

WOODWORK | TURNING | TOOL TESTS | FEATURES

November 2023

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& Goodwoodworking

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ice cream
van soapbox

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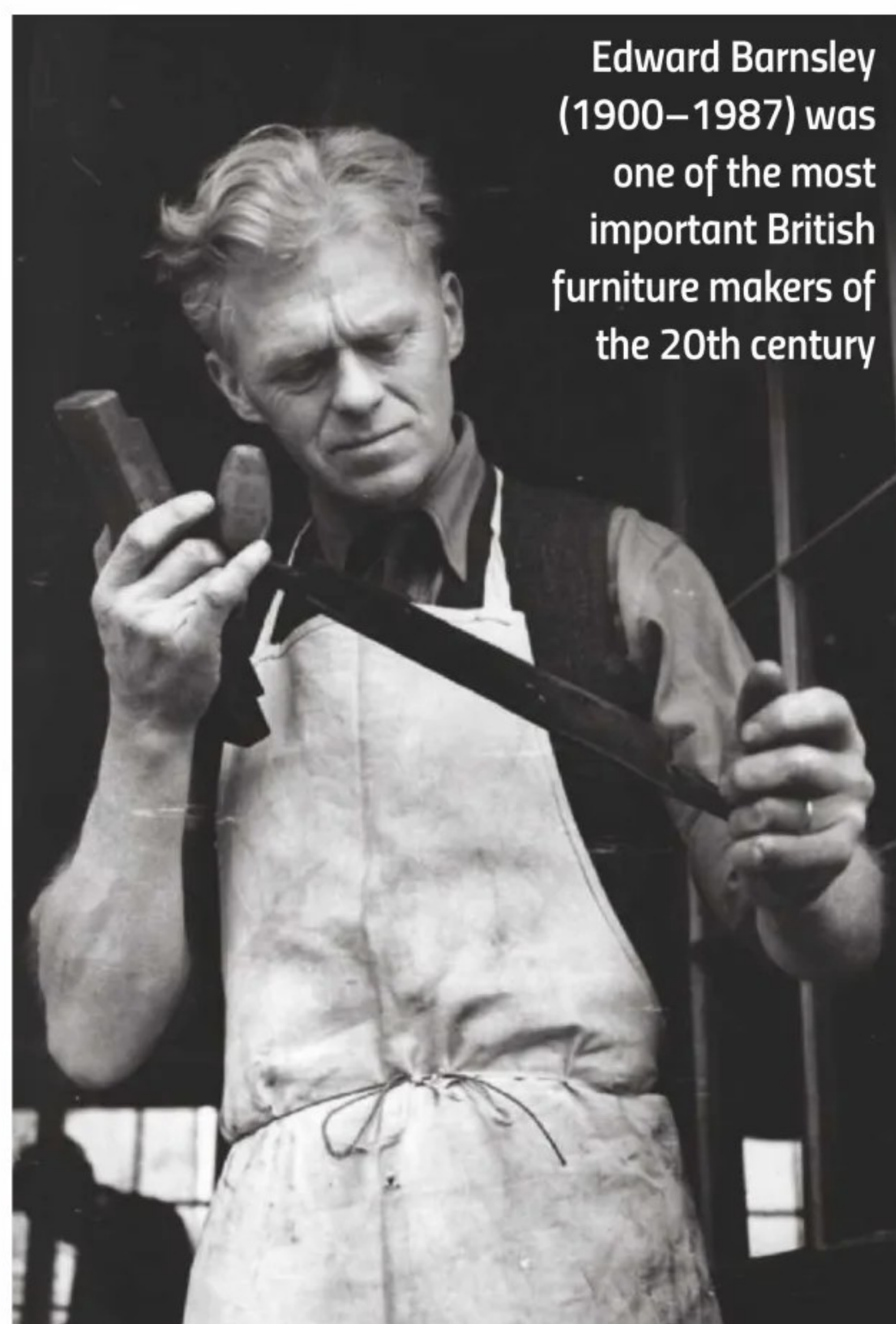
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Edward Barnsley (1900–1987) was one of the most important British furniture makers of the 20th century



Edward Barnsley's Workshop c. 1936



Boards are seasoned in dedicated drying sheds for two to five years, depending on their thickness



An Edward Barnsley Workshop Furniture Making Apprenticeship provides a thorough practical training in a commercial environment



Jubilee Cabinet, made in 1977

Welcome

I'm a great believer in serendipity, and a classic example of this happened just last month. Feeling the need to escape for a few days and choosing Hampshire due to its many notable historic buildings, not to mention stunning scenery, we found ourselves staying just a stone's throw from the Edward Barnsley Workshop in Petersfield. Interestingly, the cabin in which we stayed – named The Folly – was actually owned by Edward's grandson, the view from which was utterly breathtaking, situated on a high ridge overlooking beech and yew woods with magnificent views across the South Downs.

One of the most important British furniture designer-makers of the 20th century, Edward Barnsley was actually born into a family of furniture makers, and with his father's help, produced small items, such as a stool and side table, from the age of five.

According to the website: "His father Sidney, uncle Ernest and their friend Ernest Gimson had been inspired by William Morris and embraced his radical ideas. In 1893, these three moved from London to the Cotswolds to put their beliefs into practice."

Edward moved back to Hampshire in 1920, where he trained in Geoffrey Lupton's workshop in Froxfield. Lupton stepped back from furniture making and Edward took over the workshop in 1923, retaining most of its employees. Here, he made furniture very much in the Cotswold style, taking on his first apprentice in 1924 – Herbert Upton – who went on to become the workshop foreman. However, Alan Peters OBE – himself one of Britain's most prominent furniture designer-makers of the late 20th century – is perhaps the best known of the workshop's former apprentices.

Moving on to the present day, we were lucky enough to be given a guided tour of the workshop by designer-maker James Ryan – who's in charge of the workshop's day-to-day running as well as designing all of the furniture – and has been doing so for over 30 years. Incidentally, this year sees the Edward Barnsley Workshop celebrating its 100th anniversary, which made the visit even more timely.

It was a pleasure to meet some of the workshop's current Foundation Apprentices, who work alongside experienced furniture makers to produce a wide variety of Barnsley designs, guided by Stephen Rock, craftsman-tutor. An intensive one-year course for those who possess some furniture making skills but want to learn how to work to the very highest standards, for the first three months Foundation Apprentices use only hand tools with the first project being an octagon bread board.

James takes great pride in the fact that today, the tradition of high-quality training continues, supported since 1980 by the Edward Barnsley Educational Trust (EBET). This is perfectly described and summed up by Adam Gamble, Apprentice and Craftsman from 1987–1994, who says that: "The Edward Barnsley Educational Trust is an embodiment of the idea that knowledge is not owned, but is there to be shared for the benefit of all."

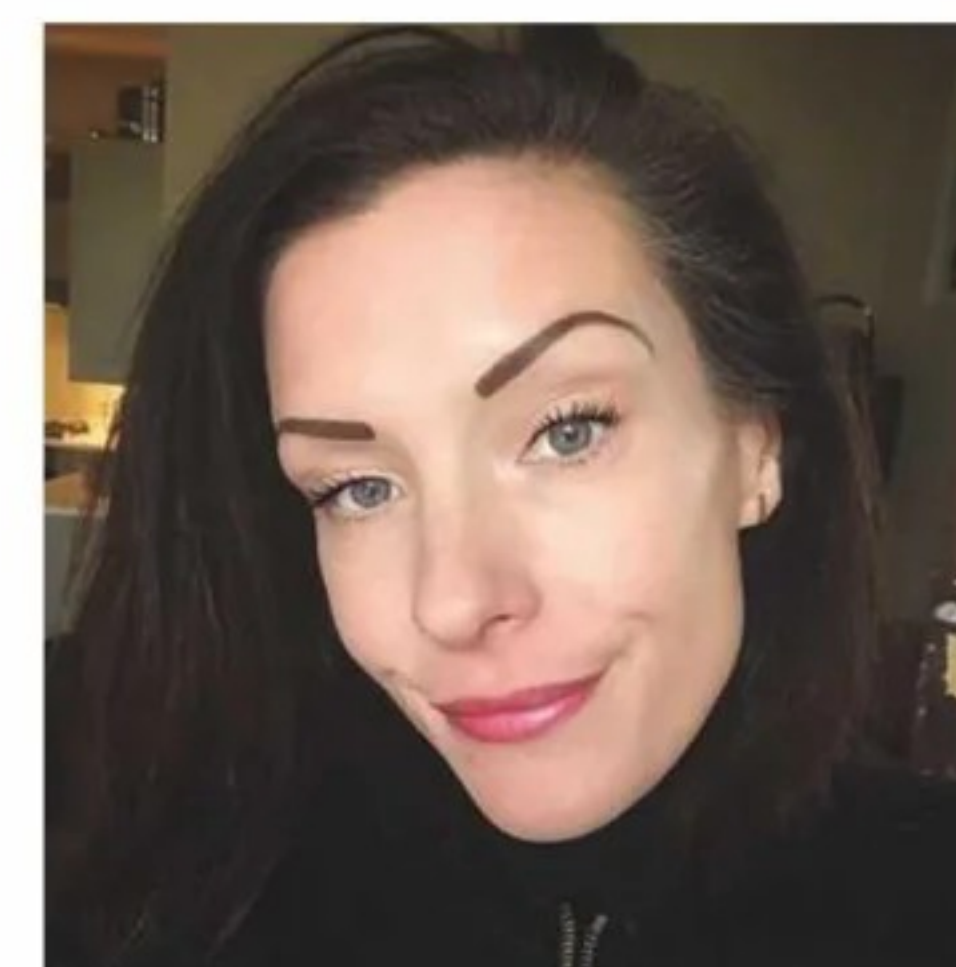
Indeed, one of the workshop's notable characteristics is its dedication to passing down skills through generations, not to mention the fact that Foundation Apprentices receive the current National Minimum Wage apprentice rate, among a host of other benefits.

Excitingly, the workshop continues to expand and a new machine area is due for completion by the end of this year. Although the bespoke furniture created here using traditional methods emphasises the skills of hand craftsmanship, James is keen to point out that machinery allows tasks to be completed with greater accuracy and precision, not to mention more quickly.

Today, the Edward Barnsley Workshop remains a beacon of excellence in the world of fine woodworking, and its pieces grace the homes of collectors, museums and discerning buyers around the world. Thank you again to James and the team for allowing us to see and experience some of these stunning pieces in the flesh.

Tegan

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We endeavour to ensure all techniques shown in this issue are safe, but take no responsibility for readers' actions. Take care when woodworking and always use guards, goggles, masks, hold-down devices and ear protection, and above all, plenty of common sense. Do remember to enjoy yourself, though

WIN!

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See **page 15** for details

Good luck!

CHISEL RATING

PROJECT DIFFICULTY 1-5

Each project in this issue includes a difficulty rating from 1-5, so you can readily see whether or not a particular one is suited to you. While it's good to try and push yourself and develop skills, workshop safety should always be a main consideration and we urge you not to attempt a project/use specified tools or machinery, if you're unsure how to do so in a safe manner. A wide range of safety information is available online and a good place to start is www.hse.gov.uk

- 1 Very easy;** only requires basic tools
- 2 Simple to make;** only a few tools required
- 3 Aimed at beginners-intermediate;** some specific equipment/tools required
- 4 Aimed at intermediate-advanced;** sound woodworking knowledge required in addition to a wide range of hand/power tools
- 5 Advanced skills/knowledge required;** a wide range of specialist equipment is needed to complete the project

75 WEATHER WATCH

If you fancy yourself as an amateur weather forecaster, this classic instrument by Peter Dunsmore is perfect. It features a barometer, hygrometer and twin-scale thermometer, all housed in a stunning banjo-style case

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SEND IN YOUR TOP WORKSHOP HINT/TIP/POINTER OR PIECE OF ADVICE & YOU COULD BE IN WITH A CHANCE OF WINNING A **VERITAS APRON PLANE** – see **page 57** for details



PROJECTS & TURNING

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Creating his own entry for the local soapbox derby, Peter Vivian's ice cream van isn't only a fun design but also a great exercise in various woodworking and construction techniques, all with an added touch of ingenuity...

41 Freddie the fence post fox

Utilising various storm-felled fence post offcuts left over from a recent project, Andrew Hall comes up with a fun design for his own 'ruff turnings', each of which cunningly features subtle design differences

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Mike Jordan's ledged & braced version still has the look of a stable door

60 Coco de Mer rehab

Peter Bishop sets about repairing and restoring a wonderful Coco de Mer seedpod – a twin-sectioned variety produced entirely and only in the Seychelles



82 On the latch

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84 Window made new

Phil Davy shows you how to quickly and easily replace a rotten window board

86 A platter full of apples

Taking a piece of spalted beech he'd had for a long time, Les Thorne turns a platter in addition to a selection of apples in various exotic timbers

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36 Premium, professional power tools backed by British design innovation

Jeremy Broun is given the opportunity to hand select £500 worth of products from Evolution Power Tools' cordless range – second prize sponsor of the upcoming Alan Peters Online Furniture Award 2024. Read on to discover which ones he chooses and why

52 Boxes constructed with furniture maker's jointing techniques

As John Bullar shows, box making projects are ideal for demonstrating various fine furniture making skills, being well suited to a small workshop with a few good quality tools

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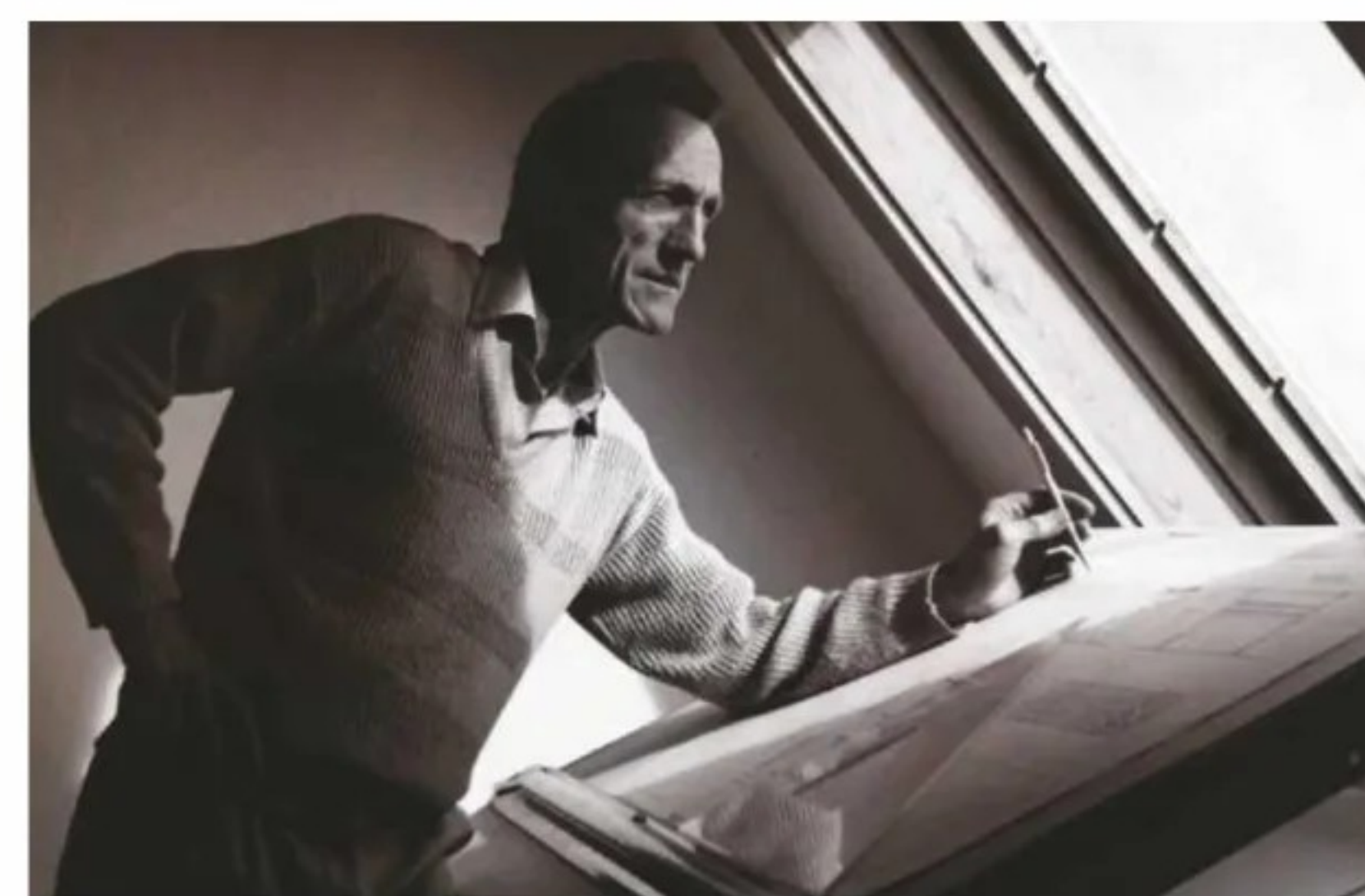
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22 The Alan Peters Online Furniture Award 2024 – 'Excellence without elitism'

Continuing to champion UK furniture design and making talent while celebrating the life and work of the late Alan Peters OBE, the 2024 award returns as a biennial competition and is set to adopt an online format as before

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Mastering the wayward structure of elm made Ercol a furniture design classic

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Featuring several critically acclaimed pieces, this month's selection includes a recently shortlisted entry for the 2023 Wood Awards and a chest of fitted drawers that breaks free from the confines of conventional furniture

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While standard noise-isolating earbuds are effective at blocking noise, these often prevent users from hearing sounds they need to be aware of, such as conversations or warning signals. ISOtunes' Aware Technology™ allows users to hear the world around them while still blocking out damaging noises above 79 decibels.

A true wireless design, ULTRACOMM Aware EN352 is supplied with a pre-attached Boom mic to provide clear audio for phone calls and is interchangeable between either earbud. Also of notable importance, the mic's comfort-fit ear hooks keep earbuds securely in place. ULTRACOMM Aware EN352 also utilises

ISOtunes' SafeMax™ technology to deliver exceptional audio quality while limiting the volume output to 79dB for all-day, damage-free listening. The new model delivers a 24dB noise reduction rating (NRR), Bluetooth 5.2 connectivity up to 30ft as well as being dust, sweat and waterproof. To ensure a secure fit, ULTRACOMM Aware EN352 includes three pairs of TRILOGY™ Short Foam eartips – in sizes S-L – as well as three pairs of TRILOGY™ Tall Foam eartips – also in sizes S-L – together with one pair of silicone triple flange eartips.

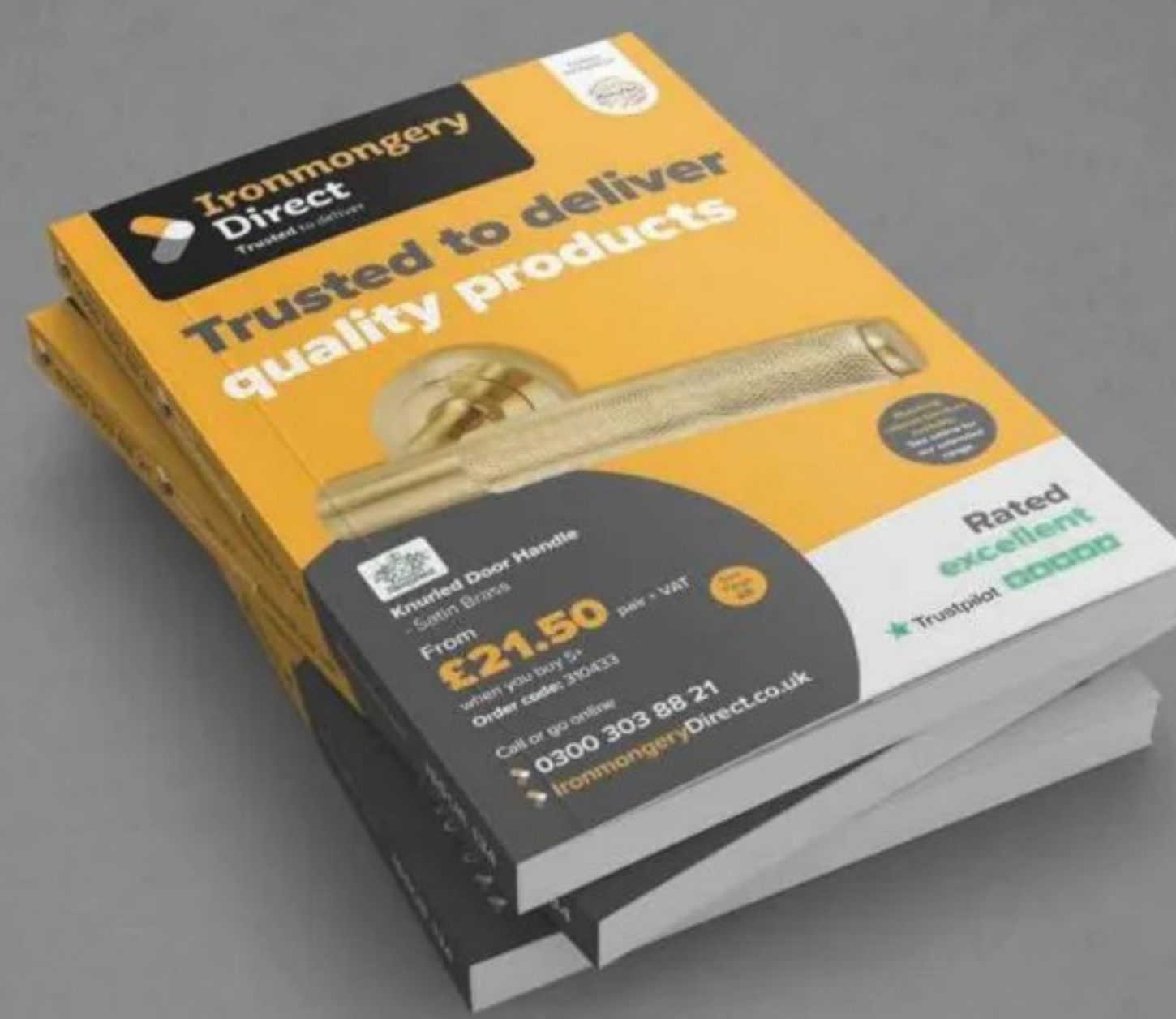
"ISOtunes customers have become accustomed to our tried and true Aware Technology™, and we're seeing an increased demand in this type of offering," said Eric Murphy, ISOtunes Co-Founder.

"Our new ULTRACOMM Aware EN352 is providing consumers with the level-dependent protection they need to operate safely and efficiently, while keeping convenience and comfortability in mind."

For more information on ISOtunes products, visit www.isotunes.co.uk.



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WOOD AWARDS 2023

Shortlist announced

20 buildings and 14 furniture projects have been shortlisted for this year's Wood Awards, all of which celebrate excellence and innovation in timber architecture and design.

From over 200 projects entered, this shortlist of 34 entries celebrates the diversity and creativity of buildings and furniture made using the world's foremost sustainable and renewable material – wood.

A seafront visitor centre, concert hall and an office complex are among the shortlisted buildings for the 2023 Wood Awards, while lathe-turned lamps, a table-cum-musical instrument and a community-built table set are among the furniture and product projects.

The Awards are split into two main categories: 'Furniture & Product' and 'Buildings'. Buildings are split into 'Commercial & Leisure'; 'Education & Public Sector'; 'Interior'; 'Private Sector'; 'Small Project' and 'Restoration & Reuse'; and within Furniture & Product, there's three subcategories: 'Bespoke', 'Production Made' and 'Student Designer'.

BUILDINGS

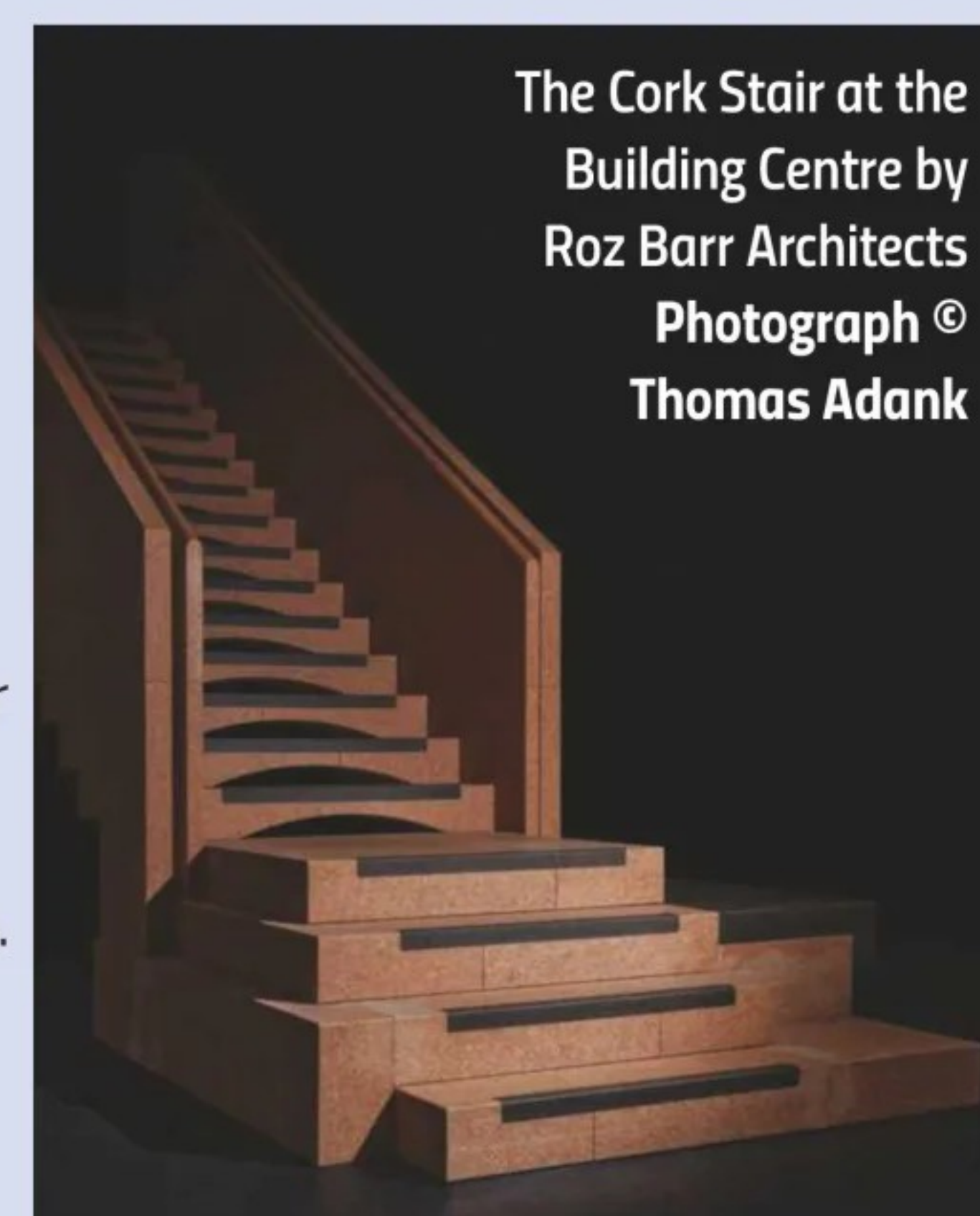
Spanning significant public spaces, forward-thinking offices and unique private homes, the 20 shortlisted structures, listed below, provide a snapshot of exemplary and progressive timber architecture.

Shortlisted projects for the Wood Awards' Building categories:

- **Black House Farm, Nr. Alresford – Robin Lee Architecture.** A historic Hampshire farm complex that's been elegantly reconstructed and reimaged through the introduction of a contemporary timber element, unifying the carefully restored agricultural buildings.
- **Benenden School, Centenary Hall and Music School, Kent – Hollaway Studios.** By engineering timber to its fullest auditory potential, this world-class concert hall and music school buildings transforms the musical and cultural education of Benenden's pupils.
- **The Boathouse, Cambridge – Ashworth Parkes Architects.** Built using Japanese carpentry techniques and no mechanical fixings, this larch boathouse sits elegantly on the bank of the River Cam.
- **Butterfly House, London – Oliver Leech Architects.** Nestled within a small corner plot in Esher, this timber-frame house carefully explores form and material to provide a compact home that supports multi-generational living.
- **The Black & White Building, London – Waugh Thistleton Architects.** Setting a new standard for sustainable and innovative workspace architecture, this landmark mass timber office complex is founded on low-carbon construction, circularity and natural materials.
- **The Cork Stair at the Building Centre, London – Roz Barr Architects.** The

world's first self-supporting staircase made of cork was commissioned as part of a wider refurbishment of the Building Centre's exhibition space.

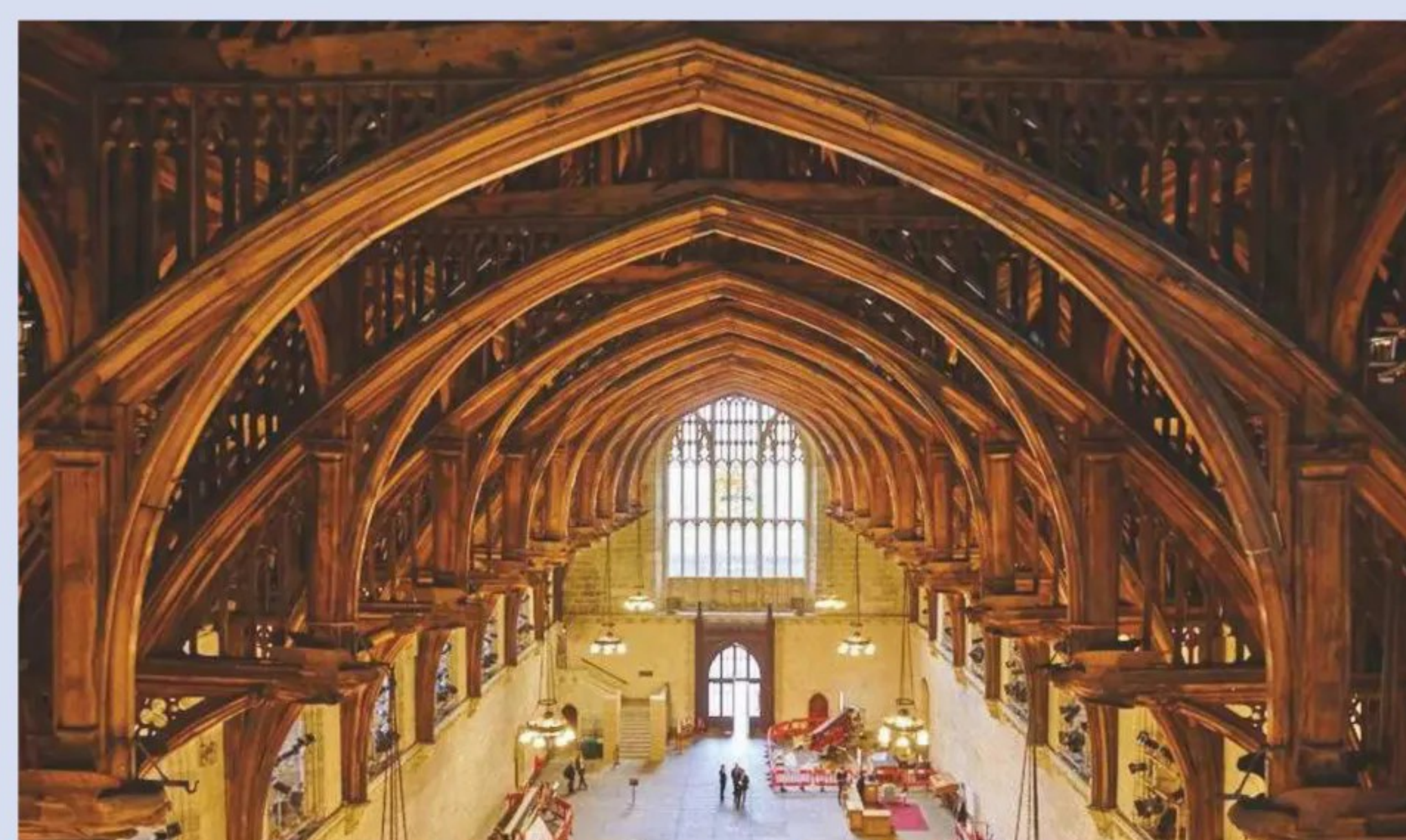
- **Dark Matter, Tring – Hyperspace.** With a minimal but textured plywood interior and charred timber façade, a former garage has been converted into a tranquil garden studio designed to foster garden biodiversity.
- **Dragon Flat, London – Tsuruta Architects.** AI-generated engravings adorn the timber wall panels and joinery of this refurbished 1950s council flat, bringing playful graphic detail to the transformed interior.
- **Durley Chine Environmental Hub, Bournemouth – Footprint Architects.** Bournemouth's new seafront visitor centre is a showcase of sustainability-driven design and the reuse of timber in construction.
- **Eton Sports & Aquatics Centre, Windsor – Hopkins Architects.** This visually striking, high-performance mass timber facility provides an accessible 25m pool and a four-court multi-use sports hall for the school's students.
- **Field Station, Beaminster – The Design + Make Programme.** Built from crown timber, this multi-purpose pavilion at Hooke Park marries technical innovation with a deep respect for nature, which demonstrates the potential of modern architecture to positively contribute towards woodland management.
- **20-23 Greville Street, London – Groupwork.** With the classic appearance of a period dwelling, this newly renovated, repurposed and vertically extended office building in Farringdon reveals a contemporary CLT structure within.
- **Lea Bridge Library Pavilion, London – Studio Weave.** Making use of a mass timber primary structure, this single-storey extension revives the Grade-II listed Lea Bridge Library into a new civic heart for the community.
- **Made of Sand, London – Studio Weave.** A Douglas fir-built artist's retreat has been added to a stone cottage in Devon, providing a creative work and holiday space immersed in its natural surroundings.
- **New Temple Complex, Hampshire – James Gorst Architects.** With a celebration of natural materiality embedded in local history, this forward-looking building is characterised by peaceful simplicity.
- **NMIS (National Manufacturing Institute Scotland), Glasgow, Renfrew – HLM Architect.** Pushing the boundaries for the application of engineered timber, the new NMIS headquarters is an inspirational learning environment with a unique structural identity.



The Cork Stair at the Building Centre by Roz Barr Architects
Photograph © Thomas Adank



The Boathouse by Ashworth Parkes Architects Ltd
Photograph © Matthew Smith Architectural Photography



Westminster Hall Roof and Lantern by Donald Insall Associates
Photograph © Thomas Erskine & Donald Insall Associate

- **Serpentine Pavilion 2023, London** – Lina Ghotmeh Architecture. Visually echoing the canopies of surrounding trees, this lightweight modular pavilion provides an enticing invitation for human interactions.
- **Spruce House and Studio, London** – ao-ft. This domestic haven uses cross-laminated timber for its structure and interior finishing to create a beautiful, minimal home that fits perfectly into its London terrace.
- **St John's College new dining room, bar, and café, Cambridge** – MCW Architects. Exploiting engineered oak's aesthetic and structural capabilities, a glulam superstructure is the centrepiece of this suite of new social spaces for St John's College.
- **Westminster Hall Roof and Lantern, London** – Donald Insall Associates. This heritage conservation project has expertly repaired and rebuilt Westminster Hall's exquisite medieval hammer beam roof and lantern.

Jim Greaves, Head of the Building Judges, says: "Selected from over 90 entries, this impressive shortlist reveals the best use of timber in construction today and demonstrates the fact that wood is truly a material of continuous change and innovation. Our panel of judges will now visit each shortlisted building to determine this year's winners – and select a stand-out project to receive the prestigious Gold Award. This rigorous process is one of the things that makes the Wood Awards the highest accolade in the UK timber industry."

FURNITURE & PRODUCT DESIGN

The 14 shortlisted furniture and product items, listed below, reveal an accomplished array of materially engaged designs. Incorporating endangered heritage techniques, community-led production, innovative problem solving and poetic exploration, each of the entries tells its own story about how wood can transform and enhance our surroundings.

Shortlisted projects for the Wood Awards' Furniture & Product categories:

- **The Ash Bushel Basket, Bristol** – Florence Hamer. Inspired by traditional techniques of split wood basketry, the Ash Bushel Basket is an ode to Scandinavian and North American basket-making craft cultures, made using British materials.
- **Lace Oak Natural Edge Bowl, Lancashire** – Greg Kent Art in Wood. Crafted from a storm-felled piece of partially rotted oak, this delicate sculptural bowl has been sandblasted to expose the growth rings and decay of its material.
- **Mixed-Deciduous Beam, London** – George Fereday. Embracing the natural form and strength of 'as-grown' wood, this speculative structural beam has been designed to address the low use of locally grown hardwoods in UK construction.
- **Serenade, London** – John Makepeace Limited. Inspired by ancient, hollowed-out tree trunks used to carry the possessions of those on the move, this bespoke oak chest accommodates the personal possessions of a less nomadic lifestyle.
- **Axis Table, St Leonards-on-sea** – Makermark. Incorporating the spherical and curving forms found in the study of planetary bodies and their cycles, the Axis Table draws on influences of the Bronze Age's monumental architecture.
- **The Sound of Wood, London** – George Richarson. Using a colourful array of 17 native and UK-grown woods, this engaging and playful project combines two passions: furniture and music.
- **Grain, Kent** – Tamasine Osher. These lathe-turned translucent timber lights push at woodturning's heritage craft boundaries.



Bespoke Furniture & Product – Furniture:
'Serenade' bespoke oak chest by John Makepeace
Photograph © Andy Whale



Production Made Furniture & Product – Furniture: 'Grain' –
lathe-turned translucent timber lights by Tamasine Osher
Photograph © Emmeline Osher

- **The Exchange Tables and Chairs, Erith** – Mentsen. A true achievement of community-led design and production, these collapsible and stackable oak tables and chairs were made by local volunteers and staff at The Exchange, Erith.
- **COTTO's Kyora Board, London** – Studio Mama. Seeking to design a balance board as a functional work of art, COTTO's Kyora Board is a celebration of wood's aesthetic along with its domestic qualities.
- **The Hanger Collection, London** – Barbara (Yixuan) Wei. Beginning with an interpretation of clothing hangers, this sculptural, contemplative project seeks to visualise a sense of intimacy with and between objects.
- **Scutoid Stool/Side-Tables, Somerset** – Guy Privett Designs. Inspired by the newly discovered 'scutoid' shape, these geometrically complex stool/side tables can be used independently or fitted together perfectly.
- **Halved Lounge Chair, Kingston Upon Thames** – Jack Allfrey. This economically efficient chair design utilises CNC machining in response to the recent rises in the price of birch plywood.
- **Rocaille Morphosis, London** – Joanne Grogan. This hand-carved limewood mirror fuses rococo ornamentation with marine life structures to create sumptuous, morphological forms.
- **General Purpose Sofa, Kingston Upon Thames** – Lukas Astrom-Wilcox. Hoping to revolutionise our approach to furniture maintenance, this versatile, cost-effective design tackles the re-upholstery challenges faced by traditional sofas.



Furniture – Student Designer:
'Rocaille Morphosis' – a hand-carved
limewood mirror by Joanne Grogan
Photograph © Julian Calder
& Joanne Grogan

Corinne Julius, Head of the Furniture and Products Judges, says: "Wood is a wonderful and often underrated, sustainable material, which is taken-for-granted and deserves more respect. The Wood Awards intend to showcase this natural material's beauty and versatility as well as highlighting its ability to connect us to the natural world. They also aim to inspire the industry, designers, makers and students to gain a better understanding of wood in its myriad forms in order to create beautiful, intelligent products for an increasingly discriminating public."

The Wood Awards shortlist will be on display from 20–23 September at Gallery@Oxo in partnership with the Material Matters Exhibition during the London Design Festival. The 2023 competition winners will be announced on 22 November during an evening ceremony held at Carpenter's Hall.

As a not-for-profit competition, the Wood Awards can only take place due to collaborative industry sponsorship. A huge thank you for continued support from Carpenters Company, American Hardwood Export Council and Timber Development UK. For more information on the shortlist, see www.woodawards.com/archive/shortlist-2023, and to view previous Wood Awards' winners, visit www.woodawards.com.

FESTOOL presents its first active exoskeleton – the new **ExoActive**

The battery-powered ExoActive exoskeleton from Festool makes light work of strenuous overhead tasks. Whether dry mortarless construction, painting, wallpapering or installation, whether on walls or ceilings, the ExoActive exoskeleton gives users an added boost when arms get tired as well as taking the load off the neck. By reducing stress on the body, users can work more effectively, have greater focus on the quality of work, and ultimately gain more enjoyment from the task at hand. The exoskeleton's support level can be adjusted as required, in a matter of seconds, so this can be precisely targeted exactly where needed. Similar to a rucksack, the ExoActive is comfortable, easy to wear, and can be quickly adjusted to suit the user's individual body size.

With the new ExoActive, for the first time in nearly 100 years, Festool has created an active exoskeleton with 18V battery power. This new product is no less than a revolution for virtually all construction industry trades, since, unlike systems currently available on the market, the exoskeleton actively provides support under users' arms, thus taking the effort out of working on walls and ceilings.



The new ExoActive from Festool gives users targeted support precisely where it's needed, while being easy to wear, like a rucksack

Easy to wear, like a rucksack

Being an active exoskeleton, the ExoActive allows the user to precisely adjust the support settings to obtain the desired level required for the task at hand. Thanks to its powerful Festool 18V battery pack, the ExoActive gives users the exact boost needed to make light work of tiring overhead tasks. Whether from the waist up, at chest height or overhead, users can set the location and level of support where needed, in a matter of seconds. If necessary, users can also pause the support boost completely. This way, the ExoActive offers users targeted, precise support, while being easy to wear, like a rucksack. It can also be quickly adjusted to accommodate different body sizes so that its ergonomics work perfectly for all body types. "Once you know first-hand what it's like to work supported by an active exoskeleton, you won't want to work on a wall or ceiling without our ExoActive ever again. The exoskeleton makes

it much easier to avoid overexertion during overhead work, and reduces load on the front of users' shoulder muscles by up to 30%, so that work feels up to one third easier. Additionally, we have an active system, which is a unique selling point in this product segment. 'Active' means that it's supplied with power, allowing the ExoActive to be adapted almost instantly to any work situation. The ExoActive is powered by the same Festool 18V battery pack used by our other tools, which makes it the perfect addition to this existing battery system," says Dominic Ender, Product Manager for the new ExoActive exoskeleton.

Provides up to 5kg of support

The ExoActive provides each underarm with an added boost of up to 50N, which is equivalent to reducing the load by approximately 5kg. The PLANEX LHS 2-M long-reach sander weighs 3.9kg, yet feels almost as light as a feather in use. "Because trade applications are so varied, the level of support provided by the ExoActive can be tailored specifically to the task at hand. A user can set the support required at any given moment, simply by turning the controller. The exoskeleton has three pre-defined working areas for effortless control: from the waist or chest up, as well as overhead," Dominic further explains. With the Festool Work App – free for Android and iOS – the ExoActive can, in future, be individually adapted to the respective use and requirement quite conveniently via a smartphone's touchscreen. The ergonomically designed, easy-to-reach control element allows users to switch the ExoActive on and off as needed, set the support level to any of five settings, as well as selecting the working area. If the user doesn't require any support for the time being, they can pause the system at the press of a button – if needing to pick up a screw or mix paint, for example.

Once you experience what it's like to work supported by an active exoskeleton, you won't want to work on a wall or ceiling without one ever again



The new PLANEX LHS 2-M long-reach sander weighs 3.9kg, yet thanks to the ExoActive, feels almost as light as a feather in use

Maximum freedom of movement

The new exoskeleton becomes one with your body: there's no components to cause obstructions and no restrictive straps. Whatever the task, the ExoActive offers maximum freedom of movement and is very comfortable to wear. An added practical detail is that all of the ExoActive's fabric and strap parts are removable and washable, allowing it to be worn by different users. What's more, each individual can be provided with their own harness system, making it even quicker and easier to interchange.

Test customer study

Since May and continuing through to October 2023, selected test customers have already had the opportunity to put the ExoActive through its paces within the framework of an international study comprising of seven European countries. In total, 300 testers are using the ExoActive within various construction sites across Europe. The result is thoroughly positive, especially when working overhead, and overall, active support has been met with great enthusiasm.

Integrated into the Festool 18V system

The ExoActive is supplied with all accessories in robust packaging that, in addition to protecting the product, also functions as a raised storage area. The ExoActive, powered by an 18V battery, is compatible with the entire Festool 18V system, and is now available to purchase from selected specialist dealers.

Festool's battery-powered universe – there's more to it than 'just' power

"Battery technology and battery-powered devices are an extremely significant trend on the tools market. We've tailored our strategy to reflect this and are continuously expanding our portfolio accordingly. We're not just blindly pursuing a strategy of using battery technology for the sake of it – we want to take a more purposeful approach to ascertain how battery technology might best serve the application in question. We want to optimise the results so that the products are perfectly suited to their applications, and we want to make work easier, safer and better for tradespeople," comments Sascha Menges, CEO of Festool GmbH. This commitment is embodied in exemplary fashion by the latest new additions to Festool's 18V system. For more information on Festool, visit www.festool.co.uk.

NORTH OF ENGLAND WOODWORKING & POWER TOOL SHOW

Advanced ticket deadline for the 'HARROGATE' SHOW

Time is running out to purchase advanced tickets for the upcoming North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show, which takes place from 10–12 November at the Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate. The ticket hotline officially closes on Tuesday 7 November at 1pm, so don't miss out on your chance to save money on the gate price charged.

This eagerly anticipated event, otherwise known as the 'Harrogate' show, features a wide range of demonstrators covering a variety of woodworking disciplines, all of whom will be appearing across the three days. New names for this year include Kate Kitchen – A Crafty Lass – who'll be demonstrating scrollsawing, as well as Ian Parker, who'll be focusing on hand-sketching woodworking and cabinetmaking techniques. Show visitors can also expect to see a multitude of trade stands from all the leading industry names as well as those that are up and coming. Importantly, this is a great chance to pick up some fantastic show deals, try before you buy and receive expert knowledge and advice on all the latest tools and equipment.

The full demonstrator and exhibitor list can be found on the website – www.harrogatewoodworkingshow.co.uk/exhibitors-demonstrators – and is constantly being updated. Ensure to secure your advanced tickets now and we look forward to welcoming you to the 2023 North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show from Friday 10 November onwards.

To purchase advance tickets, call **01749 813 899** or visit www.harrogatewoodworkingshow.co.uk and click on the 'tickets' tab.

Autumn-Winter 2023 catalogue from MACHINE MART

Exciting news for all tools and machinery fanatics, Machine Mart's new Autumn-Winter catalogue is now available, and just in time for Christmas.

The 492-page edition is packed with all the tools, machinery and equipment needed, whether you're a hobbyist, DIY enthusiast or professional tradesman.

