

WALTER HALL EXPLORES MODIFYING SLIMLINE PEN KITS

# Woodturning

THE WORLD'S LEADING MAGAZINE FOR WOODTURNERS

Adding decoration to your supported forms

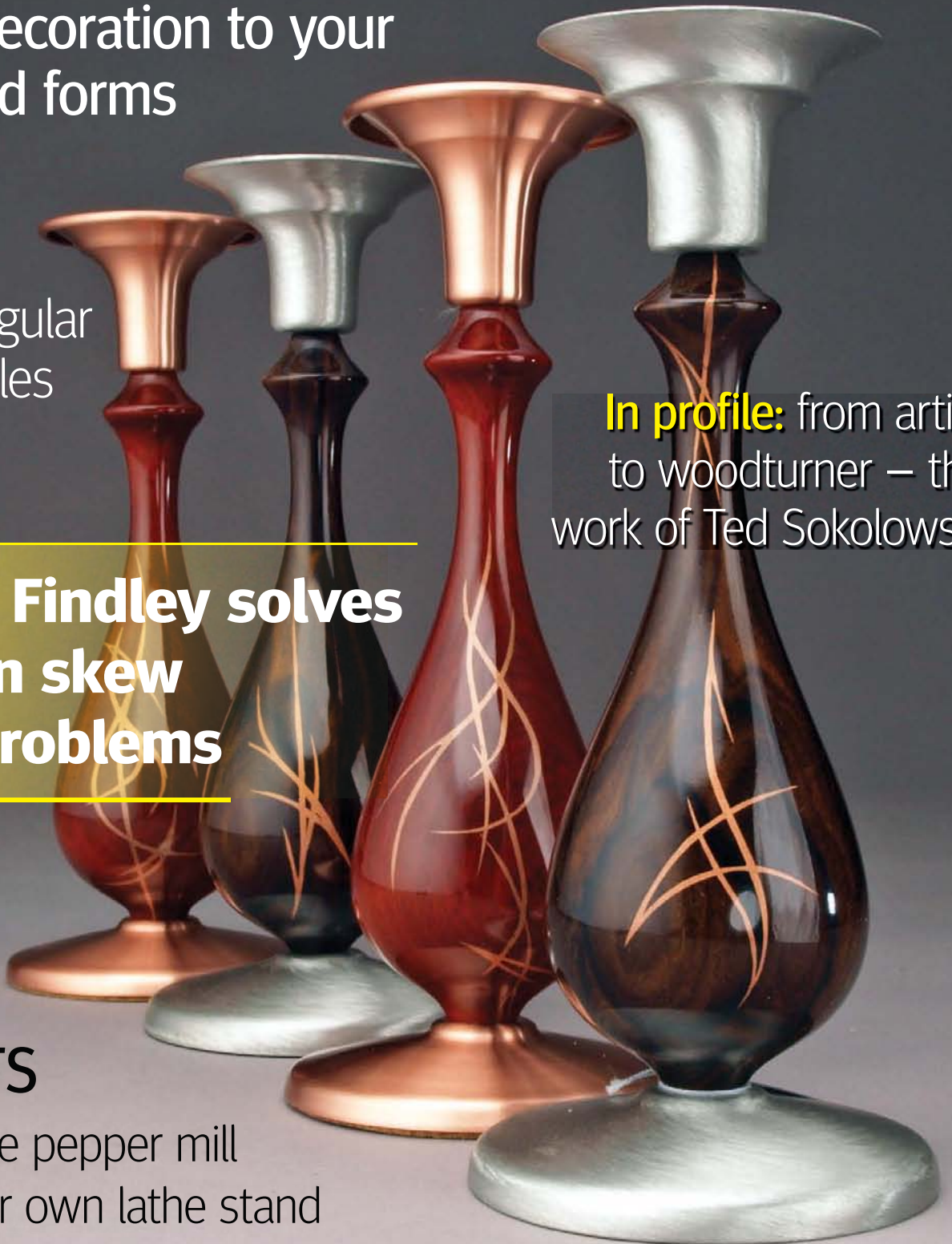
Drilling irregular shaped holes

**In profile:** from artist to woodturner – the work of Ted Sokolowski

**Richard Findley solves common skew chisel problems**

## PROJECTS

- Lighthouse pepper mill
- Make your own lathe stand
- 3 different bowl and platter designs
- London plane bowl using local timbers



## SC3 Geared Scroll Chuck Package



Spring Summer  
**£119.95**  
 RRP £198.97  
**Save £79**

- Includes:**  
**SC3** Geared Scroll Chuck (Thread options below)  
**62313** 50 mm Jaw Set  
**JS25N** 25 mm Jaw Set  
**6025** Mini Step Jaw Set  
**10006** Woodworm Screw  
**61016** Pinion Key

- Thread Options:**  
**61004** 3/4" x 16 TPI  
**61002** 1" x 8 TPI  
**61005** M33 x 3.5

## SC4 Professional Geared Scroll Chuck Package



Spring Summer  
**£149.95**  
 RRP £204.98  
**Save £55**

- Includes:**  
**SC4** Professional Geared Scroll Chuck  
**62313** 50 mm Standard Jaw Set  
**JSPIN** Pin Jaw Set  
**62833** Standard Woodworm Screw  
**3326** 8 mm Ball Hex Key  
**62825** Universal Spanner  
 Chuck Insert (See website for full range of inserts)

## New Woodturning Chuck Jaw Range

As part of the design process involved in creating this brand new range, we looked in depth at the ranges of jaws available to today's woodturners. Our aim was to create a new range which allowed for all the flexibility currently on offer whilst also engineering out superfluous features and, where possible, condensing the attributes of some jaw designs to increase their usefulness. The result is a comprehensive range of 14 intelligently designed

sets of chuck jaws, some of which are brand new designs exclusive to Record Power. This range offers woodturners a definitive collection of jaws to cover virtually any woodturning task and represents unbeatable value for money.



 <b>62321</b> 35 mm Standard Jaws <b>£34.99</b>	 <b>62313</b> 50 mm Standard Jaws <b>£39.99</b>	 <b>62329</b> 100 mm Dovetail and Deep Gripper Jaws <b>£49.99</b>	 <b>62317</b> 130 mm Dovetail Jaws <b>£54.99</b>	 <b>62322</b> 75 mm Heavy Bowl and Gripper Jaws <b>£59.99</b>
 <b>62323</b> Long Nose Jaws <b>£59.99</b>	 <b>62327</b> Pin Jaws with 9 mm Bore <b>£49.99</b>	 <b>62336</b> Mini Spigot Jaws with 13 mm Bore <b>£39.99</b>	 <b>62337</b> Pen Jaws <b>£29.99</b>	 <b>62572</b> 2 Inch (50 mm) Faceplate Ring <b>£29.99</b>
 <b>62574</b> 4 Inch (100 mm) Faceplate Ring <b>£36.99</b>	 <b>62378</b> RP Plastic Soft Jaws <b>£16.99</b>	 <b>62356</b> Remounting Jaws Mini - Up to 200 mm Bowl <b>£49.99</b>	 <b>62376</b> Remounting Jaws Mega - Up to 295 mm Bowl <b>£79.99</b>	

Prices valid until 31.08.2015. E&OE.



For full details of the brand new range of chucks and jaws please visit the Record Power website or request your free copy of the Spring / Summer 2015 promotional catalogue.



# Introducing the Brand New Range of Woodturning Chucks and Jaws

We are extremely proud to introduce the brand new range of Record Power woodturning chucks and jaws. This exclusive new range has been developed using Record Power's extensive experience and knowledge of woodturning in conjunction with a group of highly experienced professional and hobby woodturners, to bring

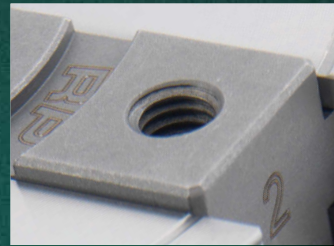
you the ultimate in quality, versatility and value. Incorporating the best elements of our previous ranges, we have also listened closely to our valued customers over the years and have taken note of their feedback, suggestions and requests to guide our design approach.



**Precision Engineered Gears**  
Super Geared True-Lock™ technology ensures high levels of accuracy to provide smooth and solid operation.



**Jaw Fixing System**  
The SC3 and SC4 feature a jaw fixing which will not only fit the Record Power series of Jaws but is also fully compatible with Nova and Robert Sorby brand jaws.



**Heavy Duty Jaw Slides**  
The improved and enlarged jaw slides give unsurpassed holding power and load bearing ability. They are made from high tensile steel, reinforced with nickel and copper and heat-treated to ensure superior strength.



**Sealed Backing Plate with Full Indexing**  
The SC4 features a strong backing plate to protect the gear mechanism from dust and 72-point indexing around the full circumference.



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**BURGESS**

Incorporating some of the most famous brands in woodworking, Record Power have been manufacturing fine tools & machinery for over 100 years. Built to last we provide support for thousands of machines well over 50 years old, which are still in daily use. Testimony to the sound engineering principles and service support that comes with a Record Power product.

**WE DIDN'T JUST CREATE  
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WE REDEFINED  
WHAT A LATHE COULD BE**



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*Sweet  
16*

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Ten years ago no one thought a little company in a small town in Wisconsin would be influencing how lathes are made around the world. Innovations like stainless steel ways, standard adjustable height and the patented Tilt-Away are affecting a new generation of woodturners.

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Learn more about us, our lathes and our growing international network of woodturning specialists at [www.turnrobust.com](http://www.turnrobust.com).

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# Clarity of thought



PHOTOGRAPH BY GMC/ANTHONY BAILEY

When buying tools, buy wisely and start with a basic set

As mentioned many times before, I am privy to being party to many conversations, as are many people who attend events and club meetings, etc. and it won't take long before the talk gets round to tools, products and techniques. The conversations can be quite interesting, but I do sometimes feel that people become too focused on such things rather than what they want to make. Mind you, I know of people who have been to six or seven shows last year and didn't get in the workshop to make anything during that time span of the shows combined. I think the balance of seeing, buying and making needs to be looked at a little more closely in those instances. Yes, time is an issue too and I have some stories from people on that subject, which I will tell you another day.

But, overly focusing on one aspect in what is a series of things that should – if all goes well – come together as a whole, can lead to

trouble because you are not able to fully realise the intended result.

Yes, you might need some tools, but in reality probably not as many as you think or might already have. Many people don't realise what can be done with just a few basic tools.

The project might require something you don't have, but it is likely that involves something such as deep hollowing or undercutting work where straight tools won't reach or are not strong enough to withstand the cutting forces without chatter or breaking. Surface decoration might require some new items, but not necessarily what you think. Ask about them, visit shows, but if you do buy something, buy wisely. Think about what you will actually use it for and how and for what project. A friend of mine recently bought a load of specialist tools. They were good quality, fitted their intended purpose, but he doesn't do the kind of work they were intended for and is not sure he will now, but

at the time, he thought they would do other things as well. That is sad and to make it even worse, he didn't realise he hadn't yet got the basic tool setup for the work he did currently do. We laugh about it now, but it was an expensive lesson. I am sure the tools will get used, but not for a while I think.

Tools are a means to an end to help us create that thing we want – they will not make you a better turner. Practice will help you with techniques, but doing something only once in a blue moon does not help you develop those techniques. Techniques and suitable tools are only a part of the whole process – you need to have a clear idea of what you want to make and then get on and do it using the safest working methods possible and analyse mistakes – yes, we all make them – so you know how not to do something again.

Have fun,

markb@thegmcgroup.com



Woodworkers Institute website ([www.woodworkersinstitute.com](http://www.woodworkersinstitute.com)) is thriving. It would be great if you took a look and participated in the various discussions and competitions in our community, or see us on Facebook & Twitter.



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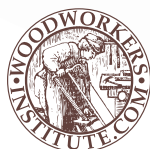
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### NEWS, LATEST PRODUCTS, MAGAZINE UPLOADS & EVENTS

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**Subscribers!**  
Turn to page 44 for subscription special offers and you could save 30%!



