



Chair's Chatter

Personally, October has been a very difficult month for me and the very last thing on my mind has been woodturning. I haven't even set foot in the workshop since September, and even then it was only to go and sweep up some shavings that I made back in August. But that is the joy of woodturning. It is one of those hobbies that you can always return to and always find enjoyment in.

This got me thinking about our lovely little club. We have all been brought together by a passion for woodturning, yet we actually know very little about each other. We meet very briefly for a couple of hours each month, but never really get the opportunity to talk in depth. In truth, there are very few of us that can honestly remember everyone's name, which is why the introduction of name badges has been such a wonderful idea.

So what is it that has kept the club going and keeps you all coming back every month? Is it just the social aspect of something to do to get you out of the house once in a while? Is it really your passion for woodturning? Is it the opportunity to win a crisp £10 note in the raffle? Is it the monthly competitions? How many of you actually own a lathe and actively turn these days? What do our club members want and expect from the club? These are all questions that we frequently debate and wonder during the committee meetings when planning for the future. Sadly the biggest question that keeps being raised in recent times is, is it worth actually keeping the club going any longer?

Our membership has been falling year by year, the cost of demonstrators has been going up and up yet the number of volunteers to run the club has slowly diminished too. Filling roles on the committee has always been a bit of a circus performance and this year has been by far the worst, with no new Events Secretary to organise bookings for 2018.

I was reluctantly press-ganged into service when I first joined over 10 years ago, I've been "stuck" on the committee ever since. But year on year it gets more and more difficult. This year I am refusing to be bullied into carrying on so reluctantly in the role, as it has started to become a burden that I can ill afford these days. It is also not healthy for the club to have a disillusioned and disinclined leader. To compound matters, my personal circumstances have also changed enormously over the last 12 months and sadly I really do need to focus my efforts elsewhere.

And I am not facing this predicament alone. John will be stepping down as Secretary and Hugh as Newsletter Editor, Newsletter writer, Health & Safety Officer, Camera Guru, etc. etc. etc. We all now feel that we have done far more than our fair share to keep the club alive.

So in short, the future of our wonderful club is in imminent danger. I will be putting out a request for new volunteers to step into the roles at the next few meetings, but if no-one steps forward, then I suspect that we will have to start proceedings to fold the club at the AGM in January.

I am so sorry to have to write this statement and it has certainly not been easy. If you want your club to continue, then you really do need to let us know and step up to one of the roles. If we hear nothing, then we will know for sure that the time has finally come to say our goodbyes.

Yours sincerely,

Dawn

Tony Tripp, our Assistant Treasurer sadly passed away recently. Tony had been a club member for about 3 years and joined the committee this year.



Editor's Scriblings

Sorry, another delayed issue. Dawn's difficult month meant that her "chat" only arrived in my inbox on the day of our November meeting, and I was, in any case, having problems with formatting the document. I have had occasions before when pictures just don't stay where I put them; this time the problem became critical as more problems arose; at one stage Word decided to add more than 3000 blank pages which I could not then delete. Maybe my old version of Word has finally decided it doesn't like working with Windows 7 (I have other programs that probably won't work with later versions of Windows, so don't want to upgrade). After discussion with Philip Watts I've decided to start using Libre Office, an open source programme which is free (but donations appreciated!). Fortunately it is very like Word to use and so far so good, I've managed to get this issue completed.

With the end of the year rapidly approaching it is time to confirm that I intend to stand down from my role as Newsletter Editor at the AGM in January 2018. When I took up the role at the start of last year I had fully intended to continue through to at least the end of 2018, but have recently started to feel that the effort that goes into producing the Newsletter each month for a relatively small number of readers does not really make the task worthwhile. The feedback I have received has been favourable, but limited to just a few members. I will do the January 2018 issue, which will be the last unless someone else comes forward.

At the same time I will also cease to be Health and Safety Advisor to the committee; by then I will then have acted in this role for six years, almost as long as I have been a club member, so I think it's time for someone else to take over. I have offered to remain on the committee, but without specific responsibilities.

Looking back, it is interesting to note that during the period of my membership the number of club members has dropped from just under 50 to about half of that. A similar trend exists at the other clubs to which I belong so maybe this is how we must assume the future of woodturning clubs will be. A reduction in the number of members, and especially attendance, will result in an erosion of the currently strong financial position of the club, and be a challenge for the committee. Hopefully the AGM will result in some fresh thinking on this.

Hugh Field





August Competition

The Novice competition theme for this month was an egg and egg cup. There were two entries as below:



2nd place - John Meers (left)

1st place - Dawn Hopley (right)

October Demonstration - Steve Heeley

Steve is one of our most regular professional guest demonstrators.

The night's project was a textured and coloured lidded box, one of a series that Steve has produced, each is unique with differences in the areas of texturing and colours.