This latest edition – the 71st of its kind – includes over 1,000 price cuts and new products, making it a 'must have' for enthusiasts. With over 5,000 products, and in excess of 15,000 'Xtra' products online, you'll be sure to find what you need at Machine Mart.

Request your free copy of the new catalogue online via the website – www.machinemart.co.uk – call **0844 880 1265** or visit your nearest Machine Mart superstore and pick one up in person.



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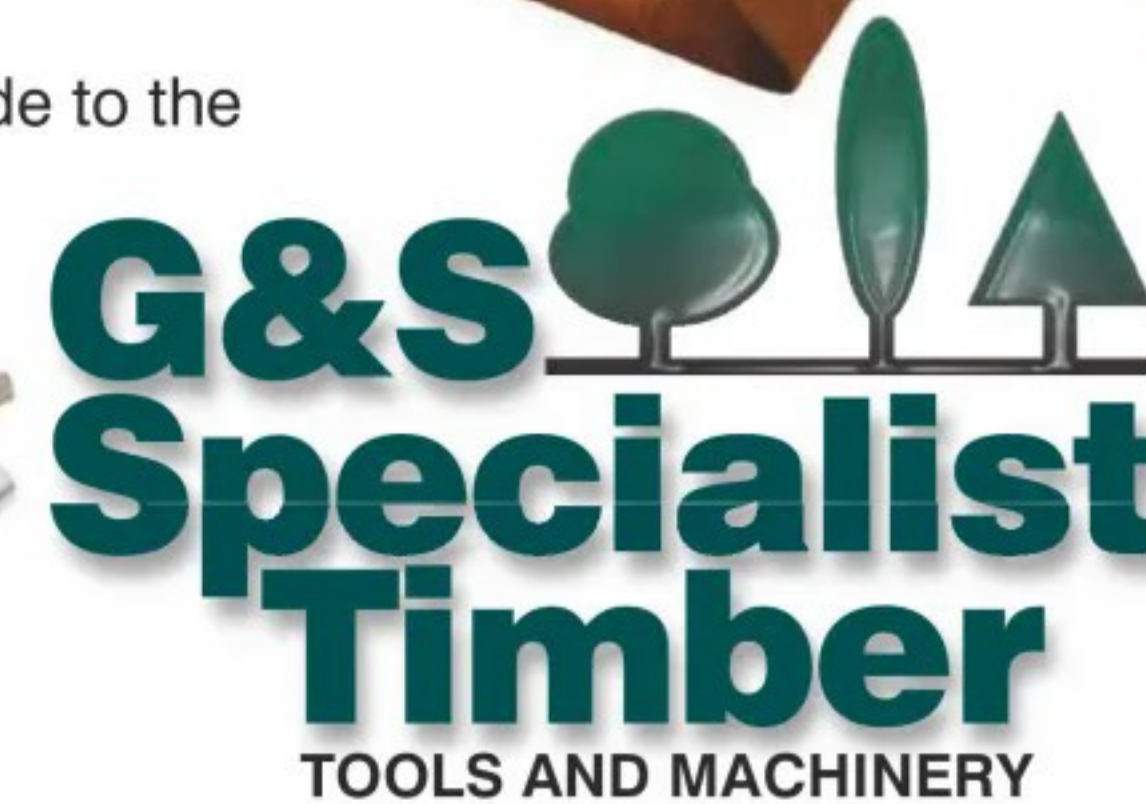
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WIN! WITH LIBERON

There's a **£200 Amazon voucher** up for grabs, plus a bundle of **Liberon woodcare products** worth over **£120!**



We've teamed up with wood care experts **Liberon** once again to give readers the chance to showcase their woodworking skills and win a **prize bundle worth over £300!**

Building on the success of our 2022 Liberon competition, we're giving more readers the opportunity to show off their woodworking skills. This time round, there's even more prizes on offer, and the competition duration has been extended by an extra month. So, if you've recently completed a project build or restoration – or are in the process of doing so – this is your chance to share photos of the finished piece(s) along with a brief description detailing the making process involved.

It's easy to enter, and the idea is to showcase a woodworking project you're particularly proud of – which could be a new piece, a restoration project, or similar – and anything from an item of furniture to a turned bowl, for example. Regardless of whether you've created a piece from scratch or restored an old or antique item back to its former glory, we'd love to see what you're capable of.

Showcase your skills

To enter the competition, entrants are required to share 1-3 photos of their chosen project as well as a brief description giving some details. Together with the Liberon team, we'll judge the



entries, select first, second and third place winners, and showcase these in an upcoming magazine feature, which will also appear online. This is a fantastic way for readers to share their work, have it judged by Liberon experts, and be in with the chance of getting their hands on a fantastic prize bundle, including an array of specialist woodcare products.

LIBERON'S WOODCARE RANGE

Ahead of the competition launch, shown below is some information regarding various core items within Liberon's top quality range. These are designed to help both professional and amateur woodworkers achieve a beautiful finish on a wide range of projects.

Wood dyes

Liberon's Spirit Wood Dye is ideal for use on dense hardwoods, and to achieve a preferred shade, any of the eight colours in which it's offered can be mixed together.

The **Palette Wood Dye**, available in a choice of 13 different shades, can also be combined in order to achieve an exact shade. This quick-drying, water-based option is suitable for both soft- and hardwoods.

Oils

Liberon's Finishing Oil blends hard-wearing oils with resins, as well as offering protection, not only against water, but also heat and alcohol.

The **Superior Danish Oil** can be used to achieve a wonderful satin gloss sheen while also feeding, protecting and adding long life to both hard- and softwoods. It protects against sunlight and is also resistant to water, alcohol, heat and food acid.

The hard-wearing **Pure Tung Oil** provides a long-lasting matt finish and is ideal for those surfaces most often in contact with food.

Wax

Liberon's Wax Polish Black Bison has a good content of Carnauba wax and, being highly lustrous, makes wood look simply beautiful. It provides good resistance to finger and water marks, and is ideal for small surfaces. It feeds, polishes and helps to prevent wood drying out.

For further information on Liberon and the company's extensive range of woodcare products, see www.liberon.co.uk



LAST YEAR'S WINNERS

1ST PLACE –

Ian Burnell's 'Lelló' cabinet – London plane, sandblasted glass and Medite Clear – 1,250 × 1,180 × 400mm

2ND PLACE –

David Henry's wonderful champagne box features a handmade wooden ribbon



3RD PLACE –

David Hutcheson's quaich is turned from a stunning piece of Scottish elm, with hand-carved thistle detailing



HOW TO ENTER

1. Email your entry to editor.ww@dhpublish.co.uk with 'Liberon competition' as the subject title. Please ensure to provide the following information: **1)** Your name; **2)** Confirmation of email address; **3)** Contact telephone number; **4)** 1-3 photos of your woodworking project – in JPEG format and each 1-2MB in size; **5)** A description of your project – maximum 100 words.
2. Entrants must be willing to have their project photos and details published and used on Liberon's social media channels, as well as in *The Woodworker* magazine and accompanying website.
3. The first place winner must be willing to supply a photo of themselves with the Liberon prize bundle.
4. All entries must be received by midnight on **17 November 2023**.
5. Multiple entries are permitted – i.e. each person can submit up to three different pieces, but each must be emailed separately.
6. The first place winner will receive a £200 Amazon voucher plus a Liberon product bundle worth over £120. Second and third place winners will each receive a Liberon product bundle as above. Prizes will be sent by Liberon directly; please note that no cash alternative is offered.
7. The competition is **only open to mainland UK residents**.
8. Judging will take place between **15 December 2023 and 19 January 2024**, ahead of a feature showcasing the first, second and third place winners in the magazine, on our website, as well as on Liberon's social media channels.
9. Further terms and conditions can be found on our website: www.thewoodworkermag.com/category/win.

CLARKE CWL460 18IN (460MM) WOODTURNING LATHE

What will turn a lot will turn a little – but do you have to compromise if you only want to create small items? **Jonathan Salisbury** takes a look at the **Clarke CWL460** woodturning lathe – available from **Machine Mart** – to find out



Out of the box

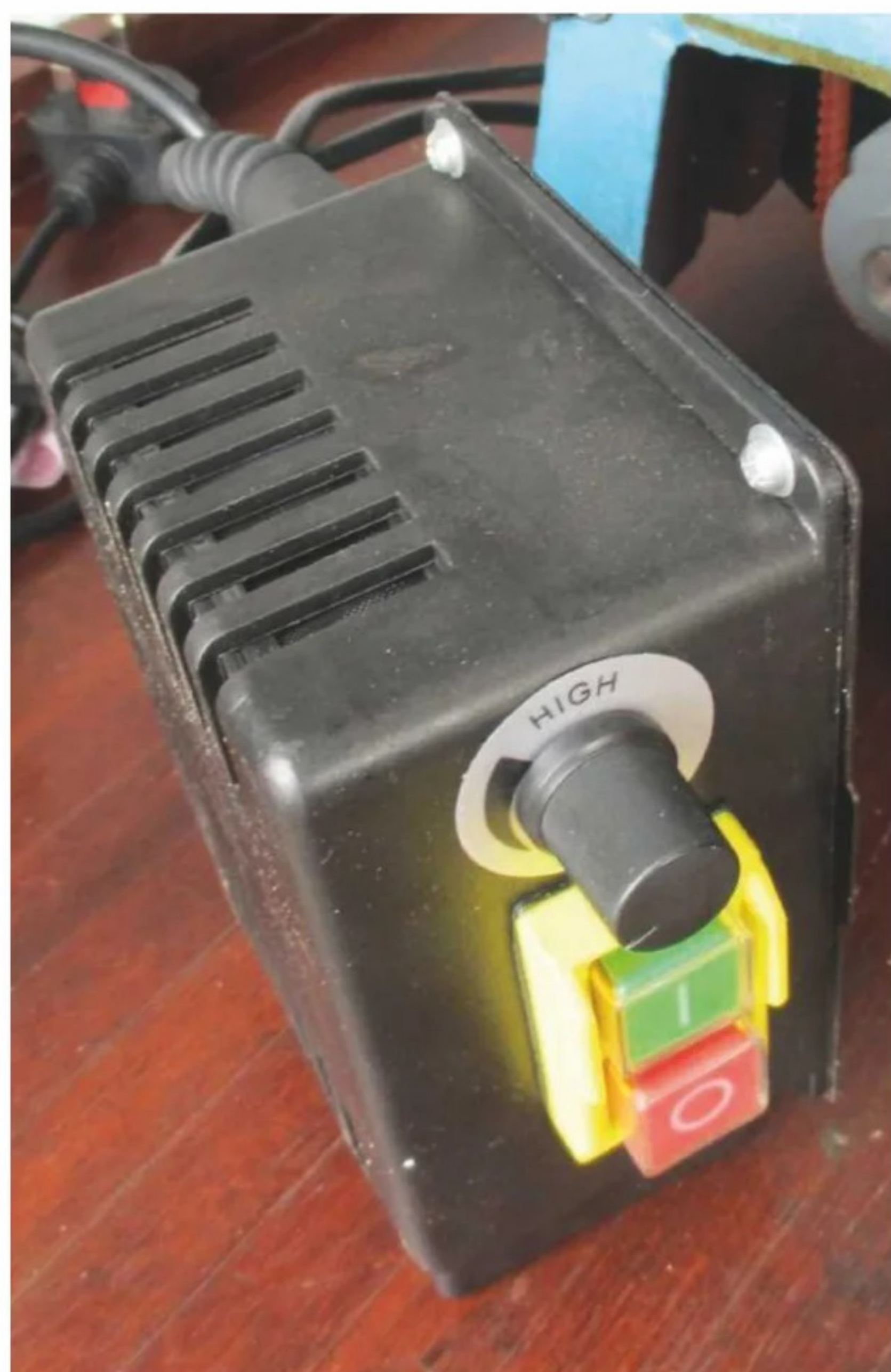
model from the Clarke range. A more compact, bench-top machine that's big enough for what I want to do and small enough to be easily stored when not in use; just the thing for a part-time turner with limited space. I was sent the CWL460 – 460mm or 18in spindle capacity – model to try out; this features a continuously variable speed dial, a counter to indicate rpm, and can be used to turn pieces up to 304mm – about 12in – diameter. Perfect!

Unpacking

The slabs of polystyrene protecting the lathe on its long and dangerous journey to the UK, although crushed and cracked in a few places, meant that the contents were still in perfect condition. I can't help wondering why there isn't a viable, less-environmentally damaging alternative yet. Machine Mart, to their great credit, replied in agreement to my email about this very matter; maybe this will change in future.

Setting up

Installation is quick and straightforward as pretty much everything was already in place. All I had to do was fix the handle on the tailstock wheel and attach the control box by inserting a pin in the hinge, located at the back, and



The control box needs to be attached

I have a small workshop tucked into one end of an over-full garage. I'd like a lathe to do a little turning every now and then; I have a large lathe, but it takes up too much space and just ends up being buried under things I needed to store temporarily – mostly machines sent for testing! I like to create small bowls, so the maximum capacity is never used. This situation wasn't working for me.

Machine Mart has a range of lathes, and they offered me the chance to test a new



One cable clip, two cables

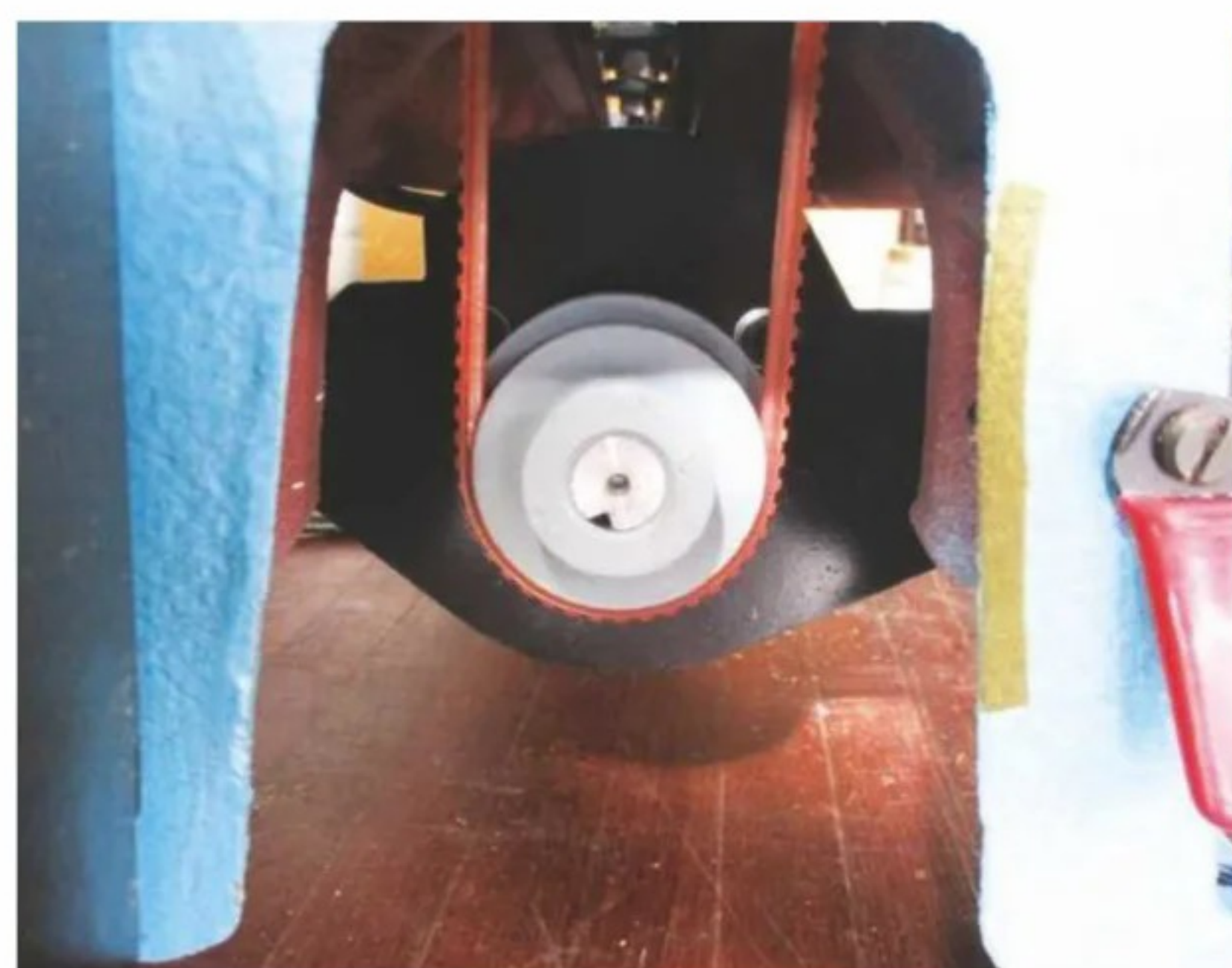


Lever down to lock in place



locking a lever at the front. But why is there a hinge on the control box? Because it hides the lower pulleys and is moved out of the way when you want to adjust the belt. A slight oversight I immediately noticed is that there's only one cable clip at the back for the two cables that pass that way; not a significant issue, certainly, but a second clip would have been easy enough to include.

I always give test machines a quick inspection for any cost-cutting, and a few years ago this was easy to spot. If you know what to look



Controls swing out of the way for belt access

for it's always possible to find something, but, having tested quite a few of the Clarke machines – although a very small percentage from their enormous catalogue – and very familiar with the range, I have to say that every time a new one arrives it's harder to find fault.

OK, there's a bit of roughness on the castings; you can still see red-oxide primer underneath, and components such as the toolrest along with drive- and live-centres aren't quite as good as those offered by the more expensive competitors. But apart from these superficial blemishes, everything was at least as good as it needs to be – and better than you might expect at the asking price.

Looking closer

At the business end, the motor is attached to the drive system by a three-speed, grooved pulley and belt setup. These are hidden behind a plate at the back of the headstock, which has no interlock so could be kept open while running, which definitely isn't recommended. The electrics inside are also worth isolating and I think there ought to be a warning sticker here. The motor has



The handle is the only remaining assembly required

carbon brushes, which need checking and replacing when worn – and here there's a sticker that promises potential catastrophic damage if you don't do this. It might just encourage you to make this a regular maintenance task!

The coarse spindle thread is a common one used on lathes – M33 × 3.5. Unfortunately, this doesn't match any of the other faceplates or chucks I own, so I'm down to the single faceplate and drive centre supplied. Enough for testing, certainly, but not enough for me to do everything I want – until I get a convertor, that is.

The levers that lock the tailstock and toolrest to the bed are of the traditional eccentric style and operate in both left- and right-handed directions. The clamps that lock toolrest height and tailstock are screw threads with adjustable handles. The travel on the tailstock and toolrest clamps can be impeded by the bed levers, but this is an occasional, avoidable nuisance more than anything else.

Start-up is slightly delayed and very smooth; stopping from full speed is braked and much faster than expected. The operating buttons on the no-volt control box are positive in use, although I'd prefer these on the front of the



Standard M33 thread



Cam lock to the bed; height locked with a screw



Rubber feet keep the lathe in place



Set up and ready to go



Constant variable speed is a bonus



A useful guide



Ear plugs at the ready?



Removing the faceplate

headstock, which would also make them better placed for emergency stop purposes.

Bowl turning

Leaving the machine on the middle pulley speed settings it arrived with, I mounted a piece of red oak and turned down the outside ready to make it into a shallow bowl sometime in the future. The 550W motor provided plenty of power to make this a straightforward task, with no jamming or slipping; the quoted noise level of between 78.7 and 91.7dB must be



Drive centre locates well



Cup centre holds end tightly



Happiness is a lathe covered in shavings

right even if the operation appears to be reasonably quiet, so get out those ear defenders. The variable speed control was very useful as I could increase and decrease it at will; it's amazing how small differences allowed the chisels to do their job more effectively. Changing the belt position isn't difficult, once the motor plate lever at the front has been released. Access to the belts is reasonable at the bottom and better at the back, but remember that there's no interlock, so switch it off at the wall. There's no provision for the lathe to be bolted down, but it didn't move at all; 33kg is enough to keep it in place, even though the blank was hopelessly out of balance to begin with.

Removing the faceplate wasn't too difficult; with no spindle lock and no flats for a spanner, the supplied drift rod is inserted into a hole and used as a counter lever. The flat plate spanner works fine but isn't the most comfortable of tools to use; it could do with a grip of some sort.

Spindle turning

This was an equally easy task, with both headstock drive and tailstock centre cup holding

the blank in position. The tailstock locking handle helps to prevent backward movement and can be released for tightening up when necessary. The only problem is that the 150mm toolrest supplied is about one-third the length it needs to be in order to turn the maximum length spindle in one pass. Many lathes are supplied with two toolrests, so the lack of a longer one compromises the ease of use – and there's no mention online of there being one as a spare part.

Maintenance tools

There's one thing that I definitely don't need, and that's more hex keys; but in case you don't have those required, they're supplied for all the grub and socket screws that call for occasional tightening.

Conclusion

All-in-all, this is a great machine. Solid, smooth, compact, storable – just the thing for those small turning projects in an overcrowded home workshop. The only issues I have concern the lack of a longer toolrest,



Handle locks to the right...



... and to the left



Toolrest is too short for full capacity

which really ought to have been supplied, and the need to buy another adaptor for my chuck, which isn't too expensive to rectify and certainly my responsibility. The continuously variable speed setting is great as it can be tweaked up and down to match the job; most lathes at this price level don't have a digital readout so you can actually set it to a specific speed – assuming that it's accurate, of course. My no-load readings were from 708-4,120

against the published 650–3,800rpm. I'd have liked there to be an interlock on the rear pulley access cover, just in case.

If your budget can't quite stretch to this model, there's a very similar 17in version without variable speed dial and rev-counter, or the 13in, which has non-metered variable speed at a lower cost. It's always worth checking the Machine Mart website for special offers, but even at full price, the CWL460 still represents good value for money. ✂



Access panel has no interlock or warning



Good access for belt movement...



... but don't forget to release the motor first



All hex keys supplied for maintenance

SPECIFICATION

Distance between centres: 460mm

Turning capacity: 304mm

Watts: 550W

No. of speeds: 3

Weight: 33.05kg

Electronic variable speed: 650-3,800rpm

Variable speed: Yes

Digital display: Yes

Floor stand: No

- 18in (460mm) lathe ideal for woodturning in the DIY workshop
- Solid steel construction with tough powder-coated finish
- 460mm distance between centres for turning spindles
- 152mm height of centre from base allows 304mm turning capacity
- Suitable for bench tops, with rubber feet providing added stability
- Supplied with 3 × hex keys – 3, 6 and 8mm – headstock spur, tailstock cup centre and headstock locking

Typical price: £466.80

Web: www.machinemart.co.uk

THE VERDICT

PROS

- Compact, sturdy and very good quality; big enough for large bowls but compact enough to be stored away; variable speed and digital spindle speed readout

CONS

- M33 headstock thread might need converting for your existing faceplates and chucks; toolrest is only long enough for one-third of the spindle turning capacity; spanner needs a more comfortable handle; no safety interlock on access cover; carbon brushes on the motor will need replacing

RATING – PERFORMANCE: **4.5** OUT OF 5

RATING – VALUE: **4** OUT OF 5



You've been warned!

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THE

Alan Peters

ONLINE

FURNITURE AWARD

2024

Entry deadline:
31 July 2024A £20 entry fee applies
& a maximum of two
entries can be made
(£20 per entry)

Devon walnut and rosewood desk by Alan Peters, 1989

'EXCELLENCE WITHOUT ELITISM'

Continuing to champion UK furniture design and making talent while celebrating the life and work of the late **Alan Peters OBE**, the 2024 award returns as a biennial competition and is set to adopt an online format as before

This biennial award celebrates the legacy of one of Britain's most prominent furniture designer-makers of the late 20th century while aiming to encourage all talent in the craft of furniture design and making. Any woodworker who's a resident citizen of the British Isles, aged over 18, with a passion and talent for designing and making contemporary furniture, is invited to submit up to two pieces made primarily of wood. These can also include, if applicants so wish, other complementary materials that echo Alan Peters' design philosophy. Judging is based on the appropriate use of material, quality of workmanship, functionality, as well as originality of design.

Both one-off designs and potential batch-produced designs are encouraged and the piece(s) doesn't have to be large. Applicants should be familiar with the work of Alan Peters prior to applying and are encouraged to read Jeremy Broun's 64-page online video-integrated e-book, which is offered free-of-charge here: www.jeremybroun.co.uk/alanpetersaward.

Alan Peters
in his studio

The man behind the award

Alan Peters OBE (1933–2009) was one of Britain's most prominent furniture designer-makers of the latter part of the 20th century. Apprenticed to Edward Barnsley, he had a direct link to the English Arts and Crafts Movement as well as being hugely influential on an international level in terms of his practice, teaching and publications. Above all, Alan Peters' respect and understanding of how wood behaves and the value of hand skill, while moving tradition forward, resulted in the creation of many timeless pieces. He created affordable, functional furniture, which was built to last, making an art of his craft in some of these subtle innovations.

Award history

The original award – called 'The Alan Peters Award For Excellence' – was initiated by Jason Heap in 2010. The prize was offered to three winners, each of whom were given free exhibition space alongside professionals at this annual furniture event in Cheltenham. The award ran for eight years and the judging panel comprised of Jason Heap, Keith Newton and Jeremy Broun.

Following the success of both the 2021 and 2022 awards, this year, as with 2021, an online format will be adopted, followed by an event ceremony and virtual exhibition.

Expert judging panel

- **Jeremy Broun (Organiser)** – designer-maker and co-exhibitor with Alan Peters from 1978–2002
- **Andrew Lawton** – designer-maker who worked with Alan Peters as well as on his last commission
- **Fernanda Nuñez** – Award-winning furniture designer-maker

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3RD PRIZE: £300 Judges' cash prize

This award is open to any resident citizen of the British Isles, aged over 18, who has an enthusiasm and flair for woodworking. A piece of furniture – indoor or outdoor – is to be made and six high resolution JPEG images submitted, together with a Word document description.

Shortlisted applicants will be asked to engage in a Zoom video call or submit a one-minute video introducing themselves and describing the piece(s).

Judging of entries will take place in August followed by an event ceremony and virtual exhibition(s) in September – exact dates TBA.

It's important to get designing and making straight away, as the submission deadline is **31 July 2024**. To download an application form and view the free 64-page e-book, visit www.jeremybroun.co.uk/alanpetersaward. The application form download button can be found halfway down the page. Payment for

entry can also be made securely via the website. For further information, contact Organiser Jeremy Broun – jezbroun@gmail.com – or Group Editor, Tegan Foley – tegan.foley@dhp.co.uk

Romanian chest
by Alan Peters

What's new from

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MAFELL LO 55 240V ROUTER

MANUFACTURER: Mafell

D&M GUIDE PRICE: £649.95

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MANUFACTURER: Festool

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Achieve ideal results more quickly with the new SYMMETRIC cordless compound mitre saw from Festool. This new tool allows you to saw strips twice as fast in comparison to using a regular compound mitre saw, both in terms of accuracy and without having to make calculations. Use the bevel to easily obtain interior and exterior angles and transfer them to the symmetrical stop system. Additionally, users can saw exactly along the bisector, with one setting for cutting both corner strips with precision. Rollers allow you to move and correctly position the cordless compound mitre saw in an instant and, when used in conjunction with the dual battery system, the saw can be made as mobile as required. Finally, owing to the machine's cordless nature, work progress is optimised, even in small spaces.

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HBS 261-2 245MM BANDSAW ART NO:5902426



- Ideal for ambitious modellersFlywheels made of die-cast aluminum with special coating
- Aluminium cast iron worktable swiveling up to 45°
- Equipped with precise 3 x bearing band saw guide above and below the table
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TKS 316 E CIRCULAR SAWBENCH ART NO:5902316



- Inclination of the saw blade from 0 to 45°, adjustable without tools
- Height adjustment of the saw blade via hand wheel and scale
- Large aluminum rip fence with eccentric quick release, can be used as a miter fence as well
- Large, galvanized steel machine table
- Maximum cut at 90/45 degree 83/60mm

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KGZ 210 E MITRE SAW ART NO: 5702210



- Infinitely adjustable double mitre and tilt to the left
- Base plate and rotary table made of die-cast aluminium, at the same time compact, robust and easily transportable
- Laser projection on the workpiece for precise control of the cutting position
- Laterally extendable support aids for longer workpieces
- Double adjustable cross-cut depth

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KGZ 305 E DOUBLE BEVEL MITRE SAW ART NO:5702305



- Continuously adjustable double mitre and double tilt as a factory standard
- Base plate and turntable made of die-cast aluminum, at the same time compact, robust and easy to transport
- Laser projection on the workpiece for precise control of the cutting position
- Adjustable contact rails and laterally extendable supports for longer workpieces

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BSM-H 16 DRILLING & MORTISING MACHINE ART NO: 5906116



- For easy production of slot-pin connections
- Solid cast construction of the machine frame with precise dovetail guides in each axis
- Long lever for quill stroke for chiseling out with little effort
- Movable clamping jaws can be mounted in three different positions
- Two adjustable stops each for X and Y direction
- The machine head is additionally held with a gas pressure spring for easier handling
- Tool holder via drill chuck with gear rim

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BSM-H 25 DRILLING & MORTISING MACHINE ART NO: 5906125



- For easy production of slot-pin connections
- Solid cast construction of the machine frame with precise dovetail guides in each axis
- Large Z-axis travel of 200 mm for high workpieces
- Long lever for quill stroke for chiseling out with little effort

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TKS 254 PRO 254MM TABLE SAW ART NO:5902027



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- Saw blade tilt from 0° to 45°, precise, accurate to the degree and conveniently adjustable via handwheel and scale
- Large central suction connection Ø 100 mm
- The saw blade height adjustment is also carried out via a hand wheel from the operator's front panel

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TF 50 E TABLE ROUTER ART NO:5901905-PI



- Compact and handy design for comfortable use
- Variable speed range from 11500 to 24000 min⁻¹
- Spindle height adjustable from 0 to 40 mm
- Work table made of aluminum
- Mitre stop and various collets included
- + Imperial and metric collets

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DB 305 VARIO WOOD LATHE ART NO:5920305



- Infinitely variable speed range 750-3200 rpm
- Machine bed made of torsion-resistant grey cast iron for high running smoothness and precision
- Tailstock and headstock made of sturdy grey cast iron
- Spindle with high concentricity

~~£269.99 INC VAT~~
£224.99 INC VAT

BTS 151 BELT AND DISC SANDER ART NO:5903151



- For sanding long edges, front edges, curves, mitres and plane surfaces at right angles
- For processing softwood and hardwood
- Sanding belt aggregate for vertical or horizontal use infinitely variable swiveling from 0° to 90°
- Workpiece support infinitely adjustable from 0 to 45° on the belt and disk unit

~~£159.99 INC VAT~~
£133.33 INC VAT

OSS 100 OSCILLATING SANDER ART NO:5903500



- Highest precision and stability, even with larger workpieces, through large and solid cast iron table
- Safe and clean working thanks to integrated extraction nozzle for connection of an external suction unit
- Practical storage for accessories and assembly tools
- Oscillation stroke 16mm

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ADH 2540 PLANER/THICKNESSER ART NO: 5904125



- For angular joining (90°) and precise planing of solid wood boards and moldings
- Automatic workpiece feed
- Rubberized extraction roller protects the wood surface when planing thick
- Suction integrated in the substructure
- With chassis as standard
- Simple and precise adjustment of the chip removal

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TF 170 E 4 SPEED SPINDLE MOULDER ART NO:5901917



- Smooth-action sliding carriage for precise workpiece guidance
- Milling stop with finely adjustable aluminium stops
- Quick and easy change of the speed by means of splined belts
- Large work surface with torsion-free cast-iron table
- Milling unit made of grey cast iron
- Downholder for precise workpiece guidance

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DB 900 10XSPD WOOD LATHE ART NO:5920900



- Torsionally rigid gray cast iron machine bed for smooth running and precision
- Tailstock and headstock also made of sturdy gray cast iron
- Wide, easily adjustable turning steel support
- Tailstock with quick release lever and handwheel
- Digital turning speed readout

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BTS 250 BELT AND DISC SANDER ART NO:5904250



- Suitable for many materials and shapes
- Torsion-free machine housing made of a cast steel construction
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SAA 902 CHIP EXTRACTOR ART NO:5923902



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SUNDAE FUNDAY

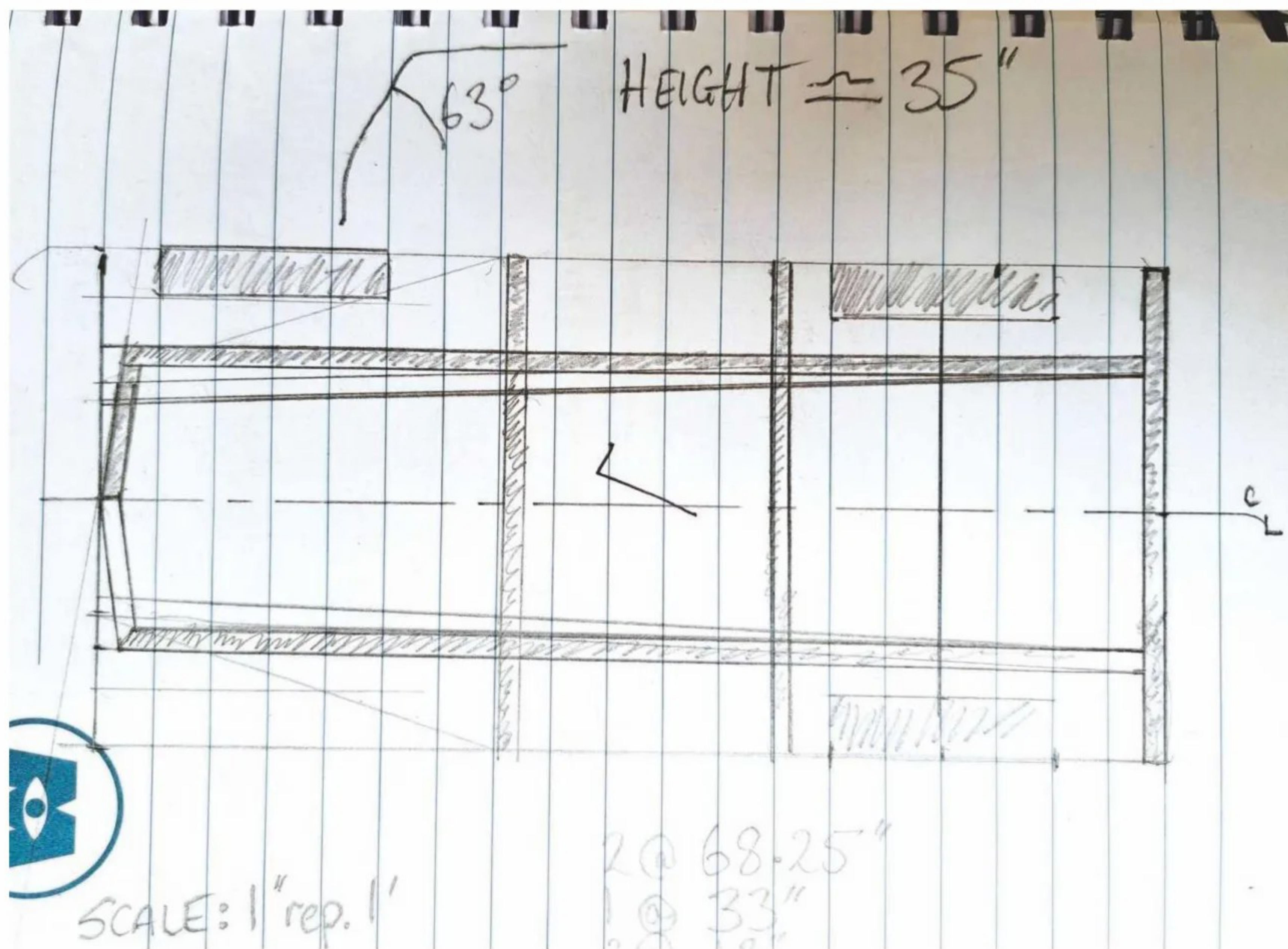
Creating his own entry for the local soapbox derby, **Peter Vivian's** ice cream van isn't only a fun design but also a great exercise in various woodworking and construction techniques, all with an added touch of ingenuity...

Every year until the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, I attended an event held in Bisley, Woking called the Hotrod Hayride. The weekend's final event is a soapbox derby, and over the years, I've come up with many different soapbox designs. This time round, however, I struggled to come up with something worthy of marking our return, but finally settled on an ice cream van. I'm not exactly sure how or why, but it seemed like a fun idea.

The more recent commercial vehicles chosen for conversion to this purpose have a lot of compound curves, which are difficult to create from timber and sheet materials. The Morris 'J' type – very popular in the late '50s/early '60s – was used by many, from Royal Mail to local the butchers, and luckily features a simple design.

Chassis construction

As is usually the case, I started with the chassis, which is made from 3x2 CLS softwood sourced



1 Ice cream van sketch

from the local DIY store. A simple sketch (**photo 1**) established overall dimensions and general construction techniques (**photos 2 & 3**). The length of the real van is a little over 3.6m, so I settled on a maximum length of 1.8m for the soapbox, giving a scale of approximately 1:2. Having applied a coat of black gloss paint, it started to look very convincing (**photo 4**). There's no complicated joints involved in the

chassis construction, just glue and screws. The floor is made from 15mm plywood.

Face & body

The next step was to tackle the front panel, containing the radiator grille, which forms the vehicle's 'face' and gives its distinctive character (**photo 5**). As I only had a side elevation and three quarter photo of the van, I had to guess



2 & 3 Constructing the soapbox chassis



4 Black gloss paint applied



the angle of the 'V' formed by the left- and right-hand halves. With the benefit of hindsight, the angle could've been slightly more acute, but as I had to remind myself many times throughout the build, 'it's only a soapbox!'. The front panel was made from 4mm plywood as was the remaining bodywork. The radiator surround was cut from a scrap of 5mm Flexipli with a narrow strip of the same material used

to raise it slightly; this allowed for the grille insert – more on this later.

Panelwork

The flat panels are fixed to vertical pieces of 2x1 prepared softwood, by means of an air nailer, which were then screwed to the chassis rails (**photo 6**). To allow the completed soapbox to be transported, I decided to make the body

in two halves, which were split horizontally just below the windows. The top and bottom are connected with dowels; these are glued into the top section with oversized holes in the bottom so they can be easily separated.

Mudguards

As mentioned previously, the decision to build this particular style of vehicle was based on its



5 The front panel forms the vehicle 'face'



6 Flat panels are fixed to vertical pieces of 2x1



7 A mudguard, carved from Polyurethane foam



8 Working bicycle lights were used for headlights



9 Windows were carefully cut with a jigsaw



10 Ice cream van roof

simple design, which consisted almost entirely of flat panels. The only exceptions were the front mudguards, which are carved from Polyurethane foam and fixed to the plywood with Polyurethane glue (**photo 7**). Working bicycle lights were added, which were probably slightly undersize (**photo 8**).

Ice cream topping

The windows were carefully marked out and cut with a jigsaw, fitted with the finest toothed blade I could find, in order to minimise tear-out (**photo 9**). The van's roof and top section follow the same construction method as for the lower half, although the curvature combined with that of the roof proved a little tricky (**photo 10**). The windscreen surround is made from four separate frames; two quarter lights and the main windscreen halves. On reflection, in an

attempt to make it truer to scale, or so I thought, I actually made these far too thin, which resulted in them being incredibly fragile – I lost count of the number of times I had to resort to repairs! In order to enter the vehicle, I had to cut out the sun roof, which again was an oversight on my part! I made a pattern for the grille insert using strips of 3mm MDF. I vacuum formed these in two halves so they were slightly larger than the aperture; this allowed them to be trimmed to fit before being fixed in place with Polyurethane glue (**photo 11**).

Prime time

With all the woodwork now complete, I treated everything with two coats of acrylic white primer (**photo 12**) and sanded the whole construction with 120 grit abrasive followed by 240.

Looking for colours to match the original, I realised I'd seen the blue somewhere before – my bathroom suite! The cream paint, by Dulux, is appropriately named 'Vanilla Sundae'.

Sign of the chimes

I haven't done any sign writing for a long time, so I was looking forward to having a go. I started with the Wall's logo, and even though my first attempt was a bit shaky, they improved each time. When it came to producing the longest lines of text, I was definitely getting more comfortable – not to mention quicker – and was happy with

the result achieved (**photo 13**). I must admit that for the 'ice cream' text, I cheated and instead resorted to using coloured logos and vinyl stickers.

I wanted to be able to play the ice cream van chimes while taking part in the event, so bought a cheap radio online that had a SD card slot; this allowed me to download an appropriate selection. The radio was capable of reaching a very loud volume, so worked out perfectly.

Ice cream menu

During my childhood, I remember ice cream vans having giant glass fibre ice cream cornets mounted above the windscreen, so wanted to replicate this. I'd planned on carving one out of PU foam but found one online that was life-size. As the van was half-scale, I thought this'd work quite well (**photo 14**). I folded a bracket out of thin aluminium, which allowed me to mount it to the front of the roof. While browsing, I found a reproduction of an old ice cream menu from around the correct era; it was A4 size so fitted perfectly in the side window (**photo 15**). Any younger readers might be confused by the prices, which are listed in old pence, i.e. pre-decimal.

Windows

All of the windows are made from 3mm PETG – a transparent thermoplastic polyester – which is easy to cut, form and bend. These are fixed in place with a bead of clear silicone.

Running gear

I purchased four wheelbarrow wheels, which were exactly the scale size required, and the



12 Applying coats of acrylic white primer prior to sanding down



11 The radiator grille, vacuum formed in two halves



13 Completing the lettering



14 The life-size ice cream that I managed to find online was a great addition



15 The reproduction ice cream menu, which shows original prices listed in old pence



16 The steering follows that of traditional pedal car/soapbox design



17 The brake is a simple block of wood, which acts on a single rear wheel

rear ones are mounted to a tubular steel axle. The steering follows that of traditional pedal car/soapbox design and is best explained by looking at **photo 16**. The brake is a simple block of wood, which acts on a single rear wheel (**photo 17**). I made the steering wheel from left-over copper, used for the clock project featured in the May 2023 issue. For the grips, I used some iroko offcuts, which were glued and screwed to the metalwork (**photo 18**).

Crossing the finish line... or not!

A few late nights leading up to the event saw all small details finally finished: number

plates, rear reflectors, metal trim, etc. When race day arrived, in the first round I found myself being drawn against a cart that was built using one of the plans I sell (**photo 19**). Wheelbarrow wheel bearings aren't the smoothest running items, and I ground to a halt just short of the finish line, having to be pushed the rest of the way!

In spite of my ignominious demise, the cart received many

positive comments, so to round off the day, we went and had an ice cream – unfortunately the prices were a bit steeper than those listed on my soapbox! ✕



18 The steering wheel made use of some left-over copper sheet



19 The completed ice cream van shown here with some of the competition

STÜRMER

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Standing for courage and optimism, **Stürmer Maschinen** has successfully carved a very unique niche and today, this wholesale machinery company supplies a growing range of metalworking, woodworking, compressed air and welding technology to over 60 countries worldwide

Stürmer history

1982

Founded in June 1982 by 20-year-old Kilian Stürmer. During his mechanic apprenticeship, Kilian's enthusiasm for welding, metalworking and working with compressed air and mechanical components grew. He went on to purchase machines and tools for his own use and for friends, and in doing so, developed a passion for buying and selling. Having completed his apprenticeship, Kilian took on the position of sales representative with a machinery wholesaler, initially in-store and later on in the field.

Kilian later went on to become self employed, before taking over the agency for compressors, welding equipment and firewood saws. Renting a 150sq.m warehouse and purchasing van, which he paid for by selling his own personal car, the business roots were laid down.

1983

Five months after establishing the company, Kilian acquired a small property that was in need of renovation, located at Geisfelder Straße 36 in Bamberg. After carrying out some refurbishments, the new headquarters and a retail store were opened. Kilian's brother, Robert, joined the company as an experienced joiner and went on to become the new woodworking machinery expert.

1984–85

Two developments followed in quick succession; first in 1984, with the creation of a new 40sq.m storage room, then the following year with the addition of a warehouse and storage space in the basement. As the company couldn't initially afford a lift, smaller machines were lowered into the basement using ropes.

1986

Stürmer developed into a wholesale supplier of tools and equipment to retailers in Northern Bavaria, selling compressors, welding equipment and small woodworking machines. At this time, seven staff were employed. Products from lesser-known manufacturers such as REHM welding technology started to be successfully demonstrated and marketed.

1988

In order to fully utilise available space, the company purchased a 4,200m² site on the Hallstadt industrial estate, which comprised a new store with office and storage areas, along with 1,100 m² of floor space.

1990

During this time, the company continued to make additions to its product ranges and achieve more distribution success. As such, after just two



In 1982, Kilian Stürmer founded Stürmer Maschinen – a wholesale machinery company with agencies – which today, is a leading supplier of German machinery retailers. The group of companies currently employs around 280 people at its sites in Hallstadt and Pettstadt.

The Stürmer name stands for courage and optimism – qualities which have allowed the company to grow into the successful and efficient organisation it is today, which successfully supplies metalworking,

woodworking, compressed air and welding technology in addition to cleaning and workshop equipment, to more than 20 European and 40 non-European countries. Despite experiencing continued success, however, Stürmer doesn't rest on its laurels, and instead choose to face changing times with a renewed focus. This is perfectly marked by the company's recognition as one of the 50 fastest-growing, medium-sized companies in Bavaria, having received the 2016 award from the Bavarian State Ministry in celebration of Stürmer's sustainably successful development. ►

years, the new building was extended and floor space increased to approximately 1,700m².

1992

In September, Kilian Stürmer joined forces with Klaus Hütter to establish AIRCRAFT Kompressoren (compressors) in Ried, Austria. In the same month, Kilian and partner also established OPTIMUM Maschinen Germany GmbH. Both start-ups were necessary in order to directly influence the quality and equipment levels of these machines.

1993

In the meantime, the sales territory was extended to cover the whole of Bavaria. The product range was also extended to include woodworking machinery from various Italian manufacturers, which involved a further warehouse extension.

1995

Stürmer Werkzeuge Maschinen Groß- und Einzelhandel was restructured into two companies: **Stürmer Werksvertretungen Maschinengroßhandel GmbH** as a wholesaler to specialist retailers, and **Kilian Stürmer Werkzeuge und Maschinen** as a specialist retailer with its own store for builders and consumers within the Bamberg area.

1996

By this time, the companies now employed around 50 people. Offerings included woodworking machines by brand-name manufacturers from Germany, Europe and Asia, which were now marketed at the 8,500m² site, with its 3,500m² of sales, warehouse and office floor space. Customers included specialist hardware retailers, department stores, a large mail-order company as well as local builders and consumers through the retail store.

1999

Due to a well-known competitor experiencing financial difficulties, the field sales team was increased from five to 10 employees. In order to better supply welding equipment and metalworking machinery nationwide, the '**SCHWEISSKRAFT**' and '**METALLKRAFT**' brands were created.