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Conversion chart	
2mm	( <sup>8</sup> / <sub>64</sub> in)
3mm	( <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
4mm	( <sup>2</sup> / <sub>32</sub> in)
6mm	( <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
7mm	( <sup>7</sup> / <sub>32</sub> in)
8mm	( <sup>5</sup> / <sub>16</sub> in)
9mm	( <sup>11</sup> / <sub>32</sub> in)
10mm	( <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
11mm	( <sup>7</sup> / <sub>16</sub> in)
12mm	( <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
13mm	( <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
14mm	( <sup>7</sup> / <sub>16</sub> in)
15mm	( <sup>9</sup> / <sub>16</sub> in)
16mm	( <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
17mm	( <sup>11</sup> / <sub>16</sub> in)
18mm	( <sup>23</sup> / <sub>32</sub> in)
19mm	( <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
20mm	( <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
21mm	( <sup>13</sup> / <sub>16</sub> in)
22mm	( <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
23mm	( <sup>23</sup> / <sub>32</sub> in)
24mm	( <sup>15</sup> / <sub>16</sub> in)
25mm	(1in)
30mm	(1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
32mm	(1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
35mm	(1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
38mm	(1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
40mm	(1 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
45mm	(1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
50mm	(2in)
55mm	(2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> -2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
60mm	(2 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
63mm	(2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
65mm	(2 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
70mm	(2 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
75mm	(3in)
80mm	(3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
85mm	(3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
90mm	(3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
93mm	(3 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
95mm	(3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
100mm	(4in)
105mm	(4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
110mm	(4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> -4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
115mm	(4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
120mm	(4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
125mm	(5in)
130mm	(5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
135mm	(5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
140mm	(5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
145mm	(5 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
150mm	(6in)
155mm	(6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
160mm	(6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
165mm	(6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
170mm	(6 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
178mm	(6 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
180mm	(7in)
185mm	(7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> in)
190mm	(7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> in)
195mm	(7 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub> in)
200mm	(8in)
305mm	(12in)
405mm	(16in)
510mm	(20in)
610mm	(24in)
710mm	(28in)
815mm	(32in)
915mm	(36in)
1015mm	(40in)
1120mm	(44in)
1220mm	(48in)
1320mm	(52in)
1420mm	(56in)
1525mm	(60in)

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Woodturning is an inherently dangerous pursuit. Readers should not attempt the procedures described herein without seeking training and information on the safe use of tools and machines. All readers should observe current safety legislation.

## Supporting Pens for Heroes

We are supporting Pens For Heroes.

This group has been set up to give something back to our countries heroes. You can find out about them on their Facebook page.

We will be donating 10% of the proceeds of all pen kits, blanks and tools sold during May 2015.



### Pen Kits

Rotur 7mm Brass Tubes	£3.64
Rotur Cigar Pen Bushing Kit	£5.40
Rotur Cigar Chrome Kit	£8.38
Rotur Cigar Gold Kit	£8.38
Rotur Fountain/Rollerball Bushing Kit	£5.40
Rotur Fountain Pen Gold Kit	£10.09
Rotur Premium Twist Pen Kits	£17.10
Rotur Rollerball Gold Pen Kits	£10.40
Rotur Rollerball Twist Pen Kits	£16.78
OWT Pen Kit (single pen pack)	£4.80
OWT Pen Kit (5 pen pack)	£22.00
OWT Pen Kit Bushes	£5.84

### Pen Turning Tools

Rotur Deluxe Colleted Pen Mandrels	£37.50
Rotur Deluxe Pen Turning Kit	£77.94
Olivers Pen Turning Kit Deal	£135.00
Pen Blank Vice – Centring	£68.10
Pen Blank Trimming Tool	£16.20
Pen Blank Trimming Tool Kit	£32.10
Pen Insertion Tool – Soft Handle	£10.39
Pen Insertion Tool – Wood Handle	£13.14
Rotur Pen Press	£53.95
Rotur Pen Turning Kits	£65.82
Rotur Universal Pen Mandrel	£27.60



### Wood Pen Blanks

Ash	£4.72	Catello Boxwood	£10.92
Maple	£6.84	Satin Wood	£17.22
English Walnut	£9.44	Indian Rosewood	£17.22
Olive Wood	£14.63	Spalted Beech	£11.96
Rapalo Lacewood	£11.96	Bog Oak	£20.36
Birch	£6.60	Nicaraguan Cocobola	£16.96



### Acrylic Pen Blanks



Chestnut Products  
£3.75 each

### Brody's Blanks



Pen blanks made by our forum member Brody.  
£4.80 each

## Request your Free Catalogue

Our catalogue is now ready. If you would like a copy posted to you please contact us or visit the website to view the online version.



# Round & about

We bring you the latest news from the world of woodturning as well as letters from the Woodworkers Institute forum and important dates for your diary from the woodturning community

## Building global woodturning alliances

**T**winning towns and cities is a relatively well-known model used to promote exchange of ideas, comradeship, understanding and progress internationally. Pairing woodturning clubs across the globe can have similar benefits, as well as help enhance knowledge, expertise and collaboration among club members. Through these alliances, woodturning organisations can examine their strengths and weaknesses and explore their similarities and differences.

### Beneficial partnerships

Successful international relationships between clubs are often facilitated through mutual contacts in the woodturning realm, such as an instructor or demonstrator who believes that synergies may exist between the two groups. Then, it's up to the individual clubs to determine whether the match is truly a fit, if they have similar ideals, views, goals, etc. To formalise the arrangement, it is recommended that the associating clubs define their objectives and seek their club's board approval.

In 2014, the Central Oklahoma Woodturners Association, USA and the Cheam Woodturners Association, UK, launched a sister partnership. They regularly exchange newsletters and information, mention one another on their respective websites, convene Skype meetings, trade DVDs of demonstrations, share member questions and queries, host international demonstrators and visitors and even swap wood. Based on mutual cooperation and



Michael Reggio, representing the Central Oklahoma Woodturners Association, USA and David Buskell, of the Cheam Woodturners Association, South London/North Surrey, UK

sharing, their innovative relationship is strengthening the woodturning community worldwide.

Last June, members of both clubs had their first opportunity to meet face to face at the AAW's 28th International Symposium in Phoenix, Arizona. Pictured are Michael Reggio, representing the Central Oklahoma Woodturners Association, USA and David Buskell, of the Cheam Woodturners Association, South London/North Surrey, UK.

### AAW's Annual International Symposium

The Annual International Symposium can be an ideal venue for establishing meaningful global woodturning alliances for your club. You'll be able to tap into a vast community that shares a passion for woodturning and be able to establish connections across the globe.

The symposium offers three and a half days of classroom-type demonstrations and panel discussion, which are led by internationally known woodturners, veteran instructors and expert woodturning talent. The event will have something for turners of all expertise levels and interests. The list of learning topics

is extensive – from classic bowl turning, to surface carving and embellishment, to segmented turning, to spindle turning, to hollow vessels. A variety of special interest groups convene at the symposium, including segmented, ornamental, pen, multi-axis, women, disabled and youth turners. The conference features awe-inspiring exhibitions, galleries, an artist showcase and a huge trade show packed with the newest woodturning products and supplies. No other event offers the quality and breadth of programming like the AAW. What's more, the AAW's culture of cooperation, camaraderie and sharing will help you to gain knowledge and relationships that will last a lifetime, thereby strengthening you and your club and the global woodturning community.

AAW's 29th Annual International Symposium will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from 25–28 June, 2015. For more information, see details below.

**Contact:** AAW  
**Tel:** (001) 877 595 9094  
**Web:** [www.woodturner.org](http://www.woodturner.org)



David Ellsworth provides an intimate critique in the AAW Symposium's Instant Gallery

# Woodturner raises over £50,000 for charity

Andrew Stockdale was once told by a local woodworker he would never be able to handle making turned table lamps. Andrew has since gone beyond proving them wrong, making so far, £51,000 from his turnings. And this is all since retirement, giving all of the money raised to various local charities.

Andrew's primary chosen charities are the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, Heart Disease Research Trust Cardiac Appeal and Coldstream Health Centre Endowment Fund.

Absolutely every turning Andrew does goes towards making money for the charities. It has got to a point now when Andrew gets so many commissions, he doesn't even need to advertise!

Having started off his woodworking career as a joiner, and after retirement having bought a lathe, Andrew has estimated he can raise around £8,000 a year from selling his turnings. Selling his standard lamps at around £150 and his bowls for between £25-£50, Andrew makes roughly £100 for each four items sold.

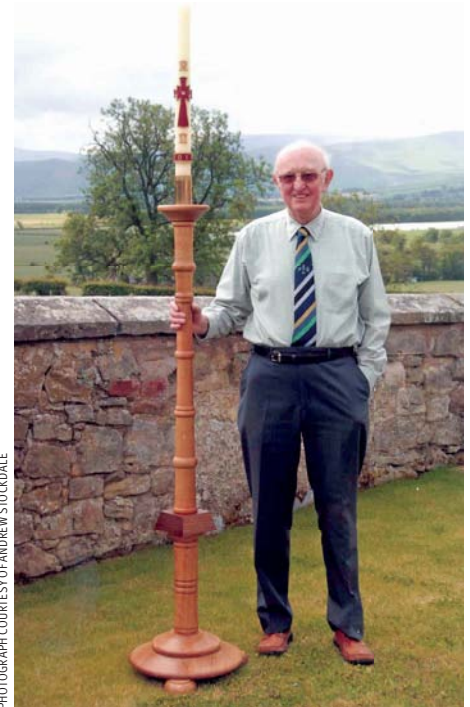
We asked Andrew why he chose the

charities he did and he told us how he had had major heart surgery 19 years ago, when the usual life expectancy after such an operation is 10 years. He tells us: "They have looked after me so well ever since, I just want to give back."

Looking toward raising money for the Coldstream Health Centre, Andrew told us that seven years ago he had a relapse and a speedy referral from the Health Centre to the cardiac unit, once again, saved his life. Again, Andrew is giving back to a charity that has helped him through tough times.

It's not just these two charities that Andrew has raised money for. He has also sold his turnings for a local cancer research charity and Macmillan Cancer Support. Recently, he has raised £2,000 to help fund a new set of doors for Branxton Church. The doors commemorate the 500th anniversary of the historic Battle of Flodden, which took place near the church.

We hope to hear more about his turning sales. Congratulations, Andrew, on your wonderful and inspirational achievement.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ANDREW STOCKDALE

Andrew Stockdale with one of his turnings for charity

# Isca Woodcrafts' 10th anniversary Wood Show

Isca Woodcrafts is once again hosting its popular woodworking show on 16 May, 2015 at Newport's magnificent Tredegar House. The business is also celebrating its 10th anniversary, thus making it a very special year.

The Wood Show takes place in the 17th-century stable block and courtyard, which is minutes away from the shop and will run from 10am-4pm. Entry is free but car parking charges will apply within the grounds.

For 2015, the company intend to keep the same ethos, putting emphasis on showcasing woodworking techniques and skills to encourage more people into woodcrafts.

Local clubs will be on hand to pass on valuable help and advice to all.

As always, the show will be supported by The British Woodcarvers – South Wales Branch – and Crow Valley Woodturners will be representing the AWGB. The South Wales Stick Makers Association will also be carving and answering questions.

In among that you can also expect to see fretsaw work, pyrography, furniture making, knife handles, lovespoons and musical instrument craftsmen and women.

Isca Woodcrafts will have a large selection of wood in both board and blank form, plus a range of exotic hardwoods. The shop will

open all day and the General Tool Store of Abergavenny and Ross will once again be selling their interesting array of wares. If you missed Newport Model Engineers last year, then they have also just confirmed.

For enquiries and to find out more about this year's event, contact Paul Roberts by seeing the details below.

**When:** 16 May, 2015

**Where:** Tredegar House, Newport, Monmouthshire, Wales NP10 8YW

**Contact:** Paul Roberts

**Tel:** 01633 810 148

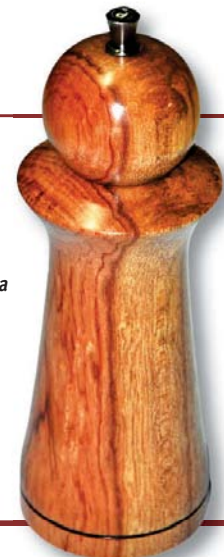
**Web:** [www.iscawoodcrafts.co.uk](http://www.iscawoodcrafts.co.uk)



Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) sculpture with abstract marbling, by georg



'Pot of Gold MK III', 240 x 110mm, by edbanger



Pepper mill in bubinga (*Guibourtia demeusei*), by guido512

# German Woodturning Exhibition 2015

In May, 2015 there is an opportunity to see great German woodturning at the Fifth German International Woodturning Exhibition. This year it will be sponsored by the woodturning association Weser-Elbe. Not only will there be a range of international demonstrators, but also first-class German demonstrators whose skills are not often seen outside Germany. It is an international family reunion, an exhibition with the latest technology products from the world of woodturning and last, but not least, a competition for the most beautiful works of art.