Steve emphasised the important 5 lock down actions for spindle turning. Tailstock, tailstock quill advance, tailstock quill lock, tool-rest banjo, and tool-rest stem.

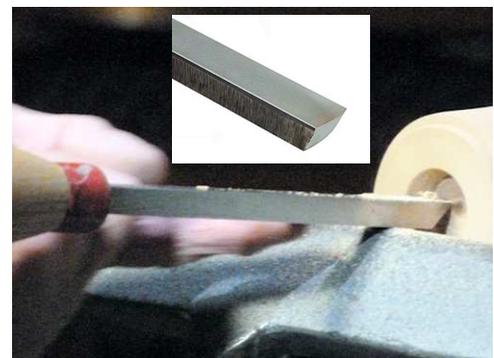
We have seen many demonstrations of box making but this was to be a bit different as it was to incorporate texturing and colouring. Steve makes several variants of this box and they can be fully, partly, or not at all textured. The chosen wood was a piece of extremely dry European oak about 3" (75mm)

square, this was roughed down between centres to a cylinder with a spindle roughing gouge and a suitable chucking spigot added using a parting tool and skew.

After cleaning the spindle and chuck threads with a toothbrush the chuck was mounted and the piece was held in the chuck and using the tailstock centre to allow a chucking spigot to be added to the other end. The wood was parted off leaving sufficient length in the chuck to form the box allowing for finishing the bottom. The tailstock was withdrawn for the final part of this cut to avoid jamming. A spigot for the lid was added (allowing for the



thickness of the lid) and the outside trued up (with a slight taper away from the chuck) and also the face. The spigot was turned with a slight barrel shape by means of the square skew chisel using the long point first left and then right. This would make the final fitting easier.



Using the tool-rest as a height guide, a twist drill fitted in a wooden handle was used to bore a hole to the required depth of the box. The box was then hollowed and Steve demonstrated two techniques, firstly using a box scraper (this has the sides bevelled slightly). The use of a spindle gouge was also demonstrated, the technique being to use cuts starting from the centre with the flute at about 10 o'clock and using a scooping action, cutting using the lower



tip of the gouge. A short flute (i.e. a worn out gouge!) works best as it is stiffer and a more aggressive cut can be achieved by using more of the wing of the tool.

The sides were squared up using the square skew chisel, long point left, and then by moving the handle to the right, the bottom of the box was cleaned up prior to sanding with wax, this reduces the heat build up and fills the grain by producing a slurry. The inside was wiped out with clean tissue and then buffed with more wax. The box was removed from the chuck and the previously parted off piece mounted.





The required diameter for the inside of the lid was transferred to the cleaned up end face using dividers (only the left hand point touching) and a recess formed using the spindle gouge and finishing with the square skew chisel with trial fits until a tight fit was achieved. This would be relieved later.

Next, some shape was added to the outside of the lid, followed by hollowing. This time Steve demonstrated the technique of just using the spindle gouge without a drilled hole.



Further shaping of the outside came next, followed by sanding and waxing as for the box.





The box was then re-mounted in the chuck (ideally a jaw position should have been marked at the base to assist with accurate centring) and the lid attached (with grain matched), using the tailstock centre for alignment and support prior to tightening the chuck.

Refining of the outside shape and sanding was next carried out.

Feature grooves were next added using the long point of the skew, one at the join line with one close either side; and one near the base and another near to where the knob/finial would be. A piece of plastic laminate was used to burn in these lines.



As much as possible of the shaping of the knob/finial was carried out with the tailstock support still present (overhead camera screen shots).



After removing the tail centre and parting off the waste portion, the knob was finished using careful light cuts.



The lid was then removed and the fit slightly loosened, still keeping the barrel shape on the spigot. Steve explained that the fit would change over the next few days but could be adjusted by careful light sanding, assisted by the barrel shape.



Now to the interesting part texturing and colouring! Steve decided to partly texture the piece so marked out the areas to be decorated in pencil. The texturing was carried out using a Dremel and flexible shaft and a piercing bit, using a light “stroking” motion along the grain until the marked areas had been filled in.



The box was given a light sanding to remove burrs. If areas of the box are not going to be coloured they can be protected from overspray by giving a light coat of spray acrylic sanding sealer first. Steve uses a very neat Spraycraft top feed airbrush and compressor (available from Axminster currently at £72.72 see [spraycraft-sp30-top-feed-airbrush-compressor-set](#) but also available elsewhere). This has a continuous air feed and is possibly a little easier for the less experienced to use than the more sophisticated dual action ones.





Normally the box would be remounted on a jam chuck for finishing the bottom, but to save time Steve used a previously finished piece that was fully textured to demonstrate the colouring process. The colouring was carried out using spirit stains, building up colour in random areas starting with yellow and adding red, blue, and black; then yellow again followed by red and more black until the desired result was achieved.