2003

Total turnover for the **STÜRMER**, **AIRCRAFT** and **OPTIMUM** brands increased by a further 21% compared with the previous year, and for the first time, exceeded €31 million. The 1,500m² newly developed, additional warehouse and distribution facility in Hallstadt was inaugurated. In China, the Yangzhou OPTIMUM machine factory was constructed, and opened by its three owners – Kilian Stürmer being one of them.



Kilian and Robert Stürmer

Managing Director, Kilian Stürmer, says: "It's our utmost concern to meet the expectations of customers and business partners at all times. Mutual trust forms the basis for long-term and successful cooperation. We'll continue to strengthen our specialist trade partners and

act honestly and as partners in accordance with our philosophy. In the face of a challenging market, we'll make all necessary investments to remain an efficient supplier to our partners in the future."

The company's extensive, newly-opened showroom, based at the main facility in Hallstadt, near Bamberg, boasts approximately 2,000m² of training and exhibition floor space and visitors can see 150 machines, which are permanently available for demonstration. This gives an overview of the most important machines from each sector of the company's product portfolio, and a leading machine program from all the brands.

Visitors are able to experience many live highlights and four customer advisors are available to assist with expert knowledge. In total, showroom machines on display represent a sales value of approximately €2 million.

- With brand-name products from the Stürmer Group, customers can rest assured that they're making the right purchasing decision.
- A price comparison among genuinely equivalent and like-for-like products gives peace of mind that any Stürmer branded machine purchased is superior in terms of ease of use, features, quality, engineering and price-performance.

OPTIMUM Factory in Yangzhou, China



- Customer investment is protected for years to come with expert advice prior to purchase, along with after-sales service and a guaranteed supply of spare parts as and when needed in future.

SLD: Stürmer Logistics Centre

In early April 2014, operations started in the new logistics centre, based at the company site in Pettstadt, near Bamberg, situated 15km from



The newly built SLD: Stürmer Logistics Centre...

... boasts 22,000m² of warehouse space

Stürmer fleet

Stürmer history

2005

The company's total turnover grew to €44.8 million and AIRCRAFT Austria moved into a new 2,500m² office building, comprising retail, office, manufacturing and warehouse space, as part of a 5,500m² site. OPTIMUM also moved into newly created office space within the Stürmer company building.

2006

Following further extensions to the product range and due to rising international sales, the Group's total turnover now exceeded over €53 million. At this time, over 120 people were employed at Hallstadt alone, which marked further growth for both office and warehouse areas. Also, a new warehouse was built for metalworking machines, plus an accessories warehouse. The sales building's upper floor was completely rebuilt and now included sales, procurement, accounting, marketing, development, training facilities and bistro, totalling some 1,200m².

2007

Having been established for 25 years, throughout Europe, there was likely no other company that could supply a comparably versatile, premium program of compressors, welding equipment and machines for metal and woodworking to specialist retailers from a single source.

The three companies – **STÜRMER**, **OPTIMUM** and **AIRCRAFT** – had now focused their sales on Europe and already achieved a remarkable market position in various countries. AIRCRAFT and OPTIMUM celebrated 15 years of successful business operations and as a whole, the Group achieved an annual turnover in excess of €69 million.

2008

Annual turnover for this year exceeded €80 million, and in order to meet logistical demands, a 6,000m² site and existing buildings with approximately 3,000m² of warehouse space and 700m² of office space were purchased in Pettstadt. This was immediately commissioned to supplement the main warehouse in Hallstadt. The warehouse featured a newly-installed high rack system with narrow aisles, offering pallet bays for around 3,000 pallets, in addition to 5,000 pallet bays at the 5,300m² Hallstadt warehouse.

2011

On 1 January, Stürmer GmbH acquired all shares in **OPTIMUM Maschinen Germany GmbH**. The building, purchased in 2010, was renovated and new modern offices installed. Total Group turnover grew to around €92 million. On 3 November, Stürmer also acquired a majority shareholding in **FINI Deutschland GmbH** – the German distribution subsidiary of



the head office. Covering some 50,000m², the new logistics centre features 20,000m² of floor space, which marks another milestone in Stürmer Group's history.

The overall objective here was to improve delivery quality in all respects, thus offering Stürmer business partners tangibly increased benefits. Today, these new processes are well established and as such, the value chain works seamlessly.

Optimum quality, precision & value – with Stürmer's own production

In 1992, Kilian Stürmer and his longtime friend, Thomas Collrep, established the OPTIMUM Maschinen Germany GmbH. The objective of these start-ups was to directly influence the product range, its quality and machines' equipment.

In Germany, OPTIMUM products are distributed through a nationwide network of specialist dealers. General importers are responsible for European marketing and, in turn, supply retailers within their respective

countries. Sales partners and retailers have their own experienced OPTIMUM service specialists on hand as well as on site.

The comprehensive spare parts warehouse in Hallstadt ensures a short time supply of spare parts when needed. This service gives customers the assurance of having made the right purchasing decision and protects investment value for many years to come.

Quality

OPTIMUM products are produced according to high quality standards. Many available on the market today look the same or similar, but simply don't come close to the quality standard offered by OPTIMUM. Customers know that if they buy an original OPTIMUM metalworking machine, they can be assured of receiving OPTIMUM quality.

Europe & worldwide

As a German company, OPTIMUM works from its headquarters in Hallstadt/Bamberg, globally, with expert partners. Beyond the borders of

Company brands



renowned Italian compressor manufacturer, FINI, which also happens to be AIRCRAFT's main supplier.

2012

The Stürmer company reaches the 30 year milestone and OPTIMUM and AIRCRAFT celebrate 20 years of successful business. In mid-July, all employees were invited to an anniversary celebration held at the Hallstadt premises. The Group achieved total annual turnover of almost €100 million.

2013

In February, Stürmer GmbH acquired a 50% share in its Hungarian sales partner, **OPTIMUM Hungaria**. At the end of October, Stürmer GmbH completely took over FINI Germany GmbH., meaning that business and sales management were now in the hands of Stürmer Maschinen GmbH. This helped to achieve further, significant synergies on both sides. FINI customers were now able to draw on Stürmer's extensive sales, logistics, service and marketing expertise. The sales organisation was orientated to continue marketing AIRCRAFT through hardware and machine retailers, while FINI was distributed via the compressed air specialist channel. The FINI program was complemented by the popular AIRCRAFT products, thus creating an attractive range to suit the German compressed air

segment's requirements. All popular screw-type compressors, in addition to mobile and vehicle-mounted piston compressors, were now available from stock. In December, the building contractor handed over 10,000m² of warehouse space to Stürmer, and in 31 March 2014, this was followed by a further 6,000m².

2014

At the beginning of the year, a new ERP-System was introduced to integrate all workflows of the Group's value-creation process in a consistent and unified system. Purchasing, sales, logistics and service were securely matched together by interfaces. As such, data redundancies were avoided and error potentials crucially minimised. Customised data was now made available and provided within the Group's Partner Portal in real time.

A new logistics centre was built on the company's 50,000m² premises in Pettstadt – 15km from its headquarters – which comprised 20,000m² of ground space. This was one of the most important milestones in the Group's history.

The following requirements allow for a noticeably time-optimised logistics process and include the following key success factors:

- Quick availability due to high storage capacity;
- Quick storage and retrieval processes due to warehouse management and route optimisation;

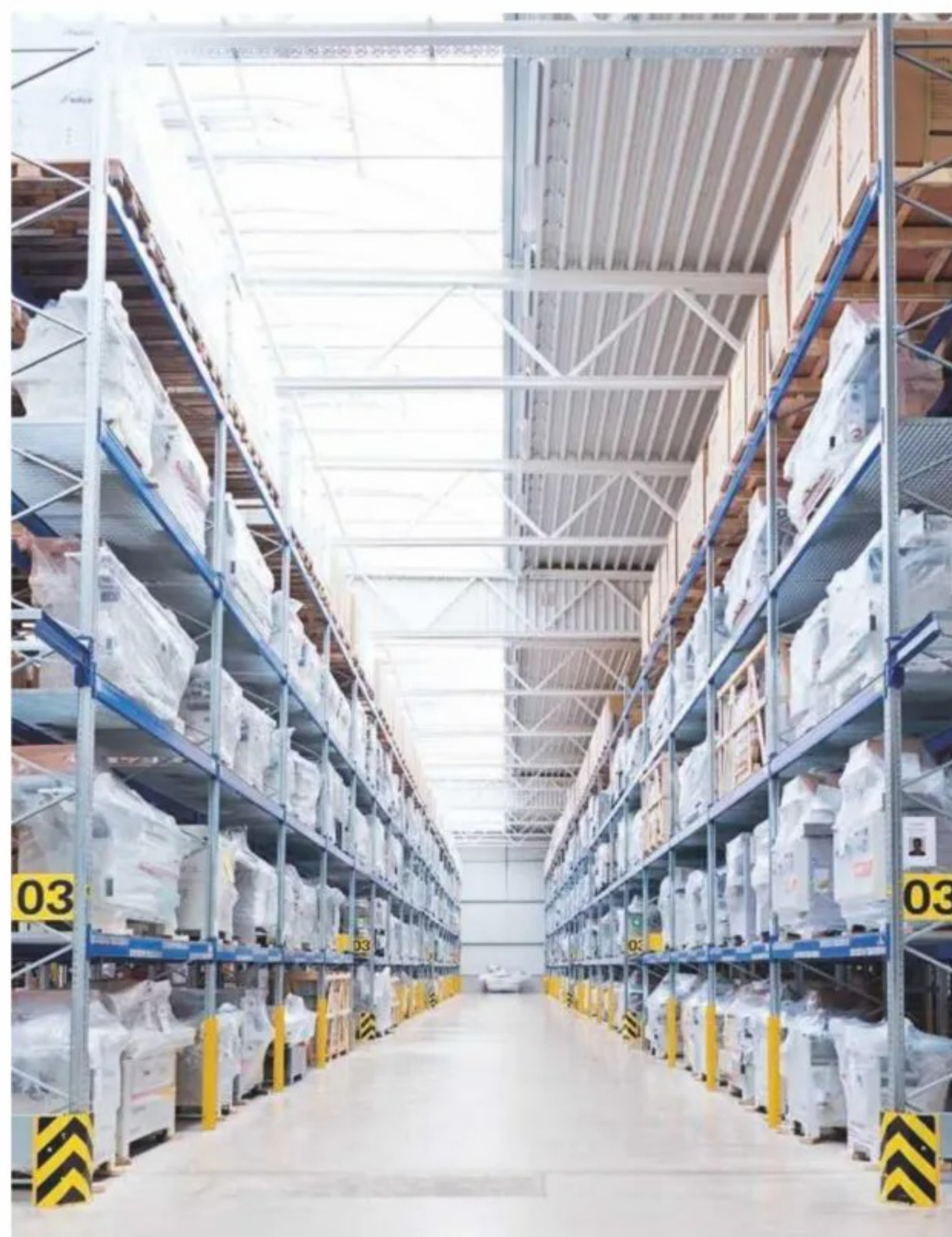
Germany, the OPTIMUM international sales network spans many countries worldwide.

Since 2003, the majority of OPTIMUM metalworking machines have been produced at the company's factory in Yangzhou, China. Here, German quality management officers and production supervisors monitor standards.

Design engineering and quality management is mainly handled in Germany. To ensure that implementation runs just as smoothly, up to seven engineers regularly commute between the two locations. In this respect, OPTIMUM machines are perfectly supported from design engineering through series production to after-sales service. Besides its own manufacturing facility, OPTIMUM exclusively relies on manufacturers that meet the company's mandatory high quality standards. ✕

FURTHER INFORMATION

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The Woodworking machinery area



OPTIMUM representatives worldwide



Inside the OPTIMUM Factory, Yangzhou, China

Stürmer history

- Reliable order picking by scanner method;
 - Massive increase in permeability in the goods issue process.
- Additionally, Partner Portal and other electronic aids were introduced and in October, a new showroom opened.

2015

Stürmer celebrated 33 years of business success. The Hallstadt premises now boasted around 235 employees and due to a substantial investment, this created the basis for further expansion of its position in the German and European market. Outsourcing of the entire logistics process and the newly created logistics center in Pettstadt led to expansion of both the exhibition and training rooms. As such, in 2014/15 an exhibition and showroom was costed for large machines dedicated to wood and metalworking. A larger training room was built in Hallstadt along with an expanded space for the entire product range.

Also, the Group became a sales partner in Portugal and saw **Stürmer Poland** being set out, which would go on to secure long-term sales within this market.

2016

The Group of companies now employed 265 people. An autumn/winter promotion saw the extensive and attractive CLEANCRAFT

programme being expanded to include several new products from the floor cleaning sector. Open days were held at the beginning of March, which welcomed around 230 specialist dealers and 500 visitors, allowing Stürmer to demonstrate itself as a powerful specialist trade partner.

The highlight of the year, however, was Stürmer Maschinen GmbH receiving the award for '**BAYERN'S BEST 50**', proudly collected by Managing Director Kilian Stürmer from the Minister of Economic Affairs, Ilse Aigner, in Munich. Being chosen as one of the 50 fastest-growing, medium-sized companies in Bavaria, the Bavarian State Ministry recognised the company's sustainably successful development.

2017

The Group of companies looked back on three notable milestones within its shared history: **35 years** of **Stürmer Maschinen GmbH**; **25 years** of **Aircraft Kompressorenbau und Maschinenhandel GmbH**; and **25 years** of **OPTIMUM Maschinen Germany**.

2018

The company showroom was further extended.

2021

Further extensions to both the exhibition and demonstration areas.

Stürmer showroom



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– wood



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PREMIUM, PROFESSIONAL POWER TOOLS BACKED BY BRITISH DESIGN INNOVATION

Jeremy Broun is given the opportunity to hand select £500 worth of products from Evolution Power Tools' cordless range – second prize sponsor of the upcoming Alan Peters Online Furniture Award 2024. Read on to discover which ones he chooses and why...

Whereas the Alan Peters Furniture Award emphasises hand skill, it'd be unrealistic not to use power tools in any woodworking today and too purist to exclude them from this very competition. As award organiser, one of my tasks is to find suitable sponsors, and with this in mind, it's a pleasure to announce Evolution Power Tools as second prize sponsor, who're kindly offering £500 worth of products from their extensive range. Not only do I use these tools when making my own projects, but I've also had the opportunity to review various tools from the Evolution range, the videos of which can be viewed via my Woodomain – Jeremy Broun YouTube channel – see 'further information' sidebar opposite.

The prize bundle on offer certainly delivers a lot of bang for the buck, and in this article, I'll take a closer look at the range of tools carefully selected from the company's extensive product portfolio. It's no coincidence that all of those chosen are from Evolution's EXT 18V cordless range; I've found the convenience of cordless tools my default choice for some time and the lithium-ion batteries today pack a worthy punch. The technology is now so well developed and on handling those from Evolution, I find them to be well designed, incredibly well made, not to mention competitively priced. In my opinion, any potential second prize winner of the 2024 award would be hard pressed to get a bundle of this calibre, quality and price from another manufacturer, where such systems are known to capitalise on just one charger and perhaps two or three batteries to share.

Design & battery build quality

Amid an array of power tools collected over the years, I have almost every tool in the Ryobi One Plus system having won The 2005 Professional Woodworker of the Year Award – in this very magazine – which included £2,000 worth of Ryobi products. That's a lot of tools for any woodworker, and I likely have around 10 batteries, some of them after-market. Among these, I also have a radio, tyre inflator, chainsaw, airnailer, hot airgun



This powerful cordless sliding mitre saw is capable of making precise cuts in new and reclaimed wood, plastics, composites and metals. The perfect tool for worksite and workshop use, its compact size makes it ideal for serious home users

along with a power inverter, so the thing about these cordless systems is that manufacturers tend to expand the range, and I look forward to Evolution doing the same. At present, the EXT range currently comprises of around 10 cordless tools along with four battery sizes.

My advice is to judge a cordless power tool



Using the sliding mitre saw to demonstrate the surface skimming technique

by its design and battery build quality, which is a topic covered in another of my recent YouTube videos. While Evolution may not be as familiar a brand as, say, DeWalt, Makita or Ryobi, I find it hard to dispute the tools' design and build quality. And do bear in mind that a cordless version of a power tool will always cost more than its wired counterpart.

THE PRIZE BUNDLE

So let's take a closer look at those tools that make up the prize bundle, where I'll give a personal appraisal of each along with a few basic specs.

Evolution Cordless EXT R185SMS-Li 18V 185mm Li-ion sliding mitre saw with multi-material blade

This is the first Evolution tool I tested, having noticed the brand at my local B&Q store. Simply put, it's a cracker, and fairly compact considering the fact that sliding mitre saws take up a considerable amount of bench top depth. A precision tool, I used it for trenching tasks that, for the past 40 years, I'd been carrying out using a radial arm saw. If making gentle cuts, it's as accurate as you need it to be. What impressed me the most, and indeed really tested the saw, was cutting through mild steel rectangular tube, and in doing so, it didn't judder. In fact, it favourably compares to a much larger and older 12in TCT bladed metal cutting saw I own. The 185mm (7½in) multi material TCT blade does what it says and I found machining the aluminium tube almost akin to cutting through butter, but the tool also cuts thick timber stock. Various batteries can be used from 2-8Ah and when using the larger battery, this doesn't affect its cordless nature and is easy to move around. Unless subjected to heavy use, with cordless tools in general, battery life isn't really an issue. In another of my YouTube videos, I also tested the cordless R240FAN-Li 18V work fan, which lasted three hours on a 2Ah battery.

In terms of furniture makers' usage of chop saws or indeed sliding mitre saws, I can't be certain. In truth, I don't have a lot of time for snobbery in woodworking, and I separate elitism from excellence. I do believe that good results can be achieved when using inexpensive tools. I had a discussion with Alan Peters about this very matter a few years ago, and whereas his workshop was kitted out with heavy-duty Wadkin machines, not all of his tools were established



Cutting mild steel rectangular tube is a breeze



FURTHER INFORMATION

To access Jeremy Broun's YouTube channel, visit www.youtube.com/@WoodomainJeremyBroun

YouTube video links

Sliding mitre saw: www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcezfNohruY

Workshop vacuum: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gts9ZkocNZo

Combi drill/driver: www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrNIGVrbBBs

Judge it by the battery: www.youtube.com/shorts/7Ifqavnm7N4

Other useful links

Evolution Power Tools: <https://shop.evolutionpowertools.com>

The Alan Peters Award: www.jeremybroun.co.uk/alanpetersaward



The Cordless R11VAC-Li is the ideal power tool for dust extraction and general cleaning tasks at home, work, indoors and outdoors

brand names depending on the amount of usage they were subjected to. When I first reviewed power tools back in the late '80s, I recall Black & Decker claiming its DIY drills were rated for 10 hours' usage before the motors burnt out, which is considered a long time for occasional use. Of course, power tools have improved considerably since then and the line between DIY and professional therefore narrowed.

Evolution Cordless EXT R11VAC-Li 18V wet & dry workshop vacuum

I compared this handy-sized portable wet and dry vacuum unit with my similar Makita one – see 'further information' sidebar as before – and found the suction very similar but the design better, with a conveniently placed switch right where your thumb can reach, thus making it a one-handed device. It's useful for hooking up to specific power tools, such as routers or sanders,



Weighing just 720g, this powerful 10 cell battery can charge from empty to full capacity in just 60 minutes thanks to Evolution's smart charging technology, thus making it the number one choice for the majority of users



The R18RCH-Li1 is designed to keep tools fully charged, allowing you to continue working efficiently all day long



The wet and dry workshop vac's on/off switch is within a stretch of the thumb

for example, to extract chippings and dust, as well as convenient due to its portability, such as for cleaning the bench or machine beds at the end of a day's work. I find my bandsaw gets a bit clogged up despite dedicated extraction, so the portability is a bonus, as well as for other tasks such as cleaning car carpets or dealing with water spills. It has an 11 litre dry bin, 1.8m flexible hose and performs just over 21 litres per second of airflow.

Evolution Cordless EXT R13CMB-Li 18V combi drill/driver With 2Ah battery & charger

This drill is noticeably a little heavy, which is no bad thing reflecting the quality of construction, which is especially important when using the hammer action. The solid 13mm steel chuck is lightly knurled and in my experience, plastic-coated chucks tend to chafe against obstructions when drilling in tight spaces. As with all Evolution tools, it features a brushed motor and in all my years of woodworking, I've very rarely had to replace brushes on later generation power tools. There's two speeds with reverse along with 20 torque settings, plus an LED light, all of which are pretty standard specification for any drill/driver. The bold orange and black livery with white markings really stands out and in use, I found the 2Ah battery quite adequate as well as helping to minimise the overall weight.

Evolution Cordless EXT R18RCH-Li1 single port fast charger

This is a single battery smart charger although there are twin battery options available. It uses an intelligent management system to minimise the charge time while optimising battery life, which is achieved by varying the charge voltage and current while monitoring each cell's temperature.



Weighing just 440g, this powerful five cell battery charges in just 30 minutes and offers long run times



The Evolution Cordless R13CMB-Li combi drill/driver is the perfect tool for any busy woodworker or keen home user



The R13CMB-Li drill/driver has a nice solid feel to it

Maximum available charge is 6A, which should be within the realms of battery longevity.

Evolution Cordless EXT 18V R18BAT-Li2 2Ah Li-Ion battery

The 2Ah battery takes around 30 minutes to reach full charge. Evolution claims the new EXT 18V batteries have outstanding run times, although I've yet to complete my runtime tests other than on the cordless fan mentioned earlier. An obvious must-have during summer workshop days, I find I'm not running to the charger every day.

Evolution Cordless EXT 18V R18BAT-Li5 5Ah Li-Ion battery

One thing I notice when reading comments on YouTube videos is that so many woodworkers comment on this or that tool being a clone of an Erbauer or DeWalt or similar brand, and whereas some batteries are interchangeable between brands – for example, in the case of Erbauer and Evolution – on closer inspection, I always notice some subtle design differences. During the power tool revolution's earlier years, I do believe this was the case, but today, moulding technology has become so sophisticated, coupled with computer aided design, that each brand has its own identity. And while on the topic of flexibility, these tools now feature soft handle grips as standard.

The Evolution Power Tools website is very well designed and easy to navigate with clear imagery and many special offers, enticing woodworkers to buy, what I believe, are very good value for money tools in an overcrowded marketplace. I think that anyone applying for the 2024 award will find this tool bundle very useful, and especially the second prize recipient lucky enough to win it. ✂

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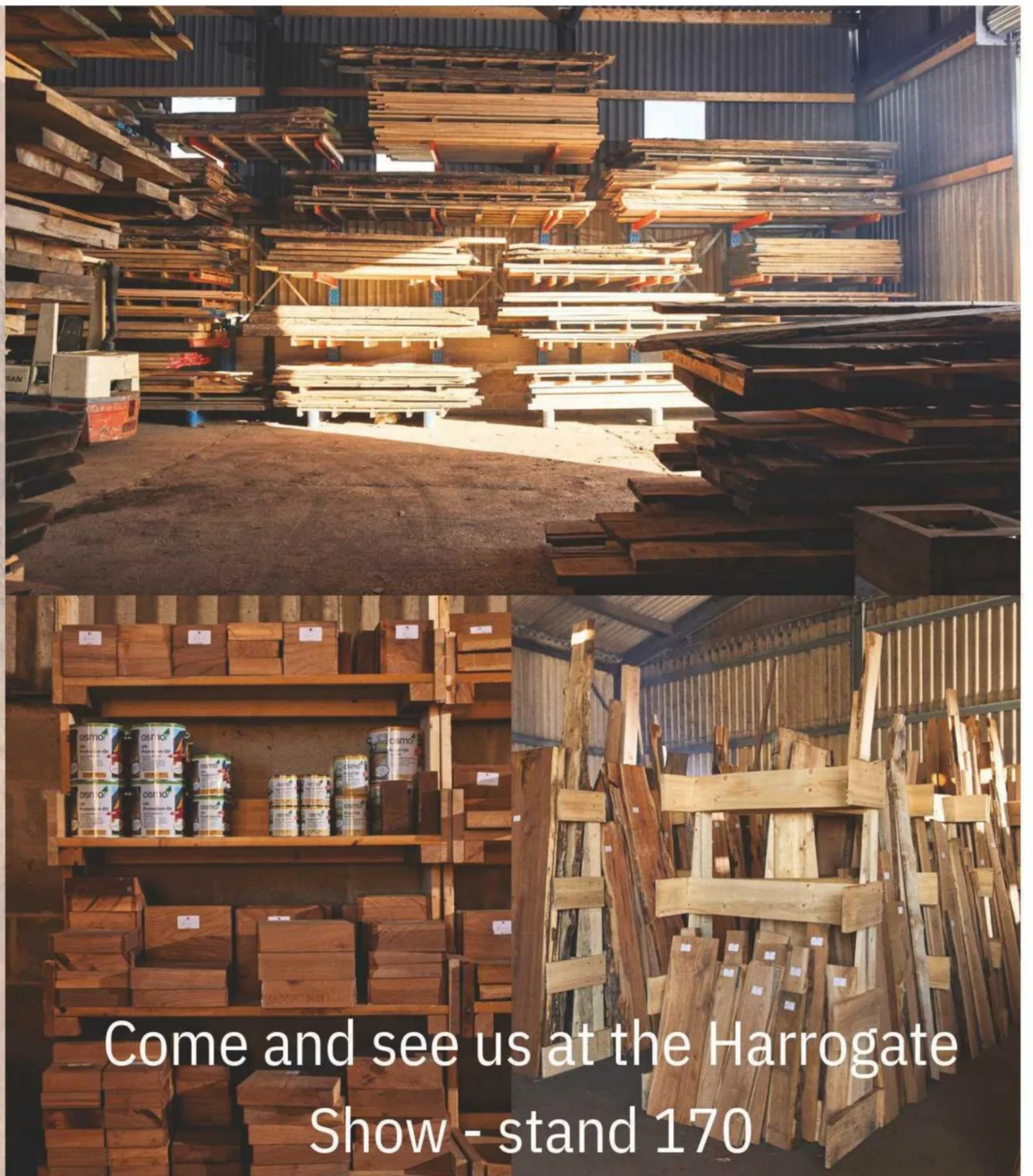
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FREDDIE THE FENCE POST FOX

Utilising various storm-felled fence post offcuts left over from a recent project, **Andrew Hall** comes up with a fun design for his own 'ruff turnings', each of which cunningly features subtle design differences

This project has provided a fun way of producing turnings using fencing material blown down in the February 2022 storms, which ended up doing a lot of damage to the Weardale countryside.

In previous articles, I've mentioned that in March 2022, we adopted our border collie rescue dog, Bailey, and one of the Border Collie Trust's requirements is that the garden is secure and fenced to a height of 1.8m. Most of our fencing and three boundaries met this need, but the boundary looking out on fields at the back of the property fell short at 1.2m.



1 The local farmer kindly said that if I sorted out what was good for repairs, I could have some of the leftover fencing



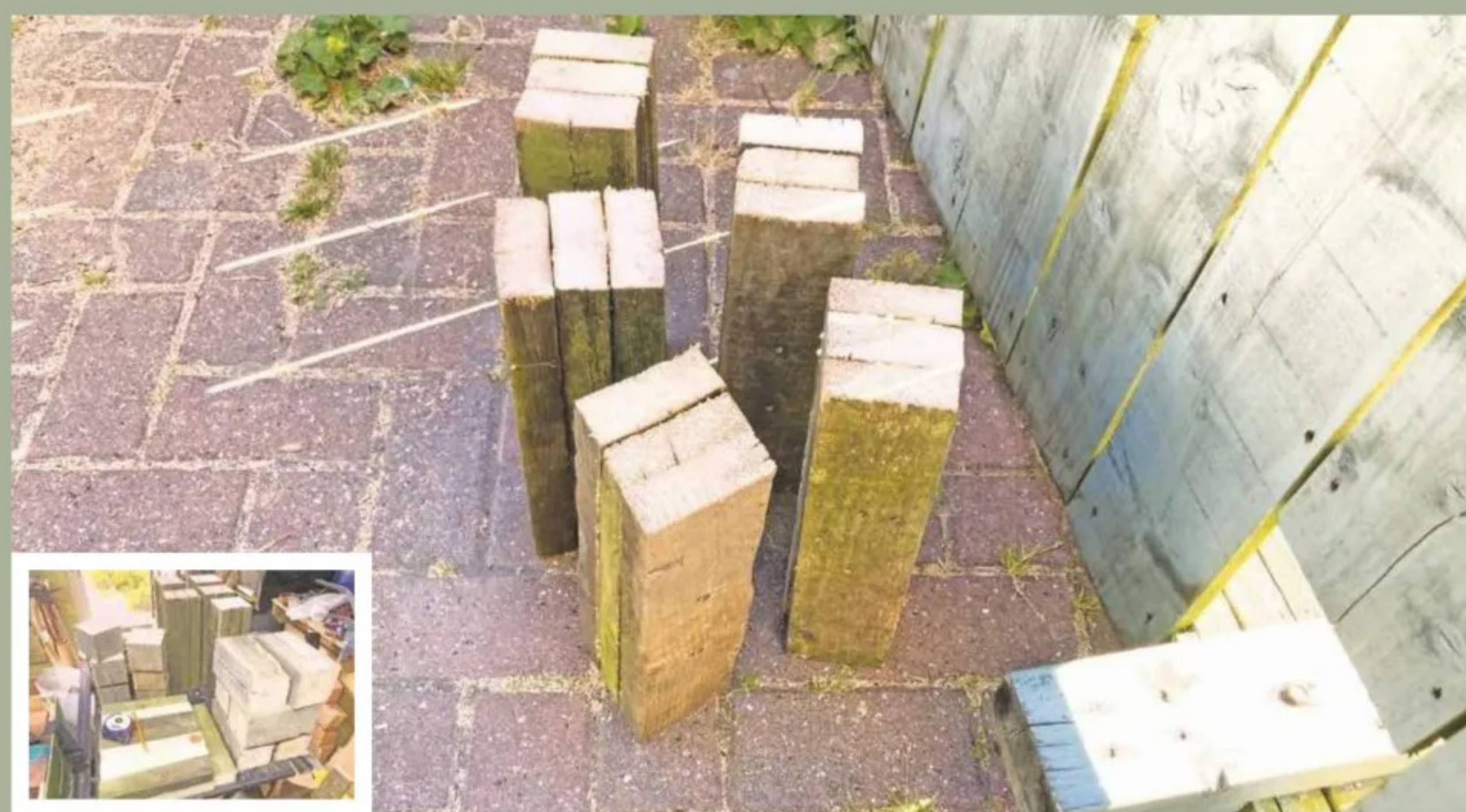
2 There was a mountain of it and we harvested three trailer loads in total. With fence work completed at home prior to Bailey's adoption, I was left with a lot of offcuts and short pieces. As both mine and the farmer's wife are very keen gardeners, I made some planters for each of them



3 We recently holidayed in Scotland, and at the cottage we stayed in, I noticed a dog made from fence posts. Roughly cut to length and nailed together, this formed the inspiration for my own 'Freddie the fence post fox'. I only used three turning tools here: a spindle roughing gouge, parting tool and skew chisel. I thought this would be a great project for practising skew work



4 I started by laminating three pieces of 300mm fence post together using wood glue and screws countersunk well below the material's surface. This way, the screw heads wouldn't catch and blunt the spindle roughing gouge or skew chisel



5 I prepared enough materials to make five Freddie's as I intended to give four away as gifts and keep one for this article, which I'd also filmed for YouTube. With the wood all glued up and ready to turn, I started with the three pieces of fence post that would be used to make the body

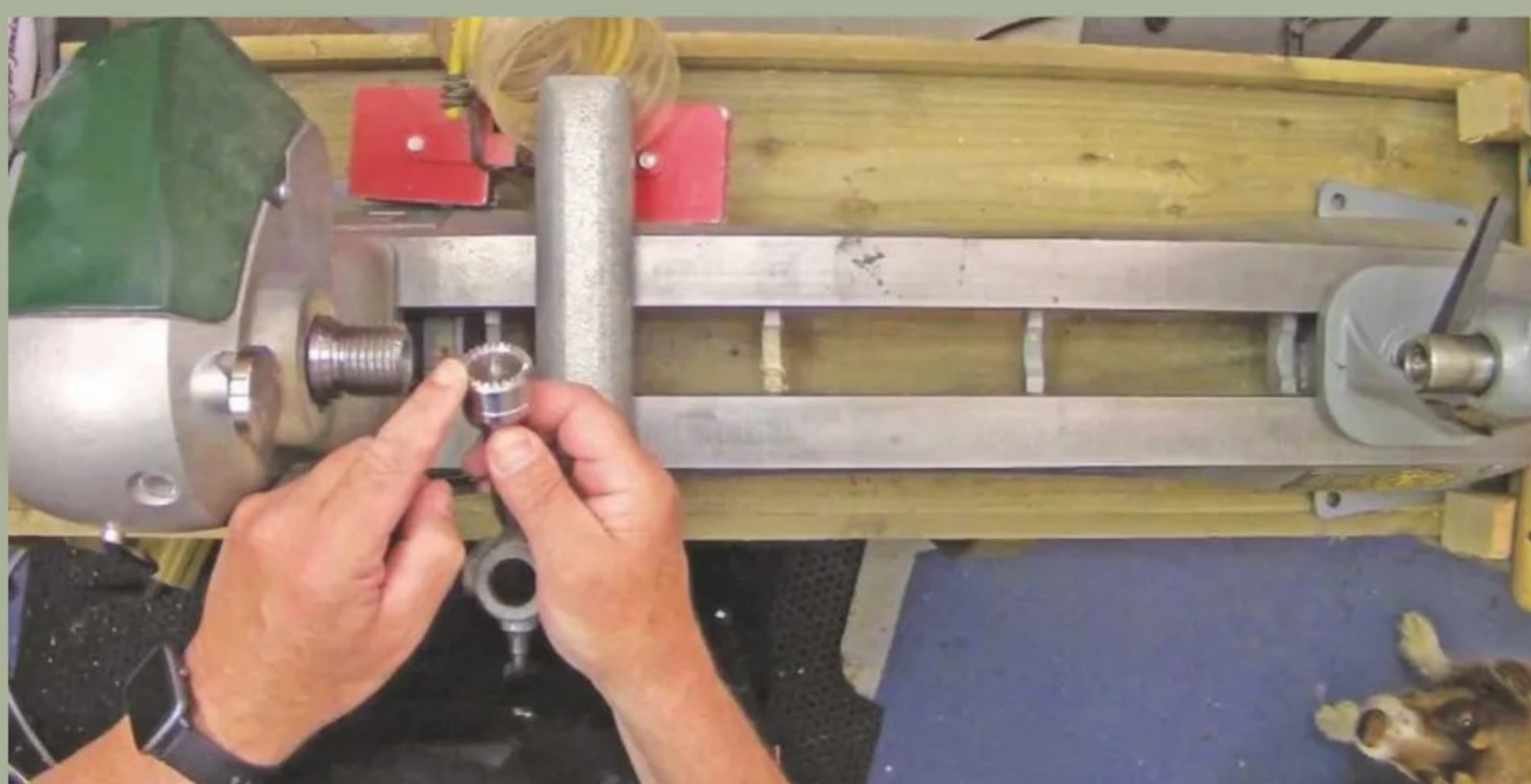


6 At this point, it's good to talk about health and safety, our lungs and in my case, nose. Fence posts are normally tanalised, not that I think there was much preservative left in the ones I used, which were both old and very dry.

Nevertheless, an awful lot of dust is generated in the workshop during both turning and sanding. For the last five years, I've had a problem with soreness in my nose and ear ache and since seeing a consultant, have been diagnosed with acute rhinitis, which is now classed as chronic. Not wishing to stop working with wood, I must now wear a mask at all times in the workshop. I think it's good practice to do this as I've been working with wood from the age of seven, and now at 62, the consultant thinks the cause of this is exposure to wood dust. Today, health and safety is much better than it's ever been, which can only be a good thing.



The helmet I'm wearing here is made by JSP and has a battery pack around the waist. I've always made JSP PowerCaps available for students to wear during training and run a CamVac extractor and Record Power AC400 two-stage air filter for fine dust, to ensure maximum lung protection is achieved



7 Ready for turning, I started with the body section and using a spindle roughing gouge, turned it from square to round. I carried out this process and wasn't striving for a finish as I knew I'd get a much better result using a skew chisel. I held the material between centres using both the Record power Hawk and Falcon multi-point centres



8 Now for the fun to commence – it's skew time! I've got to agree with a lot of turners in saying that the skew has been the scariest tool to master, or in the 'magnificent seven' as I call them. This project lends itself well to practising using this very tool



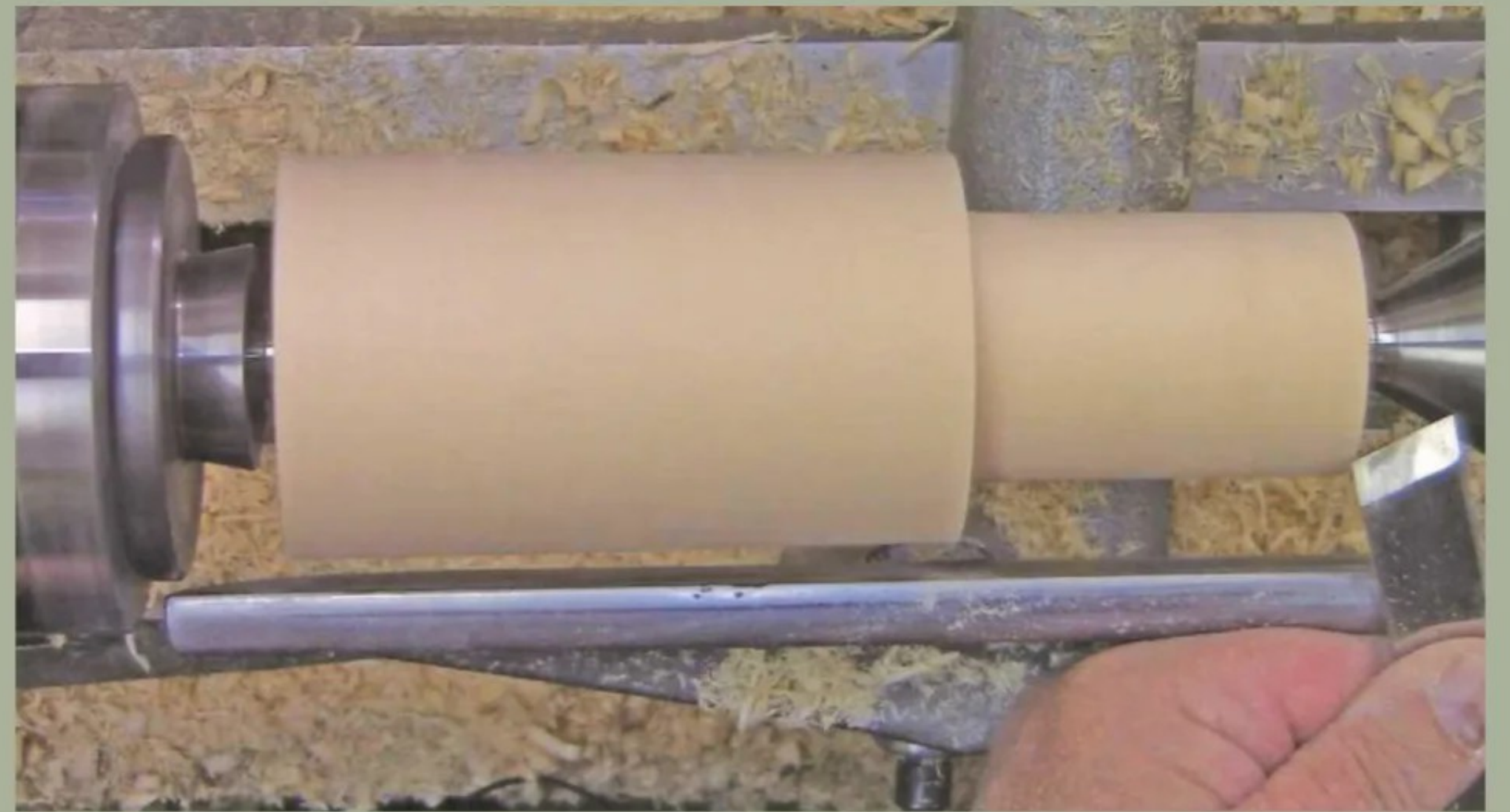
9 I've recently bought a pencil for the tablet I use in the editing suite, and marked the skew's area in black, which is used to cut the material. Hopefully this'll help to overcome some of the fears associated with its use. Doing so involves floating the bevel and cutting using the blade's bottom half



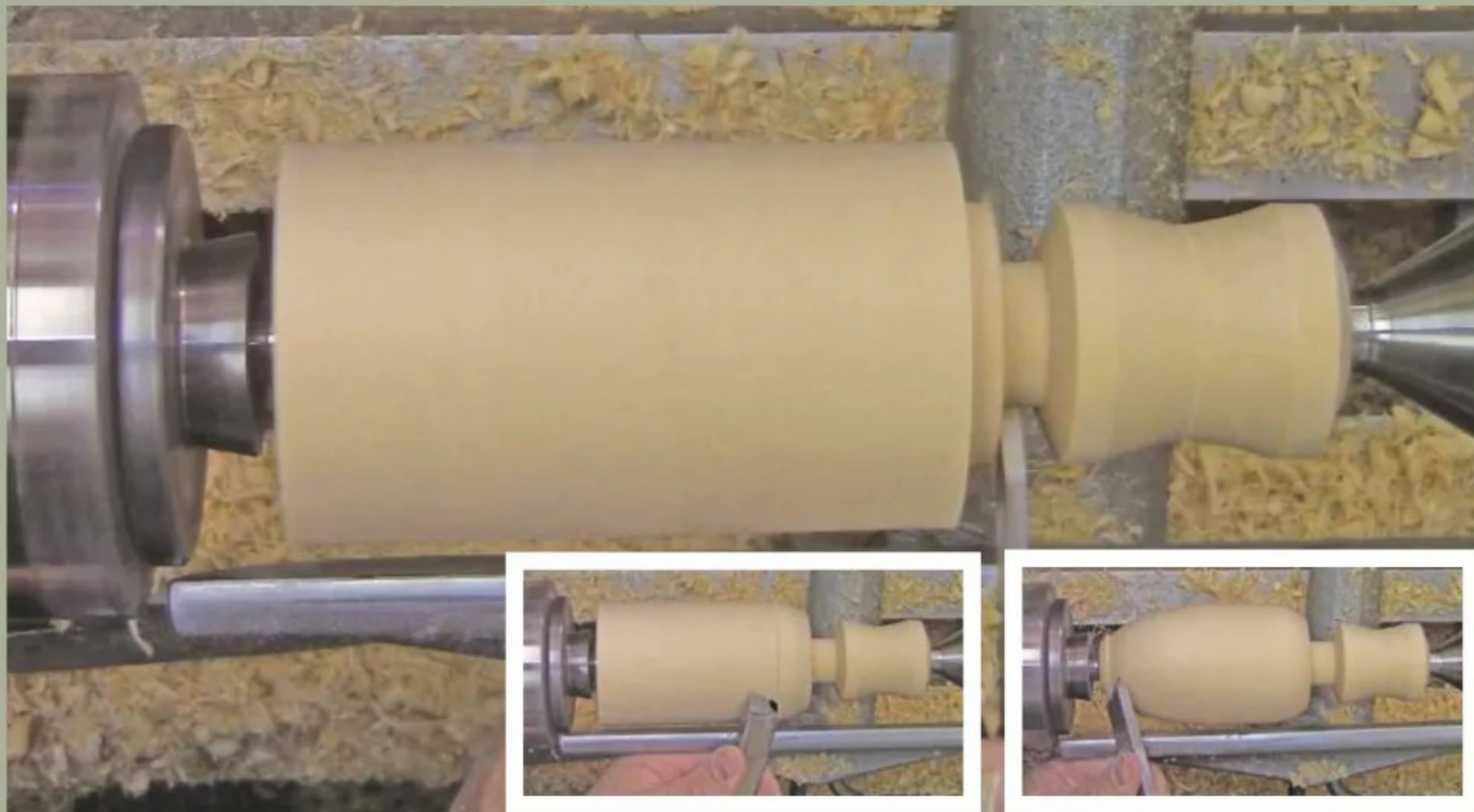
10 The finish achieved from the skew is probably the best you'll get and as I'm now embarking on a no sanding journey with my turning, I'm aiming to get the best finish possible from the tools used



11 I continued with the skew until a nice torpedo-shaped body was achieved. For the head and neck, I used a solid piece of fence post measuring 250 × 100 × 100mm, and as before, turned it from square to round using a spindle roughing gouge, before finishing the surface with a skew



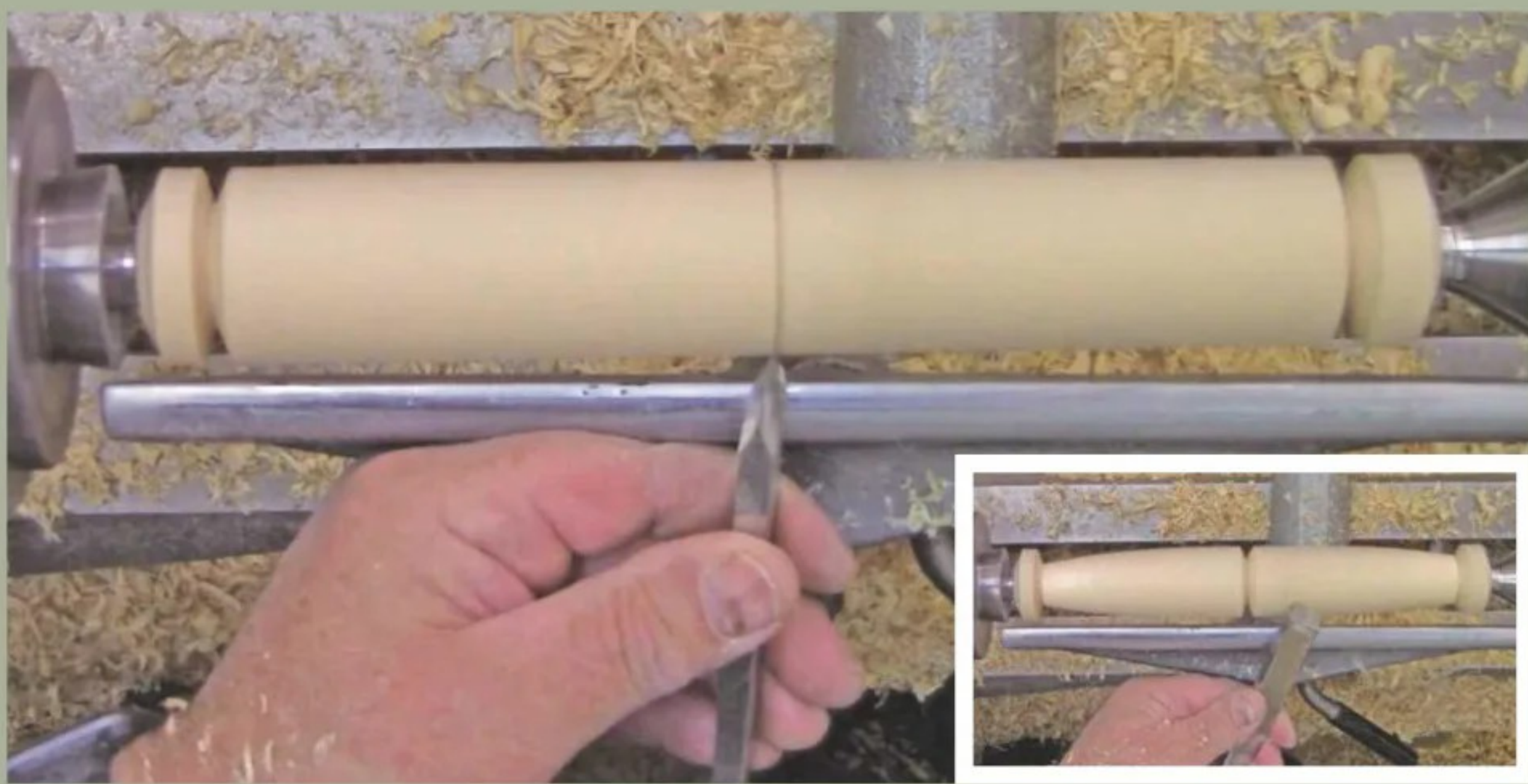
12 I turned two-thirds of the length to 75mm diameter and the third at the tailstock end to 60mm