This year's show will take place in northern Germany about 100km south of Hamburg. The previous show was in Bavaria in 2013. Details of this event, in German, can be seen at [www.dft-2013.de](http://www.dft-2013.de).

**Contact:** 16–17 May, 2015

**Where:** Heidemark-Halle, Soltauer Straße 39, 29683 Bad Fallingb., Germany

**Web:** [www.dft-2015.de](http://www.dft-2015.de) – please note this site is in German only, although Google translate may help

## New manufacturer for OptiGrind wheels

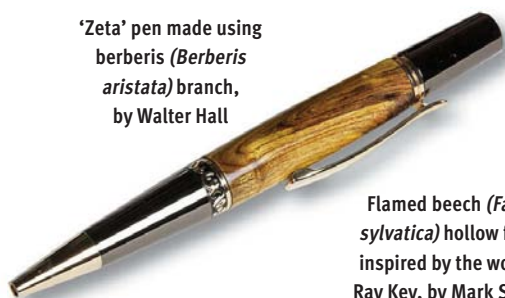
We have just received confirmation that Dietmar Holzer has found a new manufacturer for his OptiGrind wheels – Branko Dragan s.p. The company is situated in Austria and previously produced the CBN coating for the wheels. They will take over the whole production process, completely unaltered, from blank to corrosion proofing and precision balancing.

Dietmar says the two companies have worked successfully together for several years and were able to develop the OptiGrind wheels further in

close cooperation, much to their mutual success.

The company will also continue to sell the following items, much sought after by woodturners: HoneStar; DS 3T1, tapered file with red handle; DS 3T2, tapered file, half round; DS HRS, half round file with clip and the T-Bar dressing tool. In terms of the nutmeg kits, they will continue to be manufactured and sold as normal. For further information, see details below.

**Contact:** Branko Dragan s.p.  
**Tel:** +386 40 698 460



'Zeta' pen made using berberis (*Berberis aristata*) branch, by Walter Hall

Flamed beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) hollow form, inspired by the work of Ray Key, by Mark Sutton



## Umbrella stand

Hi Mark and Philip, My name is Alison Drayton and I have been turning for a few years after being encouraged to do so by my husband, who is also a woodturner. We are members of our local woodturning guild, have been receiving *Woodturning* magazine for a number of years and find it a valuable source of information.

I have just completed the umbrella stand, which was featured in issue number 275 – see photo attached. I found the instructions and diagrams very informative and really enjoyed making it.

*Thank you,  
Alison Drayton*

**Alison's umbrella stand, which Philip Greenwood made in issue 275**



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALISON DRAYTON

## Your workshop

Hi Mark, My workshop is a converted garden shed, about 3.6 × 2.4m, which is completely given over to a woodturner's workshop and in which I spend a great proportion of my time. Apart from my lathe, key essentials in the workshop are bandsaw, pillar drill, air cleaning equipment, safety helmet and radio – with volume set to a balance between being able to hear it when the lathe is running and not disturbing the neighbours. The key essential outside the workshop has proved to be a wife who understands that, however hard I try to get the dust and shavings off hair, shirt, jeans and shoes, some will inevitably get in the house.

*Best regards,  
Richard Shock*



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD SHOCK

**Richard's workshop, where he spends a lot of his free time!**

### ERRATUM

In issue 277, in Terry Mc.Donald's beer mug article, on page 89.

Unfortunately, the formula was not correctly printed and should have given the Greek symbol as  $\ddot{O}$ . The correct formula should be:  $V = 3.142 \times r^2 \times h$ . Apologies for this error and we hope you enjoy the article

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- Dust extraction facility
- 4" x 36" belt tilts & locks 0-90°
- 225mm x 160mm table, tilts 0-90°
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CS6-9C

- Includes stand
- 1 Hp/ 230v/ 1ph motor

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**1" BELT & 5" DISC SANDER**  
CBS1-5

- Inc. 2 tilt/lock tables and mitre gauge
- 300w motor

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**Clarke**  
**JIGSAWS**  
CJS380

BOSCH Power Tools

\*DIY #Professional

MODEL	POWER (W)	DEPTH OF CUT (WOOD/STEEL)	EX VAT	INC VAT
Clarke CJS380	420w	55/6mm	£12.99	£15.59
Clarke CON750	750w	80/10mm	£24.99	£29.99
B & D K5600	450w	60/8mm	£29.98	£35.98
Bosch PST700	500w	70/4mm	£49.98	£59.98

**Clarke**  
**ENGINEER'S DRILL PRESS**  
CDS300B

- Tables tilt 0-45° left & right
- Depth gauge
- Chuck guards

FROM ONLY £59.98 EX VAT  
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MODEL	WATTS	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
CDP5EB	350/5	£59.98	£71.98
CDP101B	245/5	£79.98	£95.98
CDP151B	300/5	£106.98	£128.98
CDP10B	370/12	£169.98	£203.98
CDP301B	510/12	£199.98	£239.98
CDP451F	510/12	£229.98	£287.98
CDP501F	980/12	£429.00	£514.80

B=Bench mounted  
F=Floor standing

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150kg	800x300x1500	£29.98	£35.98
350kg	900x400x1800	£49.98	£59.98

ALSO EXTRA WIDE INDUSTRIAL UNITS AVAILABLE

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

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CPF13

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- Tilting head

\*Black & Decker

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KA900E\*\* 350w/230v £49.98 £59.98

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**QUICK RELEASE ALUMINIUM SASH CRAMPS**

LIGHTWEIGHT ALUMINIUM

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MODEL	SIZE	EX VAT	INC. VAT
GHT374	600mm	£6.99	£8.39
GHT375	900mm	£7.99	£9.59
GHT376	1200mm	£9.98	£11.98

**Clarke**  
**BELT SANDERS**  
Clarke BS1 Makita

- Ideal for surface removal, sanding and finishing
- ABRASIVE SANDING BELTS IN STOCK

FROM ONLY £29.98 EX VAT  
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MODEL	WATT	M/MIN	EX VAT	INC VAT
Clarke BS1	900w	380	£29.98	£35.98
Clarke CBS2	1200w	480	£69.98	£83.98
Makita 9911	650w	75-270	£94.99	£113.99

**Clarke**  
**BISCUIT JOINER**  
BJ900

- 860W Motor
- 11000rpm Operating Speed
- 14mm Cutting Depth

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**Clarke**  
**BANDSAWS**  
CBS250

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CBS250 INCLUDES STAND

MODEL	MOUNT	MOTOR	THROAT	EX VAT	INC VAT
CL CBS190	Bench	350w	190mm	£109.98	£131.98
CL CBS250	Floor	370w	245mm	£179.98	£215.98

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PSR18

BOSCH Power Tools

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MODEL	HEAT OUTPUT	EX VAT	INC VAT
Devil 6002	0.7-2kW	£37.99	£45.59
Devil 6003*	1.5-3kW	£49.98	£59.98
Devil 6005	2.5-5kW	£74.99	£89.99
Devil 6009	4.5-9kW	£129.98	£155.98
Devil 6015	5-10-15kW	£189.98	£227.87

\* was £71.98 inc.VAT

**Clarke**  
**DRILL BIT SHARPENER**  
CBS16

- Great for 3mm to 10mm HSS drill bits - 70W motor
- Drill bit guide ensures sharpening at the correct angle
- Saves cost of new drills

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**PORTABLE THICKNESSER**  
CPT250

- Max thickness capacity 130mm
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- Powerful 1250w motor
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**POWER PLANERS**  
BLACK& DECKERCEP1

- 82mm cutting width

MODEL	INPUT POWER OF CUT	DEPTH	EX.VAT	INC.VAT
Clarke CEP1	650W	2mm	£21.99	£26.39
Einhell RT- PL82	850W	3mm	£49.98	£59.98
B&D KW750K-GB	750W	2mm	£57.99	£69.59

\* was £65.99 inc.VAT

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**DISC SANDER (305MM)**  
CDS300B

- Powerful, bench mounted disc sander - 900W
- No load disc speed: 1490rpm
- 305mm Disc Diameter (1 x 60 grit sanding disc included)
- Dimensions (LWH): 440x437x386mm
- Weight: 28kg

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**18V PRO CORDESS DRILL/DRIVERS**  
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- 10mm chuck size
- 2 Speed, Variable control - 0-350/0-1250rpm
- 21 torque settings

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**Clarke**  
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MODEL	BATTERIES	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CON18Ni	2 x Ni-Cd	£64.99	£77.99
CON18Li	2 x Li-Ion	£84.99	£101.99

**Clarke**  
**SHEET SANDERS**  
CON300

\*110V in stock

MODEL	SHEET SIZE	MOTOR	EX VAT	INC VAT
COS200	190X90mm	150w	£12.99	£15.59
CON300	230X115mm	330w	£29.98	£35.98
Makita	112X102mm	200w	£54.99	£65.99
BO455				

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**1000MM VARIABLE SPEED WOOD LATHE**  
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SUPPLIED WITH ROBUST STEEL STAND

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**WET & DRY VACUUM CLEANERS**  
PC60

- A range of compact, high performance wet & dry vacuum cleaners for use around the home, workshop, garage etc.

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MODEL	MOTOR	BLADE	EX VAT	INC VAT
CTS800B	600w	200mm	£69.98	£83.98
CTS11*	1500w	254mm	£139.98	£167.98
CTS10D	1500w	254mm	£149.98	£179.98

**Clarke**  
**STATIC PHASE CONVERTERS**  
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- Run big 3 phase woodworking machines from 1 phase supply
- Variable output power to match HP of motor to be run

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CONVERT 230V 1PH TO 400V 3PH

MODEL	MAX. MOTOR HP	FUSE	EX VAT	INC VAT
PC20	2Hp	10amps	£229.00	£274.80
PC40	3.5Hp	20amps	£269.00	£322.80
PC60	5.5Hp	32amps	£319.00	£382.80

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**TABLE SAW**  
CTS13L

- Powerful 1800W Motor
- 5700rpm No Load Speed
- Laser Guide for accurate cutting
- With folding legs and wheels
- Large 930 x 640mm Table

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**13" MINI WOOD LATHE**  
CWL325V

- Ideal for enthusiasts/hobbyists with small workshops
- 325mm distance between centres
- 200mm max. turning capacity (dia)
- 0.2Hp motor

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£155.98 INC VAT

**Clarke**  
**PLANERS & THICKNESSERS**  
CPT800

- Ideal for DIY & Hobby use
- Dual purpose, for both finishing & sizing of timber (CP-6 planer only)

FROM ONLY £139.98 EX VAT  
£167.98 INC VAT

MODEL	MOTOR	MAX THICK. CAPACITY	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CP-6	1100w		£139.98	£167.98
CPT600	1250w	120mm	£169.98	£203.98
CPT800	1250w	120mm	£189.98	£227.98
CPT1000	1500w	120mm	£269.98	£323.98

**Clarke**  
**WOODWORKING LATHES**  
CWL1000

3 PCE CHISEL SET INCLUDED WITH CWL1000

SEE CATALOGUE FOR ACCESSORIES

MODEL	CENTRE TO TURNING	TURNING CAP. (mm)	EX VAT	INC VAT
CWL1000	1016	350mm	£114.99	£137.99
CWL120	940	305mm	£189.98	£227.98

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**Record** vv7

MODEL	Mounting	Jaw (WIDTH/OPENING /DEPTH)mm	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
Clarke	Bolted	150/152/61	£13.49	£16.19
CHT152	Clamped	72/60/40	£16.99	£20.39
Stanley	Multi Angle			
Record V75B	Clamped	75/50/32	£18.99	£22.79
Clarke VV7	Bolted	180/205/78	£24.99	£29.99

**Clarke WHETSTONE SHARPENER** CWS200

Produces accurate razor sharp cutting edges on chisels, scissors, tools etc  
• 120w motor  
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CLARKE 8MM AIR HOSE FROM ONLY **£5.99** EX VAT **£7.19** INC VAT

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MODEL	Tiger 8/250	Tiger 7/250	Tiger 8/36	Tiger 11/250	Tiger 8/510	Tiger 11/510	Tiger 16/510	Tiger 16/1010
MOTOR CFM	2H 7.5	2H 7.4	1.5 hp 6.3	2.5H 9.5	24H 7.5	2.5H 9.5	3H 14.5	3H 14.5
TANK	24	24	7	24	24	24	100ltr	100ltr
EX VAT	£95.99	£89.99	£101.98	£119.98	£129.98	£149.98	£219.98	£269.98
INC VAT	£95.99	£89.99	£101.98	£119.98	£129.98	£149.98	£219.98	£269.98