On smooth wood, methylated spirit can be used to blend the colours.

Finishing could be by use of spray acrylic sanding sealer and acrylic lacquer, or oil if preferred. Cellulose finishes may result in the colours bleeding.

An interesting demonstration to Steve's usual high standard and, once again, impressive in what a professional demonstrator can achieve in little more than a couple of hours.



Steve's display table (left)

Hugh Field



My Mystery Tree

When I moved to Barton under Needwood – an aptly named dwelling-place for a would-be turner – I inherited a lovely large mature garden, ex-council house and meant to provide food for a family. There were a couple of magnolias, two fruit trees, and a mystery tree, tucked into the corner by the fence. Apart from an initial bend to seek light, the trunk rose straight up, the bark was fissured, and the leaves could have belonged to a number of native trees – only taken together with the bark and the habit of growth, they didn't match anything in my books.

A forester acquaintance tentatively identified it as an elm, perhaps a sucker from some tree later felled when the houses behind were built, but we were neither of us happy with this identification.

At last, after five years, the tree fruited, and dropped a cluster of nuts neatly into my compost box. What they most resembled was a cluster of hazelnuts, though their cases were long and curly, and almost completely hid the nuts. I could see that the leaves were more like hazel than anything else, so I Googled 'hazel', found an image of the nuts exactly like mine, and discovered that my tree is a Turkish hazel.



Unlike the English cobnut, these trees grow only one straight stem so cannot be coppiced. However, their straight trunk and neat conical shape make them very sought-after as architectural features in garden design, and apparently they are also useful in urban areas because they are resistant to pollution. They are also used as a root stock to graft common hazel to make conveniently shaped trees for commercial orchards.

The nuts are edible – if you can crack the extremely thick shell – though sadly mine have so far proved to be completely empty!

The only remaining mystery now is, why was my beautiful, architectural tree planted in such a cramped position by the fence?

Jane Russell



Forthcoming events

3rd November

Gerry Marlow - Fork Handles!

1st December

Ted Gill - a reconstructed bowl

Club Competitions

November - Challenge

A clock

December - Novice

A candlestick

Other events

17th - 19th November

North of England woodworking and Power Tool Show

Hall 1, Great Yorkshire Showground

Harrogate HG2 8QZ

This is the largest and longest established retail woodworking show in the country.

Go to www.skpromotions.co.uk/ for more information.

Hints and tips

This section is for any tips or advice you would like to pass on to other members. If you have discovered something you found useful that you think may benefit others, please pass it on.

Members sales items

This section is for listing any turning or woodworking tools or related items you have for sale.

Any submissions to editor@mswa.co.uk, please.

DVDs

The club has a selection of Woodturning DVD's for use by registered club members use only. You can borrow them for just £2 per month (some are free)! If any members have DVDs which are not on the list, but which they would like to donate to the Club, they would be most welcome.

See Ron Dixon who has agreed to manage the DVD library.



Abrasives and other items (when available)

Mirka Abranet 70 x 125mm Sheets:

5 x Mixed Grit Pack (120, 180, 240, 400 and 500) = £2.00 per pack

Mirka Abranet 50mm Sanding Discs:

7 x Mixed Grit pack (80, 120, 180, 240, 320, 400, 600) = £1.50 per pack

Rhinogrip 50mm Sanding Discs:

7 x Mixed Grit pack (80, 120, 180, 240, 320, 400, 600) = £0.90 per pack

Flexipad Sanding Pads (for above discs):

50mm Velcro Conical Spindle Pad with 6mm shaft = £8.82 each

J-Flex Sanding Paper:

5 x 1m lengths mixed grits 120, 180, 240, 320 & 400 = £9.50 per pack

Donations of items for sale to add to club funds are always welcome.



Club information

Your club committee for 2017 is:-

Chairman – Dawn Hopley chairman@mswa.co.uk
Tel: 07860 501 379

Secretary – John McElroy secretary@mswa.co.uk

Treasurer – Phil Williams treasurer@mswa.co.uk

Assistant Treasurer - Vacant

Events Secretary – Vacant events@mswa.co.uk

Newsletter editor – Hugh Field editor@mswa.co.uk

Tel: 0121 329 2911

Webmanager – Philip Watts webman@mswa.co.uk

Health and Safety Advisor
Hugh Field health.safety@mswa.co.uk

Please use phone numbers only if absolutely necessary.

Other important people responsible for:-

Refreshments: *David Neal, David Dawes & Ron Dixon*

Equipment: *Mark Pickering & John Meers*

Cameras: *John Meers, Ted Gill, Vance Lupton & Dawn Hopley*

Club shop: *Ron Dixon*