13 Using a parting tool, I turned a dentil to a dowel size of approximately 15mm diameter and relied on the skew to turn a slight cove in the neck section. I then turned an egg-shaped head



14 The legs were next to be turned, this time using just a skew, from a piece of timber measuring 250mm long × 45 × 30mm. I turned the piece to leave a couple of flats on the legs



15 I cut a foot at each end, which measured 15mm wide with 10mm centres, to a 20mm diameter at its narrowest point. I measured the centre and proceeded to cut another 'V' – again, all of which is good skew practice



16 Next, I turned the material for the second pair of legs using the same method as before. I used the first as a template and transferred the marks with a pencil



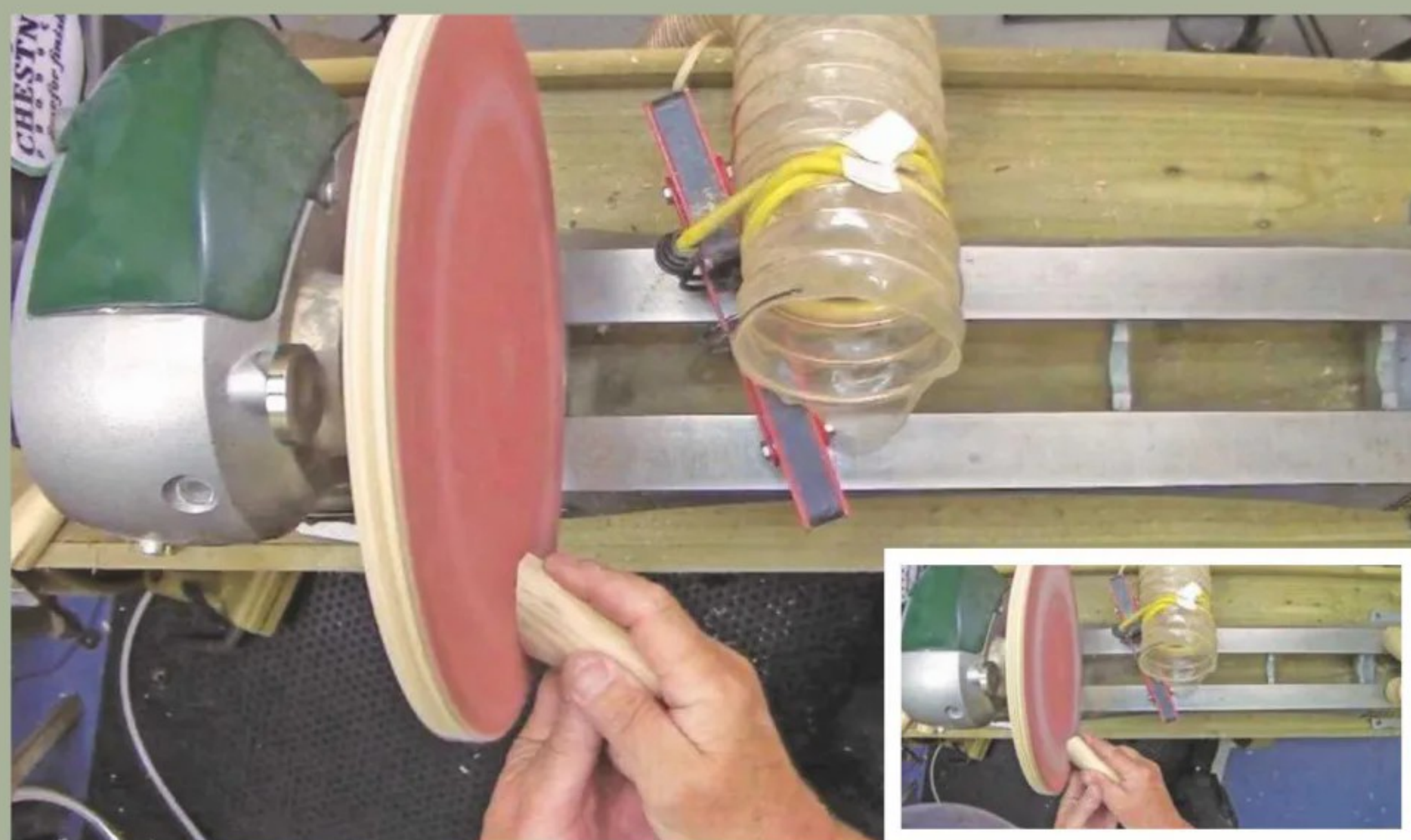
17 Using the same sized piece of wood as for the leg, I turned a tail along with a bone



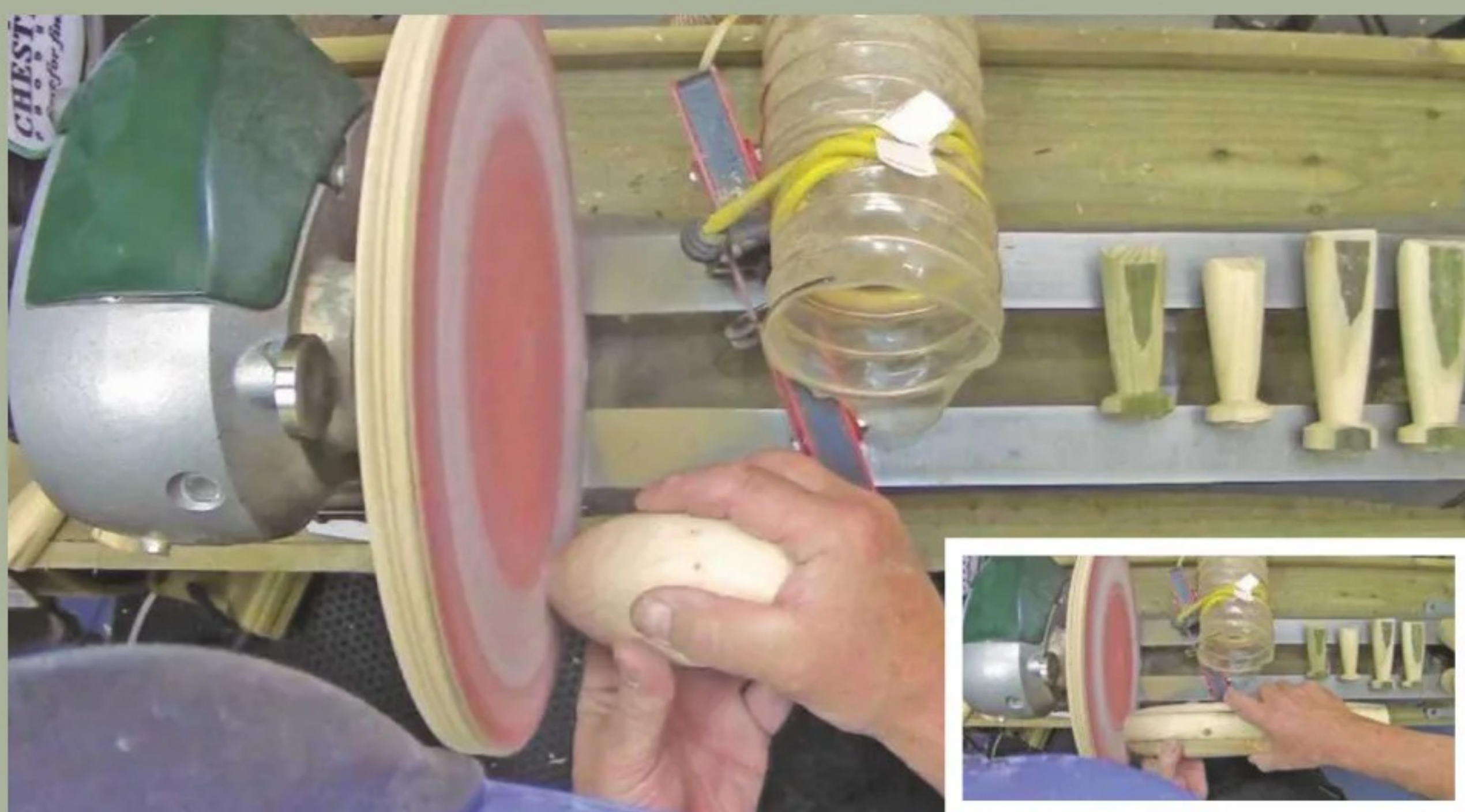
18 The ears were next and measured 75mm in length. I turned the material offcentre by placing the centres to one side of this section, which created an oval on one side and a flat on the other – again, all using a skew



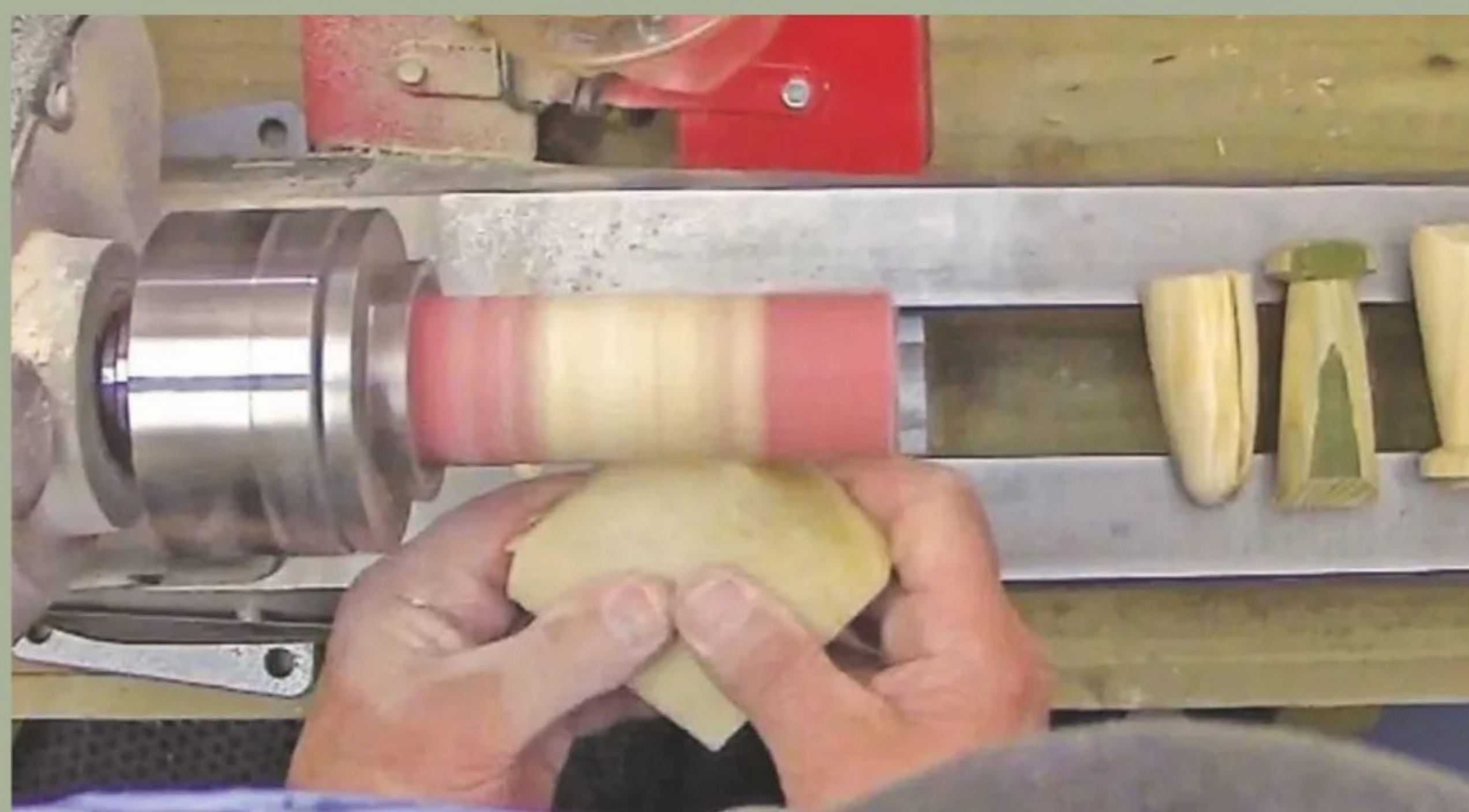
19 Having completed each of the components, I cut them up using a pull saw along with a bench hook



20 Using a sanding disc, I first sanded the tail to a 30° angle, then each leg to a 60° angle on one side, followed by 30° on the other



21 Next, I sanded flats on both the head and body



22 Prior to sanding the ears, I used a hard plastic abrasive cleaner



23 It's amazing how much dust is generated from both turning and sanding; that's why I wear a full-face respirator, have a CamVac running when sanding and also use an AC400 fine filter



24 Finally, I sanded the offcentre turned ears using a Simon Hope cylinder sanding arbor, which created a curve on the ear interior and bottom



25 Now that the turning and sanding were completed, I drilled a 10mm hole to half the head's depth, starting this off with a gimlet or bradawl



26 I then followed it through with a 5mm hole and drilled through the neck



27 I secured the neck to the body with a 60mm x No.4 screw, then secured the head using an 80mm x No.4 screw, before tightening up by hand to prevent splitting. Tip: Apply a little paste wax to the screw, which eases hand tightening



28 I drilled a hole in each leg central to the 60° angle and secured each leg with a 40mm x No.4 screw



29 I drilled the arms at an angle and secured with a 40mm x No.4 screw, then drilled and glued the eyes and nose into position. I sourced both of these on eBay – there's lots to choose from; just search for teddy bear eyes and nose. These seem to do the job for most of the animals and birds I make



30 As a final flourish and to add an extra bit of fun, I placed the bone using a 40mm x No.4 screw



31 Finished Freddies. A video detailing the making of this project will be made available on my YouTube channel at time of publication ✂





CHISEL
RATING



WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Mike Jordan's ledged & braced version still has the look of a stable door

In the last issue, I made a stable door for my woodworking friend, Paul, who lives in a one-up one-down former weaver's cottage in a small Derbyshire mill town. Ann, his wife, was so delighted with the result that Paul was encouraged to tackle the other external door in their cottage, which gave me the chance to try out a design that I'd had in mind for some time. "Why not make a conventional full-height door," I suggested to Paul, 'that opens inwards as normal, but which has an outward opening window light set into the top?' Now, I'm sure this isn't a new idea, but the only place I've ever seen anything similar was at a tiny preserved railway station, which featured a small counter and hatch set into the ticket office door – and you can't buy one of these from your local timber merchant!

As with the stable door project, the appearance of the finished door needed to be in keeping with the period of the cottage, which is set within a conservation area. The door in question, however,

is at the rear of the building and not on public view, which usually means that the rules applied to the appearance of replacement joinery are slightly less stringent. Paul and I decided, then, that the door would have bead-and-butt boarding in the bottom part, and four panes of glass in the opening top part; this pattern of glazing, we thought, would match the appearance of the vertical sliding sash windows. The good news was that the door's overall size and thickness proved to be close to normal standard at 762 × 1,981 × 44mm.

Timber choice & preparation

I'm a fairly irregular user of softwoods, most of my output being in English or European hardwoods. However, when making anything in softwood, I generally buy unsorted grade Swedish pine. This is normally only available from a proper timber merchant in rough-sawn full lengths. I'm fortunate, however, in that my



1 I ripped down a 225mm-wide board to make two 100 × 50mm sections for the stiles



2 The boarding's thickness dictates the mortise positions...



3 .. which I cut on the mortiser using a 12mm chisel, saving my chisel and mallet...



4 ... to cut the wedge from the mortises' outsides by hand

CUTTING LIST

Sizes shown are planed dimensions (mm)

Component	Number required	Size	Length
Door			
Stiles	2	44 × 95	Door height + 50
Top rail	1	44 × 95	Exact door width
Centre rail	1	44 × 95	Exact door width
Bottom rail	1	22 × 175	Exact door width
Boarding	6	Ex 22 × 100 PAR	1,100
Window lights			
Stiles & top rail	3	55 × 38	
Bottom rail	1	60 × 38	
Glazing bars	2	21 × 38	

merchant also has unsorted grade boards that are planed all round, 22mm-thick, and available in a wide range of widths.

The 500 × 225mm boards I selected were from a particularly good consignment with a high resin content, which also made it weightier. You can see from the photos that there's plenty of colour in the material. I'm happy to pay a little more for the best available grade of softwood; it works much more easily and has far fewer knots.

Buying 225mm-wide boards also means that I can rip them down to give two 100 × 50mm

sections for the door's stiles, allowing me to remove the board's 25mm centre where shakes and splits tend to be found, even in the best quality material. After cutting to length and width, the stock was surface-planed on one face and edge before being thickened – see cutting list.

Marking out

The mortise positions in a framed ledged and braced door are dictated by the thickness of boarding to be used. The boarding's thickness and that of the rails at the door's bottom and centre must equal the stiles' thickness. Bare-faced tenons are used on these rails, and the mortise only needs to be set back from the face by the boarding thickness. In this instance, only the bottom rail has a bare-faced tenon since it's only half of a framed ledged and braced door.

With mortise positions marked on the stiles and squared around, the mortises and haunchings were cut on the machine using a 12mm chisel. The stopped rebate and groove for the boards

were also formed at this point, taking care to ensure the stiles remained properly paired up. Wedge room was cut from the outside of the mortises by hand.

Tenons were cut on the rails using a cross-cut saw for the shoulders and bandsaw for the cheeks; any final trimming of the tenon cheeks is best done with a rebate or badger plane. The top and bottom rails must have the haunchings cut before each of the joints is individually fitted. The assembly wedges are best cut from the tenons' waste parts. Finally, shoulder lengths on the top and centre rails were cut to the same size before diminished shoulders on the outside of the centre rail were marked out and cut by hand.

The door was now ready to be glued, assembled, cramped up, and wedges driven home, before being left to set overnight. Once dry, the door was sanded prior to fitting the boards, where I found that softwood, with its high resin content, clogs up the sanding discs in record time!



5 The wedges themselves were cut from the waste material

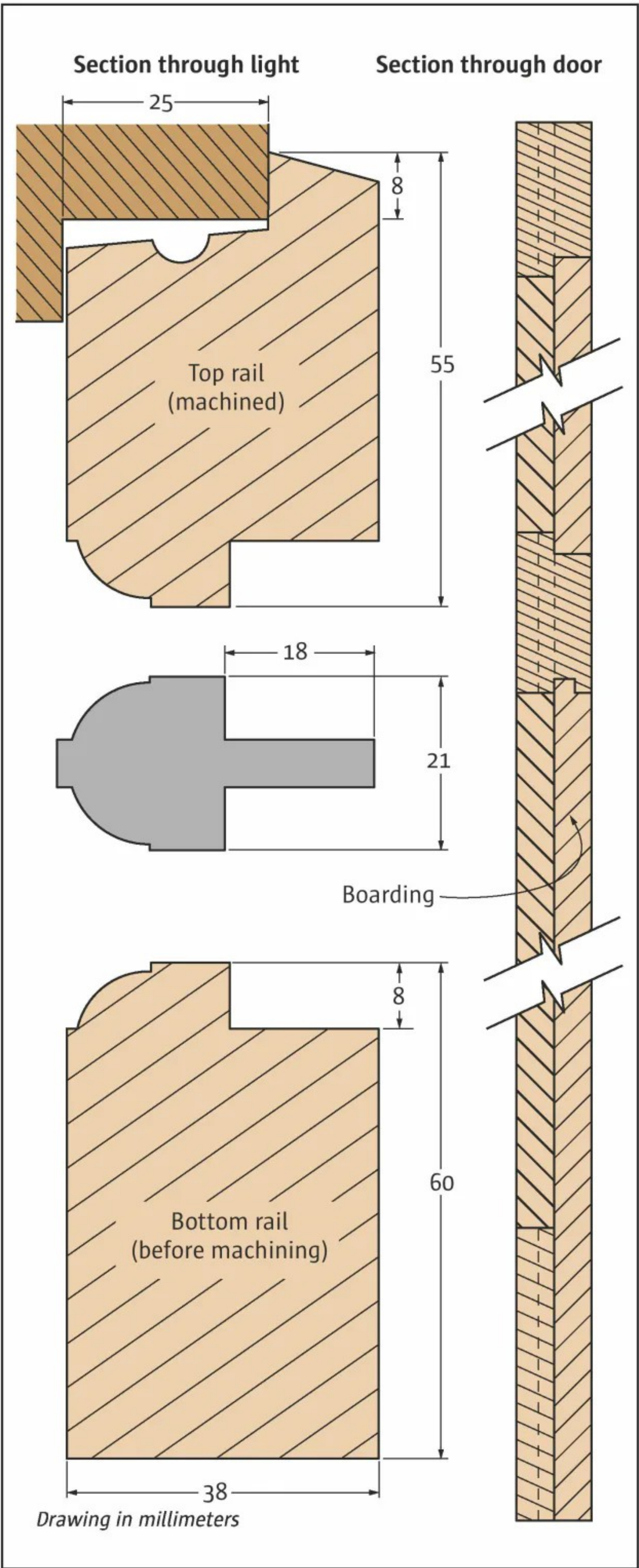


Fig.1 Cottage door



6 At this point, stopped rebates and grooves for the boards were also made



7 The diminshed shoulder on the outside centre rail...



8 ... is marked out and cut by hand



9 The frame is now glued up, assembled, and the wedges driven home



10 Bead-and-butt boarding is secured with 38mm oval nails

Bead-&-butt boarding

The bead-and-butt boarding was made, sanded, and fitted to the door's bottom part using 38mm oval nails punched below the surface ready for filling. The boards, which had been left slightly over-length, were then trimmed to size, and the horns on the door's top and bottom were also cut away. I was then able to measure the aperture in the door's top and start the opening light.

The opening light

I'd already decided that this would be made like a storm-proof window – that's to say, it'd overlap the opening by 8mm all round and stand 12mm proud of the door's face. As a concession to the house's period, the mouldings on the light were to be finished with an ovolo profile, then jointed by scribing them by hand. This may be a rather old-fashioned method, but it's a quick and simple



11 After planing and moulding stiles and rails, the stiles are marked...

one, once you've made a mitre block to guide your chisel.

To start, the stiles and rails were planed up and moulded before being mortised and tenoned; the tenon shoulders were then finished square and level. With this done, it was a simple task to mitre the end of the moulding and use the cut shape to guide the gouge, cutting a short scribe. The portion of the moulding next to the mortise is then cut flat to take the square shoulder. The glazing bars, meanwhile, are joined using a halving joint, which obviously meant relieving the upper bar to receive the lower bar's profile.

After the glue had set on the light, it was sanded off and rebated round to fit as shown, (**Fig.1**). A pair of storm-proof hinges were used to hang the light in the door.

The glass for the light is of the 6.4mm-thick laminated variety, which provides both safety and security. I also made weather moulding for the top of the light and door's



12 ... ready for mortising, a task that I carried out on, well... the mortising machine!

bottom, as well as an oak threshold strip. Fitting of the window stay and locking fastener was left until after the door had been hung.

Fitting & fettling

Come the great day, the weather was bright and sunny, and I set out with the new door and my tool box in the back of the van. The tools were just going for a refreshing day in the country really; as before, my master plan was to supervise while Paul hung the door. I didn't expect to use my tools, then, but it's nice to show willing.

The door had been treated with a 'flood' coat of clear preservative as an alternative to priming paint. This had been allowed to dry for several days, but still managed to fill the van with a powerful smell reminiscent of a hospital ward. The need to keep the windows closed and the heater on ensured that I arrived in high spirits! The opening window, meanwhile, had been removed to make the door a little lighter to carry, and to allow the glazing to be installed on site. ▶



13 More machinery, this time to cut tenon shoulders on the rails...



14 ... followed by the cheeks



15 A simple mitre block is used to guide the chisel...



16 ... when cutting an ovolo profile on the window rails



17 The job is finished with a short scribing cut, which...



18 ... produces the correctly shaped rebate for the stiles' moulding



19 Rails are offered up to the stiles, which are marked...



20 ... and the moulding cut to create...



21 ... a flat area ready to receive the rail's square shoulder



22 It may be an old-fashioned process, but the completed joint goes together neatly

The original door was removed and hinges and handles set aside for reuse; the old lock was replaced with a new five-lever sash variety. Paul had treated himself to a new power planer, which now emerged from its wrappings for the first time. Suffice to say, we had the door planed to fit in a matter of minutes, and ready to be wedged in the opening while the hinge positions were transferred from existing recesses in the frame.

After the hinges had been recessed into the door and the door hung in place, it was again removed to make lock fitting easier.

A battery drill fitted with a flat bit was used to remove most of the waste from the lock mortise before cleaning up with a sharp chisel. After fitting the lock, the door was re-hung to allow the lock keeper plate to be correctly sited and cut into the frame. The mortise from the original keeper plate will be filled and painted over later.

The opening window was then reinstalled, and its casement stay and locking fastener fitted. The weather moulding over the top was fitted

using screws that were pelleted over, and the weather moulding and threshold strip at the foot of the door provided the finishing touches.

I'm pleased to say that the finished result has been well received. It allows welcome natural light into a lobby area that previously relied on artificial lighting, and it can also be used to improve the ventilation when the warm weather arrives. ✂



23 The glazing bars are fitted using halving joints, and the outer edges moulded...



24 ... to create the channel that prevents water ingress



25 Fitting the light to the door – aren't cordless drills brilliant?

FITTING



1 Paul got to use his new power planer for the first time. How was it? Effortless!



2 Using a flat bit in the cordless drill to cut one of the mortises...



3 ... which was then cleaned up with a chisel



4 Having fitted the glazing, it's time to hang the door...



5 ... and the weather moulding with screws that are hidden by pellets

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BOXES CONSTRUCTED THE FURNITURE MAKER'S JOINTING TECHNIQUES

As John Bullar shows, box making projects are ideal for demonstrating various fine furniture making skills, being well suited to a small workshop with a few good quality tools

This article is about furniture making on a miniature scale – I want to give you an overview of how I go about making small, decorative boxes. It might be a storage box such as one to hold jewellery, a collection of family mementos, or perhaps an ornamental case made as a gift. While other types of small wooden boxes may be made by carving, turning, bandsaw work and so on, here we'll concentrate on boxes constructed with furniture maker's jointing techniques.

Boxes like this are ideal projects for the furniture maker with a small workshop and hand tools or small machines, as well as being good exercises for developing precision skills. They also happen to be very popular with clients.

Box construction

All furniture joints require careful preparation, but when working on a small scale there's proportionately less room for misalignment or gaps in joints. All the wood must be prepared to extra precision with every face, edge and end accurately planed. A shooting board is a simple jig – generally made in the workshop – which



1 Using a shooting board to guide the block plane, in order to trim the board's end precisely true

allows the end of a wooden board to be trimmed precisely with a plane (**photo 1**). The shooting board features a shallow rebate along the front edge for the plane to run in so that the cutter can cover the timber's full thickness.

We previously looked at methods of cutting dovetail joints – see November 2022 issue. Unlike a drawer that's frequently pulled in one direction, the storage case normally only has to resist external pressure. This means the tails may be positioned on the back, front or sides. Alternatively you can use finger joints – sometimes called box joints – which are simpler because they have no tapers. Whatever joint arrangement you choose, finish cutting all the joints then ensure to trial-fit the whole box by partially engaging them (**photo 2**).

Assembling boxes

Once you're happy with the joints' fit between sides, before assembling them you need to



2 This compartmentalised case has dovetail joints cut on the side, front and back panels

make provision for the lid and base. One of my favourite methods is to trap the top and bottom panels in grooves down the sides (**photo 3**). By making the box as a sealed item before separating the two halves, I can guarantee they'll align perfectly. I include extra space in the corner joints, allowing the box lid and base to be sawn apart once the glue has set.

Alternatively, the top and base may be made as flat panels and fitted later (**photo 4**). Once glue has been applied to the joints, they're pressed together using lightweight clamps while they set.

Curved boxes

Sometimes I like to make one or more surfaces of a box curved to produce a more flowing design. Curved panels may be cut out of solid wood, which is simple but wasteful; steam-bent, which is a tad unpredictable; or laminated from layers of veneer, which we'll go on to look at.



3 Here I used mitred dovetailed corners and when assembled, the box's top and bottom panels are trapped in grooves within the sides



4 Once glue has been applied to the joints, they're pressed together using lightweight clamps, then left to set



5 This arched box lid is 'coopered' with a series of narrow, flat sections, then the ridges are planed away to 'fair' the curve



6 To smooth a curved panel's inner surface, here I'm using a reshaped wooden block plane



7 Using a spokeshave to shape the sides so that they match the box's curved lid

Another way to form curved panels is to 'cooper' together a series of narrow, flat 'staves' with slightly angled edges, in a similar manner to that of barrel construction (**photo 5**). After gluing up, the outer surface can then be planed into a continuous curve using a bench plane.

A curve's inner surface can't be smoothed with a flat plane, so I use a wooden block plane with a rounded base and rounded blade (**photo 6**). Once a box is assembled, depending on the design, it may be necessary to curve edges to match the surfaces and this is best done using one of my favourite hand tools – the spokeshave (**photo 7**).

Drawers

A jewellery case or similar boxes can be constructed as a miniature chest of drawers. Alternatively, it may combine one or more drawers with a lidded compartment (**photo 8**).

Due to the lightness in weight, any friction in the sliding of drawers would be very noticeable,



so the drawers and their openings must fit perfectly in size, as well as being parallel and smooth. Drawers incorporated into a box should be made to zero clearance, then planed at the sides and edges to make a piston-fit without tightness or wobble.

Box trays

Boxes like these often house internal trays, which provide several layers of storage to keep small items in order. Each tray can be divided into a number of compartments of various sizes, depending on the intended contents.

Trays are joined at the corners with dovetails or finger joints while partitions are rebated into the sides with sliding dovetails. For jewellery, I'll sometimes line a tray's base, such as with padded velvet.

It's satisfying when an internal tray is dropped

into a box's open top and floats there for a second. It then sinks slowly under its own weight while air is displaced from beneath. The speed at which it falls in practice depends on the weight and the clearance gap for air to pass through. You can speed it up if required by drilling small air release holes in the tray base (**photos 9 & 10**).

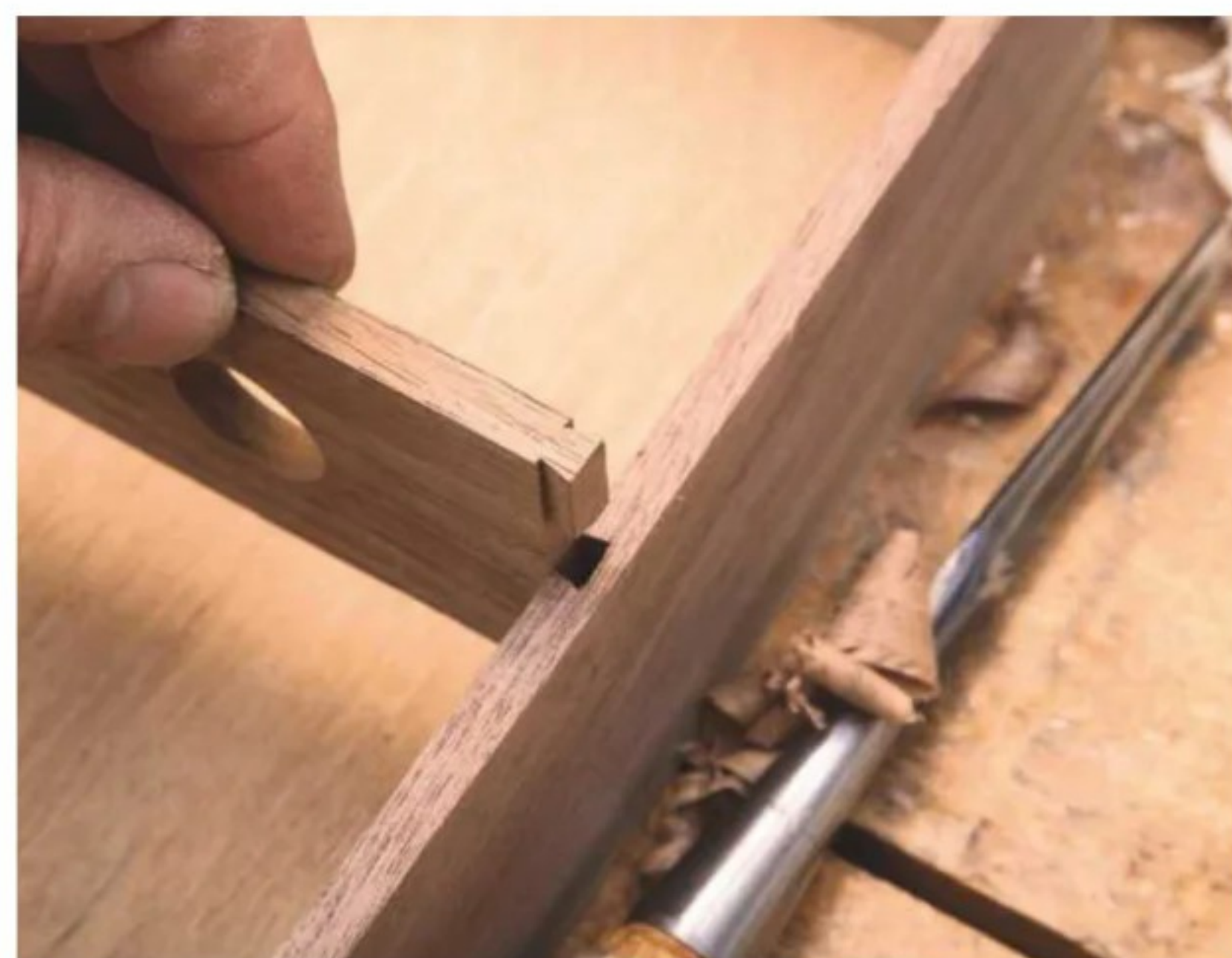
Hinges & locks

Hinges for boxes come in many different patterns, such as conventional butt hinges to fit the rear edge, knife or pivot hinges to fit at the sides, or invisible rebate hinges such as the Soss type.

Before fitting a conventional butt hinge, I rebate a shallow mortise into the box's back edge, mark out rebates for locks and hinges with a fine knife, then chop the edges with a razor-sharp chisel before paring out the central area (**photos 11 & 12**). Some clients like to have locks fitted either



8 Drawers incorporated into a box need to slide smoothly without tightness or wobble



9 This tray with compartment separators features sliding dovetail joints where I've braced them into the sides



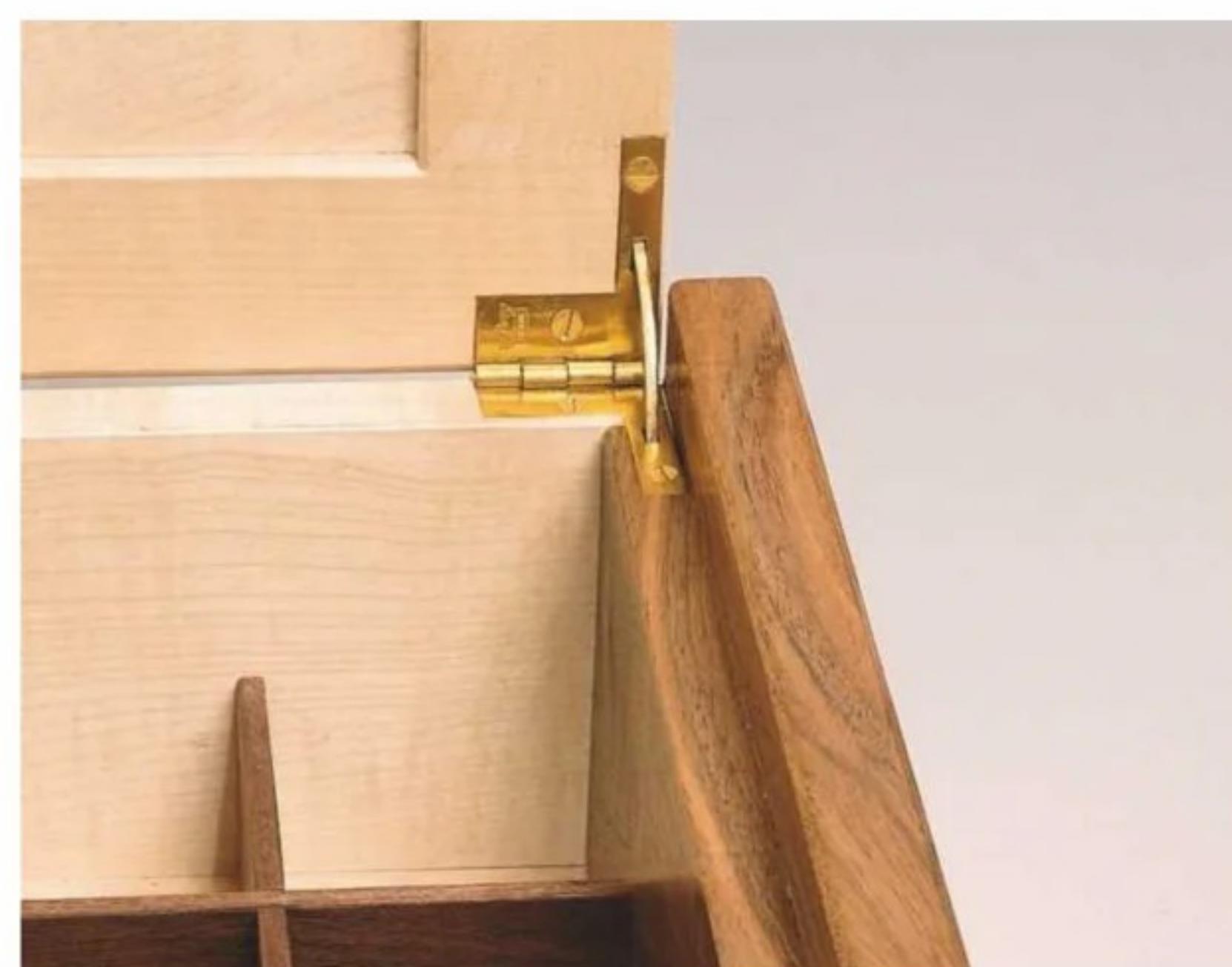
10 Thanks to the piston-fit, when let go, this tray sinks slowly into position as air escapes around it



11 These knife hinges have been designed to fit into recessed lids



12 Before fitting a conventional hinge, I rebate a shallow mortise into a box's back edge



13 To limit its opening to just over 90°, I used quadrant hinges on the corners of this case

for tradition or perhaps to keep out children. It must be admitted that these don't offer much security and any serious thief would likely steal the whole box plus its contents!

Locks are fitted in a similar way to hinges, although they often require two or more different depths of rebate. Both are generally made of brass, which can be polished up before fitting so as not to contaminate the surrounding wood. To polish new brassware, I use very fine grade steel wool lubricated with a spot of beeswax.

Stops & stays

How far should a box's lid open? One possibility is to allow it to swing through a complete 180° so that it rests with the inside facing upwards. Traditionally, small brass chains have sometimes been used as box stays in order to restrict movement, but I wouldn't recommend them because they easily trap and tangle. A more elegant solution is to limit the motion to around 95° with a stop or stay so that the lid rests just beyond vertical.

Other options involve using hinges with built-in quadrant stays (**photos 13 & 14**), flap hinges where the barrel itself is shaped to limit the angle of travel (**photo 15**), or to fit a separate sliding stay in the box side (**photo 16**).

Finishing boxes

A decorative box needs to be suitable for handling so the surfaces must therefore be sealed in order to be kept clean. Avoid heavy wax finishes that come off on fingers or thick varnish that runs off edges and clogs up details and mechanisms. If you make your decorative boxes from fine-grained hardwood such as maple, walnut or any of the

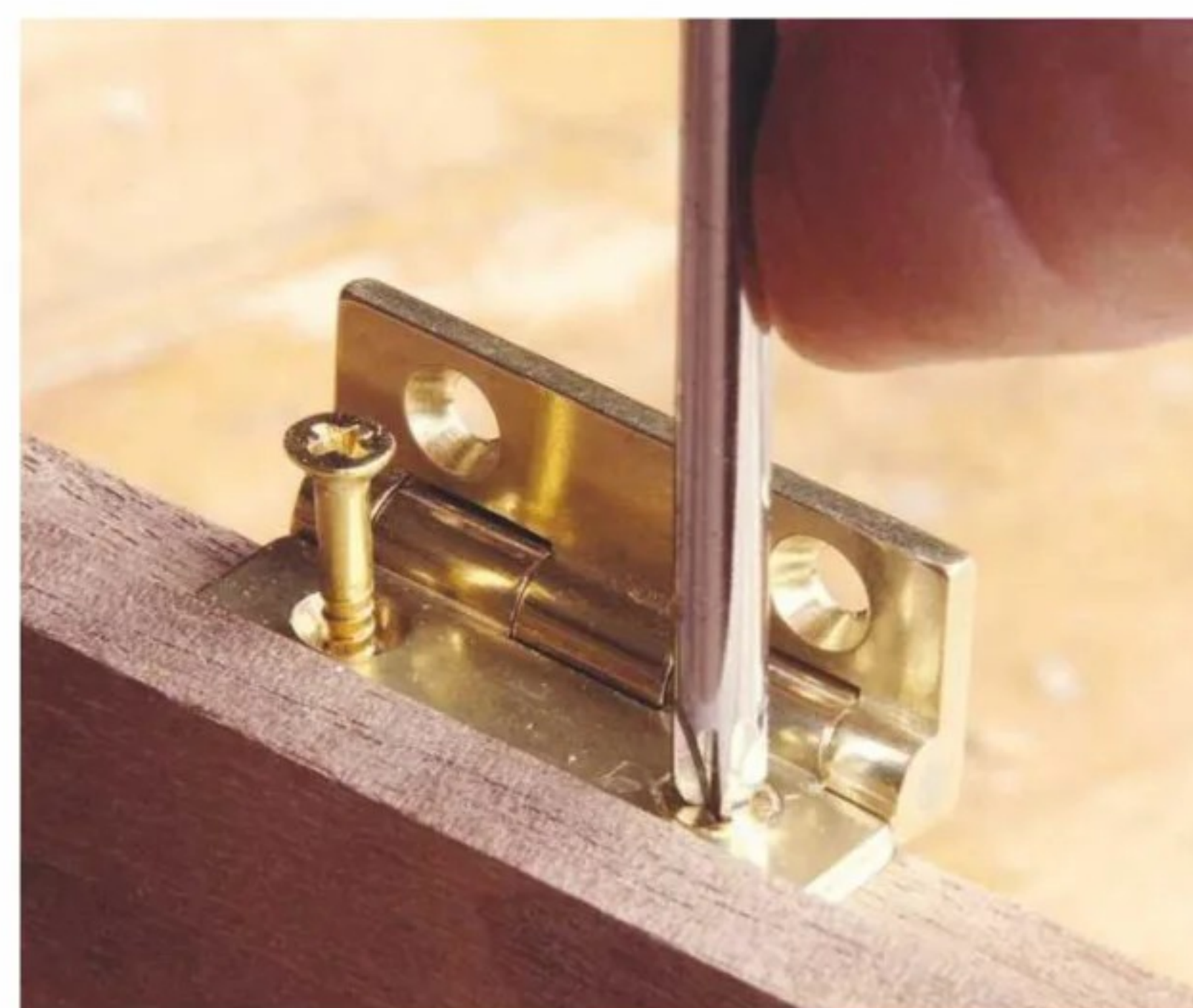


14 In addition to the quadrant hinges at each corner, I fitted two conventional hinges in order to share the lid's weight

fruitwoods, it'll respond well to lacquer (**photo 17**). The internals may be left bare or given the lightest rubbing of lacquer.

Conclusions

Box making projects are well suited to a small workshop with a few good quality tools and offer an ideal way of developing and demonstrating fine furniture making skills.



15 While looking quite conventional, these little Brusso 'stop-hinges' incorporate stays, which limit movement to 95°

As well as providing useful organised storage, they also satisfy a demand for gifts or presentations. Another added bonus is that small, decorative boxes are always well received. ✂



16 On this box, I've used conventional hinges with a separate sliding stay recessed into the side panel. The internal tray uses spline joints on its corners



17 I used a semi-matt lacquer on this box, which allows the wood figuring's natural beauty to show to best advantage

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LETTERS

★ LETTER OF THE MONTH

POWER TOOL FIRE HAZARDS

Hi Tegan,

I'd like to make other woodworkers aware of the fire risks associated with using power tools.

Recently, when using my 12mm router to form a housing in 15mm birch ply, and upon switching the machine off, sparking appeared from the brushes inside the tool. Thinking the time had come to replace the brushes or even worse, a new armature, I simply put it to one side. At this point, I started to smell smoke as well as some having appeared on the workbench.

The only debris on the bench was that remaining from the last pass, having cleaned the area after carrying out the previous one. It seems that a spark travelled at least 600mm from the router to the debris and started a fire, which was around 30mm in circumference, and although fairly easy to manage, was quite unsettling now that I've had time to reflect on the situation.

It made me think a great deal about the machines we have in our workshops, and what happens when we turn them off and walk away; specifically, not knowing or being aware of how hot things actually are! On a side note, the router does need a new armature, so my next decision is whether to carry out a repair or buy a new one! Regards, **Pete Dickings**

Hi Pete, thank you for bringing this very important matter to our attention, and for sharing your alarming



Router armature sparking

experiences with other readers. As with many situations in life, it's all too easy to think that things such as this won't happen to you but in truth, no-one is immune. As many readers already know, woodworking in general requires prior training and practice and due to the nature of the tools and machinery involved, can be an inherently

BUTTERFLIES & MOTHS

Hi Tegan,

Once again, *The Woodworker* and I converge! In the October 2023 issue, on page 98, in 'Take 5', an intarsia butterfly is shown. After initially being inspired by the

Devon Mothman – www.moth-man.co.uk – I began to make my own wooden moths, although not nearly as good as his, might I add.