**Clarke TABLE SAW WITH EXTENSION TABLES** (250mm) CTS14

Ideal for cross cutting, ripping, angle and mitre cutting  
• Easy release / locking mechanism for table extensions  
• 0-45° tilting blade  
• Cutting depth: 72mm at 90° / 65mm at 45°  
• 230V/50Hz, Motor: 1800W  
No load speed: 4700rpm  
Shown with optional leg kit CLK5 £22.99 exc.VAT £27.59 inc.VAT

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**Clarke 10" SLIDING MITRE SAW**

For fast, accurate cross, bevel & mitre cutting in most hard & soft woods  
• 1800w motor  
• Laser guide

FROM ONLY **£129.98** EX VAT  
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**Clarke MITRE SAW STAND**

CFMSS1  
• Suitable for most sizes/makes of saw  
• Inc. outriggers & rollers

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Simple, easy to set up & use for producing a variety of joints • Cuts work pieces with a thickness of 8-32mm • Includes a 1/2" comb template guide & holes for bench mounting

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**£65.99** INC VAT

**Clarke ROUTERS** CR1C

DIY  
MODEL MOTOR PLUNGE EX VAT INC VAT

CR1C\* 1200 0-50 £39.98 £47.98  
Bosch 1400 0-55 £74.99 £89.99

**Clarke SCROLL SAWS**

FROM ONLY **£64.99** EX VAT  
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MODEL MOTOR RPM SPEED EX VAT INC VAT

CSS400B 85w 1450 £64.99 £77.99  
CSS16V 120w 400-1700 £79.98 £95.98  
CSS400C\* 90w 550-1600 £99.98 £119.98

Includes flexible drive kit for grinding/polishing/sanding

**Clarke MITRE SAWS**

Quality Range of Mitre saws and blades available  
MODEL BLADE DIA. MAX CUT BORE (mm)DEPTH/CROSS EX. INC. VAT

MODEL	Blade Dia.	Max Cut	Bore (mm)	Depth/Cross	EX. VAT	INC. VAT
Einhell	210/30	55/120mm			£54.99	£65.99
TH-SM 2534						
Fury 3	210/25.4	60/200mm			£119.98	£143.98
Einhell	250/30	75/340mm			£159.98	£191.98
TH-SM2534						
Makita	260/30	95/130mm			£199.98	£239.98
LS1040						

**Clarke ROTARY TOOL KIT** CRT40

Kit includes: • Height adjustable stand with clamp • Rotary tool • 1m flexible drive • 40x accessories/consumables

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**Clarke 6" BENCH GRINDER WITH SANDING BELT** CBG6SB

For sanding/shaping wood, plastic & metal  
• Supplied with coarse grinding wheel & sanding belt

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**Clarke CONTRACTOR CR2 ROUTER**

Powerful heavy duty machine ideal for trade use  
• Variable speed control from 7,400-21,600 rpm  
• 2100w motor  
• 0-60mm plunge depth.  
CR3 Router with 15 Piece Bit Set also available only £94.99 £113.99

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Includes 15 pieces set worth over £20

**Clarke ROUTER TABLE** CRT-1

Converts your router into a stationary router table • Suitable for most routers (up to 155mm dia. Base plate)

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**Clarke DUST EXTRACTOR/CHIP COLLECTORS**

Powerful 750w motor • 56 litre bag capacity • Flow rate of 850M<sup>3</sup>/h  
MODEL MOTOR RATE BAG CAP. EX VAT INC VAT

MODEL	Motor	Rate	Bag Cap.	EX VAT	INC VAT
CD35B	750w	850 M <sup>3</sup> /h	56Ltrs	£119.98	£143.98
CDE7B	750w	850 M <sup>3</sup> /h	114Ltrs	£139.98	£167.98

**Clarke DUST EXTRACTOR** CDE1000

50 litre tank capacity • 183 m<sup>3</sup>/h flow rate • 1000W input wattage  
OTHER MODELS AVAILABLE

FROM ONLY **£99.98** EX VAT  
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**Clarke BENCH GRINDERS & STANDS**

Stands come complete with bolt mountings and feet anchor holes  
6" & 8" AVAILABLE WITH LIGHT  
STAND AVAILABLE FROM ONLY £41.99 EX VAT £50.39 INC. VAT

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MODEL DUTY WHEEL DIA. EX VAT INC VAT

MODEL	Duty	Wheel Dia.	EX VAT	INC VAT
CBG6RP	DIY	150mm	£27.99	£33.99
CBG6RZ	PRO	150mm	£37.99	£45.99
CBG6RSC	HD	150mm	£47.99	£57.99
CBG6SB#	PRO	150mm	£49.98	£59.98
CBG6RWC	HD	150mm	£54.99	£65.99
CBG6W (wet)	HD	150/200mm	£55.99	£67.19

**EVOLUTION 255mm MULTI-PURPOSE TABLE SAWS**

FURY 5 ONLY  
FROM ONLY **£149.98** EX VAT  
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MODEL MAX DEPTH CUT SIZE (mm) EX. VAT INC. VAT

MODEL	Max Depth Cut	Size (mm)	EX. VAT	INC. VAT
FURYS	54mm	73mm	£149.98	£179.98
RAGE5	55mm	79mm	£269.00	£322.80

\*FURY power: 1500W (110V available)  
\*RAGE power: 1800W/230V (110V available)  
table extensions included  
\*was £191.98 inc.VAT + was £334.80 inc.VAT

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**£250.99** INC VAT

**Clarke CIRCULAR SAWS** CON185

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

MODEL	Motor	Max Cut	EX. VAT	INC. VAT
CCS185B	1200W	65/44	£34.99	£41.99
Clarke CS2	1300W	60/45	£59.98	£71.98
Clarke CON185*	1600W	60/40	£59.98	£71.98

**Clarke HARDWOOD WORKBENCH** CHB1500

Includes bench dogs and guide holes for variable work positioning • 2 Heavy Duty Vices • Large storage draw • Sunken tool trough • LxWxH 1520x620x855mm

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**Clarke 5PC FORESTNER BIT SET** CHT365

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# London plane bowls



PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB CHAPMAN

In the first of a series of projects on using your local timbers, **Bob Chapman** shows how a bowl saver can be used to make two bowls from London plane

## BOB CHAPMAN



After teaching chemistry for many years, Bob took early retirement to become a professional woodturner, and is a member of the Register of Professional Turners. He was a demonstrator at the 2009 AWGB Woodturning Seminar and is available for commissions.

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Ask woodturners where they get their wood from and you will get a variety of different answers. Some rely on found wood, some on sawmills while some pay high prices for each individual piece they use. Obviously we all know that wood comes, initially, from trees but there is usually little reference to the trees which provide this wealth of timber. In this sanitised, pre-packaged age it is as easy to forget the tree when we buy a bowl blank as it is to forget the cow when we buy a pint of milk.

Each article in this series centres around a different species of tree and I've tried to use common, local timbers easily obtained in the UK and, with luck, in Yorkshire, where

I live. I've deliberately avoided the term 'native timber' because I don't want to get into arguments about whether the sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), for example, which was possibly introduced into Britain by the Romans, should be regarded as native. Native it might not be, but common and local it certainly is. Of course 'local' is a relative term and depends on where you live. Many of the species local to the British Isles are also widespread over parts of Europe, Asia and North America. In any case, these timbers are not unique and any of the projects which follow in this series could just as easily be made from whatever timber is easy to obtain wherever you live.

I've also tried to spotlight the tree species with interesting examples or uses. Of course 'interesting' is a subjective judgement, but I hope I'll succeed in kindling some enthusiasm for trees, and that some parts of these articles may have a wider appeal than just the woodturner of the family.

## London plane

Almost all tree experts consider the London plane (*Platanus hybrida*) to be a hybrid of the oriental plane tree and the American plane – the tree known in the USA as 'sycamore' but which is quite a different species from

the tree we in the UK know by that name. As tall as the five storey building behind it, the plane tree shown opposite is one of several in London's Russell Square, and its UK name, 'London plane', arises from its widespread use in the city since its introduction sometime in the mid 17th century. It is now estimated that over 50% of the planted trees in London are these hybrid plane trees, some of which may be more than 200 years old. The plane tree has several characteristics that equip it to deal with city living and these trees are found in city streets, parks, cemeteries and gardens all over the world.

More carefully tended than those in London, the plane trees in the other photo keep watch over the crosses at the World War II American Cemetery at Chateau Thierry, Northern France. Their camouflage colours seem curiously appropriate for this setting.

All trees 'breathe' through their bark as well as their leaves but the pores through which they do this soon become blocked by the atmospheric pollution, which occurs in any large city. Generally speaking, trees don't thrive in cities. However, the plane tree regularly renews its bark by dropping large irregularly shaped plates to reveal fresh bark beneath. The pattern of grey, brown and yellow patches is the most obvious feature

of the tree and one which makes it instantly recognisable anywhere.

In addition, the tree has very smooth, shiny leaves, which are easily washed clean when it rains. This, and the regular shedding of its outer bark, helps make the tree very tolerant of heavily polluted atmospheres. Plane trees are also very resistant to drought, making them suitable for paved areas where most rainfall is diverted into drains before it can soak into the ground.

London planes are large trees growing up to 50m tall. The timber is hard and fine grained, not unlike beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) but with a little more colour. When quartersawn it shows a delicate pattern where the medullary rays are exposed and it is known as 'lacewood'. The timber is not durable and is unsuitable for exterior situations but it cuts easily, takes a good finish and it stains and polishes well. It turns easily provided tools are kept sharp.



Plane tree in London's Russell Square



Plane trees in the World War II American Cemetery at Chateau Thierry, Northern France

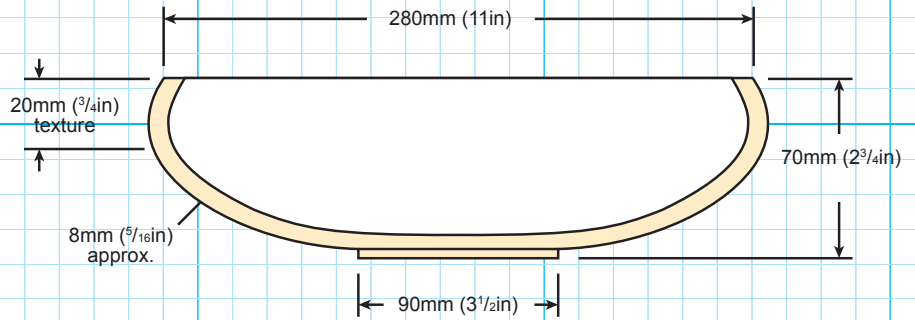
## Making a pair of London plane bowls

I found among my collection of timber a square of London plane, approximately 300mm square and 75mm-thick – ideal for a bowl. I decided to add interest to the bowl by texturing its rim and also, because the timber is quite expensive, it seemed a suitable candidate for the 'bowl saver'. This will give you a second, smaller bowl out of the same piece of wood.

### PLANS

#### EQUIPMENT USED

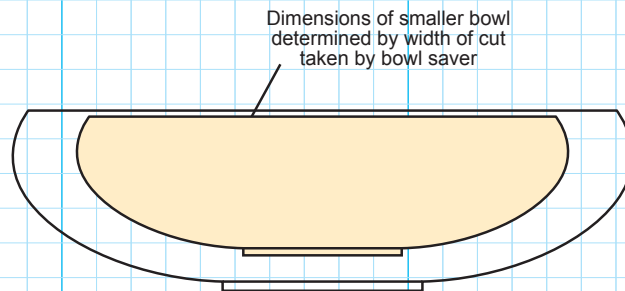
- 3mm parting tool
- 25mm skew chisel
- 13mm bowl gouge
- Proxxon long-neck angle grinder fitted with a Merlin eight-tooth chainsaw blade
- 6mm bead-forming tool
- Woodcut bowl saver
- Bandsaw
- Screw chuck
- Vacuum chuck, jam chuck or Cole jaws
- PPE: latex gloves, facemask, respirator/dust mask



#### THE DESIGN

Work on the bowl began, as usual, with some sketching. Most of the bowls I make have a wide rim and I fancied getting away from that for a change, but my main concern was the texturing.