The photo above shows a set of four made in yew – pictured left and right – as well as ones in spalted beech and laburnum. These measure approximately 70mm across the wingspan, but I've also made larger ones – with a 200mm wingspan – as wall decorations. The antennae are made from



Colin's set of four wooden moths, in yew, spalted beech and laburnum

single barbs of peacock feathers. Because moths tend to mimic natural surfaces, including tree bark, creating copies in wood is both pleasurable and understandable.

Following up on my last correspondence, the wooden clock is progressing, and shown opposite is a completed set of gears, all cut using a scrollsaw. The repetition meant that concentration was paramount, and timber species used include hard maple and sapele, which are further hardened with several coats of melamine lacquer.

Best regards, **Colin Lloyd**



A completed set of gears for a wooden clock, made using hard maple and sapele, all cut with a scrollsaw

WRITE & WIN!

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We always love hearing about your projects, ideas, hints and tips, and/or like to receive feedback about the magazine's features, so do drop us a line – you never know, you might win our great new 'Letter of the Month' prize – a **Trend T8EK 240V 2,200W ½in dual-mode plunge router**, worth **£349.99!**

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Good luck!

RIGHT TO LEFT, OR LEFT TO RIGHT?

Dear Tegan,

Here's a question for you: are all woodworking magazines published mainly for the benefit of those people who're right-handed? It seems to be generally accepted that around 12-13% of UK citizens are naturally left-handed. It's no longer the case that when a child goes to school, efforts are made to convert a left-handed infant to right-handed ways.

I started school in 1943, aged six and a half, and was a late starter due to the London Blitz, which closed schools in my part of London. My parents had a heated discussion with the teacher before I was permitted to use a dip pen left-handed and make my early efforts at writing, blots and all.

Now, with the advent certainly of the ball-point pen and perhaps good sense, everyone can choose to write using the hand that suits them best. But, in all the years that I've gazed enviously at the work of your highly skilled contributors, not one has apparently been a 'Lefty'.

As a result of a fall in 2022, I effectively lost the use of my right arm for a while. When using most tools, it doesn't make a great deal of difference which hand you use. The exceptions are probably only coping and fret saws where I'd always had a problem if I tried to cut using them from left to right.

I have a copy of Robert Ingham's *Cutting Edge Cabinetmaking*, which is, as far as I'm concerned, a 'coffee table book'. I leaf through it wondering at his skills and knowing it'd be unwise of me to even try and create the pieces shown in his illustrations. Then on page 78, when writing about 'removing waste between tails', he recommends bending a coping saw frame upwards to provide clearance for horizontal cuts, commenting: "Make sure the bend allows you to saw in the direction that suits your eye – I saw out the waste with the piercing saw held horizontally, moving from right to left."

I wonder if his penchant for cutting from right to left isn't just because it suits his eye but due to him being naturally left-handed? I've taken his advice as a general release to cut hinge recesses in this very manner.

Recently, when making a house nameplate, I took this tip a stage further and carved out the letters, working from right to left. In doing so, I'm cutting to my 'forehand' in tennis terms and not only found it very comfortable, but also achieved a very acceptable result.

Perhaps it'd be of value to all woodworkers, whichever hand they favour, to try to work away from their body and avoid the 'tucked up' feeling that comes as a result of working toward their backhand.

Best wishes, **Gordon Watson**

Hi Gordon, I'm sure you're not alone in feeling that right-handed woodworkers are better catered for in terms of available tools and also predetermined methods, and many would argue that being ambidextrous is a skill worth mastering. In terms of workbenches, for example, these can be built with the vice situated on either the left or right, but some would also argue that typically, these cater for right-handed folk. Conversely, looking at available power tools, various manufacturers produce 'left-blade' saws, which are intended to give users a better view of the line to be

dangerous pursuit. It's vital that relevant health and safety information should be read, learnt and adhered to prior to embarking on using any tool or workshop practice. Obviously, some tools and machinery are considered more dangerous than others and therefore command greater training prior to use. A good starting point for any woodworker is the Health & Safety Executive's website – www.hse.gov.uk – which contains a wealth of information. As a bare minimum, having a fire extinguisher in the workshop is something we can all do, and will prove invaluable for situations such as the one discussed here.

Thank you again for raising awareness of this very serious issue and hopefully it's served as a useful reminder to pay more attention to machinery and tools, not to mention the possible hazards that can arise during usage. Good with the router armature and do let us know what decision you to come to! Best wishes, **Tegan**



Every workshop should have at least one well-maintained, easily accessible, portable fire extinguisher



Robert Ingham's dovetail pairing jig

to hear other readers' views on this matter, especially those of left-handed woodworkers, so please do get in touch and share your experiences with us. Best wishes, **Tegan**

cut, but these are actually very well suited to left-handed woodworkers. With hand tools, many now produce left-handed versions, so perhaps things are changing? You specifically refer to woodworking methods, however, and changing the way we work in order to not only make things easier, but also safer. It'll be interesting

WOODWORKING POETRY

The action of sculpting wood using tools and being able to bring an idea to life is certainly something to celebrate, as **Doug Nicholls** explores here

SCULPTURE

*My head held the idea of a shape but not the shape itself,
The wood was a square block of pine,
About nine by nine.
I felt it escaping from the shelf,
Into a wave like those I'd watched so endlessly
Folding over on themselves*

*Crashing as if so aimlessly
Into the eddies and wells
That we forgot.
Our minds so taut and eager to capture
All that moved and shot
In some lasting impression's rapture.*

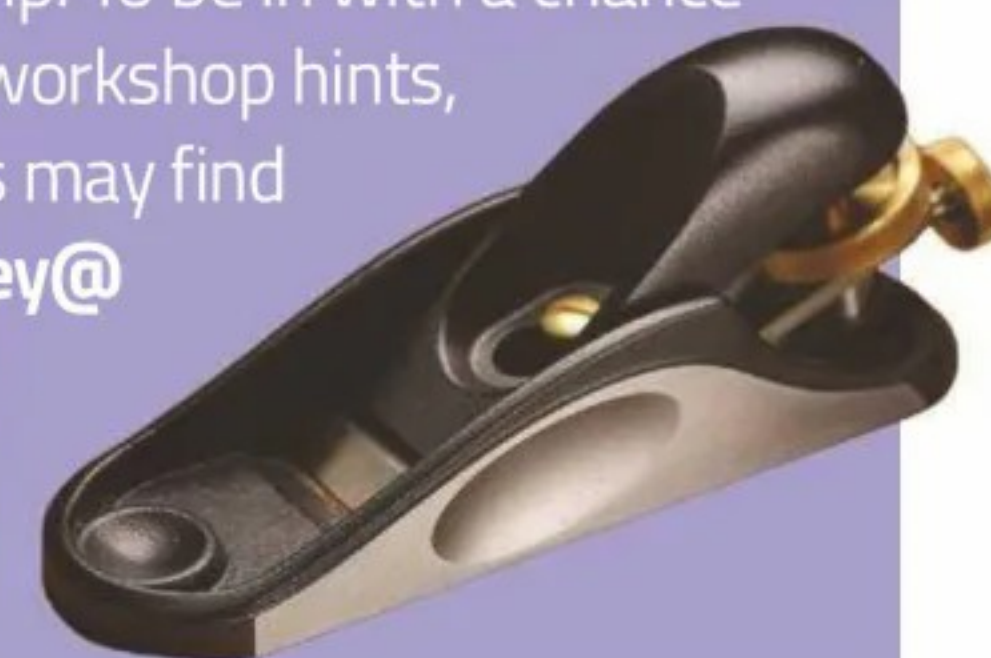
*We studied motion
To fix it one day perhaps in some monument.
And now this magic potion –
An old bit of pine, and a hammer and chisel I present,
And a rasp so sharp the shape streams
From my head instantly into form,*

*My arms are in a dream
Tearing the stock in a storm.
I am outside in
And the wood leads me with its grain
To thin
This curve and think again
Where I would place the swoop*

READERS' HINTS & TIPS

For the next two issues, in conjunction with Veritas and Axminster Tools, we're giving one lucky reader per month the chance to get their hands on a fantastic Veritas apron plane with PM-V11 blade. Ideal for trim carpentry and featuring a ductile cast-iron body, its unique side wings allow for a comfortable, firm grip. To be in with a chance of winning this great piece of kit, just send your top workshop hints, tips or pointers – indeed anything that other readers may find useful in their woodworking journeys – to tegan.foley@dhp.co.uk, along with a photo(s) illustrating your tip in action. To find out more about Veritas tools, see www.axminstertools.com

veritas



HANDY HINT: POWER DRILL DEPTH MARKER



Check the depth requirements for drilling and place a piece of tape at this point

Not every hole that's drilled needs to be completely through the material, and in many cases, you'll need to drill a certain distance. Though setting up stops on a drill press is easy enough, there's plenty of times when using the press isn't the best tool for the job, especially when it comes to portability, size of material, etc. Making a depth marker for a hand-held power drill is as easy as using a piece of tape to mark the intended depth of that bit.



With the tape in place, drill down into the wood until the bottom of the tape just touches the surface

Managing drilling depth requires measuring from the drill bit's tip, then marking this particular length with a small piece of tape. Drill down into the wood until the tape just touches the surface. **Mike Warren**

trend
tool technology

3
YEAR
WARRANTY*

NEW PRODUCT

240V
110V

T8 2200W 1/2" DUAL-MODE PLUNGE ROUTER

Engineered for both handheld and router table use. Ideal for lock mortising, kitchen fitting, worktop jointing and timber profiling.

80mm Plunge Depth

Precision Centring System

Router Table Compatible

Constant Speed Control



www.trend-uk.com

TIME SAVING SOLUTIONS FOR THE TRADE

Clarke 10" EXTENDABLE TABLE SAW WITH STAND

PRICE CUT
£179.00
 exc.VAT
£214.80 inc.VAT
 WAS £227.98 inc.VAT

- 0-45° blade tilting for bevel cutting
- Max cut depth of 45° / 90° (50mm/72mm)

CTS17

Machine Mart

Britain's Tools & Machinery Specialist

65

SUPERSTORES NATIONWIDE



Clarke 4" BELT / 6" DISC SANDER

- Dust extraction facility
- 4" x 36" belt tilts & locks 0-90°
- 225mm x 160mm table, tilts 0-90°
- 370W, 230V motor

“Excellent machine, very solid and exactly as described. Very happy with the purchase”
 See www.machinemart.co.uk



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Clarke DUST EXTRACTOR/CHIP COLLECTORS

CWVE2



- Powerful 1100W motor
- 50 litre bag capacity
- Flow rate of 450M3/h

FROM ONLY
£99.98
 exc.VAT
£119.98 inc.VAT

* WAS £263.98 inc.VAT

Model	Motor	Flow Rate	Bag Cap.	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
CWVE2	1100W	183 M3/h	50Ltrs	£99.98	£119.98
CDE35B	750W	450 M3/h	56Ltrs	£189.98	£227.98
CDE7B*	750W	850 M3/h	114Ltrs	£209.00	£250.80

Clarke 8" TABLE SAW

- 500W motor
- 200mm Blade Dia.

NEW

CTS800C
£89.98
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£107.98 inc.VAT

Clarke CONTRACTOR TABLE SAW WITH SLIDING CARRIAGE

NEW



CCS12B

PRICE CUT
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 WAS £406.80 inc.VAT

- A sturdy, powerful saw, manufactured from a durable steel body with tough powder coated finish
- Max Depth of Cut 83mm
- Blade Dia 315mm

Clarke CONTRACTOR 18V BRUSHLESS COMBI DRILLS

- 2 forward and reverse gears



FROM ONLY
£99.98
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2x2Ah

Clarke DRILL PRESSES

- Range of precision bench & floor presses for enthusiast, engineering & industrial applications

FROM ONLY
£99.95
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B = Bench mounted
F = Floor standing

Model	Motor (W)	Speeds	exc.VAT	inc.VAT	WAS	NOW
CDP5EB	350	5	£99.95	£119.94		
CDP102B	350	5	£115.95	£139.14		
CDP152B	450	12	£209.00	£250.80		
CDP202B	450	16	£269.00	£322.80		
CDP352F	550	16	£339.00	£406.80		
CDP452B	550	16	£299.00	£358.80	£406.80	
CDP502F	1100	12	£699.00	£838.80	£934.80	

CDP102B

Clarke 18V CORDLESS LI-ION STAPLE / NAIL GUN



SPARE NAILS / STAPLES IN STOCK

powered by Li-Ion

- Includes 300 nails and 400 staples
- 1x 2Ah 18V Li-Ion battery

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£129.98
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VAC KING WET & DRY VACUUM CLEANERS

PRICE CUT
 NOW FROM
£59.98
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- Compact, high performance wet & dry vacuum cleaners for use around the home, workshop, garage etc.

* SS = Stainless Steel

WAS £75.59 inc.VAT

Model	Motor	Dry/Wet Capacity	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
CVAC20P#	1250W	17/13 ltr	£59.98	£71.98
CVAC20PR2	1400W	14/12 ltr	£72.99	£87.59
CVAC30SSR*	1400W	24/22 ltr	£109.98	£131.98

Clarke WHETSTONE SHARPENER (200MM)

- Produces razor sharp cutting edges on chisels, planes, etc.
- Inc. 3 tool holding jigs, workpiece clamp & support frame, polishing paste & water trough

£139.98
 exc.VAT
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CWS200B

Clarke BOLTLESS SHELVING/BENCHES

- Simple fast assembly in minutes using only a hammer



150 KG
 PER SHELF
 (evenly distributed)
 Strong 9mm fibreboard shelves

350 KG
 PER SHELF
 (evenly distributed)
 Strong 12mm fibreboard shelves

CHOICE OF 5 COLOURS
 RED, BLUE, GREY, SILVER & GALVANISED STEEL

Model	Dims WxDxH (mm)	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
150kg	800x300x1500	£42.99	£51.59
350kg	900x400x1800	£59.98	£71.98

Clarke TOOL CHESTS / CABINETS

FROM ONLY
£89.98
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OVER 50 MODELS IN THE RANGE

BALL BEARING ROLLER DRAWERS

Model	Desc.	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
① CTC600C	6 Dr chest	£89.98	£107.98
CTC900C	9 Dr chest	£89.98	£107.98
CTC500C	5 Dr cabinet	£149.98	£179.98
CTC800C	8 Dr chest/cab set	£149.98	£179.98
② CTC700C	7 Dr cabinet	£169.98	£203.98
CTC1300C*	13 Dr chest/cab	£189.98	£227.98

Clarke PLUNGE SAWS

FROM ONLY
£69.98
 exc.VAT
£83.98 inc.VAT

INC. 2X 700MM GUIDE RAILS

Model	Motor	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
CPS85	550W	£69.98	£83.98
CPS160	1200W	£132.99	£159.59

Clarke CIRCULAR SAWS

AVAILABLE IN 230V 110V



CON185B

- Great range of DIY and professional saws
- Ideal for bevel cutting (0-45°)

*Includes laser guide

Model	Motor	Max Cut 90/45 (mm)	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
CCS185C	1200W	65/44	£54.99	£65.99
CON185B*	1600W	63/43	£69.98	£83.98

Clarke SHEET SANDERS

- Ergonomic design for optimum comfort

Model	Sheet Size	Motor	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
COS210	190x90mm	200W	£27.99	£33.59
CON320	230x115mm	320W	£39.98	£47.98

Clarke POWER PLANERS

PRICE CUT
 NOW FROM
£34.99
 exc.VAT
£41.99 inc.VAT
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* WAS £44.39 inc.VAT

Model	Width of Cut	Motor	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
CEP450*	60mm	450W	£34.99	£41.99
CEP720B	82mm	720W	£44.99	£53.99
CON950	110mm	950W	£74.99	£89.99

Clarke PLANERS & THICKENERS

- Ideal for DIY & Hobby use
- Dual purpose, for both finishing & sizing of timber

* WAS £359.98 inc.VAT

Model	Planing Width	Max Thick Capacity	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
CPT600	6" (152mm)	120mm	£249.98	£299.98
CPT800*	8" (204mm)	120mm	£299.00	£358.80
CPT1000	10" (254mm)	120mm	£399.00	£478.80

Clarke GARAGES/WORKSHOPS



- Ideal for use as a garage/workshop
- Extra tough triple layer cover
- Heavy duty powder coated steel tubing
- Ratchet tight tensioning

Model	size (LxWxH)	exc.VAT	inc.VAT	WAS
CIG81212	3.6x3.6x2.5m	£249.00	£310.80	£298.80
CIG81015	4.5x3x2.4m	£279.00	£334.80	
CIG81216	4.9x3.7x2.5m	£329.00	£394.80	
CIG81020	6.1x3x2.4m	£349.00	£418.80	
CIG81220	6.1x3.7x2.5m	£399.00	£478.80	
CIG81224	7.3x3.7x2.5m	£499.00	£598.80	
CIG1432	9.7x4.3x3.65m	£1099.00	£1318.80	
CIG1640	12x4.9x4.3m	£2599.00	£3178.80	

Clarke BELT SANDERS



- Ideal for surface removal, sanding and finishing

Model	Motor	M/Min	exc.VAT	inc.VAT
Clarke BS1	900W	380	£45.99	£55.19
Clarke CBS2	1200W	480	£94.99	£113.99
Makita 9911	650W	75-270	£104.99	£125.99

Clarke PALM SANDERS

- Ideal for detail sanding of corners & hard to reach areas

PRICE CUT
£21.99
 exc.VAT
£26.39 inc.VAT
 WAS £27.59 inc.VAT

INC DUST EXTRACTION



CMS200

£47.99 exc.VAT £57.59 inc.VAT

1/3 SHEET SANDER

DISC SANDER

Clarke RANDOM ORBITAL SANDER

- Adjustable front handle improves control
- 7000-14000rpm

CROS3

INC DUST BAG AND SELECTION OF 125MM DIAMETER SANDING DISCS



CPT800

FROM ONLY £249.98 exc.VAT £299.98 inc.VAT

Clarke 4" BELT / 8" DISC SANDER

- Includes two tables to tilt & lock
- Quality Induction 250W motor

PRICE CUT
£199.98
 exc.VAT
£239.98 inc.VAT
 WAS £246.00 inc.VAT

CS48

CS6-9D

Clarke 6" BELT / 9" DISC SANDER

- 1100W motor
- Use vertically or horizontally

PRICE CUT
£329.00
 exc.VAT
£394.80 inc.VAT
 WAS £418.80 inc.VAT

DUST PORT

BELT/DISC TABLE ADJUSTS 0-45°

INCLUDES STAND

CDS300B

Clarke DISC SANDER (305MM)

PRICE CUT
£179.98
 exc.VAT
£215.98 inc.VAT
 WAS £227.98 inc.VAT

- Powerful, bench mounted
- 900W
- Dust extraction port

CDS-1V

Clarke DETAIL SANDERS

- Perfect for smooth and fine finishing along with hard to reach areas or curved surfaces

£27.99
 exc.VAT
 £33.59 inc.VAT

ALL MODELS INC. SANDING SHEETS

CDS-1V

280W

Clarke OSCILLATING BOBBIN SANDER

- Dust collection port
- Inc. 6 sanding sleeves/bobbins

PRICE CUT
£149.98
 exc.VAT
£179.98 inc.VAT
 WAS £190.80 inc.VAT

COBS1

Clarke OSCILLATING BELT & BOBBIN SANDER

- Sand concave, convex, straight or multi-curved pieces
- Dust collection port
- Inc. sleeves, drum & belt

PRICE CUT
£209.98
 exc.VAT
£251.98 inc.VAT
 WAS £262.80 inc.VAT

COBS1

Clarke OSCILLATING BELT & BOBBIN SANDER

- Sand concave, convex, straight or multi-curved pieces
- Dust collection port
- Inc. sleeves, drum & belt

PRICE CUT
£209.98
 exc.VAT
£251.98 inc.VAT
 WAS £262.80 inc.VAT

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Ideal for woodturning in the workshop

- Distance between centres allows for turning longer spindles
- Inc. tool rest, tail stock, drive centre & face plate
- Large turning capacity of 350mm
- 4 turning speeds

BEST SELLER

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40" WOODTURNING LATHE

BENCH MOUNTED

LOCKABLE TAILSTOCK

Clarke 40" WOODTURNING LATHE WITH COPY FOLLOWER

- Ideal for DIY, furniture or joinery workshops where repeat quantities are required
- Large 980mm distance between centres
- speeds 600-2200rpm
- Inc. copy follower assembly, tool rest, drive centre tail stock assembly, face plate, eye shield & stand

PRICE CUT
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£526.80 inc. VAT
WAS £562.80 inc. VAT



INCLUDES STAND

INCLUDES COPY FUNCTION

TURBO AIR COMPRESSORS

- Superb range ideal for hobby & semi-professional use

TIGER 16/550



FROM ONLY
£119.98
£143.98 inc. VAT

Model	Motor	CFM	Tank	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
Tiger 8/260	2HP	7	24ltr	£119.98	£143.98
Tiger 11/550	2.5HP	9.3	50ltr	£179.98	£215.98
Tiger 16/550	3HP	14.5	50ltr	£249.00	£298.80
Tiger 16/1050	3HP	14.5	100ltr	£309.00	£370.80

Clarke 13" MINI WOOD LATHE

£189.00
£226.80 inc. VAT



- 325mm distance between centres
- 200mm max. turning capacity (dia)
- 0.2HP motor

CWL325V

Clarke 3/8" MORTISING MACHINE

- Ideal for the serious DIY woodworker, craftsman & woodworking enthusiast
- Max. chuck capacity: 13mm
- Max. mortise chisel stroke: 76mm

£229.98
£275.98 inc. VAT



NEW

230 VOLT
CBM1C

Clarke PROFESSIONAL BANDSAWS

- Produces fast, precise mitre & longitudinal cuts
- 250W motor
- 8" throat size
- Cuts in all types of woods

PRICE CUT
£124.99
£149.99 inc. VAT
WAS £155.98 inc. VAT



CBS205

- Great for both home & professional use
- Induction 300W motor
- Table tilts up to 45°
- 9" throat size

£239.98
£287.98 inc. VAT

REMOVABLE DUST TRAY

MODELS ALSO FEATURE:

MULTI-STEP DUST EXTRACTION OUTLET

QUICK RELEASE FENCE

DRIVE-BELT TENSIONING

REMOVABLE DUST TRAY

FLEXIBLE LED WORKLIGHT

BLADE TENSIONING CONTROL

- Table tilts 45°
- Adjustable blade guide
- Supplied with stand, 4TPI wood cutting blade, rip fence, mitre guide, mitre gauge and push stick
- Induction motors



CBS300

Model	Throat Depth	Max Cut 90°	Max Cut 45°	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
CBS250C	245mm/10"	115mm	65mm	£249.98	£299.98
CBS300	305mm/12"	165mm	115mm	£579.00	£694.80
CBS350	340mm/14"	225mm	160mm	£699.00	£838.80

Clarke WOODWORKING VICES



FROM ONLY
£16.99
£20.39 inc. VAT

Model	Mounting	Jaw (Width/Opening Depth) mm	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
Clarke CHT152	Bolted	150/152/61	£16.99	£20.39
Record TV75B	Clamped	75/50/32	£25.99	£31.19
Clarke WV7	Bolted	180/205/78	£39.98	£47.98

Clarke JIGSAWS



FROM ONLY
£19.98
£23.98 inc. VAT

Model	Power (W)	Depth of Cut (Wood/Steel)	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
CJS400	400W	55/- mm	£19.98	£23.98
CON750	750W	80/10mm	£31.99	£38.39
Bosch PST700E	500W	70/4mm	£56.99	£68.39

Clarke SCROLL SAWS



FROM ONLY
£99.98
£119.98 inc. VAT

- 50mm max cut thickness
 - Air-blower removes dust from cutting area
 - Table tilts 0-45°
- WAS £155.98 inc. VAT # WAS £189.59 inc. VAT
- | Model | Motor | Speed RPM | exc. VAT | inc. VAT |
|----------|-------|-----------|----------|----------|
| CSS400D | 120W | 400-1600 | £99.98 | £119.98 |
| CSS16VB* | 90W | 550-1600 | £124.99 | £149.99 |
| CSS400C# | 90W | 550-1600 | £154.99 | £185.99 |

Clarke ELECTRIC POWER FILE



FROM ONLY
£54.99
£65.99 inc. VAT

WAS £76.74 inc. VAT

Model	Motor	Belt Size (mm)	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
CPF13	400W/230V	13x457	£54.99	£65.99
KA900E*	350W/230V	13x455	£59.98	£71.98



FROM ONLY
£39.98
£47.98 inc. VAT

WAS £107.98 inc. VAT # WAS £209.99 inc. VAT

Great for sawing, cutting, sanding, polishing, chiselling & much more

Variable speed

CMFT250

Clarke GRINDERS & STANDS

- Stands come complete with bolt mountings and feet anchor holes



WAS £80.39 inc. VAT
WAS £119.98 inc. VAT

Model	Duty	Wheel Dia.	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
CBG6RZ*	PRO	150mm	£64.99	£77.99
CBG6250LW	HD	150mm	£69.98	£83.98
CBG6250L	HD	150mm	£72.99	£87.59
CBG6SB	PRO	150mm	£94.99	£113.99
CBG8370LW#	HD	200mm	£96.99	£116.39

Clarke 10" SLIDING MITRE SAW

- For fast, accurate cross, bevel & mitre cutting in most hard & soft woods
- 2000W motor



Model	Blade Dia/Bore (mm)	Max Cut Depth/Cross	exc. VAT	inc. VAT
CMS210B*	210	60/120	£79.95	£95.94
CMS10S2B#	255/3	90/340	£169.00	£202.80

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CHISEL
RATING

COCO DE MER REHAB

Peter Bishop sets about repairing and restoring a wonderful Coco de Mer seedpod – a twin-sectioned variety produced entirely and only in the Seychelles

**TOOLS
YOU'LL NEED**
A lathe,
powered saws
& sanders

I've always fancied one of these seedpods, but they've usually been too expensive to justify purchasing. The Coco de Mer is a unique twin-sectioned seedpod produced entirely and only in the Seychelles. They've fascinated people for many centuries and are associated with various myths and legends. Have a look online for more information – there's lots available. Owing to their rarity, the seedpods have been protected for many years and feature on the international CITES listing of endangered species. You can't trade in 'modern' pods from the Seychelles without a licence and exportation is extremely limited. Here in the UK, we can't export any existing examples found locally without applying for and obtaining a CITES certificate declaring a pre-1947 status, which is the date that restrictions on trading were first introduced.

'I can fix that!'

I came across this particular pod at a general auction while looking at potential furniture for restoration. It was listed as 'A/F', meaning 'As Found', which piqued my interest. I didn't handle the pod but, online, some impact cracks were clearly visible on one end. I took one look and thought, 'I can fix that!' When examples of other similar seedpods come up at auction, prices vary considerably. An unpolished one is usually between £400-500 'on the hammer' and on a good day, polished varieties go for just under £1,000. With auctioneer's commission and P&P, this can often increase the hammer cost by 30% or more. So by now, you'll have gathered that these beauties ain't cheap! The total cost, once it arrived, was just under £300, which I considered something of a steal.

Removing the kernel

So what was the problem? On closer inspection, this became apparent. The pod kernel was still inside, which dramatically increased the weight. It'd obviously been dropped and the impact on one end, with this internal weight in place, had created the damage. It's not often the kernel is left inside, and over the years, local practice was to remove it. The kernel supposedly has some interesting properties, more details of which can be found online. To remove the kernel, it's carefully cut down the centreline, the innards removed, then the whole thing stuck back together. My plan was to replicate this, by opening the pod



up, taking the kernel out, supporting the cracks from inside, and reassembling it.



1 As soon as I started to cut into the pod, I realised this was a very old nut. Using a bandsaw, the dust emitted was fine and extensive. Once open, the large chunks of old, dried up kernel and loads of degraded dust, became visible. I emptied it out and cleaned the inside completely using a vacuum. It was now time to inspect the damage and assess how to go about repairing it



2 The cracks and splits were only on one side of the pod. If I simply filled them, the joints would flex and, in time, the filler would fall out. I decided that the best way to provide internal support was to coat the inside, behind the damage, using expanding polyurethane glue



3 As the glue is liquid and would run off the inner walls if simply spread all over, this was a two session job. To activate polyurethane adhesive, a damp surface accelerates the process. I used a mist sprayer to dose the inside with a covering of water before spreading the PU over the initial damaged area, then left it to expand and set. Later, I knew it'd worked because the expanded adhesive had seeped through the first set of cracks. I applied a second dose and left it to cure



4 Thinking ahead, I decided to fix a wood block into the pod's centre so that, later on, I'd have something to drill into if I mounted it on a stand. I used a piece of western red cedar thinking this would be strong enough and easily bored. I then cleaned out and made good the cracks with a two-part resin filler



5 & 6 Once the filler had set, I sanded it back flush and also went over the remaining surface of this half of the pod. I matched the finish on the other half by also sanding off any old covering. It could now be glued back together



7 & 8 If anyone has ever tried to glue up and hold something like this, you'll know it's not easy! I used PVA here, and plenty of it. In anticipation, I'd torn off some short lengths of masking tape and had those to hand. I jiggled the two halves together to ensure there was a good bond and tried to line them up. Clasp the pod between my knees, I popped the first bit of tape on, readjusted the joint, then got some more on as quickly as possible. Reasonably happy with progress so far, I then wrapped long lengths of masking tape all round, double checked the alignment, and left well alone so the adhesive could cure



9 Once whole again, I cleaned off any visible excess glue and lightly hand-sanded the whole surface with 180 grit abrasive. I knew the filled cracks would always show, but wanted to blend them in as best I could. I very carefully ran some black oak spirit stain down each repair trying not to let it spread onto the main surface. I left this for a little while before applying the main walnut stain all over



10 I left the stained pod to dry off overnight, then sealed the whole thing, in several goes, with a sprayed on acrylic satin lacquer. Once again, I left this overnight before cutting back with some fine steel wool. Using my favourite Rugger Brown wood wax from Fiddes, I then finished off the pod and buffed it to a nice lustre



11 With the pod finished, I now had to figure out how to mount it. I found, stashed away, a very long, old Whitworth part threaded bolt, which was about 14mm in diameter. I didn't want the head, so lopped that off. The length of thread was limited and, at this stage, I only had one old nut. I've got a couple of containers with a mixture of ancient nuts, bolts and washers that always come in handy. I found a square nut that fitted the thread. Because it was too thick, I'd not have much wood remaining to fix the rod in place if left as is, so I sliced it in half. This nut, and a big diameter washer, would be top side of the disc and the other nut wound up from below to fix it solidly onto the base



12 In keeping with the pod, I found a chunk of American black walnut, about 32mm thick, which was already planed both sides. I cut a square blank, found the centre and recessed a hole for the lower nut to fix into with enough space around it to get a spanner on. The rough disc was cut out on the bandsaw and fitted to a faceplate



13 I didn't want the base disc to be too fancy and detract any interest away from the pod, so I simply turned an ovolo edge onto it. Once cleaned up and finely sanded, I coated the show wood surface with some lacquer



14 This was cut back with fine steel wool on the lathe, then waxed and buffed up with more Fiddes Rugger Brown



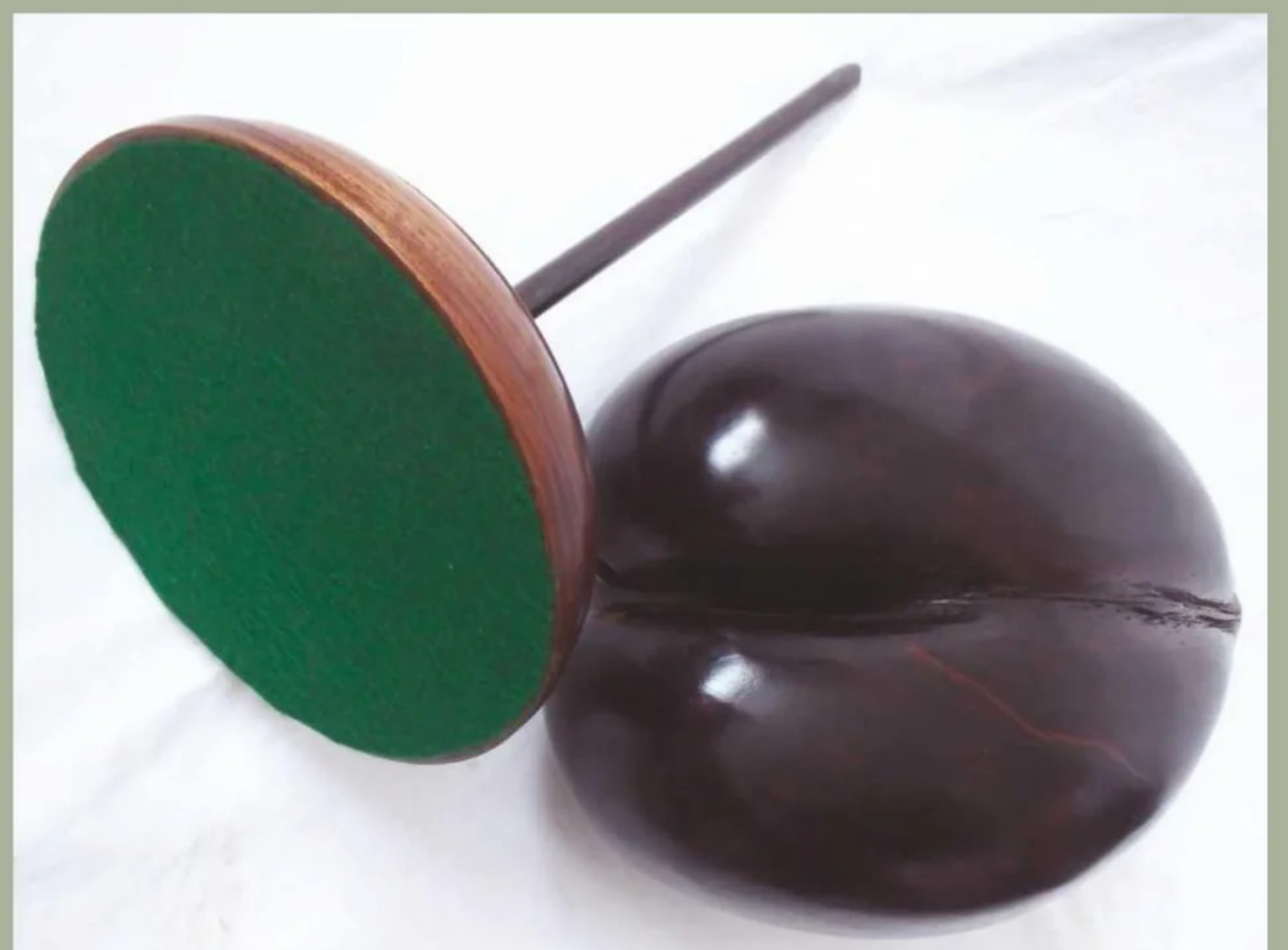
15 The fixing screw holes on the disc's bottom needed to be level and the display rod fixed in place. By this time, I'd cut the top of the rod into a chisel shape so that it'd bite into that internal block. I wanted the stand to be removable so that the pod could be easily transported



16 & 17 I have some very long wood-boring bits, and used a 14mm one to drill up into the pod from what's perceived as the lower end. I just managed to locate the block as well, so that was a good result. I put a rubber grommet on the rod's shaft to buffer the pod's bottom, stuck a disc of green baize on the underside and the job was done. The pod now sits on a sideboard in our lounge and is a talking point when visitors see it for the first time: a nice, natural sculpture



18 & 19 The completed seed pod, detached from its mounting ✂



DREAMLAND ON ELM STREET

Mastering the wayward structure of elm made **Ercol** a furniture design classic

For over 100 years, Ercol has stood as a byword for elegant, robust and nowadays sought-after classic furniture. This is in no small part thanks to the foresight and inspiration of the Ercolani dynasty in recognising the beautiful but wild grain of native elm trees and taming them.

Ercol Managing Director and Chairman, Edward Tadros, the great grandson of company founder Lucian Ercolani, says that as in any industry, designers and makers were always looking at ways of standing out from the crowd and protecting against plagiarists. Given its variable grain direction, the English elm did both.

"When we first started, elm was cheap and plentiful; nobody wanted to use it because it's a very awkward timber. It's got amazing grain but moves in all directions, meaning it can bend and split if not dried and stored properly.

"The grain is of course part of the attraction but makes it difficult to stabilise in order for it to be workable."

Edward says it was a case of trial and error with storage and drying – too fast and you get distortion and splitting; too slow and it takes ages and adds to the costs.

His grandfather, Lucian Ercolani Jnr. was among the first to bring science and technology to the furniture industry. He developed timber-drying techniques that'd make it possible to construct cabinets and tables from elm, which, in spite of its wonderful grain, was always considered too wayward for practical large-scale furniture production. And in his early days, he was also instrumental in transforming the very much craftsman-made Windsor chair into a mass-produced classic.

3,000 chairs a week

The UK had been forced to mass-produce affordable furniture for post-war rebuilding, and Ercolani devised a method of producing 3,000 bow-backed Windsor chairs a week from a mechanised production line at the Ercol factory in High Wycombe. The result was a hugely popular Utility version of the quintessentially English item of furniture.

"I'd say that the Windsor chair that we've made in many variants such as the bowback, Butterfly and stacking chair, since 1945, represents the spirit of Ercol," says Edward.

Ercol's bentwood Windsor chair was hailed as an instant hit at the 1946 Britain Can Make It exhibition, held at the Victoria and Albert Museum; at the Festival of Britain in 1951, as well as the Brussels World Expo in 1956.

And it's a tribute to the enduring appeal of the original designs that in 2010, the Furniture Makers' Company awarded a Design Guild Mark for Lucian's Originals collection – a revived collection featuring the stacking version of the Windsor chair and the Windsor dining table, stacking tables and Butterfly chair.

"At the time, it was a revolutionary design, which had the classic Windsor base but the seat was in bent ply and that curve was new. It's very comfortable too, which is why it's endured."

Lucian was always fiddling with the designs and the boardroom's full of prototypes that didn't quite work or didn't last very long.

Despite its status as a modern design classic, the Butterfly never sold in huge amounts and went out of production for nearly 20 years, until 2000, when fashion designer, Margaret Howell, asked if Ercol would make her a few

Butterflies for her shops. Then, to Ercol's surprise, Howell kept selling them and asking for more. "Thanks to her, sales of the Butterfly started creeping up again and so we put it back into production," says Edward. "I think the chair has lasted this long because not only is it very comfortable, but also very simple and pretty."

Perfect wood bending

Lucian Ercolani Snr, and to a greater extent Lucian Jnr, collaborated with government scientist Norman Turner. At the Board of Trade's Department of Scientific and Industrial Research laboratory at nearby Princes Risborough, they developed drying techniques for bending wood of varying cross-sections into reliable chair profiles, which could be used on a large scale.

"In the old days, there'd have been an old boy steam-bending one bow – chair back – over an open fire and fitting it into a seat,



The classic bow-backed Ercol Windsor chair – a quintessentially English piece of furniture



Photographs courtesy of
High Wycombe Furniture Archive,
Bucks New University



which could be different every time. But when making 500 seats and cutting the dowel holes, you needed to know the bows would all bend to fit," Edward explains.

Ercol has a reputation for durability and longevity, which Edward puts down to the high tolerance machining of components and joints.

"We've never been afraid of using machines to cut time. It's fine for an apprentice to understand how to cut joints by hand, but if you have a run of 200 chairs to make, you want to do it as fast as possible."

As with other notable firms such as Parker-Knoll and Stag, Ercol relied heavily on advertising to get its message across. "We'd spend around £1m a year on advertising in newspapers and magazines, on TV and even in films," Edward says. The trademark ErcoLion – wearing a carpenter's apron – featured on many advertisements, as did the famous gold on blue Sphinx logo.

Dutch elm disease

The company was forced to import American elm following the Dutch elm disease outbreak in the 1970s, which virtually eliminated the UK's commercial elm stock.

The disease is still so virulent and seemingly impervious to any attempts at prevention or cure that it's unlikely the UK will ever re-emerge as a credible grower. Edward continues: "English elm is very inefficient to use compared with American and Italian. It comes in shorter lengths and is more liable to bends and distortion than imports. It's not really available in any commercial volume as a result of a lack of timber yards to process trees for manufacturers."

As late as the 1970s, High Wycombe and the surrounding area was home to over 250 furniture-making companies, but now, there's no more than a handful remaining.

Ercol moved out in 2003, but only eight

miles away to a new £20m 160,000sq.ft factory in Princes Risborough where it employs some 800 people. However, Edward's passionate about informing the buying public that this is still an English company designing and making the vast bulk of its furniture in the UK. "There's a large photo of the present factory on display in our showrooms, so the public can see that we still make things in the UK."

Although some 75% of furniture is still made there, Edward says that the global nature of raw material supply – wood from the US and Italy, lacquers from Germany and fabrics from China – means that its designers also work with manufacturers in China and other parts of the Far East.

A model employer, Ercol makes much of the firm's family ethos and employing local youngsters as apprentices: "We have a thing called the 21 Club for those with 21 years of



The Butterfly chair (left) enjoyed a sales boom thanks to fashion designer, Margaret Howell

service. They get a special medal and their name is engraved on a wood plaque in the factory – there's currently around 600 names on the board. Many people here started as apprentices and have gone on to become senior managers in the company," Edward says.

Dr Lynn Jones – Former Head of the Department of Furniture at Bucks New University – says that Ercol deserves praise for the way in which it runs the factory. "The new building is very much state-of-the art. It's a fabulous setup and so well thought out. All waste wood is recycled to heat the factory, so the company really has a holistic approach to life. Lots of students say this is the sort of place they'd like to work when they graduate, or the sort of thing they'd like to emulate when setting up in business."

She feels that Ercol also needs to be congratulated for its institutional furniture – the Stacking and Butterfly chairs used in schools and canteens. "These chairs, which were made in beech, are robust and timeless pieces – I have one of each at home.

"They're making a bit of a comeback because there's a backlash both by the public and retailers against poorly made imports. Retailers, importantly, want better quality control and these are well-made, good-quality products, which are still designed and made in an English factory."

Ercol origins

The company was founded by Lucian Ercolani (1888–1976) who left school in 1902, aged 14, to take up a job as a Salvation Army messenger boy. He also enrolled for night school at Shoreditch Technical Institute where he studied all aspects of furniture design and making.



From left to right: Lucian Jnr, brother Barry and dad Lucian Snr talk business



The Ercol Lion was a major feature of Ercol newspaper and magazine advertising

By 1906, Ercolani was working in the Salvation Army joinery department, producing staircases and handrails. In 1910, Frederick Parker – of Parker-Knoll fame – invited Ercolani to join his furniture workshops in High Wycombe – the 'furniture capital' of England.

In 1912, Ercolani took up a part-time appointment at High Wycombe Technical School, teaching furniture design to evening classes, which were attended by High Wycombe's furniture makers.

It was here that he met Edward Gomme, son of a High Wycombe chairmaker. At the outbreak of World War I, Ercolani joined E Gomme Ltd chairmakers – famed for its G-Plan furniture range.

War hero

In 1920, Lucian Ercolani Snr had joined a furniture-making consortium in High Wycombe, trading as Furniture Industries, which was nurtured on wartime government orders for Utility Furniture developed by his sons Lucian Brett Ercolani and Barry Ercolani, which evolved into the Ercol brand. Lucian Snr played an active



Even into his 80s, Lucian Snr took an active role in the company



An Ercol worker in the relatively health and safety free 1970s

part in the furniture industry, being a founder member of the industry's guild, the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers – referred to as The Furniture Makers' Company – and its Master from 1957–58. He was married in 1915, to Eva Brett, and they had three children. He took British citizenship in 1923.

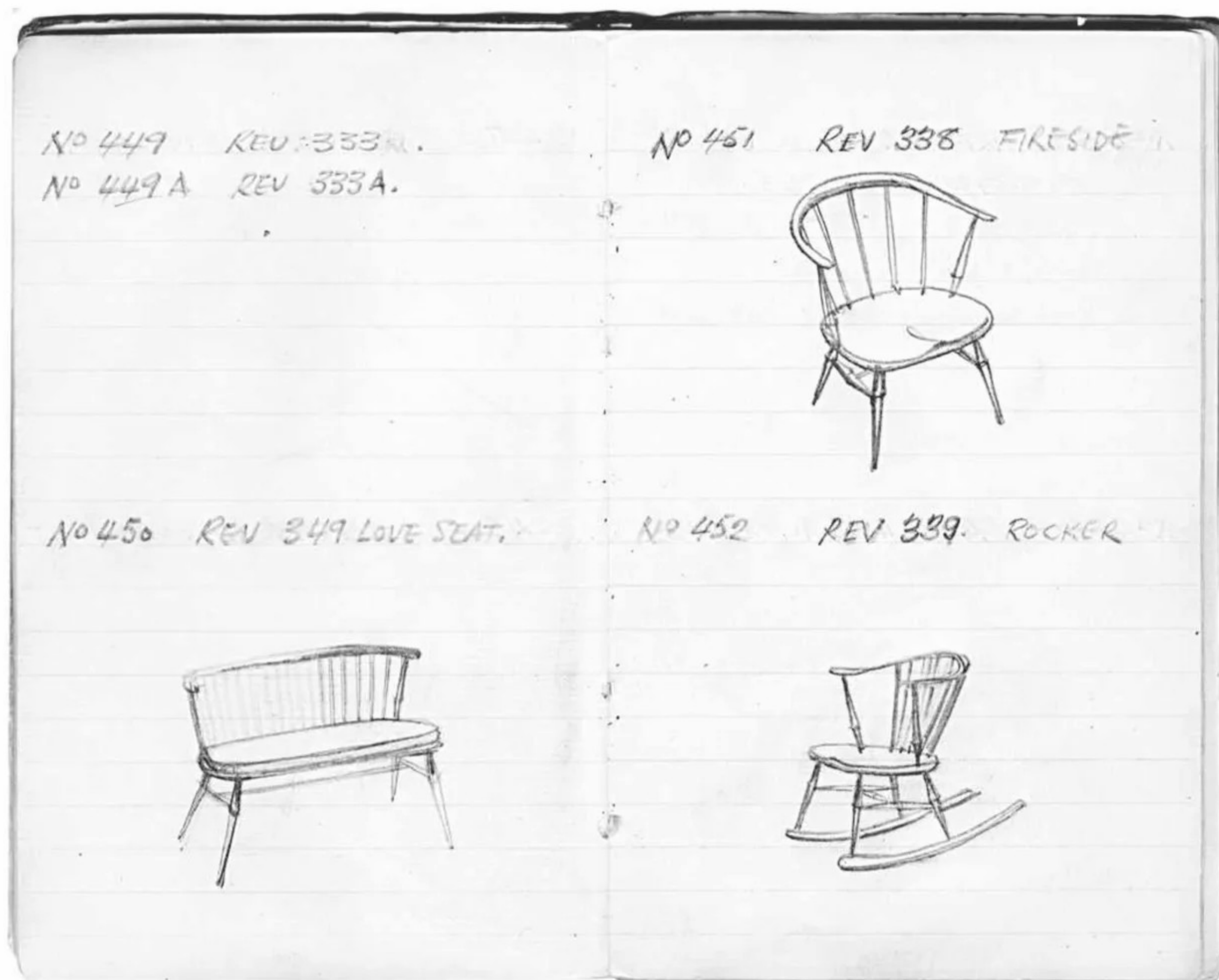
Lucian Jnr also had a distinguished war career in RAF Bomber Command during which he earned a DSO and Bar, along with a DFC for his gallantry. His DSO was awarded for piloting a Wellington bomber home from a mission to Berlin after it was hit and set alight. He flew the burning plane back and eventually ditched it in the Channel just short of the coast. He ensured that his entire crew escaped into the life raft. They landed at Ventnor on the Isle of Wight, having being lost for nearly three days. He was subsequently offered the post of aide-de-camp to Lord Mountbatten but turned it down in favour of being an operational head of several squadrons in India. These were instrumental in such actions as the demolition of the railway bridge over the River Kwai and the destruction of shipping in the Bay of Bengal. He finished the war as a Wing Commander at the age of 28, and died in February 2010, aged 92.

Steam-bending

21 Club member Robert Taylor – team leader in the machine 'shop and an expert in steam-



Windsor Living Small Dining Table and matching set of chairs



Early Lucian Ercolani sketches include the 'pre-formed chair' – bottom left – which became the Butterfly chair

bending – has been with Ercol for 32 years. The company uses three bending processes: green bending; machine bending for the more radical bends; and radio frequency bending for side rails. There are some excellent videos of Ercol steam benders in action, which can be viewed on the company's website – www.ercol.com – and also on YouTube.

Ercol's Evergreen chair bows are created using green wood, which is a two-man job. Newly-cut ash or beech – and sometimes oak – is used and must be as moist as possible, so newly felled timber is therefore vital. It's cut into 32mm square strips to guarantee consistent sizes, then put into a steam oven at between 90-100°C for 45 minutes to increase moisture content and make it pliable.

"It's not advisable to go for any longer because it can burn and cause discolouration of the timbers, which go slightly purple," he says.

When they come out of the oven they're clamped to a metal strip, which is bent over a special jig. It's a complex bend with each end bent in three different axes through two bends to give the back its distinctive shape.

"Both men pull together to make the initial horizontal bend, then they pull down to create

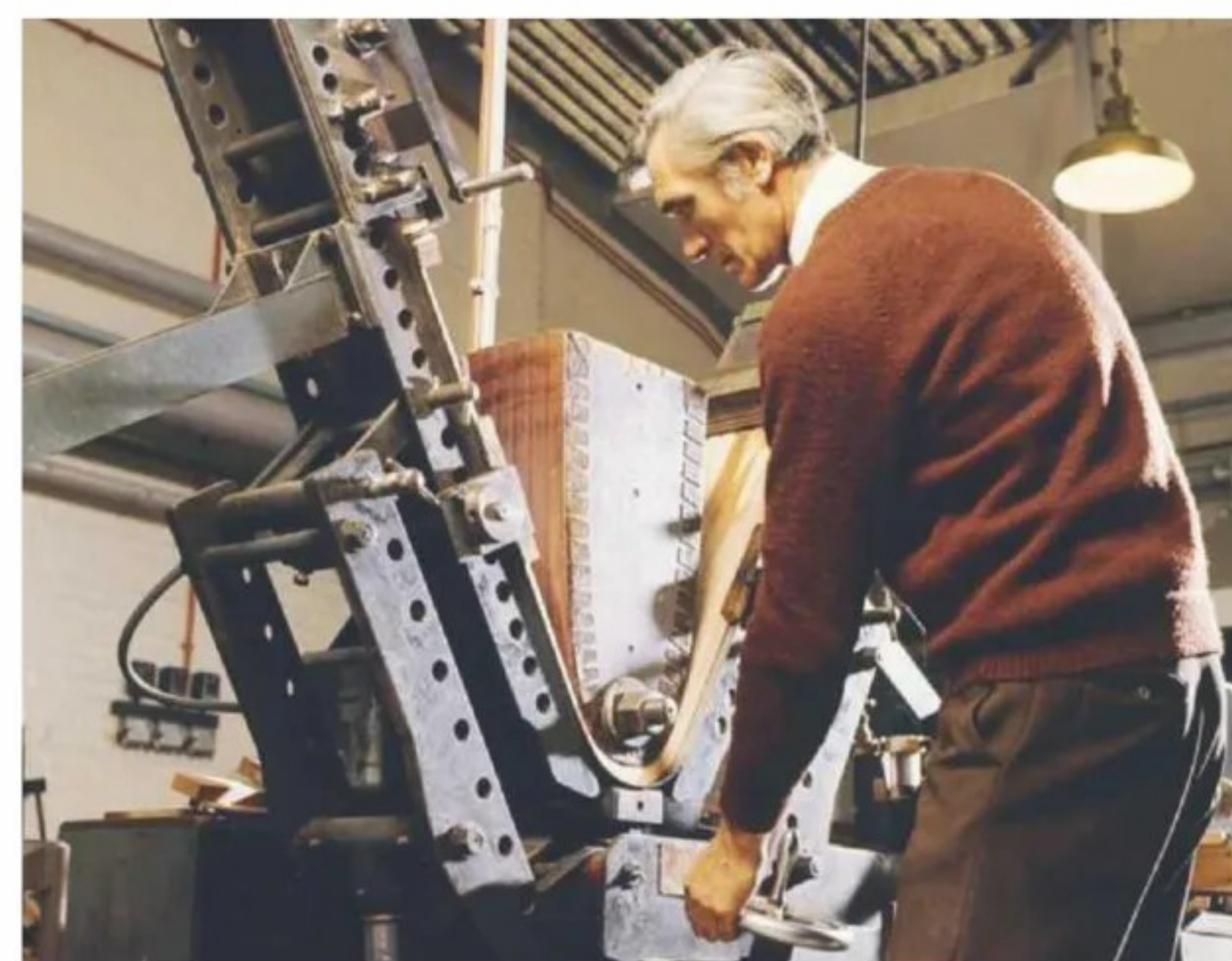
the sides and lock the whole thing into the jig before kilning it overnight. This is a skilled job: too much force and the timber can split; take too long and the timber will cool down and not be pliable enough. There's no substitute for experience here," he continues.

Ercol's Windsor and Quaker chairs have chair backs machine bent to a tight radius from a single piece of straight timber. "The timber is air-dried and cut into planks and stickered for several months depending on time of year and how often the timber is rotated. It's steamed for 45 minutes and while still hot, each set of bows is bent around a former using a hydraulic ram."

They're then put in the kiln overnight, at a



Edward Tadros, great-grandson of Lucian Jnr, and wife Vicky Tadros flank Lynn Jones, pictured receiving honorary degrees from Bucks New University



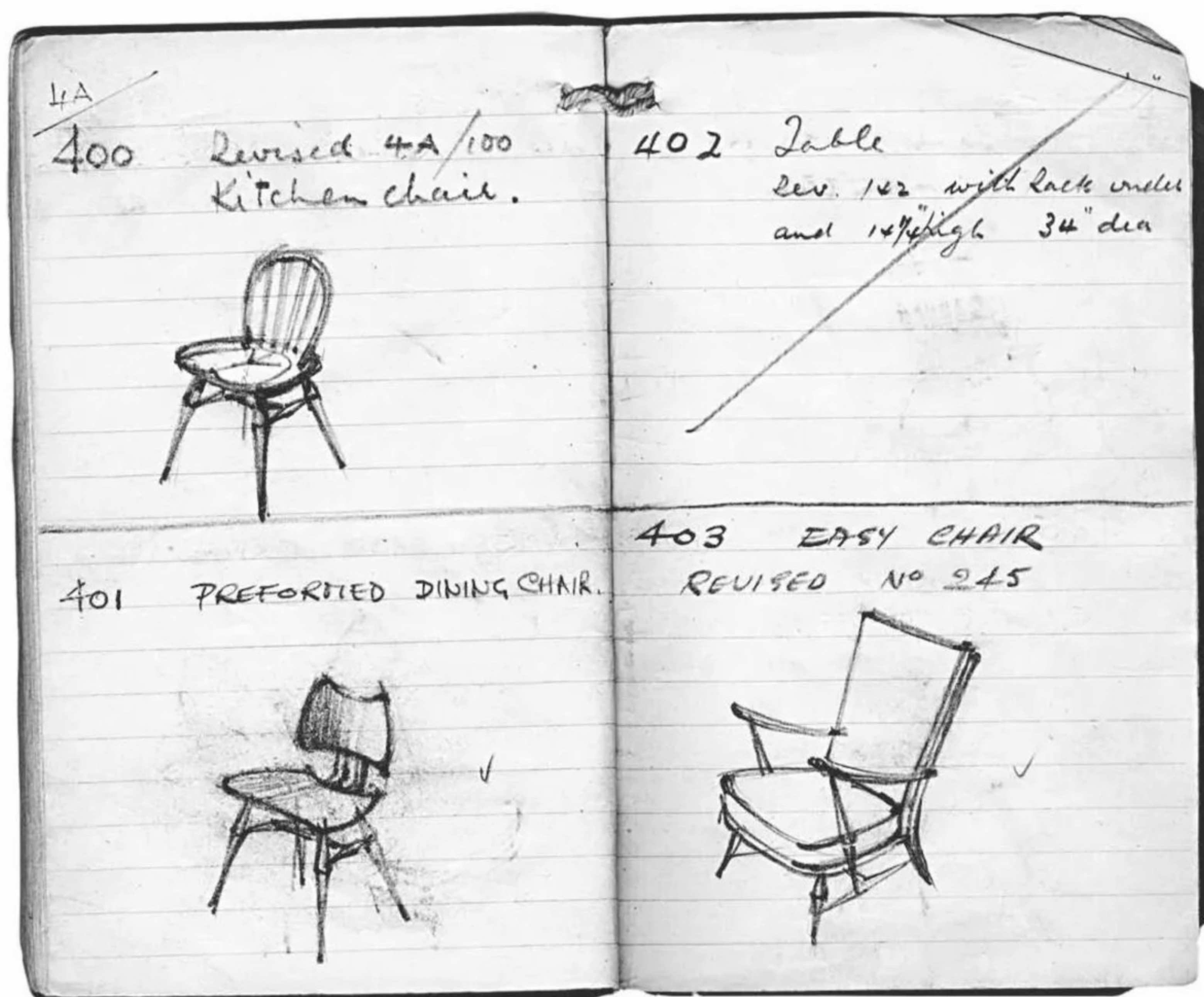
Ercol man 'Big Jack' Holmes operating a steam-bending machine, hammering the chair parts to ensure they stay flat on the machine bed

constant dry – i.e. humidity-free – 70°C heat so they don't take in any more moisture after which they permanently retain the new shape.

Robert says that sometimes, if not dried for long enough, they can take up more moisture: "One man took some rejected bows home to make clothes for his garden and they straightened up, which goes to show that you're really dealing with living material." ✕



The operator turns the wheel, which moves the steamed parts up to the former. Other finished bent parts can be seen in the top left



More Ercolani sketches for the two-seater Love Seat, Rocker and Fireside chair

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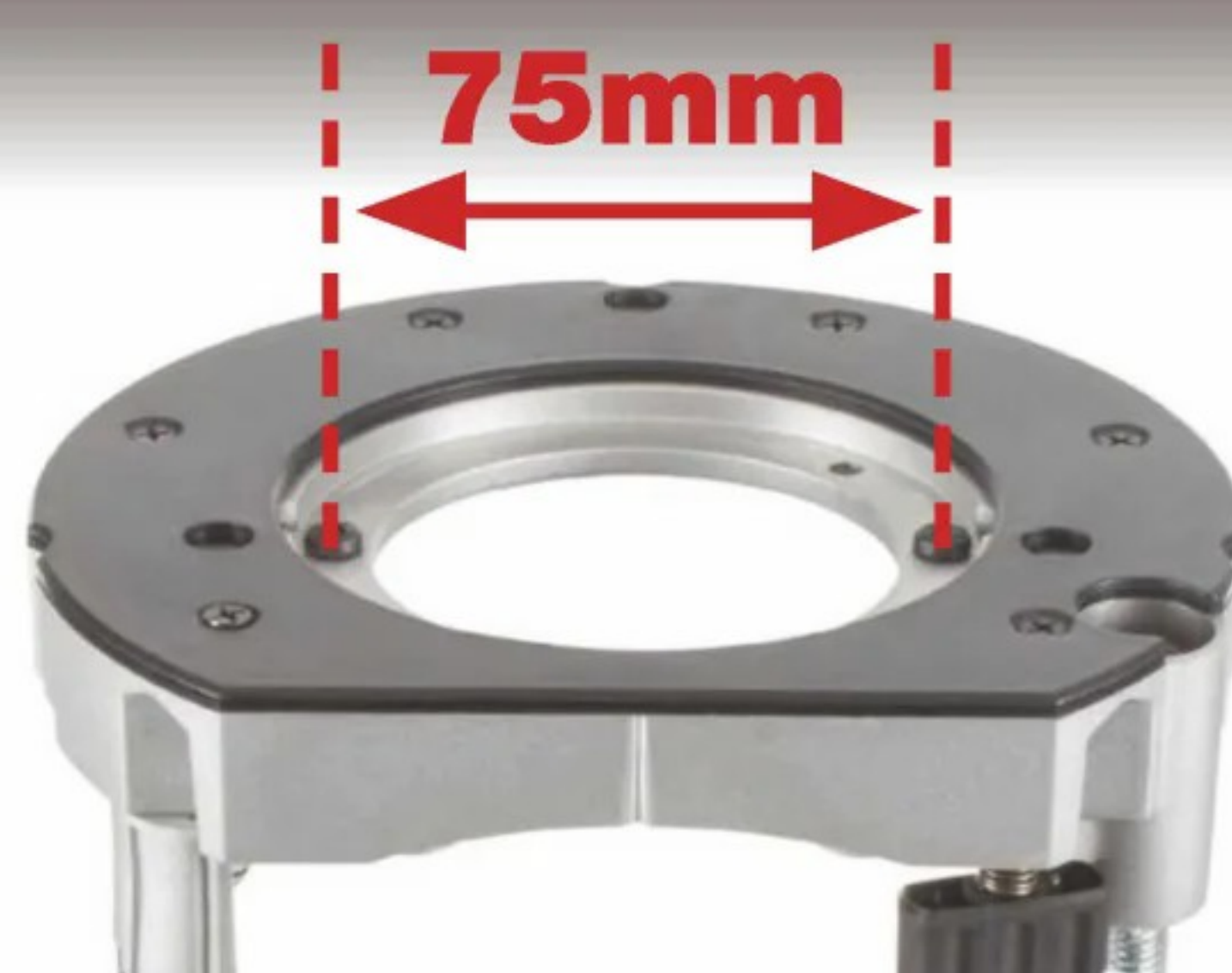


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Mind the gap

A mitre shooting block in *The Woodworker* of February 1937 prompts Robin Gates to work on his sawing technique

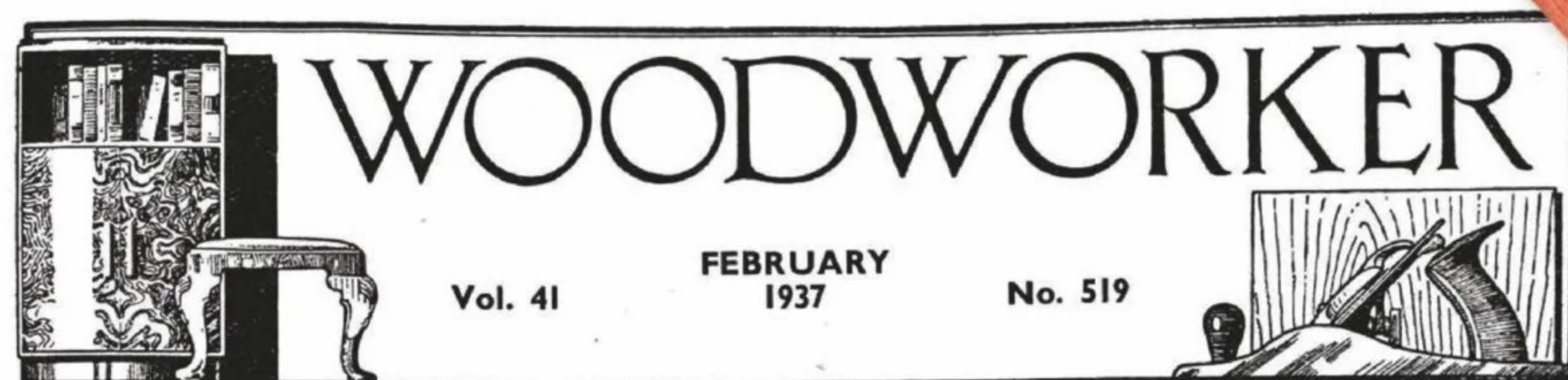
Of several build projects described in the February 1937 issue of *The Woodworker*, it was this mitre shooting block that grabbed my attention, because some 20 years ago, I briefly owned one of these dinosaurian relics of old school joinery.

Sawing litmus test

Its sole purpose lies in trimming the mitred ends of large mouldings, which have been – as ‘Craftsman’ put it – ‘cut somewhat full’. Having clamped an overlong piece between the device’s jaws, the trick is to glide your finely-set smoother across all three 45° faces in one fluid movement, reducing the length shaving by shaving until your cornicing, dado rails or planted mouldings assemble in their respective corners with perfectly bisected perpendiculars. Well I gave it my best shot with the mitre shooting block while restoring the damaged architrave around a living room door, but soon grew frustrated at the old device losing its grip, not to mention finding difficulty with the plane’s necessary gliding action. While not denying the fascination of this ingenious jig, I found a more mundane mitre shooting board better met my needs.

That said, this article served as a timely reminder that cutting a plain 45° mitre joint by hand, without resorting to mitre box or mitre saw, is a fair litmus test for the quality of one’s sawing. I don’t know if it’s just me but I find gappy mitres the most unsettling of all woodwork joints, which is perhaps fitting since I’m one of the worst offenders. While the visible gauge marks, over-cut kerfs and irregularities of sloppy dovetail joints may be excused as ‘authentic’ and ‘characterful’, conjuring the cosy image of some pre-industrial village carpenter’s shop, a non-meeting of mouldings at a mitred corner feels like an encounter with a shouting drunkard who refuses to shut up.

Perhaps it’s the very fact of my neither expecting nor wanting to be aware of this simple joint that makes an opened-mouthed mitre so disturbing. Visiting an art gallery some months ago, what should’ve been a relaxing experience turned ugly when I noticed there was barely an invisible mitred corner joint to be seen – if you’ll excuse the obvious paradox. After a while, I found myself not even looking at the pictures, only hurrying from one frame



HOME MADE TOOLS

By Craftsman

The Mitre Shooting Block

ALTHOUGH mouldings are not used to anything like the same extent that they used to be, the mitre shooting block is still an extremely useful appliance in the cabinet-makers’ kit. Every experienced man knows how awkward a job it is to reduce the length of a piece of moulding mitred at both ends which has been cut somewhat full. The use of the shooting block enables this to be done without the slightest difficulty and with the assurance that the mitre will be dead true. The most useful form is that shown in Fig. 1, which can trim at the usual mitreing angle of 45 degrees and also at 90 degrees. Some workers prefer to substitute an angle of 67½ degrees because this is the mitreing angle for 135 degrees which is a right angle plus 45 degrees. It is also the correct angle for making octagonal frames. It all depends upon the usual run of work for which it is required.

It consists of a main framework with two blocks fitted above, one movable and the other free to slide up to and away from it. A threaded screw of either wood or metal controls the movable block and enables wood to be fixed firmly whilst being planed as in Fig. 1. Any well-seasoned piece of reliable hardwood can be used. Beech or a hard mahogany do very well.

The main framework is made up first. It consists of three strips of 1½ in. by ¾ in. stuff, with 1 in. by ¾ in. pieces between as at D, Fig. 2. These last named pieces

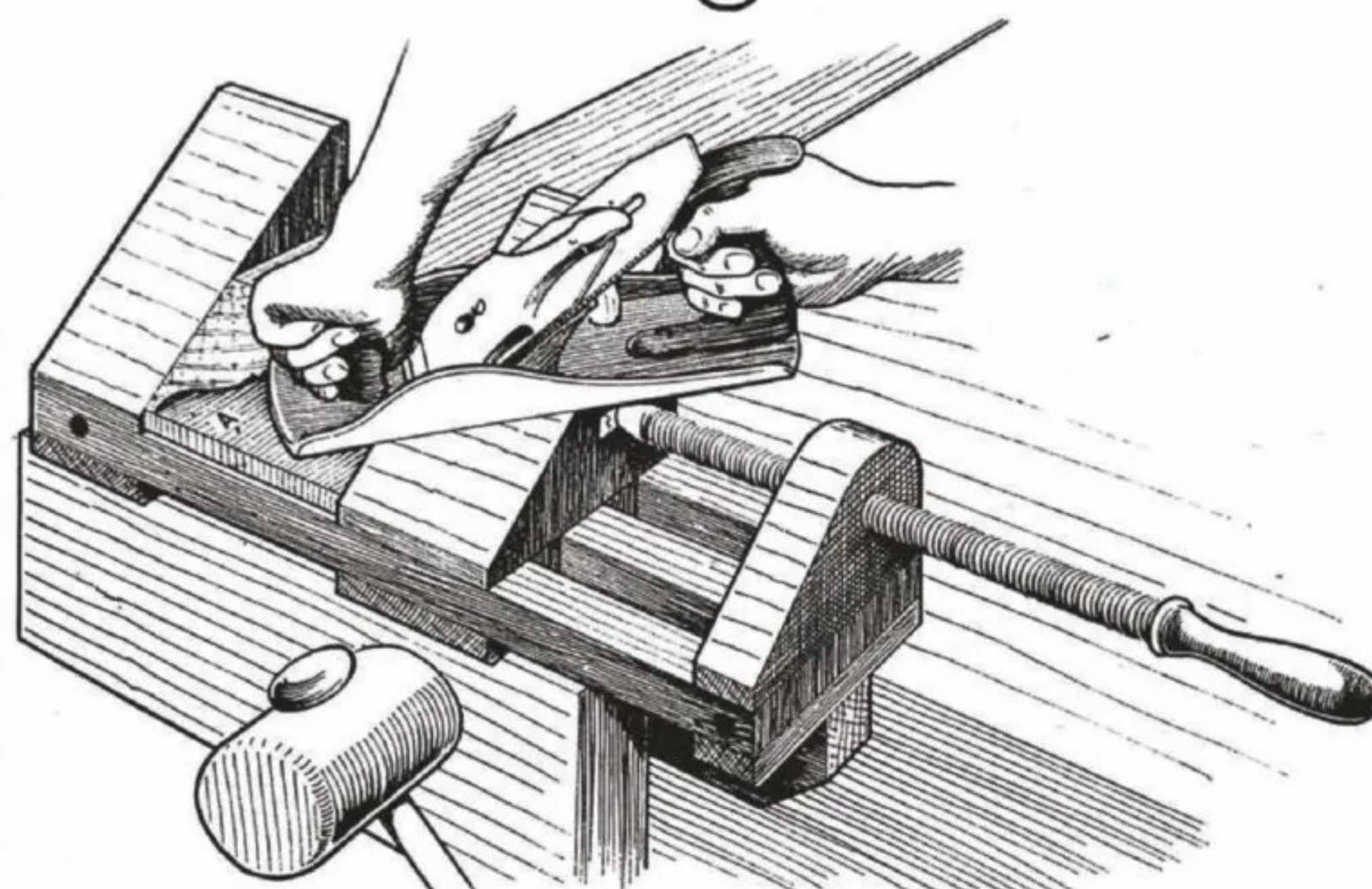


FIG. 1. AN INVALUABLE PIECE OF APPARATUS WHEN MITREING MOULDINGS. One side of the block is at 45 degrees, the most usual mitreing angle and the other is at 90 degrees, handy for squaring up. If desired an angle of 67½ degrees can be substituted for the right angle, this being handy for mitreing angles of 135 degrees which is a right angle plus 45 degrees. This occurs often in cabinetwork.

The latter method is probably the stronger. The bolt should be countersunk to avoid gashing the plane iron. When the glue has set the surfaces are planed dead true, and any glue that may remain in the corners is scraped away.

The blocks are now prepared. To minimise the effect of warping it is advisable to build them up as shown at C, Fig. 2. The heart sides in the joining pieces face opposite ways. Each layer can be glued up complete in itself, and then jointed to the next when the glue has set. Both blocks are made in a single piece, and are separated later. Having planed the angle the block is placed in position on the frame and the guiding pieces screwed up underneath. They will have to stop short midway under the fixed end because of the strips in the framework. A single saw cut then separates the blocks after which

37

to the next, desperate to find one with vertical and horizontal mouldings not separated by a yawning chasm. A restorative tea and jam doughnut in the café felt like poor consolation for a display of such slack-handed joinery.

Practice, not excuses

So it’s off to the bench with mitre square and tenon saw I go and, half an hour later, I’m looking at the results of my first exercise in squaring and sawing at 45° in, well, too long. Even holding this effort at arm’s length, the evidence of my sawing muscles having lost their memories and my mind having been anywhere but on the job in hand is painfully obvious.

Evidently I have a tendency to begin the kerf

reasonably on the line, but then to drift the saw across to the waste side as it goes deeper into the wood, resulting in mitred corner joints so gappy as to resemble slots in a cycle rack. For an unworthy moment, I wonder if the mitre square might shoulder just a little of the blame, but alas that would be to libel a tool that may have faithfully served three or four generations of workers before me. Checking the venerable instrument against an engineers’ protractor reveals its angle between broad steel blade and brass-bound ebony stock to be bang-on 45°. No, it’s practice I need, not excuses, paying attention to my stance and saw-hand-arm alignment. Watch this space, I’m telling myself – meanwhile hoping it’ll disappear! ✕

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BEADY EYE

Reviving a venerable but neglected backgammon board required patience and a lot of matchsticks, says **Stephen Simmons**

Table tops, drawer runners and chair legs are the common currency of furniture restoration, but not all projects involve large surfaces or easily manageable parts. Things can get very fiddly and finicky – and consequently doubly challenging. Not only do they involve the precision of knuckle joints, but also the difficulty of working with very small pieces.

Cutting escutcheons and making miniatures are good recent examples. In addition, fiddly and finicky can't be rushed and therefore provide a good test of that other essential quality of any good restorer: patience. Part of the project to restore a 17th century backgammon board for Tissington Hall, Derbyshire a few years ago illustrates all the basic principles very well.

Standing scrutiny

It'd been languishing in the attic for several years and was beginning to deteriorate badly: the whole thing was very dirty and the damp had caused much of the veneer to lift or become detached and some was missing. As the veneer was hand-cut it was of variable thickness, from paper thin to a good 3mm, making replacement a bit of a juggling act at times. But more specifically, some of the chequered inlay was missing (**photo 1**). The rest of the pattern was made up of standard wood and ivory inlay, but inspection with the magnifying glass showed that the ebony and boxwood chequering was end-grain. As an eye-catching element of the motif, any replacement had to stand up to similar scrutiny.

There's a legitimate low-cost technique for replicating coloured patterns with earth pigment suspended in transparent shellac, but it's best



used when the work is normally a significant distance – about 4 or 5ft – from the eye. A good example is the geometric ebony and box stringing around the base of some 17th century walnut chests when vegetable black and either yellow ochre or raw sienna are ideal.

Tricking the eye

It's a technique for tricking the eye into the pattern's rhythm. If you make a mistake, it's easily reversible with meths. However, it only imparts colour and doesn't compensate for wood loss. So, despite its attractions this cheap and cheerful method wasn't appropriate here: given its high visibility, any replication had to be exact. End-grain ebony and box it had to be...

From the very start, it became evident that

cutting 28 individual squares and fitting them all into place wasn't practical, particularly given the variable thickness of the surrounding veneer.

Although I'd done nothing like it before, two things would obviously make life easier: use longer sticks and cut them down, and glue them together into blocks to form the end-grain chequer pattern beforehand. As it stood, the job required two blocks – 4 × 4 and 4 × 3 squares – so how many sticks would I need? In hindsight, it would, of course, have been more straightforward to sacrifice the four remaining squares of the second pattern to save this division and work with two complete 4 × 4 blanks, but even at this marginal level, the brief was to keep as much of the original as possible.

I'd anticipated that stick making would be fiddly and wanted to keep the number to a minimum, so the implied 28 seemed a bit over the top.

Make a mock-up

I took the time-honoured novice's approach and played with some matchsticks. After a couple of mock-ups, the way forward emerged. The optimum number of sticks that could be glued into a block at one time was eight and once glued, it was relatively easy to halve a block into a 4 × 1 configuration using a scalpel.

So in the end just eight sticks were enough, and at 20mm, long enough to be cut into four if necessary. The raw materials posed no



2 The solution emerges: the scale is small...



3 ... the approach slightly unconventional...



1 The problem: missing end-grain inlay of variable thicknesses

problems... I had plenty of small ebony offcuts and for the boxwood, I plundered an old broken ruler. It was the scale of things that provided the challenge. Accuracy wasn't critical for the length but proved crucial for the square section.

Measuring the original, I got a more accurate reading with metric as opposed to imperial so 2mm was the order of the day (**photo 2**). Face sides and edges were created as normal, but normal had to stop there. Width could still be marked with a gauge but small size made it impossible to secure the sticks to square them as is usually the case with bigger pieces. Instead they had to be roughed out, then pared down to size by drawing them gently but firmly over a finely set plane, which was held upside down in a vice (**photo 3**).

Done carefully it should be quite safe – I luckily came out of the process unscathed – but it was surprising how the concentration induced tension... regular hand and finger stretching breaks were essential. And because of the excessive handling, it was necessary to degrease the sticks with meths before gluing in place.

Fine-tuning

After the mock-ups, arithmetic and cutting the sticks, things speeded up as well as becoming less tense. Eight sticks were glued together at a time, using PVA; masking tape was sufficient to bind them together tightly (**photo 4**). I also



4 ... very fiddly...

used a couple of small bulldog clips over the tape, more to keep things square than apply extra pressure. Once the glue had cured and the excess cleaned off, the 4 x 2 blocks were cut into shorter lengths – a very fine saw such as a Pax razor or gentleman's saw is recommended – and one was separated for the single 4 x 2 block. A bit of scraping to fine-tune the blocks was necessary, then they were set in place, secured with animal glue and ultimately trimmed with a flush-cut saw (**photo 5**).

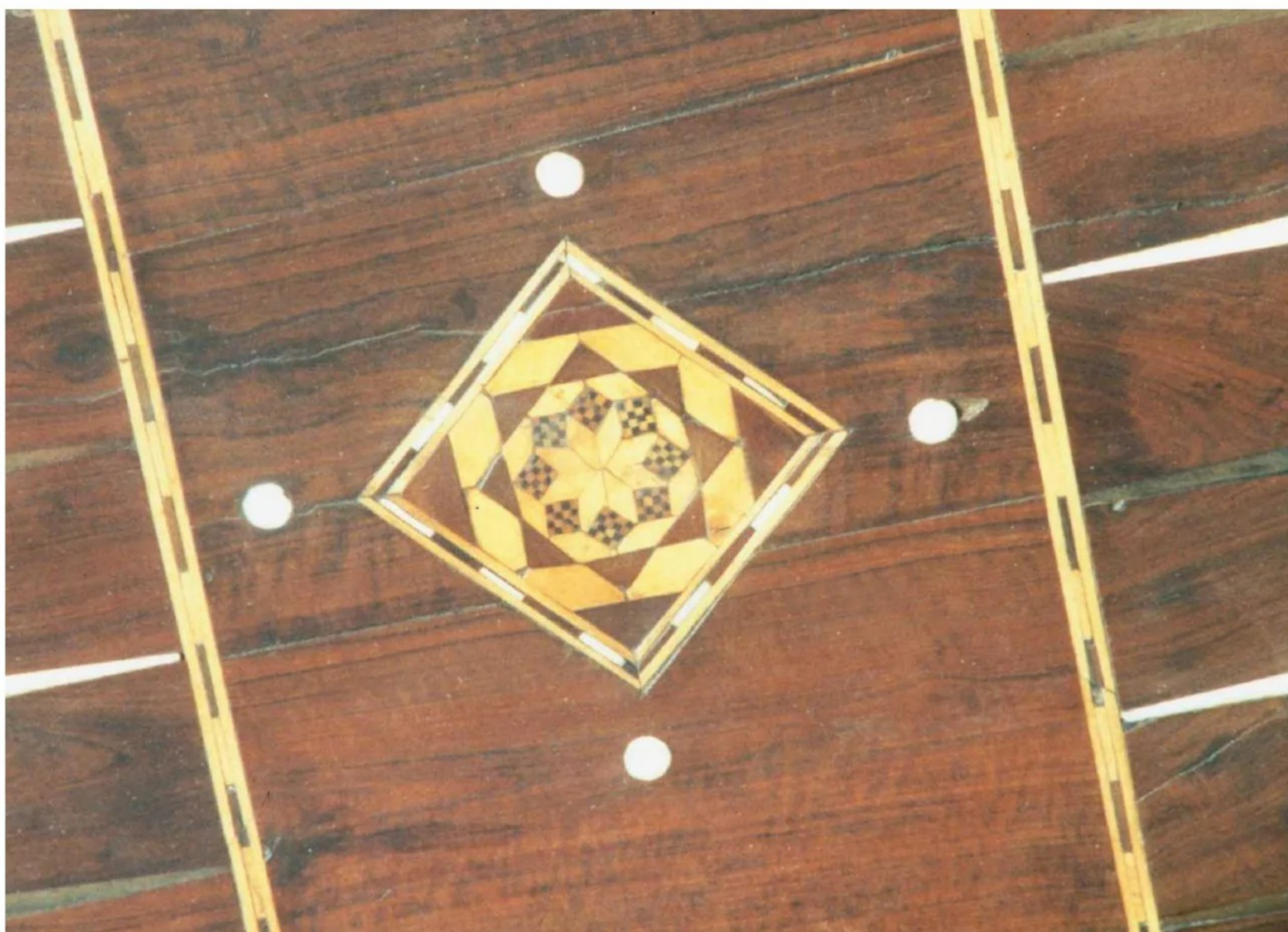
The boxwood was a bit stark at first but a gentle rub with 600 grit wet-and-dry and linseed oil, once the remaining work had been finished, was sufficient to blend everything together beautifully (**photo 6**).

Working on fiddly things often involves a disproportionate amount of time in relation to



5 ... and requires patience...

the final product, but as an integral part of the job, it has to be done. And ultimately it's well worth the effort. Become master of the fiddly bits and you're well on your way to becoming an all-round restorer. ✂



6 ... but the end result is well worth the effort

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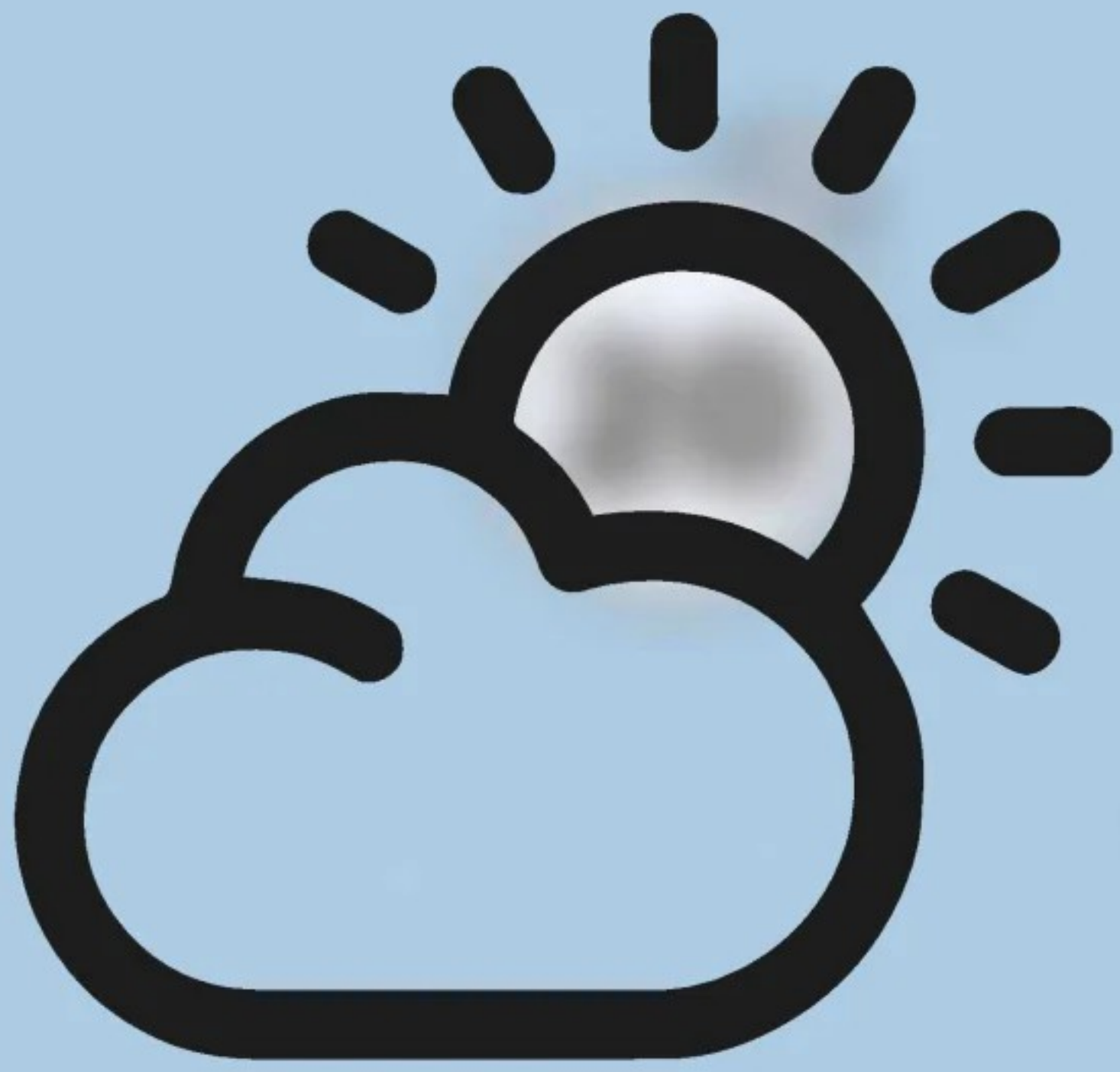
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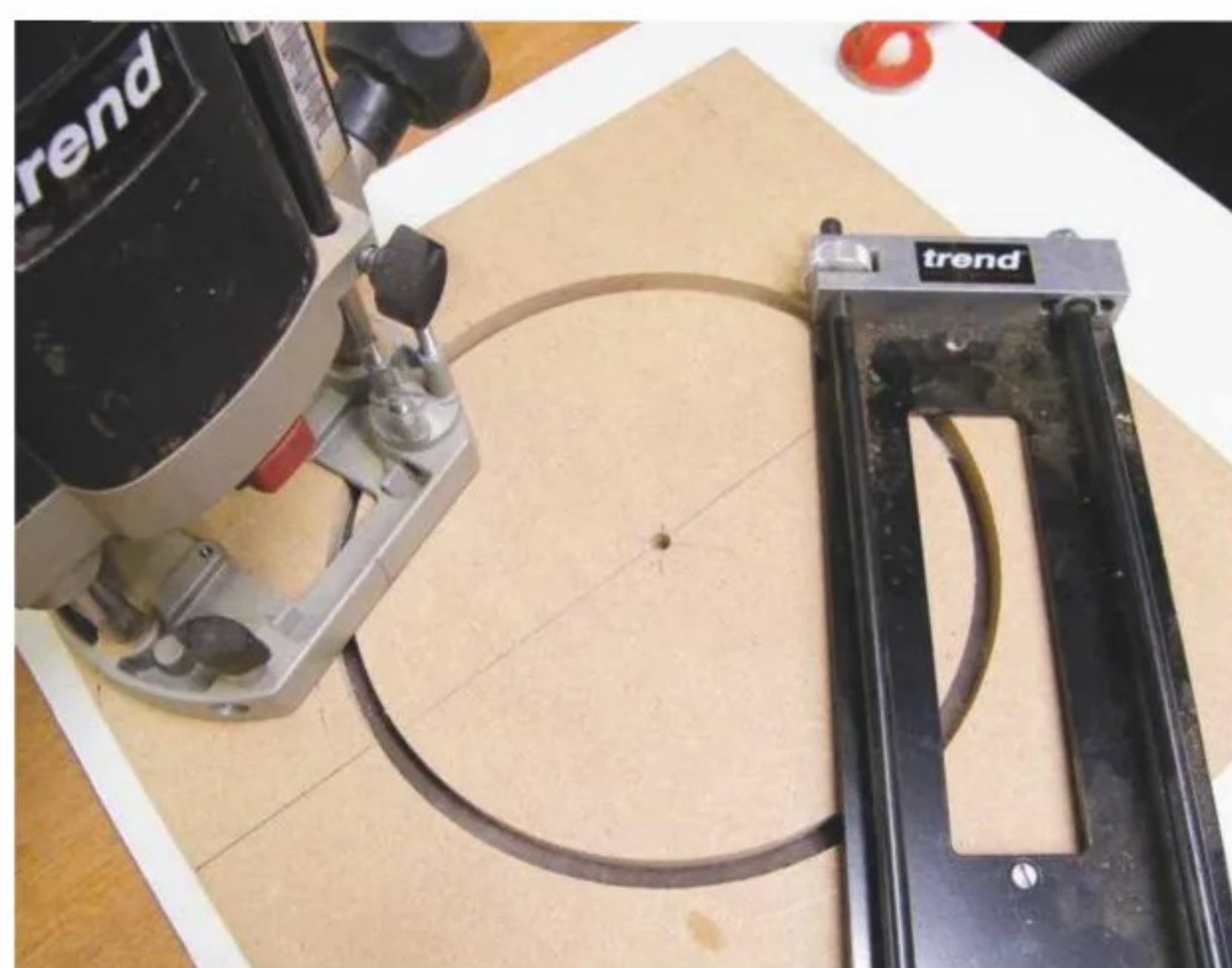

MADE IN SHEFFIELD

CHISEL
RATING

WEATHER WATCH

If you fancy yourself as an amateur weather forecaster, this classic instrument by **Peter Dunsmore** is perfect. It features a barometer, hygrometer and twin-scale thermometer, all housed in a stunning banjo-style case





1 The Trend N compass jig proves invaluable for accurate circle cutting



2 Use the jig to cut the MDF template for the barometer's wheel part

At first glance, this banjo style barometer looks straightforward to make. It's similar to models found in shops with a profile machined from one piece of timber. However, a closer look will show that the wheel part not only has stringing around its perimeter, but that the corners between the circle and vertical post are clean-cut rather than blended into one.

Clever veneering

The wheel has walnut veneer radiating out from the mechanism, while a figured veneer flows vertically from the lower part of the barometer body through to the top section. To achieve this effect, it's necessary to make the wheel separately, then to inset this into the post, and doing so requires some very accurate circle cutting with a router.

Although this can be done with a trammel bar fitted with a point, it's much easier using the N Compass circle cutting jig produced by Trend. This jig has the ability to make very

accurate circles from as small as 25mm diameter, quickly and accurately (photo 1).

What you'll need

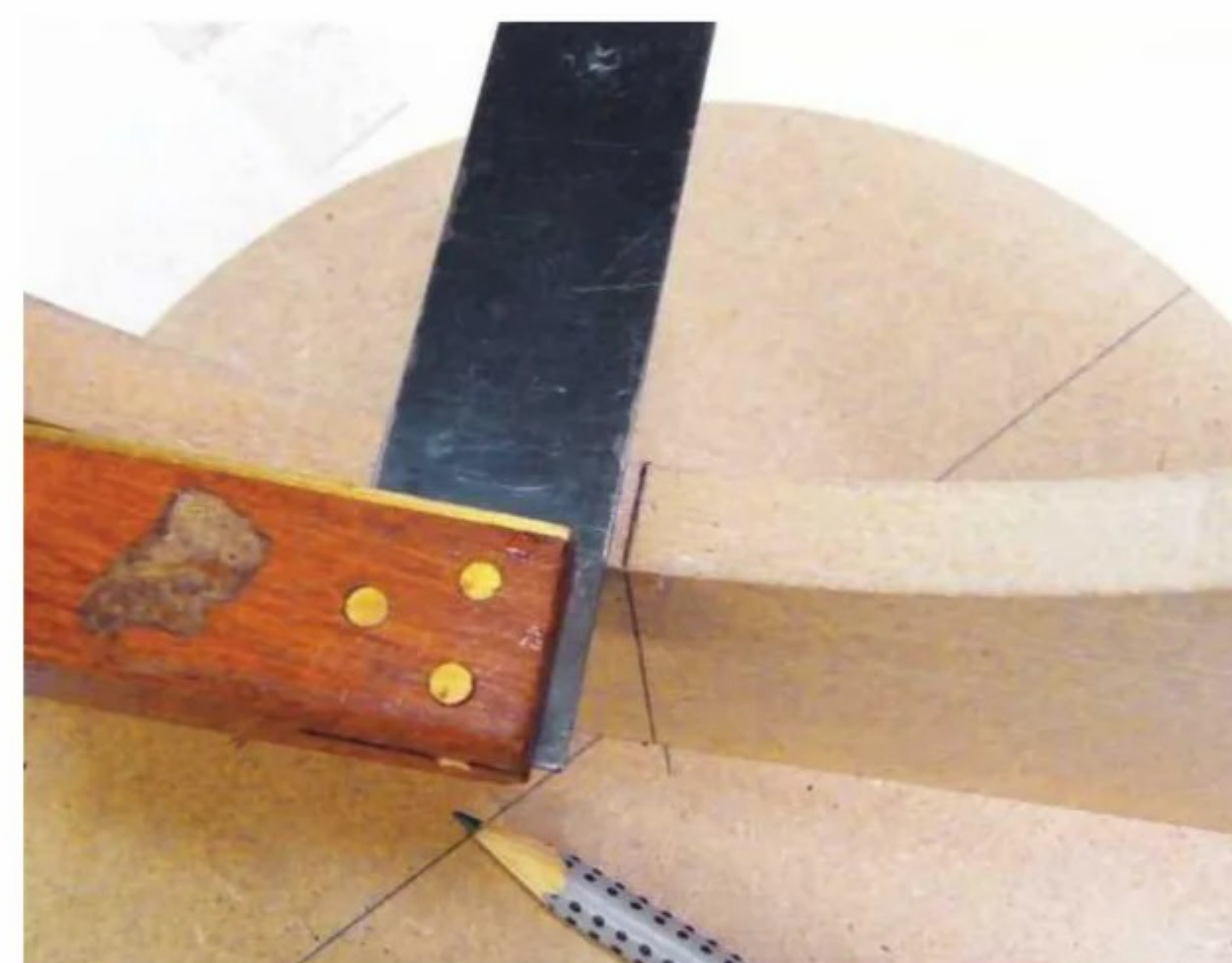
I used American walnut to make this barometer, with figured walnut veneer on the face, though most decorative hardwoods would be suitable. The piece is designed to take a 160mm diameter barometer, available from Barometer World – www.barometerworld.co.uk. Rather than providing a detailed cutting list, suffice it to say that a single piece of walnut measuring 1,500 × 125 × 32mm will be more than adequate for the job.