It was while drawing these sketches that various factors were decided – the bowl would have a slight incurve at the top, the texturing would continue over onto the rim, which meant the walls shouldn't be too thin and a narrow bead would be used to visually – and physically – separate the texturing from the smooth area below



1 Firstly, cut off the corners of the blank on the bandsaw and a drill hole for the screw chuck in the centre. With the blank mounted on the lathe, form a dovetail spigot and begin work on shaping the underside of the bowl. Position the flute of the gouge at about 10 o'clock, cutting from right to left on a 2-3mm wide section of the blade just to the left of the tip



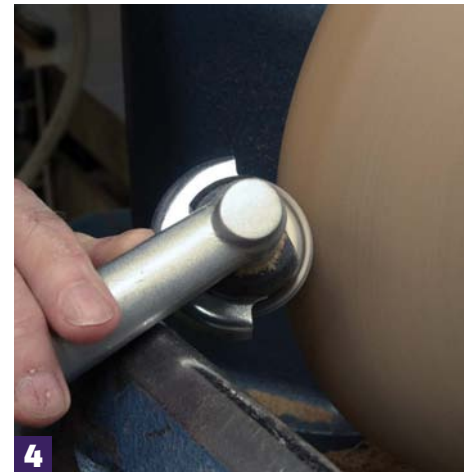
2 Use the same gouge to shear scrape the surface by rotating it until the flute is at about eight o'clock and the lower wing of the gouge is at about 45° to the surface of the blank. At this stage, cut in the foot of the bowl so it is 2-3mm deep and about one-third of the bowl's diameter



3 For the texturing, use a Proxxon long-neck mini angle grinder fitted with a Merlin chainsaw disc



4 You are very likely to have to go over your piece more than once in order to get the desired effect. The texture obtained using the Proxxon will depend on several factors: firstly, the lathe speed you're using, the diameter of the piece, the angle at which the grinder is held, how heavy-handed you are and the rate of movement across the work



5 This photo shows the result of three or four passes with the grinder. The angle at which the grinder was held can be seen quite clearly. I get good results with the lathe on a low speed and holding the grinder at an angle of about 45° from top left to bottom right. In this position, the rotation of the grinder is aligned with the rotation of the lathe and this gives better control. Make light contact and cut from right to left, pulling the grinder gently across the surface



6 The chainsaw cutters leave quite a rough, splintery surface in places but bristle discs in the Dremel soon got rid of them. These yellow ones are 80 grit but, used gently, they de-fuzz the texturing without any danger of removing it. With the lathe off, rotate the work by hand while gently brushing the discs across the texturing in line with the indentations



7 Where the texturing begins there is a ragged start, which needs tidying up. Use a 6mm bead-forming tool to cut a small bead; this will help to separate the textured surface from the smooth surface. Position the bead so that it just overlaps the texturing and leaves a clean edge to it. Apart from a light sanding and polishing, which I advise to leave until later, this completes the underside of the bowl



8 My bowl saver is made by Woodcut and is a robust affair on a thick metal plate, which is held in the lathe's toolpost holder. It comes with two cutters of different diameters and the smaller one can be seen upside down on the far side of the plate where it is stored







9



10

**9** Begin by positioning the bowlsaver so that the cutter will leave a wall thickness of about 16mm. This might seem thick but it is likely that your bowl isn't spherical and it is better to leave a thick wall than risk going through the bowl side and potentially wasting a good piece of wood. You can then remove the bowl from the chuck and use the bowlsaver's handle to swing the cutter round to its final position in front of the chuck



11



12

**10** Adjust the position of the bowlsaver, by trial and error, so that the gap between the chuck face and cutter is again about 16mm. Repeat these checks, repositioning as necessary to ensure the cutter will follow a path that remains inside the bowl. Do not begin the cut until you are quite certain that a reasonably thick wall will be left in the bowl

**11** Starting the cut can be quite nerve-racking and is accompanied by a certain amount of juddering and vibration from the bowlsaver. The cutting tip forms a wide groove to allow the arm of the cutter to follow it into the cut. Wear full face and head protection for this and all other turning and proceed slowly, steadying the cutter with your left hand to help dampen vibrations. As the cut proceeds, the swarf will build up in the cut and could jam the tool. Backtrack frequently to clear the cut



13



14

**12** Surprisingly quickly the cut progresses to the centre and the solid core can be broken free. Note that this piece still has the central hole in it, so it can easily be remounted on the screw chuck later on

**13** It's wise to check the wall thickness at several places before proceeding any further as it is bound to vary and you need to know where it is thinnest and just how thin that is. In this case, you're safe with a minimum wall thickness of about 10mm and much thicker in places

**14** Using a 13mm bowl gouge, take the interior down to a roughly even thickness of about 8mm and texture the rim, maintaining the grinder at the same angle in relation to the rotation of the bowl. With the rim and the interior completed you can now power sand the bowl from 120 grit through 180 and 240 to 400 grit before sealing and wax polishing



15



16

**15** All that remains to be done is the removal of the dovetail spigot and completion of the foot. If you have a vacuum chuck, reverse your bowl using this, although you can also hold it in a jam chuck or Cole jaws if you don't have a vacuum system

**16** After removing the spigot from the bottom of the bowl, decorate the foot with a small bead formed using the same bead-forming tool. The bowl exterior can then be sanded, sealed and polished like the inside

17 The smaller bowl is made by remounting the core on the screw chuck and turning a dovetail spigot just as before. The usual procedure is then followed, removing the interior with the bowl gouge until the smaller bowl is also finished

18 This second bowl is a bonus that wouldn't have been possible without the bowlsaver. Although its dimensions are largely determined by the bowlsaver, my bowl measured a respectable 210 × 50mm

19 The finished bowls. A perfectly matched plane pair

*“This second bowl is a bonus that wouldn't have been possible without the bowlsaver”*

20 Of course, the bowlsaver can be used on any timber and this pair of ribbed and stained beech bowls were made from one piece of wood using the same bowl saver. The larger of the two is approximately 320mm diameter × 95mm and the smaller one is 240mm diameter × 70mm. In each case, the interior has been left unstained and the rim divided to create the illusion of a bowl within a bowl

21 Alternatively, different cutters may be used in the Proxxon angle grinder. This very deeply textured laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides*) bowl was done using a mini Arbortech blade and then ebonised with a blowtorch ●

### HANDY HINTS

1. The Proxxon grinder is a very useful tool but the thing I don't like about it is that it has a simple rocker on/off switch. If this gets pushed to 'on' inadvertently during storage, then the thing starts up as soon as you plug it in – with possibly disastrous results if you are anywhere near the blade
2. Using the Proxxon grinder with its rotation opposing that of the lathe makes it much harder to control and it tends to get carried deeper into the work with unpredictable and possibly dangerous results
3. The bowlsaver takes a very wide, heavy cut. Ensure that the bowl is held very firmly in the chuck because this is the most likely source of weakness in the setup. The juddering and vibration can be alarming so proceed slowly and withdraw frequently to clear the cut



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# Adding decoration to your supported forms

Following on from my previous article on developing supports for your turnings in issue 278, in this article, I will be looking at how adding decoration to our supported forms through carving, texturing, piercing and use of pyrography can open up a whole new direction for our projects. Of course, you don't have to add decoration to a beautiful piece of wood as the figuring may be all that is needed. You may also prefer to try some of these ideas on a standalone project without a support – as with the previous article, I want to introduce you to a few ideas and to get you thinking about other ways of working and experimenting. Above all, it is all about the enjoyment of what we can make with wood and adding a few more strings to your bow is never a bad thing.

## Nature as inspiration

There is a limitless variety of shapes and textures in and around our local environment, which we can use as a reference for our own work and which can be included to complement a form and add interest. Nature and manmade items can be explored and with their textures offer much scope to spark off an idea for a project – indeed there are many books dedicated to the subject of shape, form and texture containing hundreds of photos for the exact purpose of a reference for artists, sculptors and other makers. For example, *Surfaces and Textures: A Visual Sourcebook* by Polly O'Neil.

### MARK SANGER



Mark is a professional turner living and working in Dorset. He specialises in creative turning that incorporates texturing, colour and mixed media. Mark has written numerous woodturning

articles, demonstrates the craft, runs courses and has produced DVDs on the subject.

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Mark Sanger further explores developing supports and this month looks at adding decorations to your work



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK SANGER



## Collecting ideas

Other than purchasing books, we can create our own archives to dip in and out of by collecting our own images with a digital camera. A few examples of photos I have taken of interesting items are shown here with kind permission of Compton Acres Gardens, Poole. This large urn and close-up of a crane statue are examples of interesting textures and how they have been used as decoration. The photo of an eroded cliff also shows an unusual texture. We can also look at pottery, ceramics and other artefacts in museums, etc. to see how other makers have decorated vessels. Also shown here are examples of Poole Pottery, pictured with kind permission of Poole Museum – [www.poolemuseum.co.uk](http://www.poolemuseum.co.uk). Always ask permission before taking photos at venues as some do not allow it or have restrictions on the use of photos taken.



Large urn at Compton Acres Gardens, Poole



Examples of Poole Pottery, on display at Poole Museum



Close-up view of a crane statue, showing textured areas, also at Compton Acres Gardens, Poole

## Pencil and paper

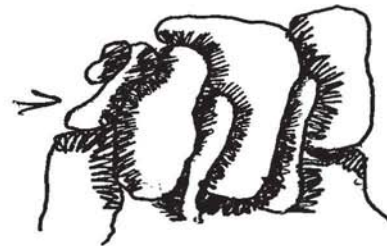
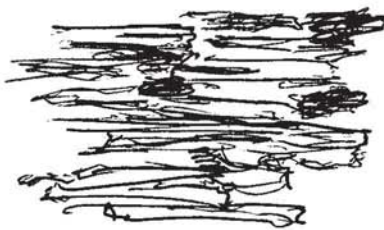
Once we have our photos, we can start picking out aspects of interest to incorporate within our projects. The idea here is not to directly copy but to come up with our own ideas, which are inspired by these points of interest. In the drawing below I have shown a group of sketches created

from the photos, using the erosion cliff face and the geometric shapes of the Poole Pottery vessel as reference with the latter reminding me of crazy paving. Once this process has been completed, I work further on my favourites and develop them until I find an idea that I want to work with.

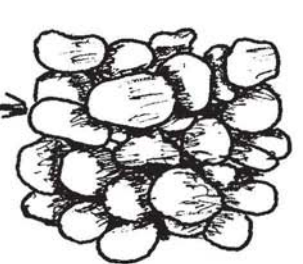
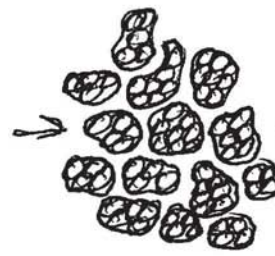
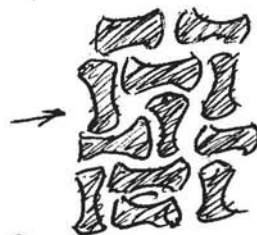
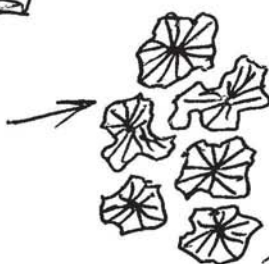


Texture of an eroded cliff

*Erosion*



*Crazy Paving*



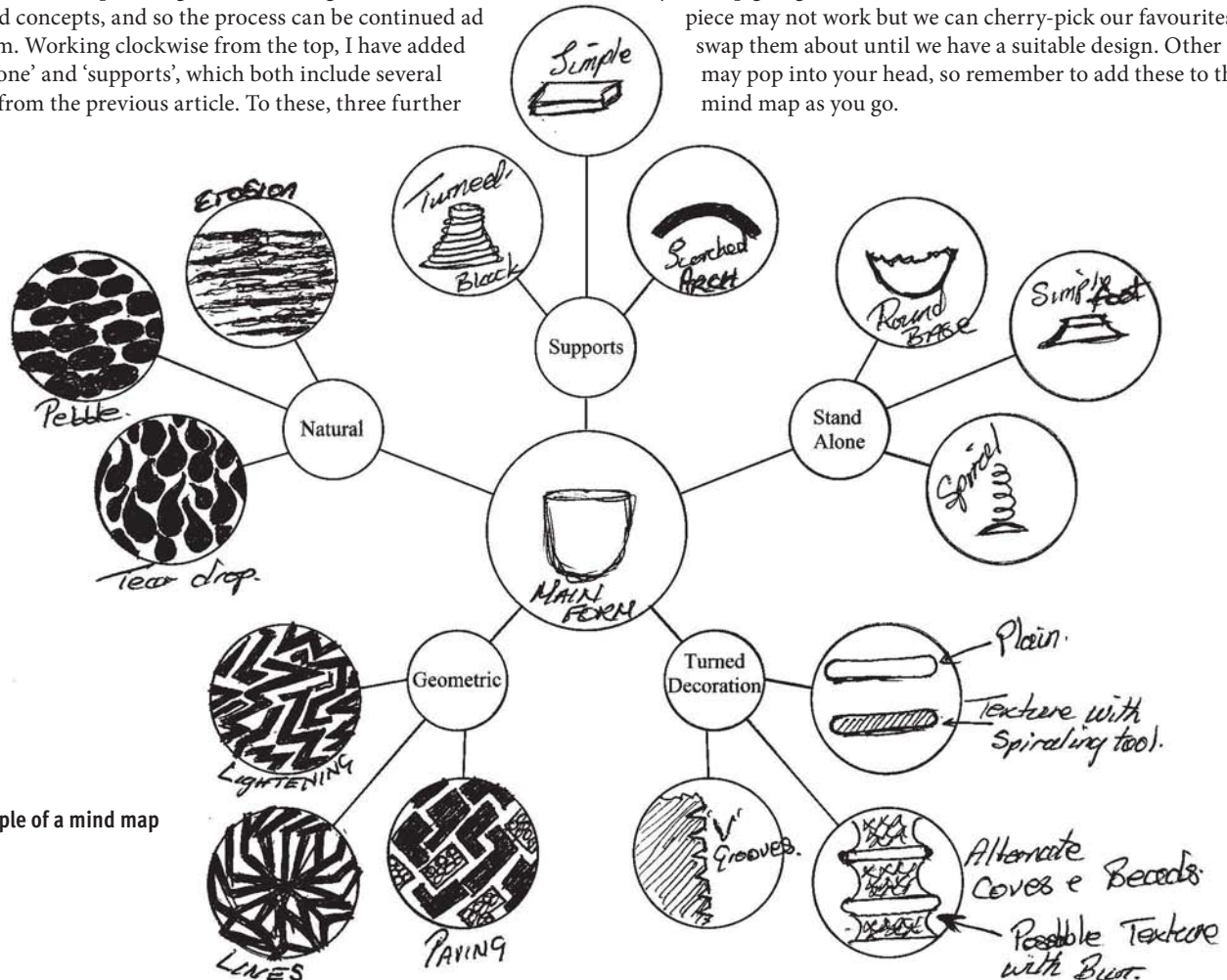
*Positive or Negative*

Sketching process showing how I came up with ideas for projects based on the eroded cliff and Poole Pottery textures

## Mind map

A mind map is a way of visually organising ideas quickly and clearly. They are used in art, design and commerce and are an organic ongoing process, which can be added to with further ideas as you work. Once I have my photos, reference material and sketches, I can start a mind map. Here, a simple form is placed in the middle with further concepts being added, which generates further ideas and concepts, and so the process can be continued ad infinitum. Working clockwise from the top, I have added 'standalone' and 'supports', which both include several designs from the previous article. To these, three further

concepts are added giving a total of nine variations, with 'turned textures' being next, and so on, as we work around finishing with 'natural textures'. By mixing and matching these ideas, we end up with a total of 243 vessel variations. Add a further section on 'colour' and this would take it up to a total of 729 variations and you can just keep going. Of course, to include all of the ideas into one piece may not work but we can cherry-pick our favourites and swap them about until we have a suitable design. Other ideas may pop into your head, so remember to add these to the mind map as you go.



An example of a mind map

## Tools

Next, we consider the practical aspects of making. For most turned projects, we can produce beads and coves for decoration using standard tools. If we want to add more complex textures, then we will need dedicated tools. This being said, a lot can be done with a set of woodcarving chisels and a simple rotary tool. For the occasional user, there are many

low-cost versions of these from well-known budget supermarkets that also sell power tools, which are ideal for starting with. Here you can see a selection of hand chisels and dedicated turning tools, which are used for texturing as well as a small selection of tools I have built up over the years which I use, including power carvers, a pyrography machine and

rotary tools. Also shown on page 22 is a small selection of burrs and pyrography tips, which are available from many good woodworking outlets and are ideal for texturing. Power tools greatly speed up the process and are at times necessary, but as mentioned, a lot can be achieved with standard chisels and basic tools if you take the time to experiment.



A selection of hand chisels and dedicated turning tools used for texturing



Tools I use including power carvers, a pyrography machine and rotary tools



A small selection of pyrography tips and burrs

## Practice before starting the project

Practice new techniques on small sections of prepared wood before starting on the final project; this will allow you to try out the tools, see how they perform and discover what can be achieved with them before committing to the final project. For this, I cut 10 × 50 × 50mm pieces of a close grain wood on a bandsaw, finished with 120 grit abrasive and wrote the texture techniques and tools used on the back for future reference. Here you can see a few of these blocks with the

texture on the far left example being achieved with a woodcarving 'V' chisel. The effects you like the most can be practised on larger pieces until you perfect the technique and can then move on to your turned project. Spraying the practice textures with black or white acrylic paint allows the detail of the texture to be seen without the grain, but you can leave them natural if you want to see how the texture complements or contrasts with the grain.



Practice blocks showing examples of different textures



## Putting it all together

Eventually, you can take the plunge and try out your ideas on a turned form; this can be nerve wracking as you could potentially ruin a piece, which has taken some time to turn. Being willing to wreck pieces is what we have to do to see if our designs on paper work – sometimes they will and sometimes they won't, but this is the best way to progress. Worrying about mistakes keeps us in our comfort zone and stops us trying out new things. Here you can see a close-up photo of an oak (*Quercus robur*) end grain form, which was textured to represent the cliff erosion previously shown. The form was turned and 'V' grooves were then cut into the surface at random with a skew chisel while the piece was mounted on the lathe and the grooves were cut progressively smaller and closer as I neared the base. The inside of the bowl was then finished with abrasive. The texture was achieved by cutting into the 'V' grooves and surrounding high points using 1.5mm, 1mm and 0.5mm piercing burrs in a rotary tool. Finally, the surface was finished off the lathe



A close-up of an oak end grain form textured to represent cliff erosion

with a bronze brush, which helped to clear out and remove any remaining debris. I decided to leave the textured surface natural and applied no further finish. I decided to make a stand using scorched oak, which was rubbed back with a small wire brush to reveal the texture of the grain. A few fine coats of acrylic sanding sealer were then applied to seal on the carbon. At this point, I tried a natural base with a complementary pebble as a focal point as I thought the first support was too formal. Playing around with the forms, supports and materials is what I enjoy the most. On occasions, I just cannot make up my mind which one I prefer as shown here, so I just keep adapting until I am happy with the result.



The oak (*Quercus robur*) form mounted on a scorched base

*“Being willing to wreck pieces is what we have to do to see if our designs work...”*



An alternative base for the form, incorporating a pebble

## Scorching wood

Scorching wood is an ancient practice not only to add texture but also longevity in harsh weather conditions. Scorching imparts a beautiful organic texture and the carbon residue protects the wood from the elements. Carving a turned form prior to scorching adds yet another dimension, as shown here in this beautiful ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) end grain form turned by George Watkins – [www.fromthetree.co.uk](http://www.fromthetree.co.uk). Here George carved a simple vertical line down both sides to intersect with the carved rim and grain pattern. The form was then heavily scorched and rubbed back with a wire brush to remove the soft early growth and the result is striking with minimal work as the wood grain is used in itself as the main

texture/effect. The opening photo on page 19 shows another scorched example – an end grain oak form, which was treated in the same way and presented on a slate support. For this piece, I included bamboo to introduce another material, texture and colour.

Hopefully this and the previous article will give you food for thought on how texture and supports can be added to a turned project and introduce you to some of the tools you can use to achieve the effects. An encyclopaedia could be written on texturing and the tools and effects that can be achieved. Using only a few carving chisels, a low cost rotary tool and a few small burrs, you can have a lot of fun and this is ultimately the aim of woodturning, so enjoy the journey. ●



A beautiful ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) end grain form turned by George Watkins

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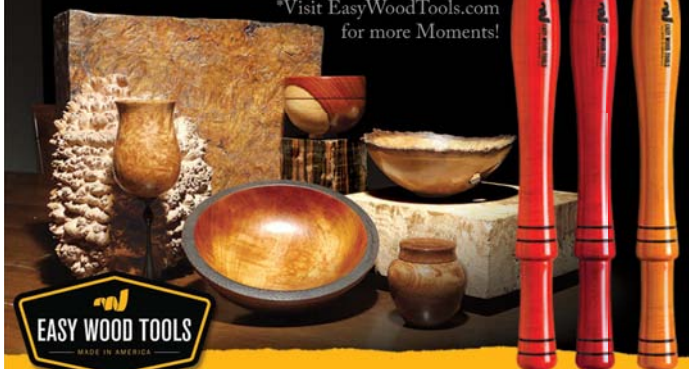
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM DUXBURY

# Lighthouse pepper mill

Jim Duxbury makes a lighthouse pepper mill

A uniquely designed wooden pepper mill is always a favourite both to turn and to use. Pepper mills can be made in a basic form from a solid piece of wood or complex wood glue-ups of contrasting colours. In some cases, forms such as a mushroom, the Seattle Space Needle, or even some of the historic lighthouses of England and others around the world would be of interest. All of these wooden mills can be attractively turned and are only limited by your own imagination. I have made numerous pepper mills of various shapes and sizes; however, the most popular is the lighthouse design. Let's get started.

## JIM DUXBURY



Jim is a woodturner and inventor who thinks and creates 'out of the box.' He makes a variety of items, including kaleidoscopes, wooden hats, pens, and even a working Foucault pendulum. More of his fine wooden objects and plans can be found on his website.

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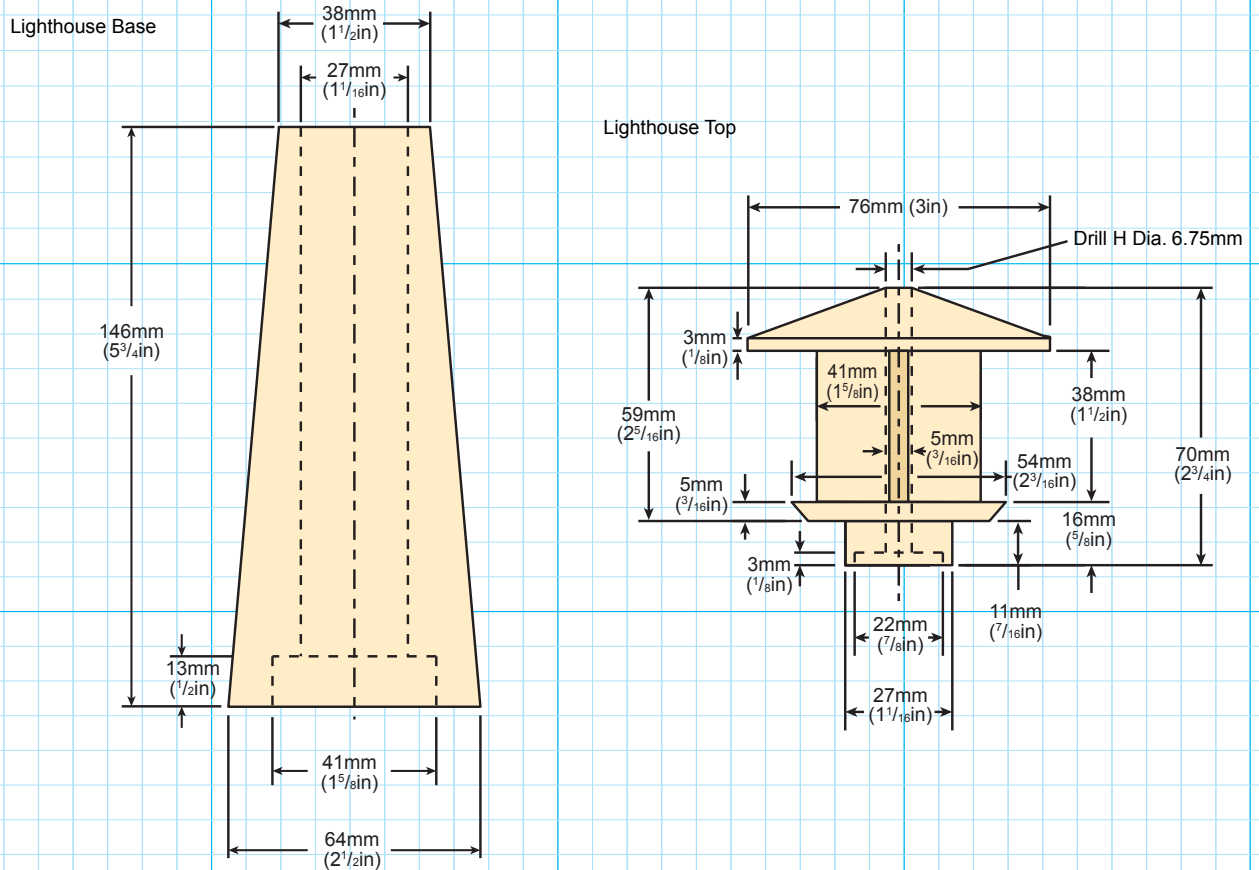
### EQUIPMENT USED