Making two templates

Start with two pieces of 9mm MDF: one should be a little larger than the wheel's diameter and the other about twice the size. There's a 6mm brass peg screwed to the base of the jig. The router is secured to the jig and can then be slid along the rods using a fine adjusting wheel at the rod's end.



3 The second MDF circle needs to be a perfect fit into the first hole



4 Extend the centre pencil line onto the circular cutout's edges



5 Glue pieces of walnut together to make up the wheel's width



6 The double-ended bearing trimmer has four blades rather than two

Drill a 6mm hole into the middle of the smaller piece of MDF and fit a straight fluted cutter into the router. Adjust the router so the circle's outside diameter is 230mm, then proceed to cut the circle. I've found it useful to pin the MDF to the work surface – in this case some old chipboard – so the circle is held in place as the cutter cuts through. This prevents any slippage that might damage the circle's edge (**photo 2**).

Now repeat the process to cut a 230mm diameter opening in the larger piece of MDF. This time the router will need to be adjusted to take into account the cutter's size, as the measurement will be taken from the pin's centre to the cutter's outside edge. What you're aiming for is a perfect fit of the circle into the opening (**photo 3**). Next, take a straightedge and draw a straight line across both pieces through the circles' centres, then separate both pieces. Using a small square, draw a line on the larger template's inside edge (**photo 4**), extending the straight line just drawn.

Making the wheel

The barometer's wheel part is made by gluing together some pieces of walnut using clamps and softeners to keep the timber flat before it's put aside to dry thoroughly (**photo 5**). Screw the MDF template to it, ensuring the screws are within the wheel's centre portion, and cut the bulk of the wood away with a bandsaw. Next, profile the circle's edge with a 50mm long bearing-guided trimmer, such as Trend's 46/501.

The next stage

Next you'll need a further MDF template to make the barometer's vertical part, using the plans as a reference. It's best to make one half



8 Use the template as a guide for trimming the figured walnut veneer



9 Glue the veneer to the column's face – I used a vacuum press here

of the profile on a separate piece of MDF and use this to make the final template by flipping it over the centreline. This ensures that the two sides are symmetrical. Next, screw the template to the walnut, locating the screws within both the wheel and hygrometer areas. Remove most of the waste using a scrollsaw or bandsaw, cutting close to the template but taking care not to damage its edge in the process.

You can now trim the work edge flush with the template using the same Trend cutter used earlier. This has four blades for a finer finish and features a bearing at each end (**photo 6**), which allows it to cut 'downhill' with the grain by simply flipping the timber over and adjusting the cutter height (**photo 7**), thus avoiding any tearing of the wood fibres.

Beginning the veneering

Trim a figured piece of walnut veneer to fit the



7 Extra blades give a fine finish as the cutter follows the template round the column

column using the MDF template as a guide (**photo 8**); note that it's not necessary to veneer the timber's wheel area.

Glue the veneer to the column's face using

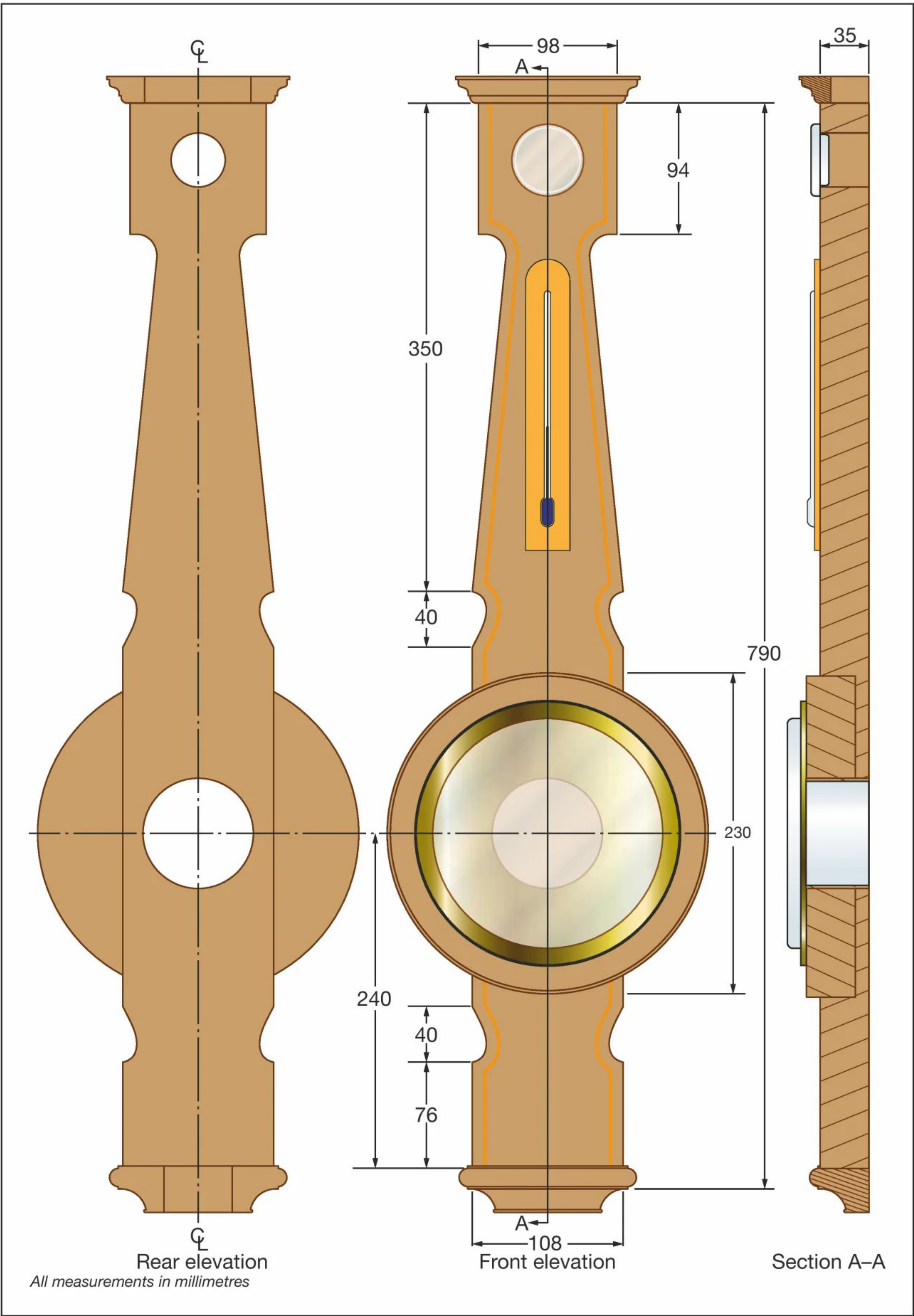


Fig.1 Barometer dimensions



10 Create an 8mm rebate wide round the perimeter, then use a rebate cutter

PVA adhesive, spread evenly onto the timber and hold in place until it's set (**photo 9**). As can be seen in the photo, I used a vacuum press, but equally satisfactory results can be obtained using a piece of carpet tile, MDF scrap and some cramps.

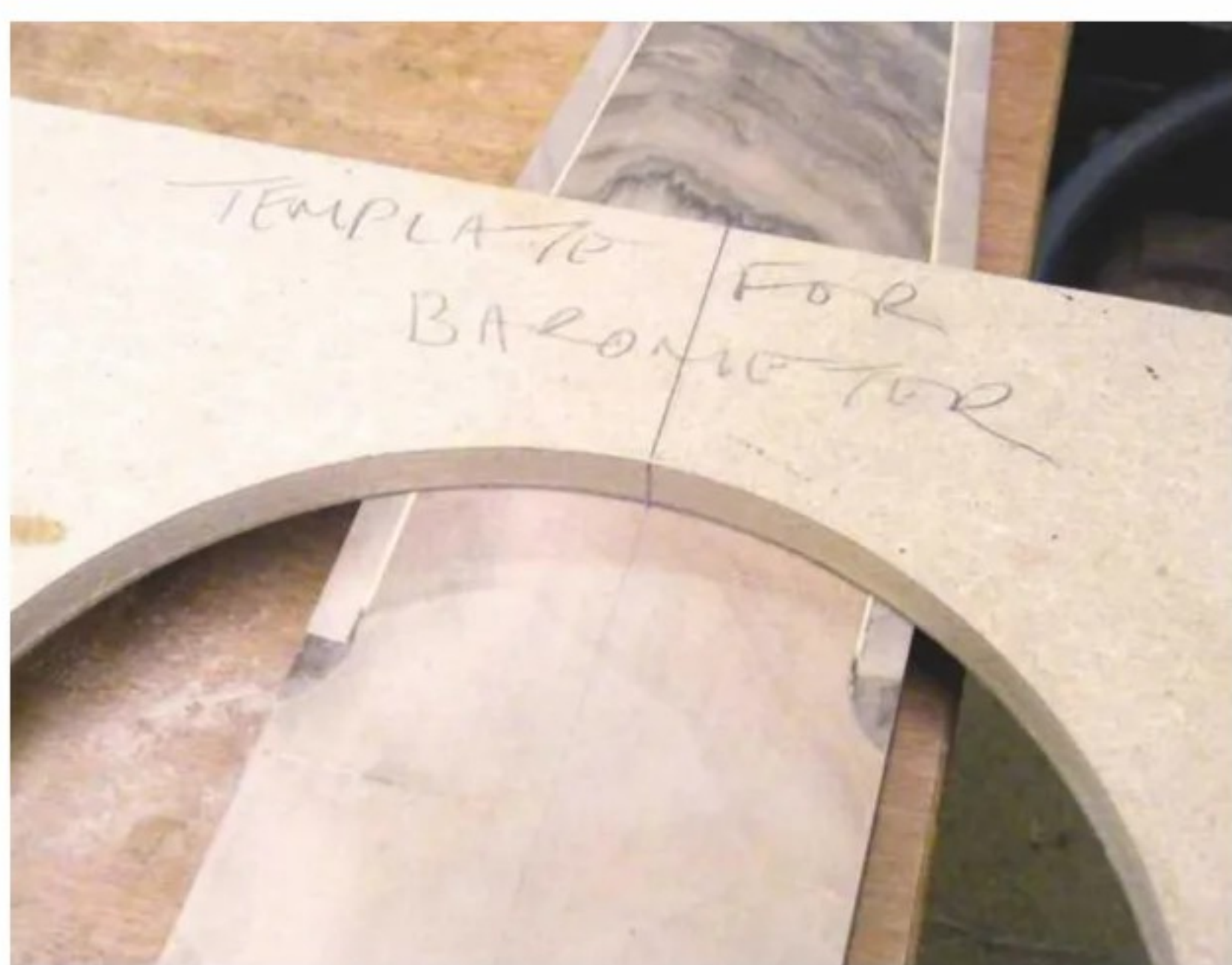
Cutting edge rebates

The next stage requires care with the router. Fit a bearing-guided rebate cutter with a suitable bearing to cut an 8mm wide rebate (**photo 10**). Set the cutter depth to a little under the veneer's thickness. Test the set-up on a piece of scrap timber, then fit a piece of veneer into the rebate. Ideally the veneer should be level with the timber's surface.

Once satisfied with the set-up, cramp the column to the workbench and run the router along both long edges, taking particular care not to tilt the router base. Keep the bearing pressed against the timber's side. The result is an evenly cut rebate following the column's profile to a depth that suits the cross-banding veneer.



13 Divide the wheel into 30° equal segments and glue on the veneer wedges



16 Align the template pencil marks with the column's centreline



11 Glue and pin the stringing in place against the rebate's inner edge

Adding decoration

Glue some 1mm stringing in place against the veneer's rebated edge (**photo 11**), and trim carefully. Start by fitting the stringing into the curves, and secure these with pins until the adhesive has dried. If the stringing is a little stiff, hold a piece in the spout of a boiling kettle to soften the timber, then wrap it round a jam jar until it's dried. Simply glue the straight pieces in place.

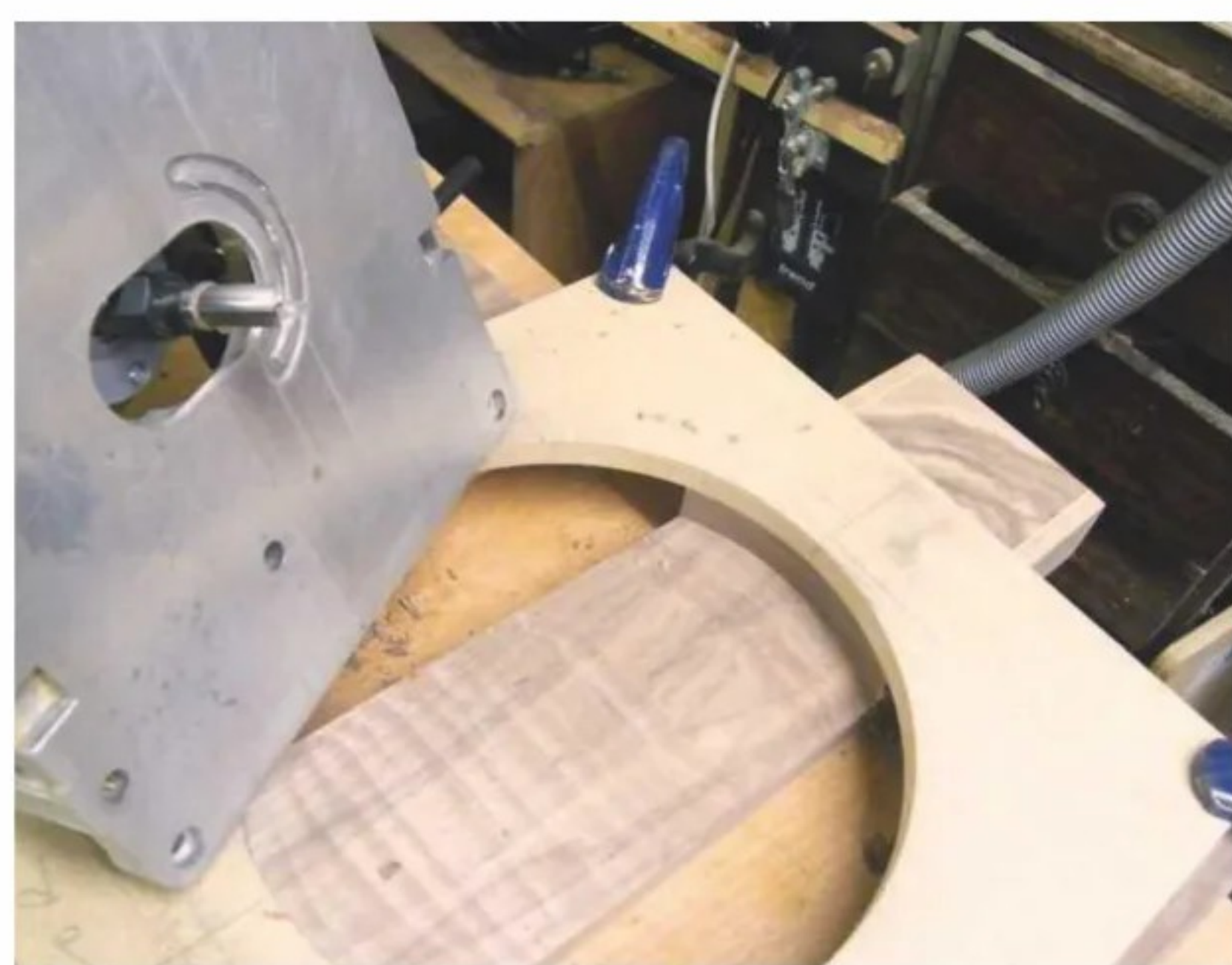
Tackle the cross-banding a short length at a time. The easiest way to deal with the curved sections is to cut short wedge-shaped pieces and glue them in place, working your way around the perimeter in stages. These pieces need to be held down firmly as the glue dries to avoid an unsightly fit on the barometer's edge; this is best achieved using the carpet tile and MDF technique mentioned earlier (**photo 12**).

Tackling the wheel

The wheel is veneered in a similar way to the column. I used a protractor to divide the circle



14 Note the reduced bearing on the trimmer for cutting the stringing rebate



17 Use the router to remove waste timber to half the column's depth



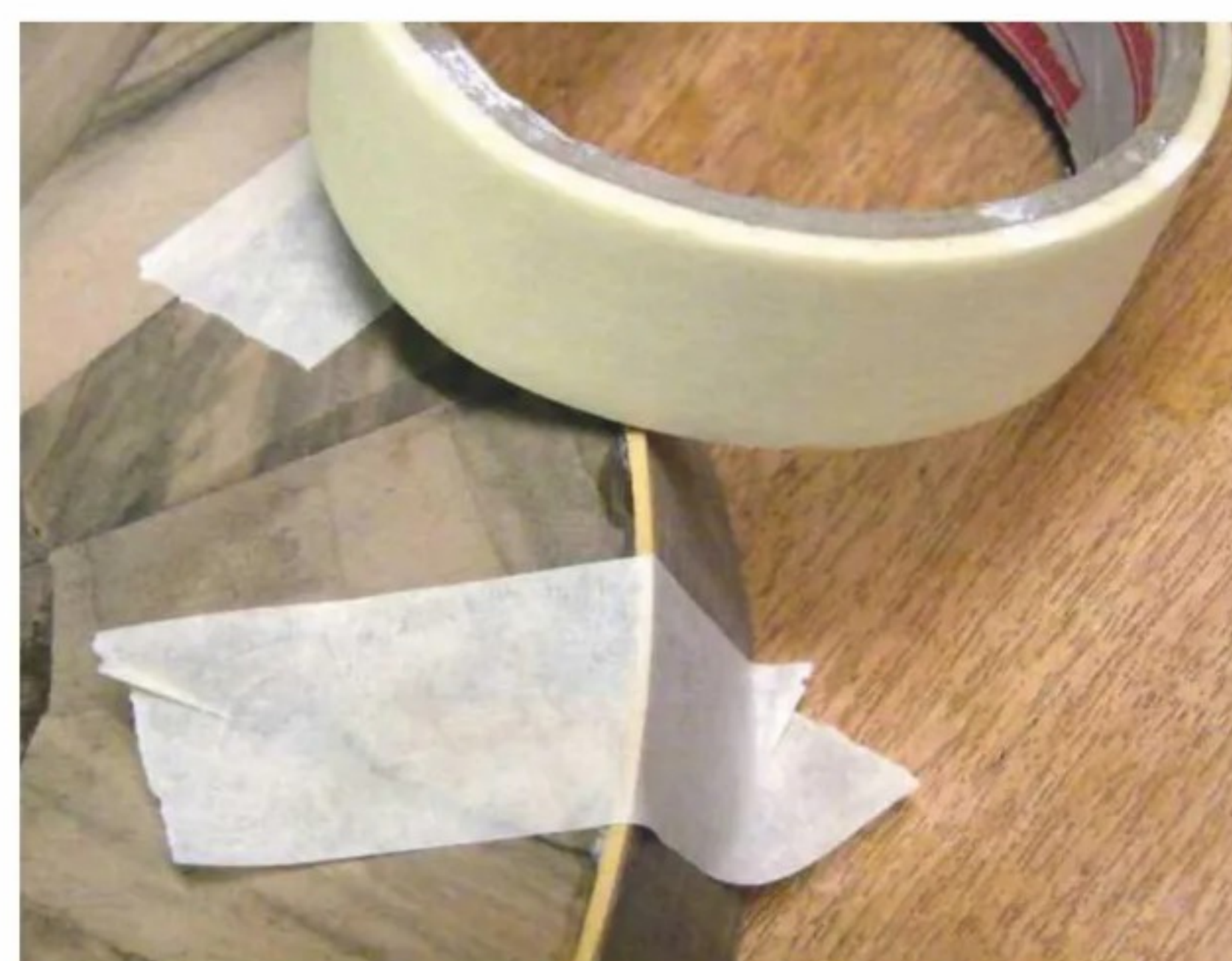
12 Add the cross-banding in stages, and cramp in place using a carpet tile offcut

into 30° segments, and made a scrap MDF template to cut the individual wedges to size. The wedge needs to only be about 50mm in length as the barometer itself will cover most of it (**photo 13**). When the face has been covered in veneer, trim off any overhang with a sharp knife.

Next, a rebate needs to be cut to suit the stringing that'll be wrapped around the perimeter at the next stage, and the following method works well. Use a bearing-guided trimmer fitted with a smaller diameter guide wheel to give a 1.5mm rebate (**photo 14**). Set the depth of cut to suit your stringing, and make a test cut on a piece of hardwood.

If all's well, secure the wheel to the workbench either with some double-sided tape or use a suction table. Work carefully around the wheel's perimeter, taking care to keep the guide wheel pressed against the timber and the router base firmly on the work. Use a sharp cutter to avoid a torn finish on the veneer.

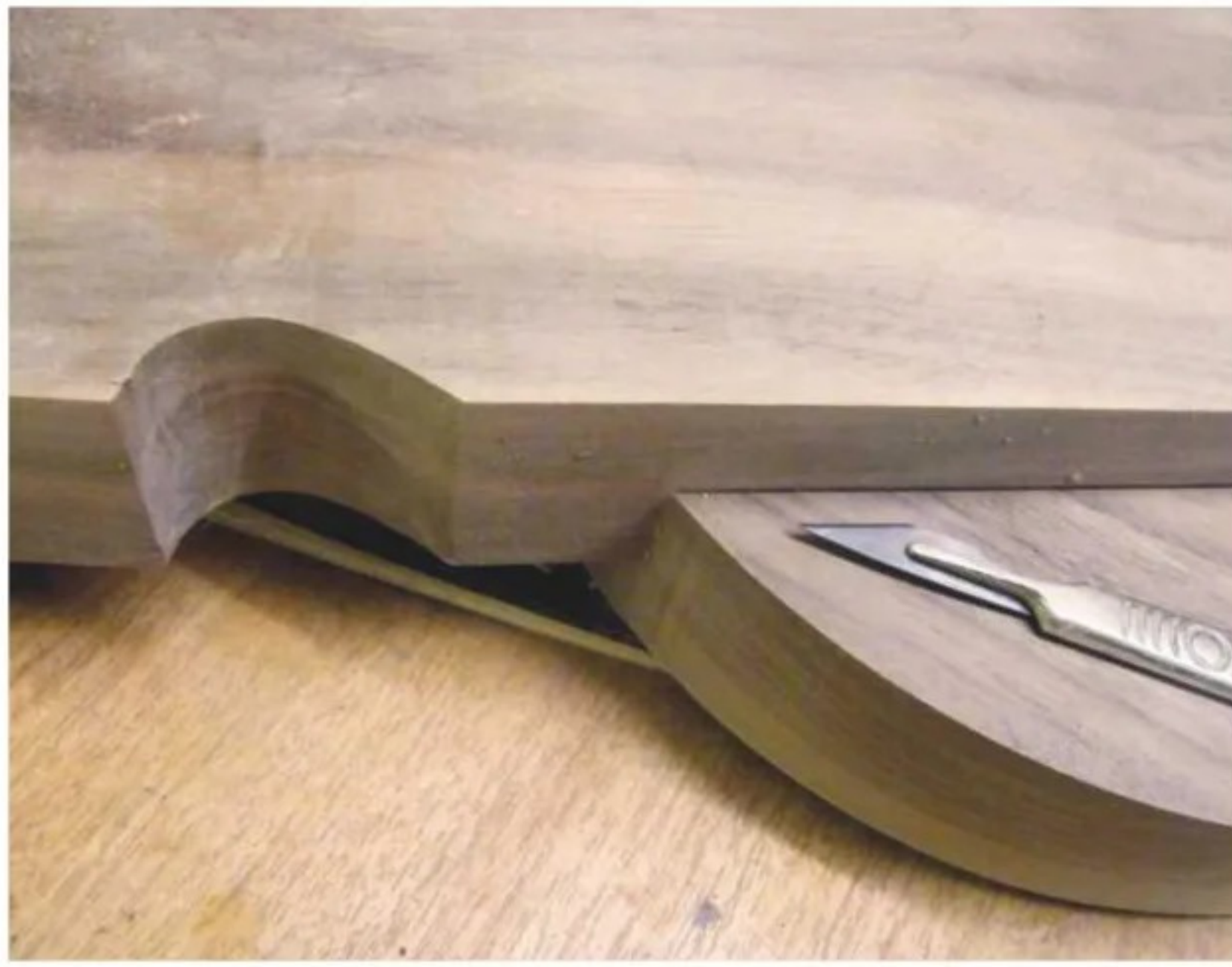
Glue the stringing in place and use masking tape to secure it until dry (**photo 15**). Ideally the



15 Secure the stringing with masking tape until the adhesive has dried



18 Repeat the process to leave a trench on the wheel's rear face



19 The wheel sits proud of the column when the two parts are assembled

join where the lengths of stringing meet should be scarfed, as a butt joint can be a little obvious.

The tricky bit...

Draw a straight pencil line along the column's centre where the wheel will be recessed. Take the larger template and clamp this in place after lining up the small lines on the circle's interior with those on the column. Position it so there's an equal distance between the disc and the column's small decorative indentations (**photo 16**). Next, fit a trimmer with the bearing at the cutter's top and use this to remove the waste timber to half the column's depth (**photo 17**).

Take extra care to keep the edges sharp as the router breaks out of the column. Several shallow passes are better than trying to remove it in one or two attempts.

Fortunately I have a small router table, originally made by Elu, that can be inverted to support the router over the entire template. In the absence of this, make a suitable base from some MDF and screw this to the router's base for extra support.

An even trickier bit

Draw a pencil line lightly through the wheel face's centre and use a square to extend the line down the wheel's edges. Place the wheel on the column and line up the pencil marks with the pencil line previously drawn down the column's centre. Hold the two parts in



20 Mould the edge of a wider strip, then trim off the width required...



22 Cut the various sections of moulding to length using a small mitre box

place with some double-sided tape and flip the barometer over. Now butt two pieces of MDF up tight against the column on the wheel's rear face and cramp them in place. Remove the column.

Now use a bearing-guided trimmer (**photo 18**) to remove the waste and leave a trench in the wheel's rear to accept the column. Set the depth of cut so the trench is about 5mm less than half the column's depth. This lets the wheel stand a little proud for a more dramatic effect (**photo 19**). Sand the veneers to a good finish.

Making the mouldings

The mouldings that fit round the barometer's top and base are made using a couple of suitable cutters. Begin by moulding the edge of a wider timber strip before ripping the moulding off with a saw (**photo 20**).

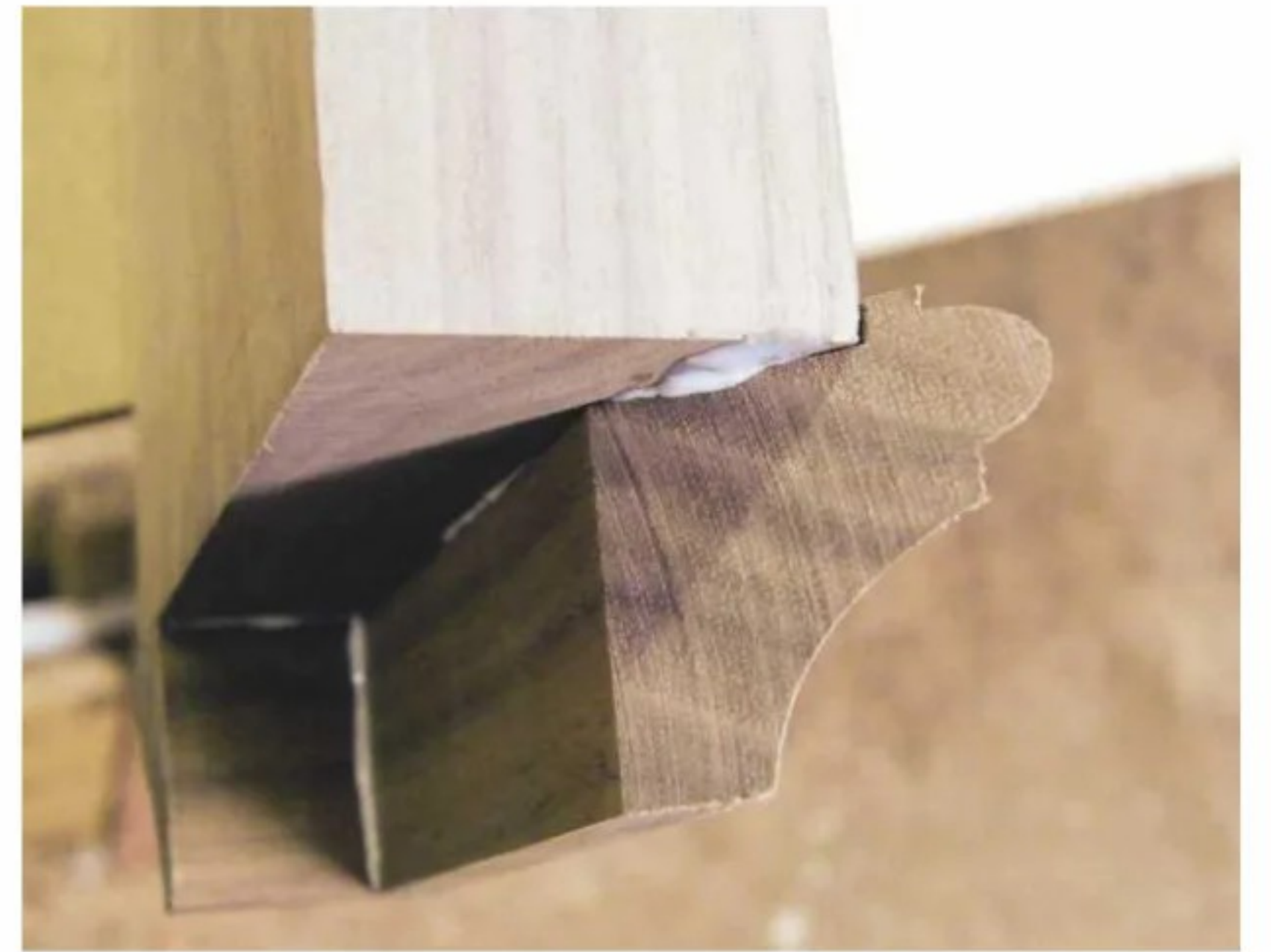
An alternative method is to use double-sided tape to secure the wood you're moulding to the edge of some scrap timber (**photo 21**). Next, cut the moulding to length in a small mitre box (**photo 22**), before gluing in place around the column's base and top (**photo 23**).

Finishing off

A project such as this is probably best French-polished. Screw both parts to a length of scrap timber, about



21 ... or stick the wood to be moulded to the edge of some scrap timber



23 Glue the lengths in place round the column's base and top

50mm wide, so they can be held in a vice on the bench. This makes the polishing stage much easier as the polishing rubber can be worked around the barometer sides without touching the work surface (**photo 24**). When the finish has dried, glue both components together.

Fitting the instruments

To fit the hygrometer and barometer, cut two holes into the barometer's face. Although I cut these out after polishing, in retrospect it'd probably be easier to cut these circles out at an earlier stage. Certainly the top hole is more easily cut out before the top moulding is secured in place. The large hole for the barometer is easily cut out using a scrollsaw, while a suitably sized hole saw is ideal for the smaller hygrometer opening.

Before finally fitting the instruments, apply a soft wax and buff the barometer to a sheen, then attach a small brass mirror fixing bracket to the rear, which allows the barometer to hang on the wall. ✂



24 Polish, wax and assemble the parts and glue them together, ready for the instruments

FURTHER INFORMATION

Weather instruments

Barometer World

Tel: 07938 500 024

Web: www.barometerworld.co.uk

Turners Retreat

Tel: 01302 744 344

Web: www.turners-retreat.co.uk

Vacuum presses

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AROUND THE HOUSE WITH PHIL DAVY



Have you ever struggled to identify a particular timber, either one that's part of a piece of furniture or one you're actually using? Having recently been asked at my local Men's Shed to repair a rather dilapidated garden bench, a number of seat slats were broken and needed replacing. With an almost unlimited supply of recycled wood stored in an adjacent barn, I found some rather nice mahogany – a conservatory in a previous life. This machined well, though I still needed a couple of slats without wasting some heavier section timber. On cue, a friend added some unwanted hardwood to the stash, which he said had also originally been a bench.

After planing, this grubby, dense wood revealed a gorgeous dark red surface, with fascinating grain. After much online research I'm almost certain it's ekki, a tropical hardwood from West Africa. Reckoned to be the most durable African timber, its mineral deposits blunt edge tools rapidly. Interestingly, it'd previously been a piece of B&Q garden furniture!

USEFUL KIT/PRODUCT WOLFCRAFT ACCUMOBIL DRILL GUIDE

For boring holes exactly at 90°, there's no doubt a pillar or bench drill is the best machine for the job. But these are hardly portable, so freehand drilling is essential much of the time. Without some sort of jig it's all too easy to allow the bit to tilt slightly out of square, which can be pretty annoying. Wolfcraft is famous for producing cost-effective gadgets for power tools, and the Accumobil drill guide is one of its latest aids for the woodworker.

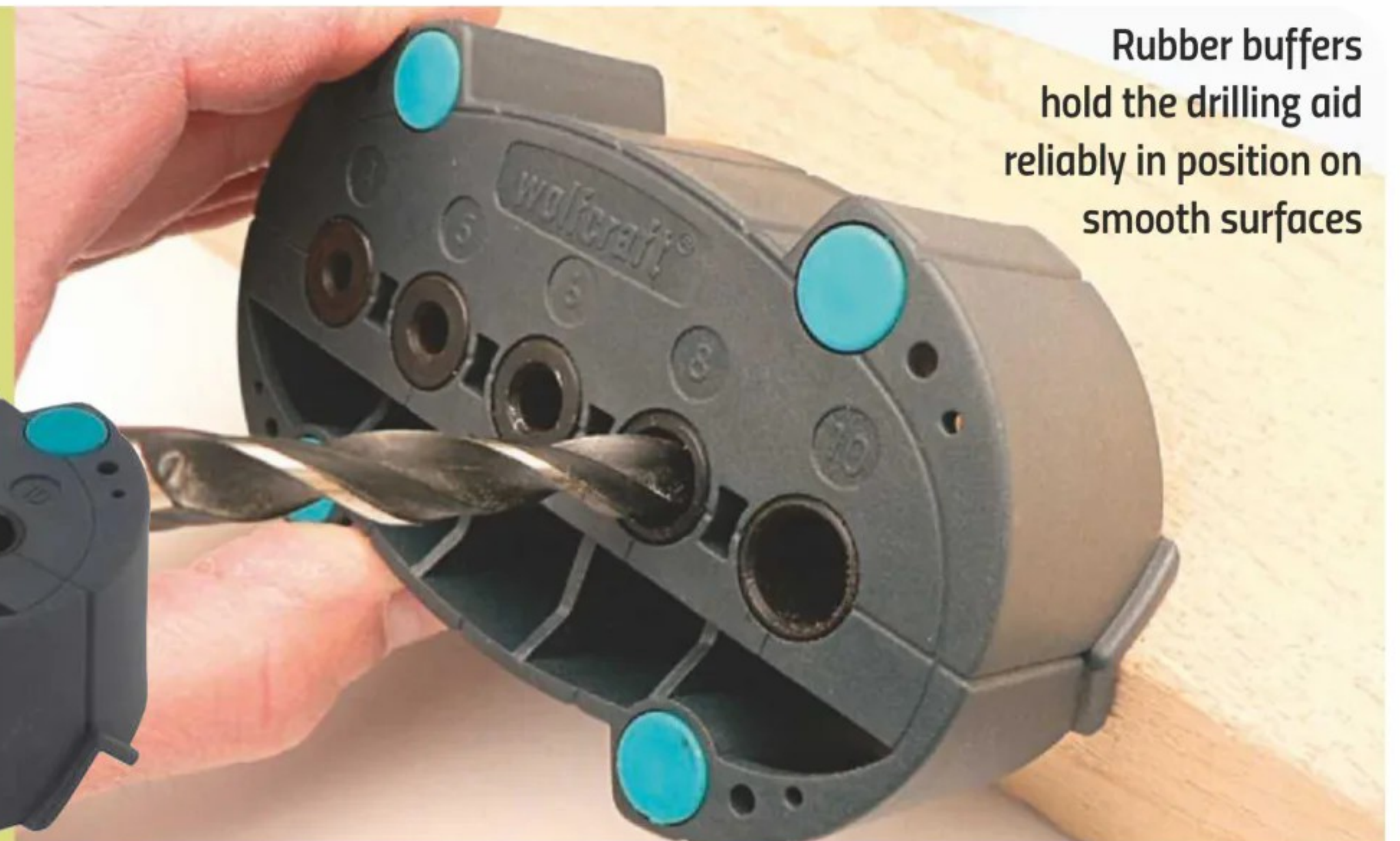
Made from glass fibre-reinforced plastic, the device is certainly sturdy. Measuring 32mm deep, it consists of a row of five hardened steel collars: 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10mm in diameter. You simply align the vertical guide marks with pencilled lines on any surface, insert the correct bit, and bore the hole. Four soft rubber feet provide grip, though you still need to hold the unit steady. For drilling close to a board's edge you could add a clamp. Underneath, 'V' cut-outs allow the Accumobil to be used for drilling dowel or pipework. It can even be used to drill at 45° into the edge of timber, though you may need to chamfer the edge slightly first.

For deep drilling, you can obviously use the device to start the hole, then withdraw the bit and continue drilling without the guide. Dowel – lip and spur – bits work well, though twist bits are just as effective. Small enough to store in a cordless drill case, the Wolfcraft Accumobil may offer a solution to many of those tricky drilling situations, though don't expect the precision of a bench-top machine

A simple and precise
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of vertical holes



Rubber buffers
hold the drilling aid
reliably in position on
smooth surfaces



SPECIFICATION

Typical price: £14.50

Web: www.wolfcraft.com

RATING – **PERFORMANCE: 3.5** OUT OF 5

RATING – **VALUE: 4** OUT OF 5

USEFUL KIT/PRODUCT HAMILTON 'FOR THE TRADE' FIVE- PIECE SYNTHETIC PAINTBRUSH SET

Most woodworkers know it's easy to spoil a project at the finishing stage, whether through poor sanding or actually applying the finish. When varnishing or oiling it makes sense to use a decent quality brush, but you don't actually need to spend a fortune. This five-piece set from Hamilton is just the job for general varnishing or painting tasks.

Handles are beech, rather than nasty plastic, so are comfortable to grip. What's more, they feature solid, tapered synthetic filaments, which reduces tramlines, and provides a controlled finish. When applying a clear finish, I usually write on a new brush handle in felt tip pen to identify this, so the tool never gets contaminated by using paints or stains. Natural beech makes this a cinch. Comprising one 25mm, two 90mm and two 50mm brushes, this pack is certainly excellent value

The five-piece
set includes
one 25mm,
two 90mm
and two
50mm
brushes



Each of
the fine-
tipped
flat brushes
features
solid,
tapered
synthetic
filaments



SPECIFICATION

Typical price: £12.14

Web: www.toolstation.com

RATING – **PERFORMANCE: 4** OUT OF 5

RATING – **VALUE: 4.5** OUT OF 5

Takes:
Two hours

Tools you'll need:
Steel rule, combination square, bradawl, drill and bits, coping saw, chisel, hammer, screwdriver

**WINTER PROJECT:
SUFFOLK LATCH**

ON THE LATCH

Taking only a few hours to install, follow **Phil Davy's** simple steps for installing a Suffolk latch on a ledged and braced door and be sure to avoid any of the common pitfalls

Traditional Suffolk latches date back to the latter part of the 16th century, being distinguishable from the later Norfolk latches by the absence of a backplate. These latches can add the authentic finishing touch to an internal ledged and braced door, especially in a period cottage. But they're not always straightforward to fit. Nowadays, most of the more expensive latches are hand-forged in India, which explains their rather rustic appeal. Screws supplied can be a bit hit or miss – the countersunk slotted ones provided with this latch didn't look right, and should ideally be round head.

Originally, latches would simply have been nailed to the door, with the tips clenched over. You'd position a latch about two-thirds up from the floor, with the latch bar fitted on the door's opening side.



1 Using a combination square, mark the hole for the thumb lever on both sides of the ledged and braced door. Tongued & grooved boards extend the full width and aren't framed



2 Draw the slot needed for the thumb lever and drill holes top and bottom. To prevent breakout, either cramp an offcut to the door's reverse or drill from both faces



3 Slacken off the coping saw blade, insert an end through the upper hole and re-tension the tool. Make two vertical cuts to link the top and bottom holes, so forming a slot



4 Check the thumb lever's fit in the slot, and enlarge if necessary. The lever's curved end acts as a pull handle, passes through the door, and lifts the latch bar as necessary



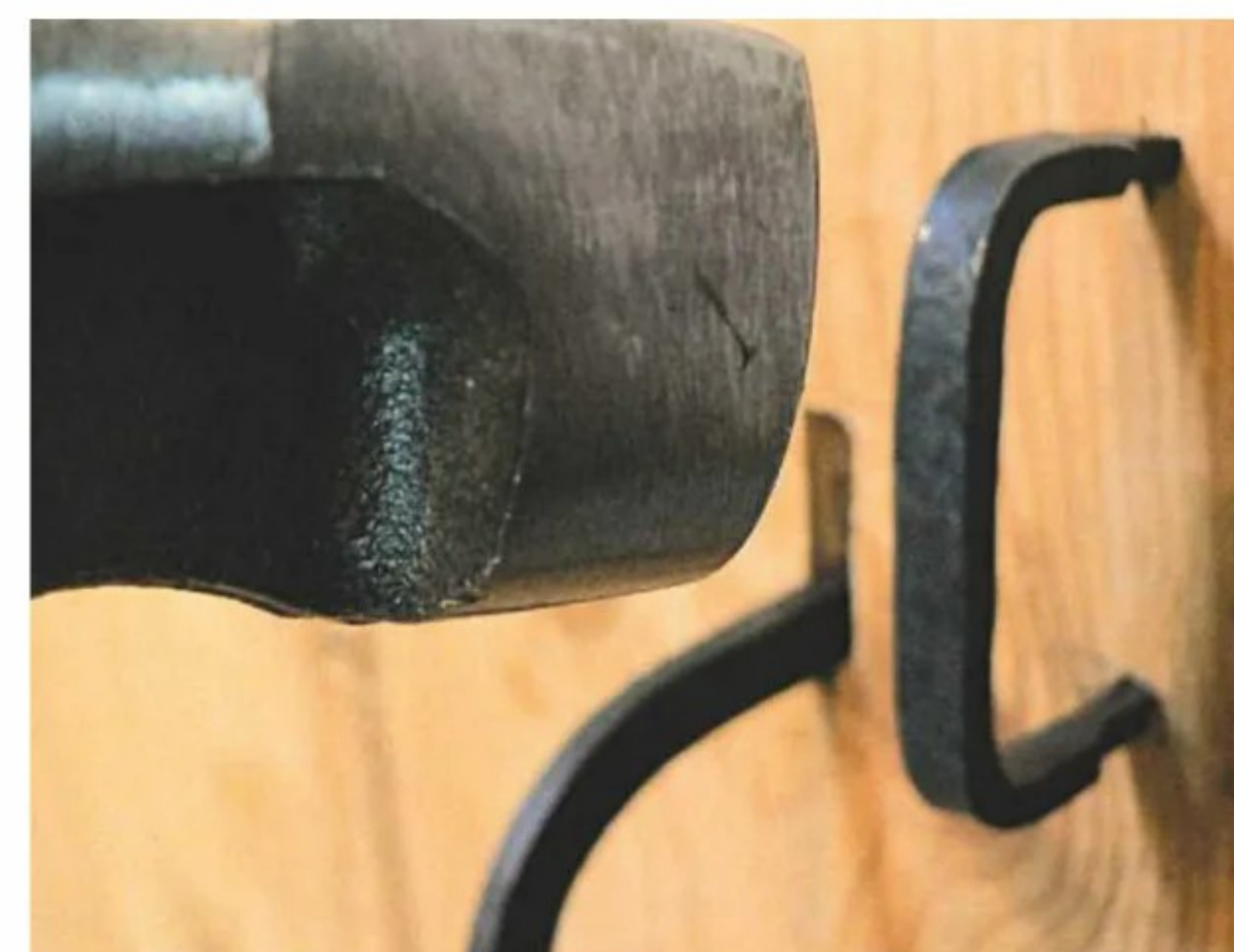
5 Position the handle against the door and mark fixing holes with a bradawl. Drill and screw in place, lining up the slots for neatness. Round head screws would be neater here



6 If the latch bar is too long, cut to length with a hacksaw. Wrap masking tape around the steel to form a clear cutting line. Clean up the sawn end with a file



7 Place the bar above the thumb lever, mark the end hole centre and screw it to the door. Avoid fixing through a joint between adjoining boards. Check to ensure the bar rises and falls



8 A staple is driven into the door to retain the latch bar. Mark its spikes, drill pilot holes and tap in place, taking care not to split the wood. Traditionally, spikes would be clenched over



9 Draw around the bar end where it meets the architrave or door jamb. Drill a pilot hole for the frame keep's spike, which will be hammered into the wood for a tight fit



10 The frame keep for this latch is rounded at the bottom and awkward to affix to Torus architrave. A Forstner bit cuts a clean hole, but hold an offcut in place to centre the drill



11 This keep has a spike at the top and is secured with a screw. Mark and drill a pilot hole to prevent splitting, then insert part way to see whether it fits the architrave



12 Where the latch bar sits behind the keep, cut away architrave with a chisel if necessary. If paint exposes bare wood, tap the spike into the hole and screw the keep in place



13 Check the latch mechanism works correctly from either side. Although not easy to adjust once spikes have been driven in, parts can still be removed and sawn or filed



14 Traditional forged Suffolk latches include bean head and Gothic patterns, as used here. You can purchase staples with locking pins for use on bathroom and toilet doors

WINTER PROJECT: WINDOW BOARD REPLACEMENT

WINDOW MADE NEW

Phil Davy shows how to quickly and easily replace a rotten window board

Renewing a rotten window board is straightforward, though be prepared for plenty of dust and debris as you remove the old one. I used pine board, which is available from most DIY sheds in both 18 and 22mm thicknesses. It has one long rounded edge and comes in several widths and lengths. Once cut to size, treat with preservative. When using solid timber, it's a good idea to elongate the screw holes; this allows for movement and prevents splitting.