- 25mm spindle roughing or spindle gouge
- 10mm detail gouge
- 12mm parting tool
- 2mm parting tool
- 6mm point scraper
- 41mm Forstner drill bit
- 27mm Forstner drill bit
- 6.75mm or H drill bit
- Callipers: both dial & OD
- Wire burner
- Abrasives from 100-320 grit
- Spray lacquer
- PPE: facemask, respirator/dust mask and extraction
- 203mm stainless steel pepper mill kit – with detailed assembly instructions

### TIMBER REQUIREMENTS

- Maple (*Acer saccharum*):** 76 × 76 × 203mm and 25 × 25 × 178mm – any white wood can be used
- Wenge (*Millettia laurentii*):** 51 × 5 × 102mm – any dark wood can be used
- Cherry (*Prunus spp.*):** 76 × 19 × 152mm – any brown wood can be used

PLANS



1



2

- 1 The first step is to gather all the materials to make your 203mm pepper mill
- 2 Start by placing the 76 × 76 × 203mm piece of maple (*Acer saccharum*) between centres on the lathe. You can then turn it to a diameter of 64mm, then mark a cut line 146mm from the drive end. Cut a tenon on the end of the cylinder to fit your chuck
- 3 Next, turn the piece round, mount it in a chuck and bring up the tailstock. Square off the end with a finish cut



3



4

*“...when drilling with a chuck mounted in the tailstock, keep one hand on the drill chuck with pressure towards the tailstock”*

- 4 This will be the finished bottom of the pepper mill. Slow the lathe down to about 450rpm and using a 41mm Forstner bit, drill a 13mm deep recess. Always remember, when drilling with a chuck mounted in the tailstock, keep one hand on the drill chuck with pressure towards the tailstock; this will ensure that the chuck does not work itself out of the taper

5 When that is completed, the next step is to mount a 27mm Forstner bit and drill through the cylinder. A drill bit extension may be required or the piece can be turned around and drilled from the other end if the Forstner bit is not long enough



6 When the drilling has been completed, remove the drill and chuck, put a cone end in the tailstock, slide the cone into the drilled hole and lock the tailstock in place



7 With a parting tool, cut a notch about 13mm wide down to a 38mm cylinder. This references both ends of the base and allows the taper to be easily cut



8 This lighthouse has a straight taper – no beads, coves, dimples or protrusions. The trim lines are burned in with steel wire mounted in wooden handles. To get the burn lines in the exact location, measure 13mm in from each end and place a pencil line. To make five lines, measure halfway between these two lines and mark a pencil line, then measure halfway between those lines and place more pencil lines. With a point scraper, make a small cut on each line...



9 ... you can then increase the lathe speed and burn the lines in

10 Once you've finished burning the lines in, you can sand the piece to a final finish

11 Next, turn the lathe speed down, move the tailstock out and part off. This completes the lighthouse base and we can now start on the top



***“Be sure all grain is running in the same direction”***

12 Because longer strips are safer to cut on the tablesaw and easier to glue and clamp, I show making three of this part at one time. This being said, the following dimensions are for a single top and will start with the light section. Take the piece of maple measuring 25 × 25 × 178mm and cut the 178mm length into four equal lengths. Then, take the wenge (*Millettia laurentii*) and cut the 102mm length in half, making two 51 × 51 × 5mm pieces. Take one of these pieces and cut it in half, with the grain, leaving two 51 × 25 × 5mm pieces. Next, take each one of these wenge pieces and glue a white piece onto each side of each piece. This makes two maple/wenge/maple pieces, which gives us the effect we're looking for. When the glue has cured, sand one side of each piece flat and glue these two pieces onto the remaining wenge piece. Be sure all grain is running in the same direction





13

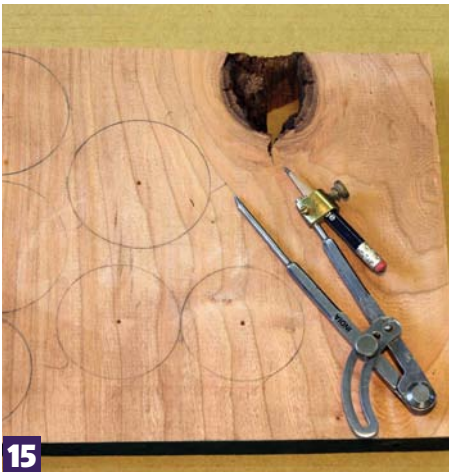


14

**13** Once the glue has totally cured, mount this piece between centres. Locate the axis points centred on the wenge wood cross, turn the piece to a 41mm diameter and part off both ends to make a final length of 38mm. Mount this cylinder in a chuck, locate the centre with a starter bit...

**14** ... and you are then ready to drill through with a 6.75mm (H) drill

**15** The roof and skirt of the light are made from the piece of cherry measuring 76 × 19 × 152mm. You then need to draw a 76mm circle and a 54mm circle...



15



16

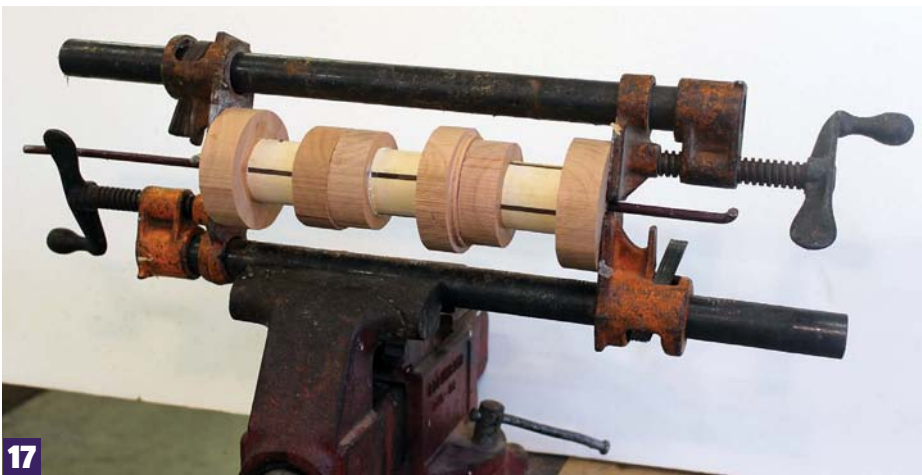
**16** ... and drill a 6.75mm (H) hole in the centre of each

*“The roof and skirt of the light are made from the piece of cherry measuring 76 × 19 × 152mm”*

**17** Cut these circular pieces out on the bandsaw and with the aid of a metal rod or even the drill bit, glue and clamp one piece to each end of the previously turned light cylinder

**18** When the glue has cured on this piece, mount it between point centres and turn a tenon, which measures about 6 × 54mm on the 76mm end

**19** You then need to chuck up on this tenon and secure with the point tailstock centre. Next, trim all surfaces round and begin turning the roof and skirt shape



17



18



19

**HANDY HINTS**

1. Purchase the pepper mill hardware kit and ensure to read all instructions thoroughly before you begin
2. When drilling on the lathe, always keep one hand on the drill chuck with pressure toward the tailstock to prevent the chuck from vibrating loose
3. Always wear a face shield, especially when marking lines with callipers
4. Using sharp tools for all of your turning projects is a must
5. When sanding and burning, always wear a respirator. In fact, whenever you are in the workshop, full PPE should always be worn wherever possible
6. Use a started bit when drilling smaller diameter holes; this will ensure that the drill does not deflect
7. For maximum strength be sure all glued surfaces of the pepper mill are sanded smooth and flat

20 The next step is to set the callipers to 27mm and cut the 11mm tenon. You can then test fit this tenon in the base of the lighthouse. It must turn easily but not be too loose. Adjust as needed and sand all surfaces below the roof top

21 You can now remove the tailstock. From the pepper mill kit hardware, take the turn plate – a round disc with a square hole in it. Set the callipers to the exterior diameter of this disc. Wearing your face shield, set the lathe at a slow speed and mark a cut line in the end of the tenon. Exercising caution, resting the callipers on the toolrest, touch only the calliper tip closest to you and move this tip until the scratch line aligns with the other tip held just off the rotating wood. When the calliper tips are both over the scratch line, press the scratching tip in further to cut a solid line

*“Touch only the calliper tip closest to you”*

22 Then, using a small parting tool, cut a recess deep enough to receive the turn plate...

23 ... drill pilot holes and you are then ready to screw it in place

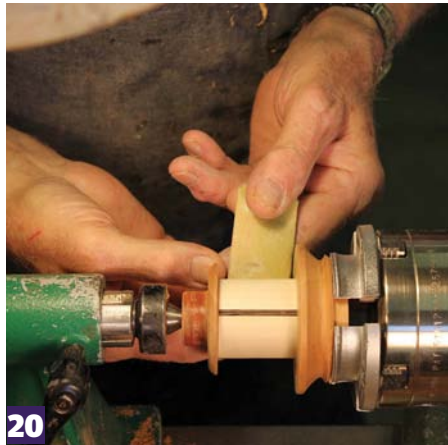
24 Next, reverse the piece and mount it in a chuck. Bring up the point tailstock and rough shape the roof

25 Once that is done, you can remove the tailstock and using a detail gouge with light cuts, finish the roof

26 Trim rings or roof designs can be added as you see fit. Final sand all the exterior surfaces and the mill is ready for you to apply your chosen finish. I use spray lacquer for most of my mills, but polyurethane or any of the hard surface finishes are suitable. A pepper mill can get a lot of use so apply three or four coats. When the finish has dried, mount the remaining kit hardware, refer to kit assembly instructions, add a few pepper corns and give it a try ●

### HANDY HINTS

8. To achieve the exact location of a wire burn line, cut a shallow starter groove with a point scraper
9. Make the tenon between the base and light fairly loose so that it turns easily and will not bind should the weather change
10. It is helpful to mount hardware in place while mounted on the lathe
11. Pieces that are frequently handled should have a hard finish, such as lacquer. Oil finishes build up a patina and are not easily cleaned







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# Skew chisel problems

Richard Findley continues his problem solving series, and this month looks at skew chisel problems

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD FINDLEY



## RICHARD FINDLEY



Richard is a registered UK professional woodturner living and working in Leicestershire. He discovered woodturning while working for his father as a joiner. Richard makes all kinds of work to commission,

from replacement antique components, walking canes and stair spindles, to decorative bowls. It is the variety of work that he loves. He also offers demonstrations and a range of woodturning supplies.

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There has been a lot written about the humble skew chisel, I've even written some of it myself, but people continue to struggle with the skew, or avoid it all together. My intention with this series is to look at the problems that people face in their turning, but from a problem solving angle, rather than just saying 'do this' and 'do that', which doesn't always help.

There are a number of issues surrounding skew chisels which tend to trip turners up:

- Tool choice
- Catches when planing
- Catches when rolling beads
- Chatter marks
- Overly burnished timber after a cut
- Poor shapes
- Clean cutting end grain and pommels
- Did I mention catches?

So, you followed the instructions in your preferred turning book, or watched the demo at the last club meeting, bought a new skew chisel at the show last month, which promised to be an 'easy' skew; you have scoured past issues of *Woodturning* magazine for articles about the tool, but you still can't get it to do what it should! Frustrating, isn't it? Being a largely self-taught turner myself, I too have travelled this road, so I know exactly how you feel. I hope this article helps you with what can be an extremely useful tool.

## Tool choice

There is a huge array of skew chisels on the market. There are round ones, square

ones, rectangular ones and oval ones, some are wide, some are narrow, skews can have rounded edges or square edges. The cutting edges can be curved or straight... have I missed any? Quite possibly!

Like so many things in the world of woodturning, if you asked 10 different turners for their opinion as to which is best, you are likely to get 10 slightly different answers. Most will tell you the one they use is the best because of 'X', 'Y' or 'Z'. So, which actually is best? Well, let me tell you a secret – they are all basically the same.