Finally, ensure any exterior work is carried out. Here, gaps in the pointing meant that driving rain was finding its way inside.



Takes:
Three hours

Tools you'll need:
Bolster, club hammer,
narrow cold chisel,
cheap screwdriver,
jigsaw or hand saw,
router, filling knife



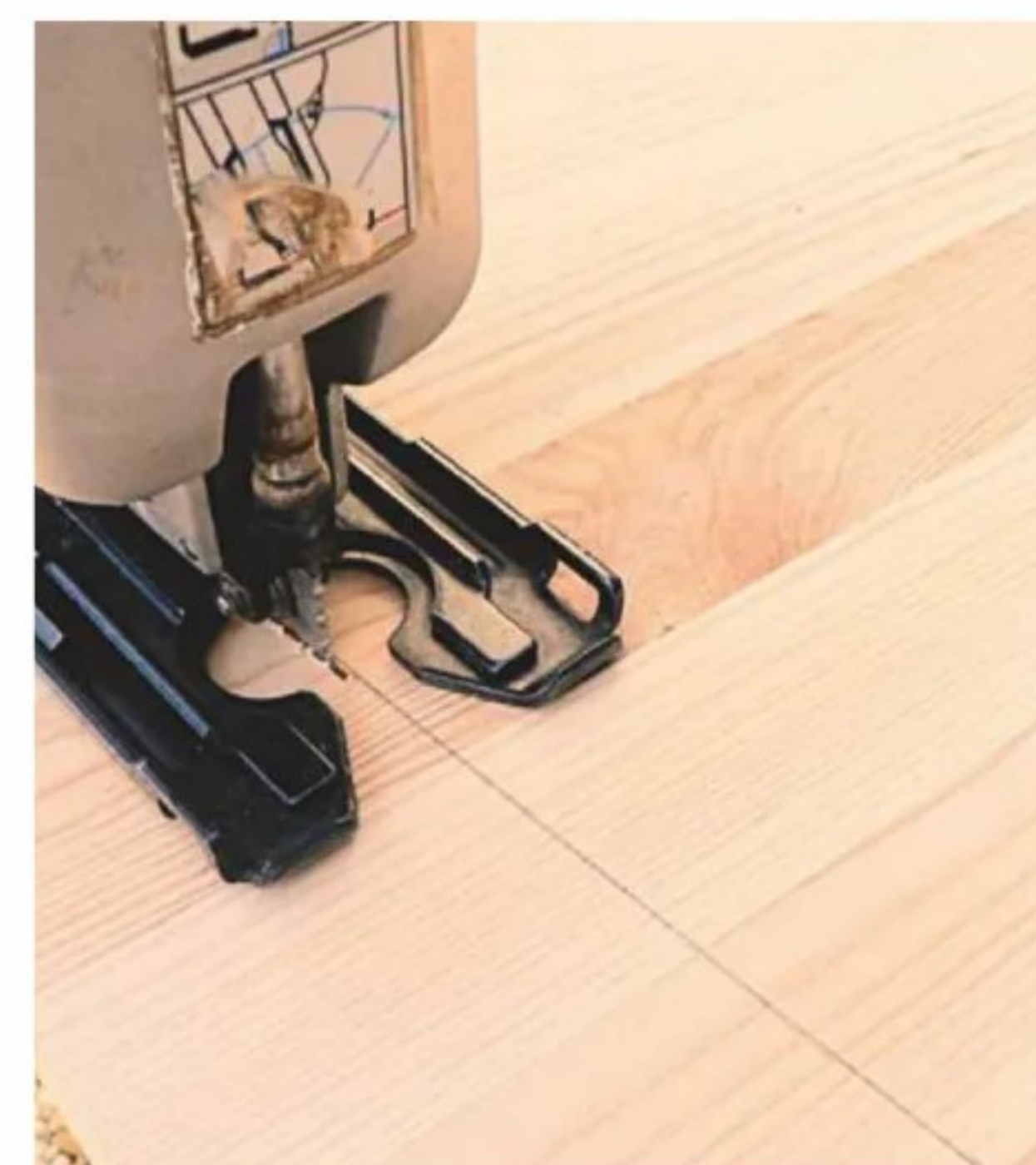
1 This old window board is rotten in the corner, due to damp penetration from defective pointing. The window frame is actually fairly recent and in sound condition



2 Cut a line along the wall with a bolster and club hammer. You'll probably need to do this on both sides above the timber. Rake out the plaster with a narrow cold chisel



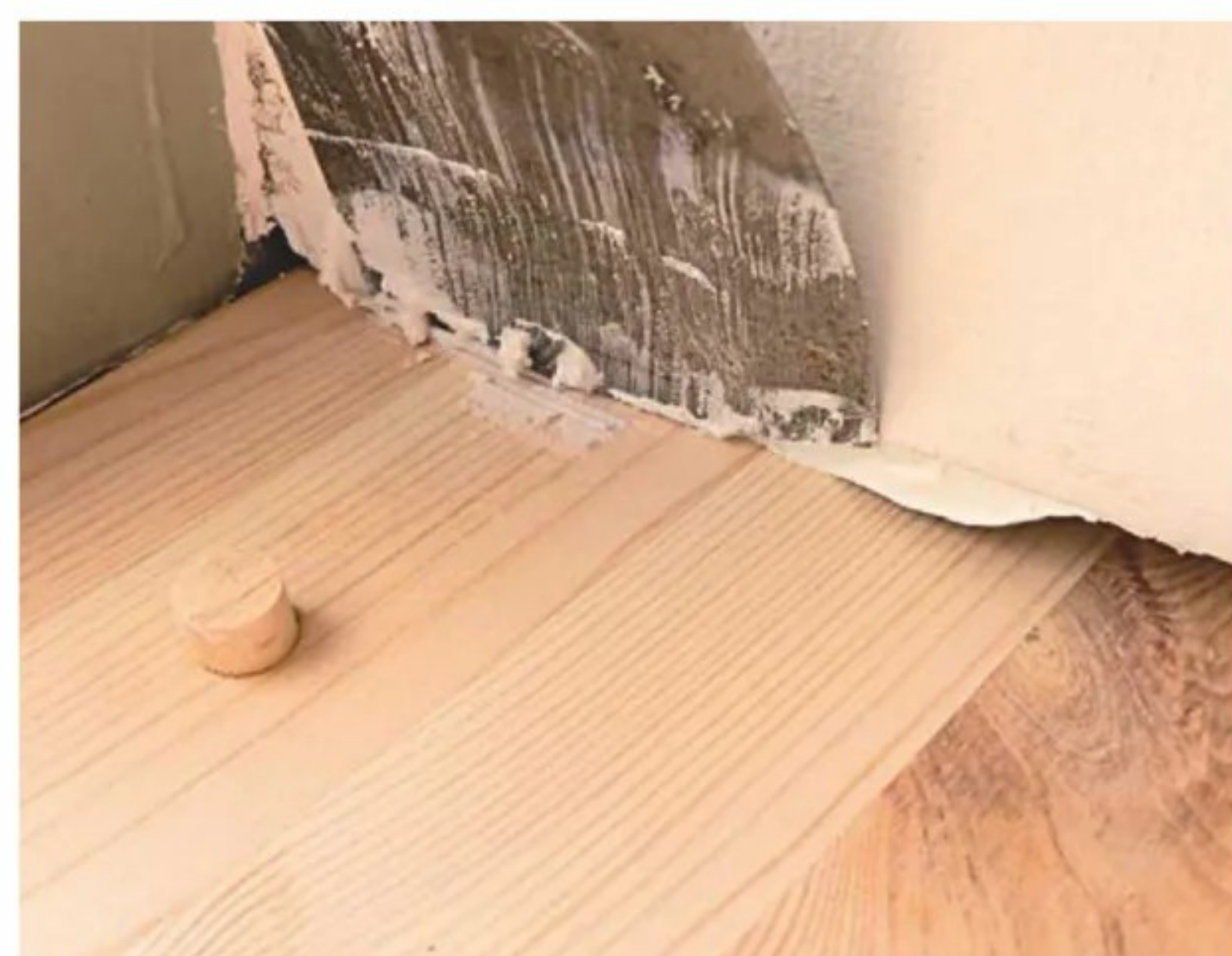
3 You may need to remove nails, so dig down with an old chisel or grind a cheap screwdriver for this job. Ease out the old window board and use this as a template for the new one



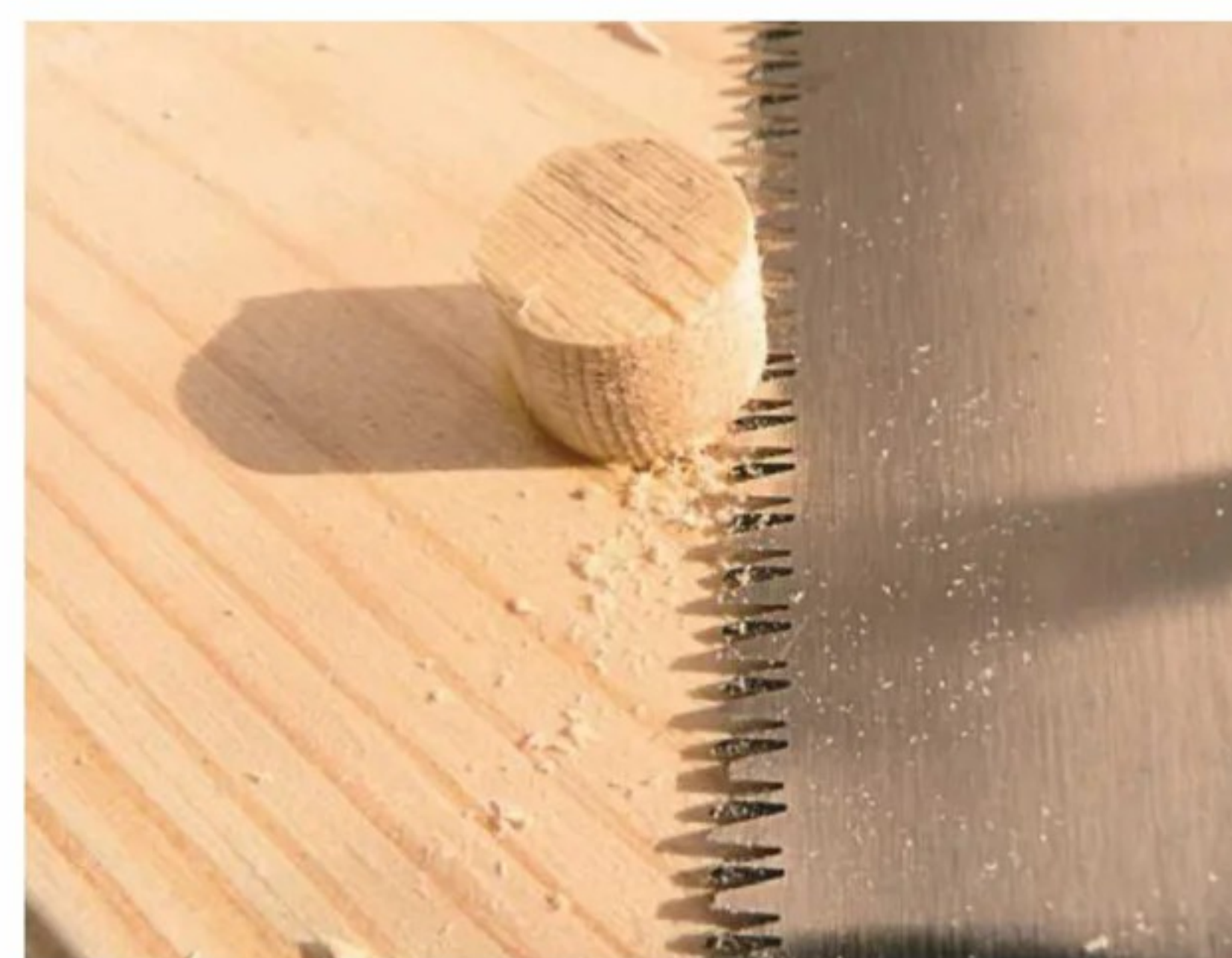
4 If the window board is to be painted, MDF will be more stable. Here, the timber will be stained, so pine board is a good choice. Cut to size with a jigsaw or hand saw



5 Try the new board in the opening and trim if necessary. If there's a groove along the back of the window frame, rout a tongue on the board's rear edge to fit. Screw into place



6 If the gaps around the masonry are quite small, use a suitable filler. Smooth off the surface with a damp filling knife and allow to dry. For larger gaps, make good with plaster



7 If fixing the board with screws, holes should be counterbored. Cut plugs and tap these home with PVA. Saw off excess material. Sand and seal the board with preservative ✕



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A PLATTER FULL OF APPLES



Taking a piece of spalted beech he'd had for a long time, **Les Thorne** turns a platter in addition to a selection of apples in various exotic timbers

Many years ago, turning wooden apples and pears was a significant part of my business. I used to make them for local and national retail outlets as well as some for other professional woodturners. Many of these turners attended large craft fairs but were too busy making bowls and pots to create, what's always a great seller.

A little while ago, I was asked to deliver a demonstration to a group at a private club in London, and they specifically requested I bring some apples for sale. Luckily, I still had a few prepared blanks in one of my wood stores, including some really beautiful timber.

The problem I now had was what item I'd use to display them on. This predicament was caused by me lending a good friend, professional turner Gary Rance, my large display platter a few years ago, which he then promptly sold... and never told me.

He then asked me to make another – good job he's one of my best friends! I'd had this piece of spalted beech for a long time and haven't done anything with it until now due to it developing a couple of small cracks, which really renders it unsaleable but perfect for a display piece. In my opinion, a shallow plate does tend to show off the contents better than a bowl.



1 My poor old electric chainsaw struggled through this piece hence the poor quality of cut, but I just about managed to get two for the price of one



2 By taping a pen to one of the arms, large dividers can be turned into a oversized compass. I'm often asked what the best bandsaw blade size is for circles: I find a width of 10mm and 3tpi to be perfect



3 The blank was very thin so the initial holding on the lathe required some thought. Short screws through the faceplate would hopefully not cause any problems, such as leaving holes in the top once I'd hollowed out the plate



4 Here you can see how badly shaped the piece was before I started. At this stage, I wasn't sure whether I'd actually manage to get the desired piece from it as there were so many saw cuts into the blank



5 Turning spalted timber can be a problem due to the fungal spores given off, so it's imperative you take precautions by wearing a decent mask or respirator. The face shield is also important due to the timber splits



6 This cut on the top surface with a bowl gouge will determine the rim's location. The toolrest is swung around to the front, which affords the cutting edge the best possible support



7 There was still a large, deep chainsaw cut in the underside of the platter, which needed to be turned away. The black or zone lines in the wood are where different fungi make barriers against one another



8 The dividers are used once again to transfer the chuck jaws' internal diameter onto the blank. If you're really limited on thickness, you could glue a piece of scrap wood on the bottom and turn your spigot on that



9 Here I'm using dovetailed chuck jaws, so needed to replicate that on my spigot. I used my skew chisel, which is ground to 15° across the top, to cut the desired angle



10 A nice straight piece of timber can be used as a guide to show how flat the bottom is. Mark the high spots with a pencil so you can see these when the blank's spinning



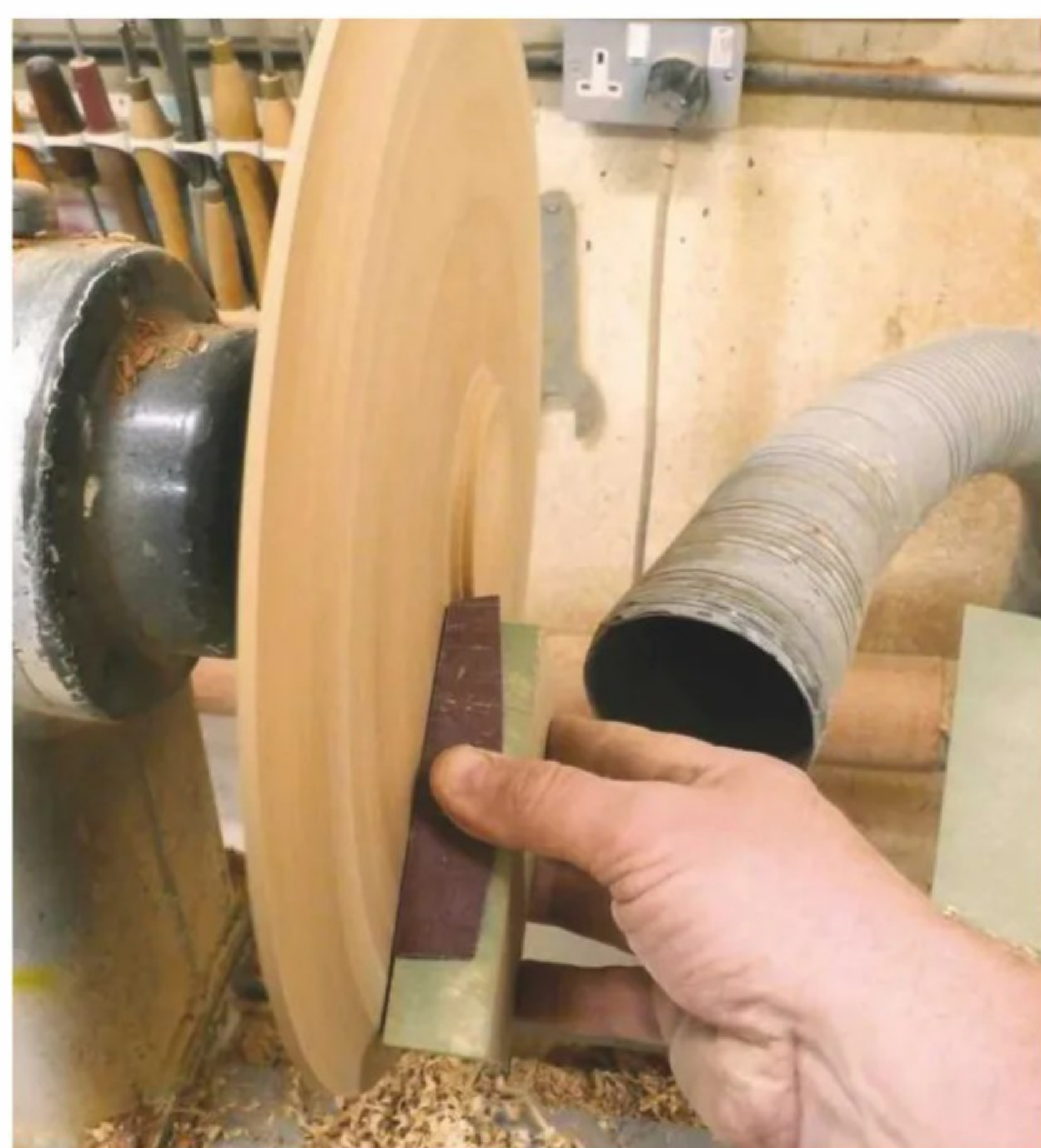
11 One of the easiest techniques for removing small amounts of material is a scrape with a bowl gouge. The tool's flute is pointing at 3 o'clock with the lower wing in contact with the blank's surface



12 Once the bottom is as good as you can get it, it's time to decide what to do with the rim. Half a cove is a simple but effective shape on the edge. This is cut with a bowl gouge, ensuring the bevel is kept in contact with the surface



13 Having my brother's cabinetmaking workshop next door has many advantages and these used sanding belts come in handy for various turning projects, especially as the edges often haven't been used



14 A piece of quality 100 grit abrasive mounted on a wooden block is perfect for flattening off any small discrepancies on the base. Once happy with the shape, I power sanded the rest through the grits down to 400



15 Turn the blank around and begin to hollow out the platter, starting with the rim. At this stage, leave as much stock as possible in the centre; this will prevent some of the vibration that's experienced when turning this thin



16 Regularly check the piece's thickness using a pair of figure-of-eight callipers. Here I'm aiming for something around 8mm; any thinner and the plate would probably fall apart



17 An option for turning thin is to support the work behind the cut with your fingers; this is a technique that should only be used if you're experienced in bowl turning



18 A good tool for cleaning across the bottom on the platter interior is the 60° bowl gouge. This tool is sharpened by rotating it on the grinder platform



19 The tool can be presented to the surface horizontally with its flute pointing at 12 o'clock. A normal bowl gouge presented like this is likely to, at worst, catch and, at best, leave a poor finish



20 Any unevenness can be removed with the 75mm sanding pad with a 100 grit disc. It's important to present as much of the pad's surface to the timber; this stops you creating more problems than you solve



21 Here I'm using a vacuum chuck to hold the platter in order to remove the spigot. Alternatively, this could also be done between centres with the top face up against a wooden disc



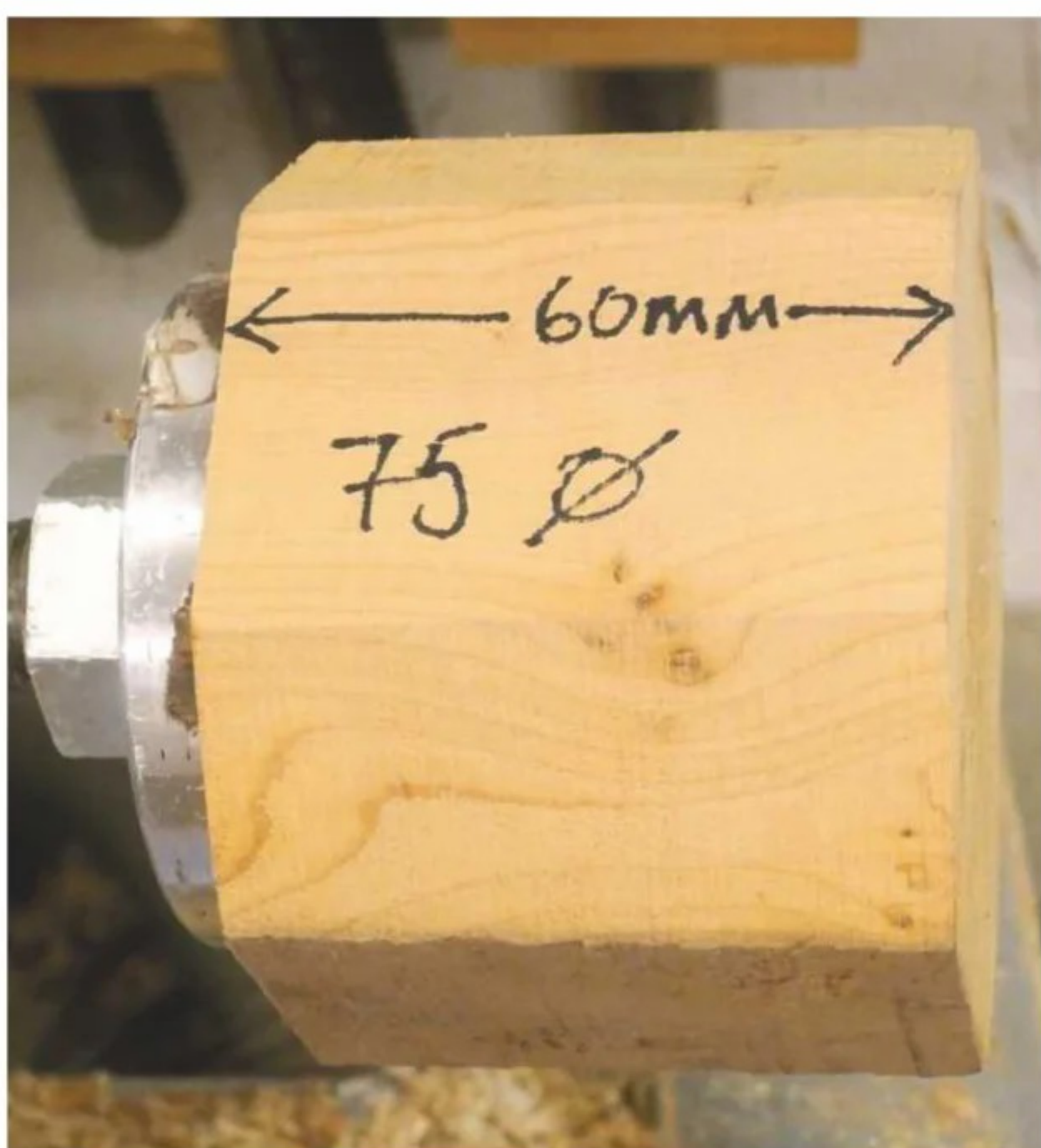
22 Even though the piece is on the vacuum chuck, I keep the tailstock in place for as long as possible. If you don't have the luxury of a vacuum chuck, this last bit will require finishing by hand



23 The little details are everything, so I turn a small button in the base. Always do this after you've sanded with the coarser abrasives otherwise you run the risk of removing all the fine details



24 My set-up for turning apples couldn't be simpler: a screw chuck with a 4.5mm screw and 3mm drill in the tailstock. Here I'm using the versatile Oneway screw chuck, but a home-made version will also do the job



25 Apples are made using exotic timbers, so you want to keep waste to a minimum. Using a 60mm long blank, I can usually get five from a length of 300mm stock



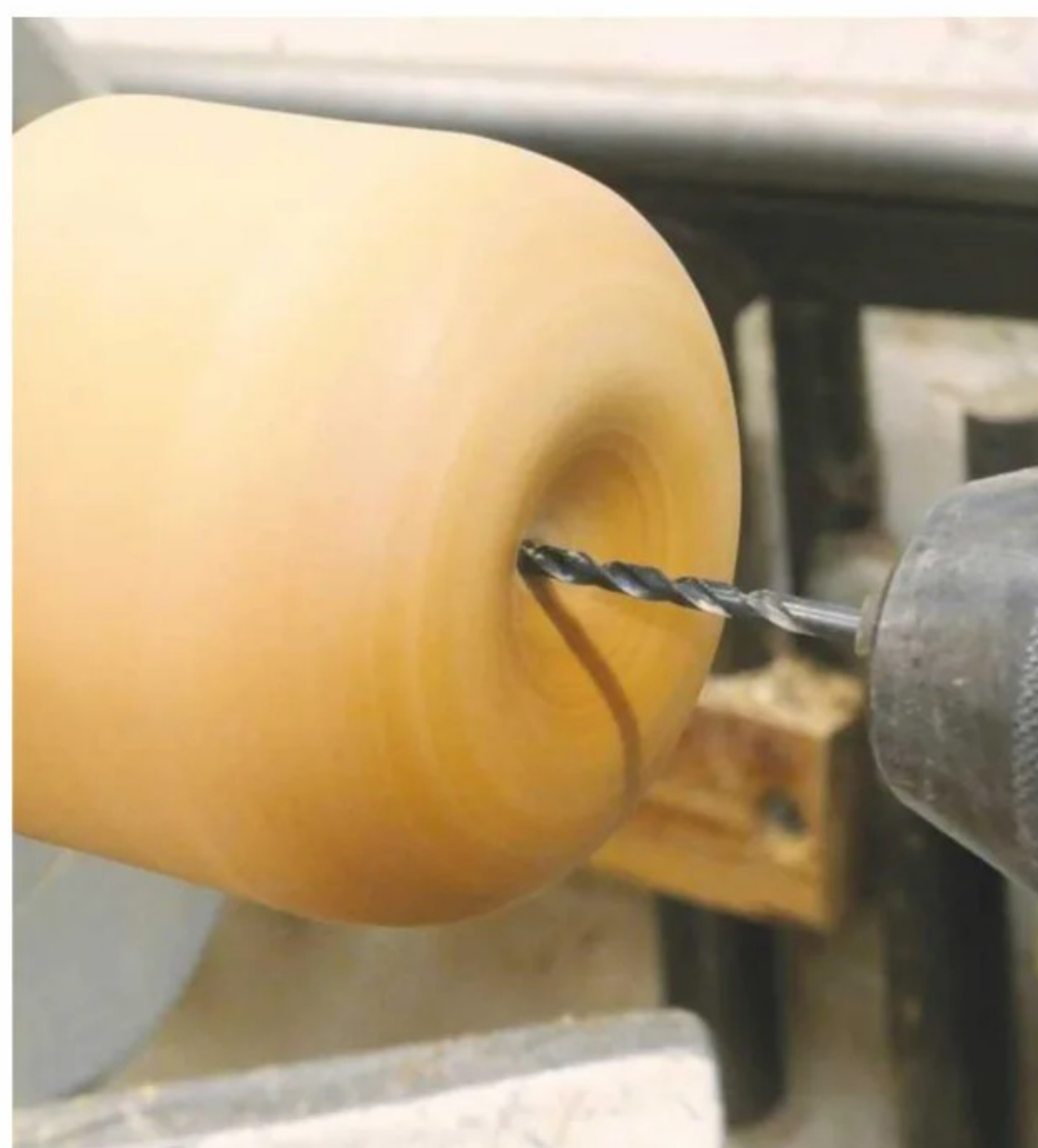
26 After making the blank round with a spindle roughing gouge, the shaping is completed with a 13mm signature gouge. The bevel is in contact with the surface the whole way through the cut



27 You'll need to move the toolrest around the end in order to turn the top. The locking collar on the toolrest's stem allows you to move it without altering the height, which makes the process much more efficient



28 Cutting an indent in the top is difficult; it's important to keep the tool's point away from the wood as you can experience the tip running back, thus causing a dig in. The other thing to remember is that the tool must hit the centre in order to remove the remaining part



29 Drill a 3mm hole in the top as accurately as possible using a drill mounted in the tailstock. If you're working with the harder exotic timbers, increase the drill's size to put less strain on the screw



30 Once you've turned the top and sanded it, reverse the apple onto the screw in order to turn the bottom. A business card held against the aluminium faceplate will prevent the apple's sanded top from getting damaged in the process



31 It's now easy to turn the 'flower' end of the apple. I like to take this down to about 25mm diameter before cutting an indent in the end, just as I did on the stalk



32 If the apple doesn't reverse onto the screw perfectly then it'll run slightly out of true; this isn't a real problem, as you can see here, but it can easily be rectified with a piece of 180 grit abrasive



33 I like a high gloss sprayed and buffed finish on my fruit and the best way to hold the apples for spraying is to use an old bicycle spoke inserted into the hole. The piece can then be easily rotated while applying the lacquer



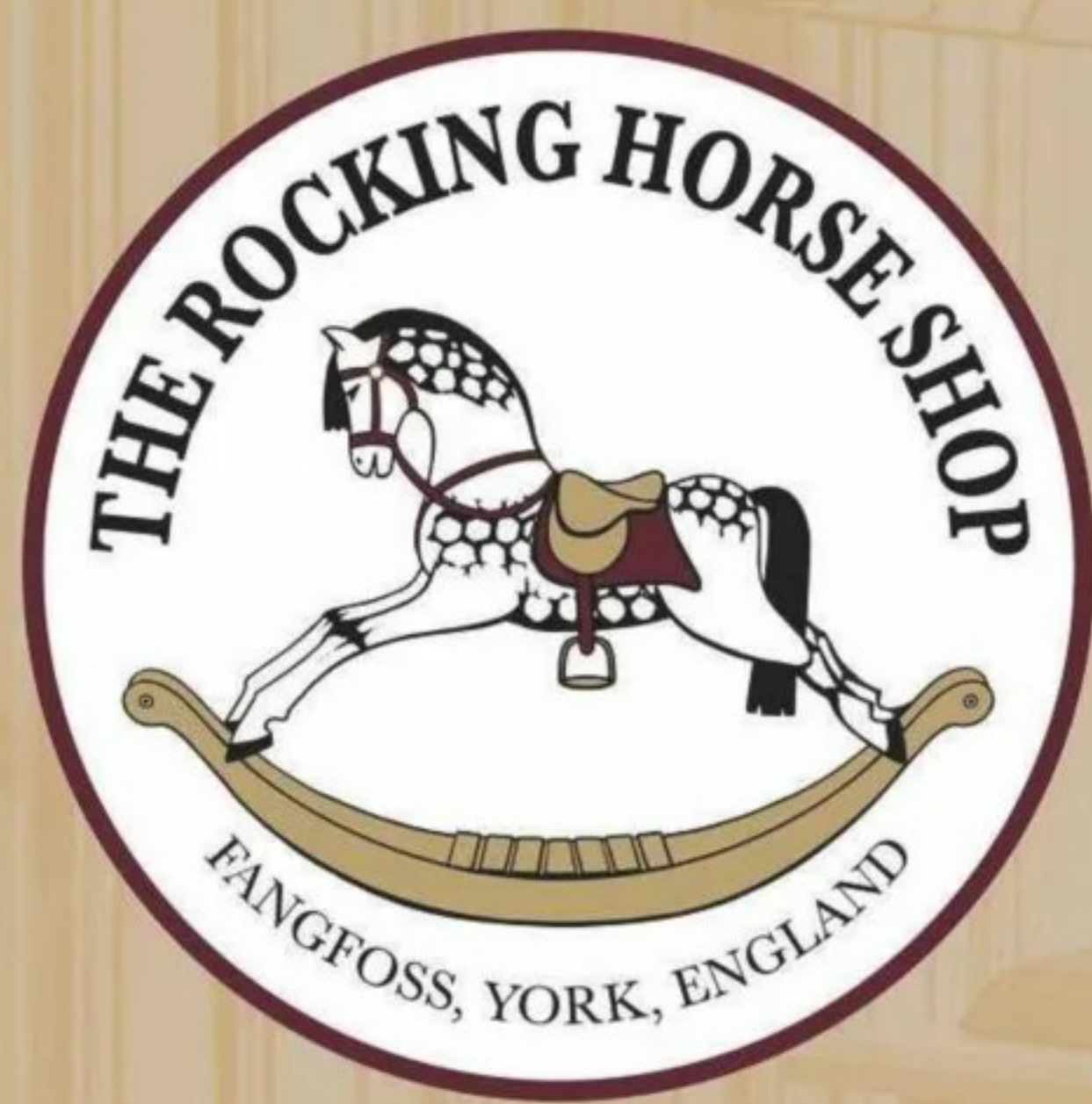
34 What you use to cover the bottom hole is up to you. I like to use a clove that's glued in with CA adhesive; it does look quite natural and the glue will harden up the otherwise soft clove



35 The stalk is made from hazel twigs that've been dried in the microwave; the bark falls off and they're then soaked in black stain for a few days. The stalk is pushed in with a small dab of PVA glue



36 The completed spalted beech platter with a selection of turned apples, shown here in a variety of exotic timbers ✂



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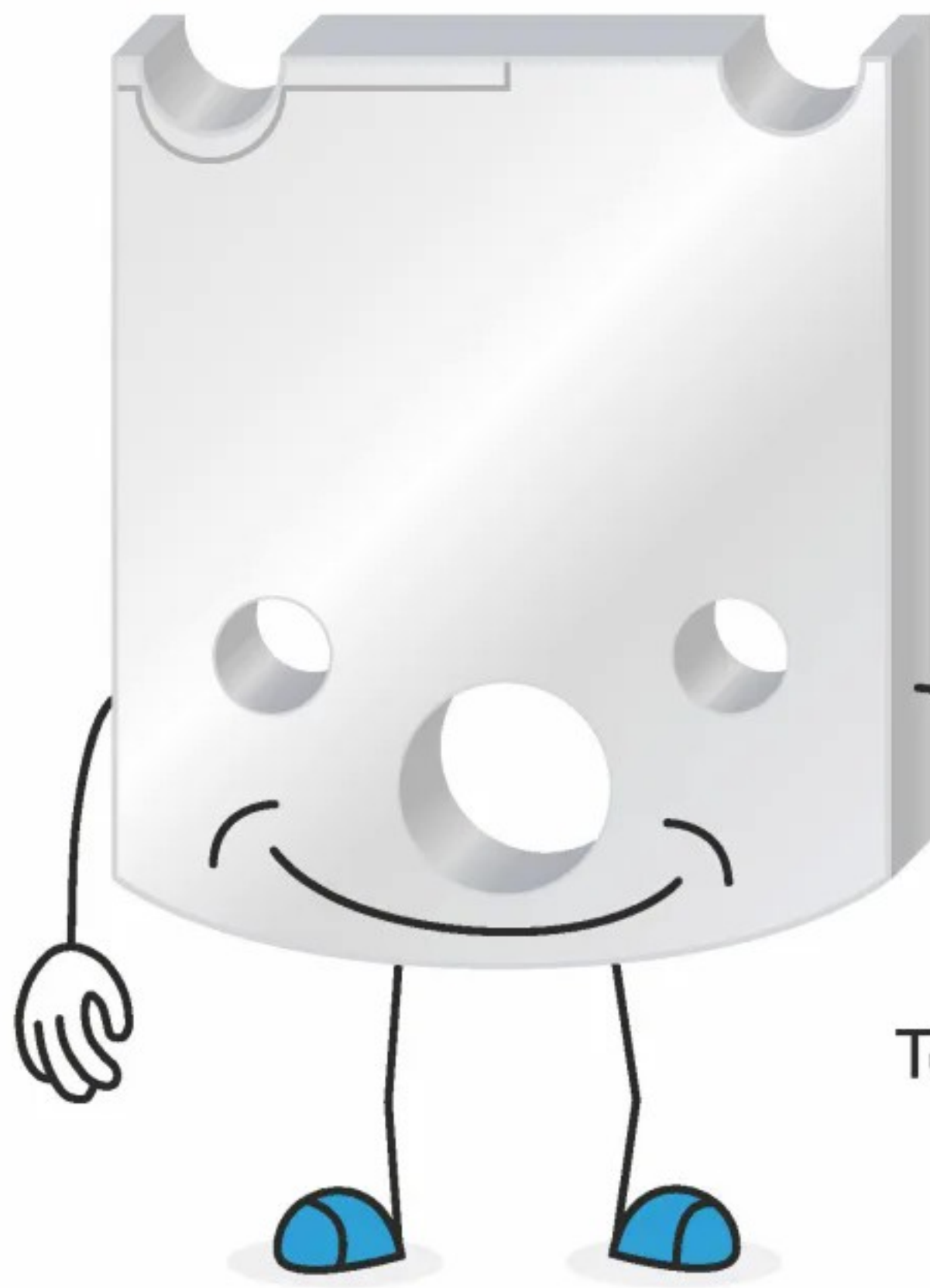
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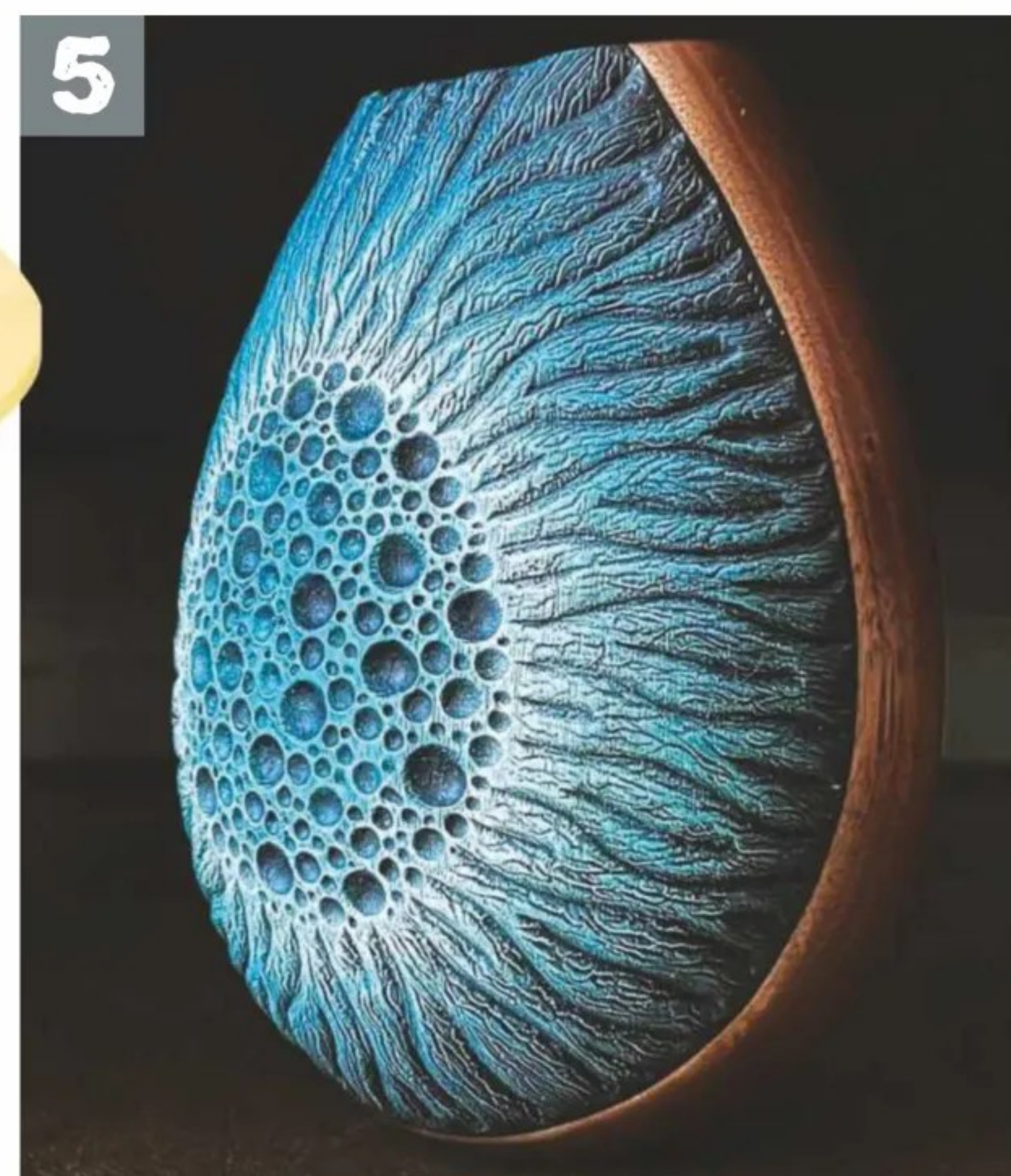
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TAKE

5

Featuring several critically acclaimed pieces, this month's selection includes a recently shortlisted entry for the 2023 Wood Awards and a chest of fitted drawers that breaks free from the confines of conventional furniture



1 'House of Curiosities' – desktop sized, pitched roof house, intended for storing stationery and precious objects, with traditional fitted drawers, made by [@watersandacland](#) student Silvy – [@tsquiggnome](#)

2 Scutoid Stool/Side-Tables by Guy Privett – [@guyprivettdesigns](#) – featuring a hexagon at one end and a pentagon at the other. They feel lovely and solid to sit on and look really striking. Designed to be used independently, or can fit together snugly for a longer surface. According to Guy, these involved "a huge amount of problem solving and 28 separate glue-ups." Recently shortlisted within the Furniture – Student Designer category of the Wood Awards 2023 – [@woodawards](#)

3 Little turned scoops in wildly spalted beech, by Dominic Pearce – [@cornishwoodsmith](#) – made to accompany his 'Koffi Lestryn' containers

4 'Lily Pad Table' by David Liu – [@davidliu_design](#) – the opposite sides grow together and are tightly connected; "however, there's always twilight in between if you pay enough attention to the hope"

5 Carved walnut vessel by Greg Gallegos – [@naturalselectionstudio](#) – 146mm tall x 100mm diameter: "There's no end to different shapes and textures; the only real limit is the imagination"

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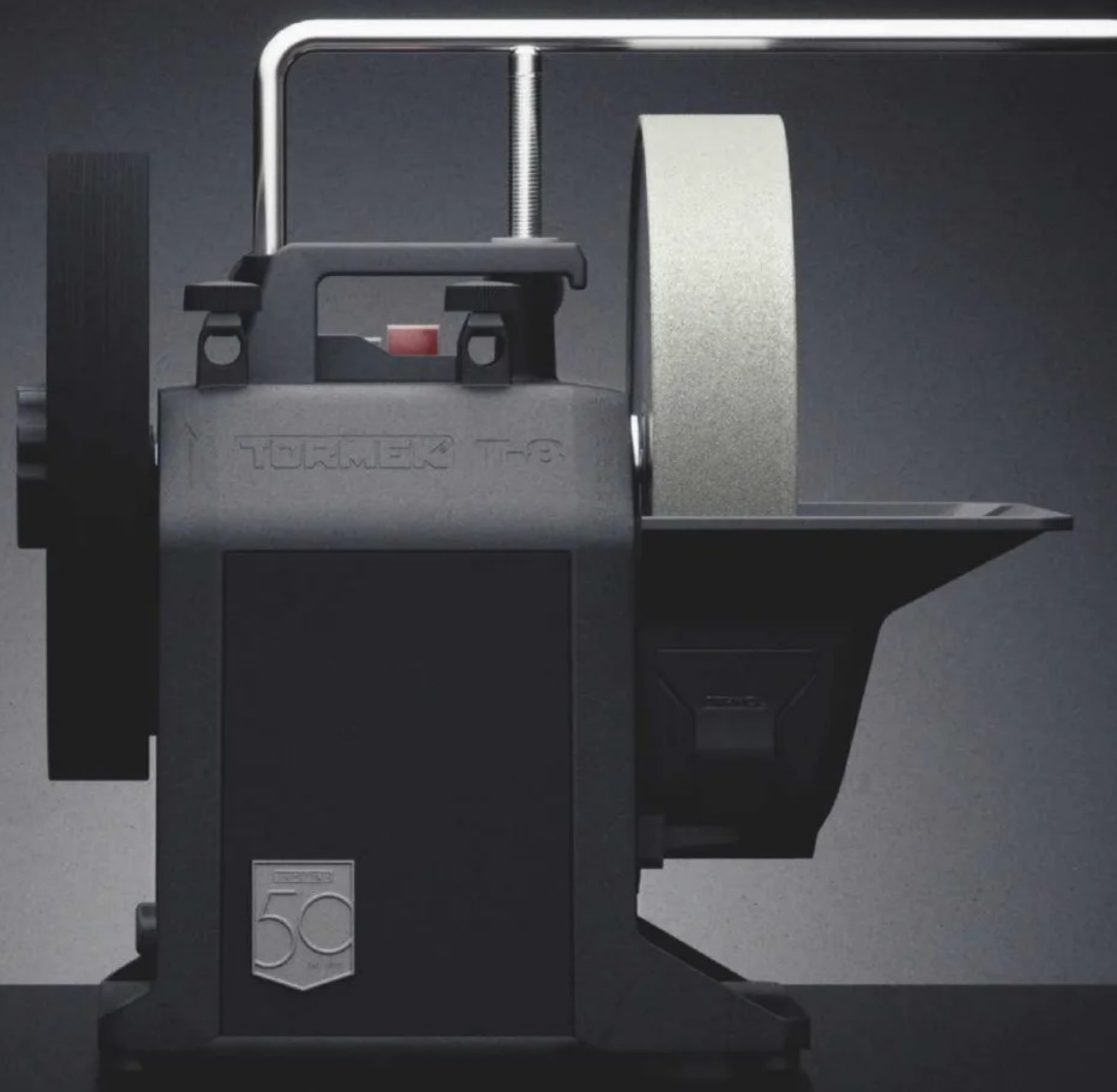
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