A selection of skews in various shapes and sizes

## What? Really? Then why sell so many different sorts?

The answer is the same as why they sell so many different types of beer or cars or styles of jeans; simply because different people like different things. I believe that skew choice is a very personal thing. My best recommendation is to listen to what all of the different people advise, weigh up the options and then make up your own mind. If you can try out a few then all the better. Hands-on sessions at clubs are ideal for this. Your choice should be based on:

- Does it feel comfortable in the hand?
- Is it too heavy, too light or just right?
- Can you get it to work when being advised by a more experienced turner?
- Does it feel good/solid/controllable/comfortable when cutting wood?

## Which is my favourite?

Funnily enough, my favourite skew isn't really a skew at all. My preference is for a beading & parting tool, which is a very traditional British tool and a kind of hybrid between a skew and a parting tool. The advantage being that it does everything that both tools can do, in one tool, meaning that for my production work it minimises the amount of tools I need with me at the lathe and prevents swapping between tools so often.

Referring back to my earlier statement, that all skews are basically the same, my beading & parting tool is no exception. It will plane, roll beads, clean end grain and cut pommels just the same as any other skew, as long as basic principles are applied. So for me, the best skew is my 10mm beading & parting tool.



Beading & parting tool in action

### TOP TIP

To make any skew chisel work to its best, I would always advise using some abrasive along the long edges of the tool, just to remove the arris. This will help the tool to slide along the rest much easier. Of course, the rest itself needs regular maintenance to ensure it is smooth and allows the tool to glide along it. A regular rub with abrasive will normally be enough to achieve this

## The fear factor

The biggest problem with the skew is the fear. Anyone who has experienced a catch will know that they can be spectacular and often quite alarming! This is the main reason for most people's fear of the tool. I hope that this article will help in some way to reduce, or even stop, catches altogether for you. Once catches are removed from the equation, your focus can shift to improving the shapes and the finish you achieve from the tool and enjoying the turning process, rather than worrying about catches.



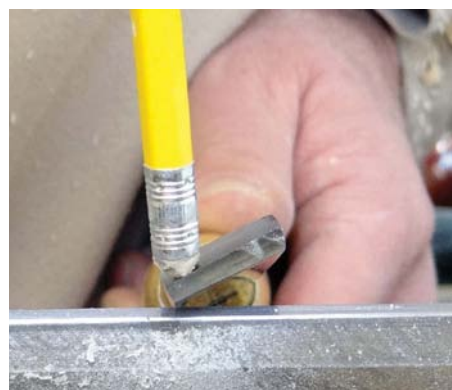
A planing catch

## Catch avoidance 1

To avoid these catches there are a few basics that need to be understood first:

- The tool sits on its bottom corner when planing
- Generally speaking, the short point is down nearest the rest and the long point is up, away from the wood and unsupported, but some people do it the other way round
- As the tool touches the wood, the natural downward force pushes the tool down into the toolrest, so you must only cut with a part of the edge that is supported by the toolrest.

The catch happens because you have touched a part of the tool to the spinning wood that is unsupported by the toolrest. Notice what happens when the downward force is shown with a pencil pushing downwards. If the force is towards the lower edge of the tool, it simply pushes



The downward force on the skew in the supported area of the tool...

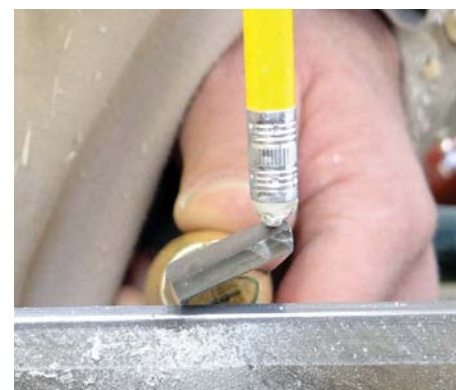
## Catches when planing

Planing with a skew is probably the first and simplest of all the actions you can do with the tool. The trouble is you get the tool on the rest, lift the handle and touch the edge to the spinning wood and immediately the tool is aggressively pulled off to one side, leaving a deep spiralling gouge mark in the wood. Sometimes you will begin the cut and all will seem to be going well until suddenly, seemingly without warning – bang! There it goes again!



Parts of a skew. Notice my skews are not very skewed in angle compared to some that you might see, which is simply my personal preference

the tool firmly onto the rest. If the downward force touches higher up along the tool edge, nearer to the long point, then there is no toolrest to support the tool – it is unsupported – and so slams down onto the rest with a bang, the geometry of the tool often causes it to be pulled back along the timber, causing a catch.



... and to the unsupported part of the skew – the main reason for planing catches

**TOP TIP**

While it isn't necessary, raising the toolrest to slightly above the centreline of the work can help if you struggle to control the tool when planing. Raising the toolrest will put you in a more elevated position, giving improved visibility and lifting the unsupported long point well away from the spinning wood.

Experiment with the tool, lightly touching different parts of the edge to the spinning wood and you will notice there is a 'sweet spot' at around the lower quarter point along the edge. Mark this point with a marker pen. Ideally, this is where you should be cutting. Now mark the centre point of the edge. Under no circumstances should you cut above this point when planing with the skew



Sweet spot and 'no-go' areas marked on the edge of a skew can be a real help when getting the feel of a skew



Planing with a skew. Notice the shaving is coming from the 'sweet spot' marked on the edge, giving me a smooth and controlled cut

**MYTH BUSTERS:**

**Myth – 'a wide skew will solve your planing issues!'**

It might... but might not! It is true to say that, because the tool is wider, the sweet spot is larger, meaning you have more leeway to make errors. The problem, however, is that because the tool is so much wider, the long point is so much further from the support of the toolrest that if a catch does occur, it could well be the biggest catch you have ever experienced! A narrow tool may actually be a better option, because the long point is much closer to the short point and the forces involved are greatly reduced, meaning that it is much less likely to catch at all. With my 10mm beading & parting tool, I aim to cut at around the centre point along the edge, which I find works well

**Chatter when planing**

So, you have planed along a few pieces of timber without a catch and seem to be getting the hang of it, but now, instead of catching, the tool, or perhaps the wood is now vibrating and chattering, causing a spiralling washboard type pattern along the timber. Chances are, the timber also appears to be quite shiny after the tool has passed along it.

**Relax!**

Easier said than done, but you need to relax. Naturally, all of those catches have made you a little nervous of the tool, so you hold on tight and apply plenty of pressure to stop it catching, but that is exactly why this new problem is occurring. By applying too much pressure to the timber, the heel and bevel of the tool rub on the wood, but too hard, causing the timber to compress – which causes the burnish or shine – and also to rebel against the pressure by causing the tool to bounce.

**I'm getting chatter, is it me or the wood?**

Chatter can be caused by the wood, so stop the lathe and inspect the timber. Several things in the timber can cause chatter:

- Knots
- Uneven grain patterns
- In some timber such as pine (*Pinus spp.*), the early and late growth that form the grain patterns can be different densities, which can cause chatter
- Slender work can chatter and bounce when cut

If none of these things appear to be present

then the problem can't be blamed on the timber. If any of them are present, then the solution is often the same as if they aren't present:

- Resharpener the tool – which is standard advice to solve almost any problem in turning
- Apply less pressure to the wood
- Be firm and positive with your movements, but don't fight the tool or the wood
- Remember, knots might be harder than normal wood, but they are still only wood, they will cut

So, you need to relax and just let the wood come to the sharp edge of the tool. You shouldn't have to fight the lathe or the wood, the lathe should do the work for you. If you are going to apply pressure anywhere, it should be tool to toolrest, rather than tool to wood. Pressure tool to toolrest can give additional stability but pressure into the wood will almost always result in chatter and vibration. If the wood is chattering because it is slender, you may need to offer some support with your front hand or employ a centre steady for additional support.

A second more practical thing you can do is to remove the heel of the skew. I always remove the heel from all of my tools because when first sharpened, the heel can be quite harsh to touch. This harsh edge rubs against the spinning wood and can exacerbate the problem. By lightly grinding it away, either into a secondary bevel or by riding it up the stone and gently round it, this softens the heel, making the contact between the hard metal tool and relatively soft wood, much lighter and greatly reduces chatter. This can be seen in the labelled photo of the skew chisel on page 34.

**Rolling beads**

With planing mastered, the next step is learning to roll beads. I think that rolling beads with a skew is one of the most difficult things to master in spindle turning, if not in all of turning. As with planing, generally speaking you will pick up the cut and begin forming the bead, then as you get about half way round the bead, suddenly, seemingly without warning – bang! Yet another catch! This time, though, the spiral catch has destroyed the bead!

**MYTH BUSTERS:**

**Myth – 'I just lay the skew flat on the toolrest and form my beads like that'**

While this will indeed enable you to form something resembling a bead and you will get away with it on dense timbers like boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), most commercial timbers will show a scraped and usually torn surface once you have stopped the lathe. To achieve a clean bead on any timber, from pine to boxwood, you need to cut it, not scrape it



A typical bead rolling skew catch

## ❏ Catch avoidance 2

The key to rolling a bead with a skew is to use the very tip of the tool. To ensure you are using the very tip, you need to look out for:

- A V-groove
- A feathered edge

If you can see the tip of the tool forming and sitting in this V-groove, it naturally raises a feathered edge before the cut. Done correctly, you'll have full tool control. It won't want to catch, it won't try to destroy your work – it will just allow you to guide it around the cut.

### TOP TIP

Use the long point. The first book I ever bought to help teach me woodturning said that you must use the short point. The problem with this is that you lose sight of the tip of the tool as you form the bead. This is less of a problem to an experienced turner, but if you are just getting used to the tool, it seems obvious to me that being able to see the pointy end of the tool will be a great help to you. No matter which point you choose to use, the technique is actually the same: use the very point and look for the V-groove and feathered edge

## Practice, practice, practice

Once you are able to turn a few beads without a catch, you will find that you become less worried by the next catch and can focus on the shape you are turning. Turn a row of beads with a skew – initially they are likely to be a bit flat and square or rather pointy, but with fewer and fewer catches, keep going and you'll find the shapes improve.

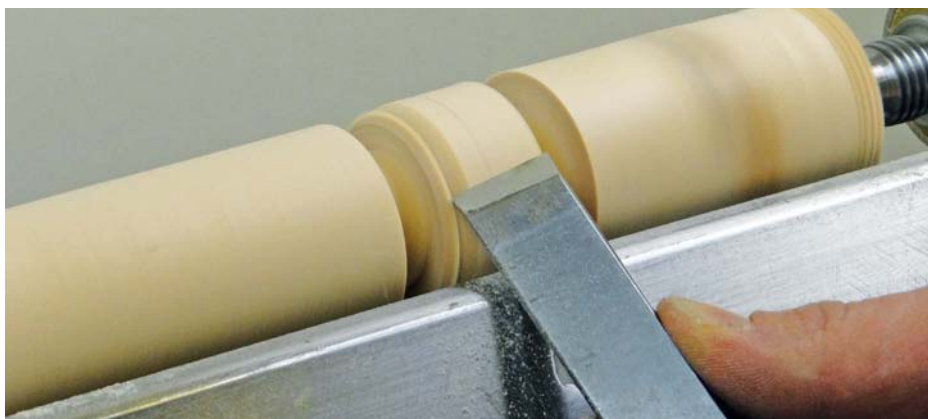
## Cleaning end grain

People are often surprised just how clean a cut can be achieved across end grain with a skew chisel. The problems faced here range from the tool binding in the cut from taking too big a cut, uneven or angled surface from poor presentation and movement and, of course, yet another frustrating catch.

Success with this cut is all about slicing with the tool rather than just pushing it into the wood. Presentation of the tool plays a vital role in making this cut work as it should.



A typical catch when cleaning the end grain of a spindle blank



Rolling a bead with a skew. Notice that only the very tip of the tool is cutting



When cutting correctly with the very tip of the tool, the tip sits in a V-groove and a feathered edge is lifted in front of the cut. These are tell-tale signs that you are doing it correctly

### TOP TIP

A very simple trick that can help with forming well-shaped beads is to draw a pencil line down the centre of the bead you've created; this gives you a guide to the position of the centre of the bead and helps to balance the shape.

The thing to be aware of when trying to form a bead is that there are several movements required to achieve the desired shape and keep the cut on the tip of the tool. The tool needs to move along the toolrest, it needs to roll, usually starting with the edge almost horizontal and finishing with it vertical, having rolled through 90°. There is also a slight swing to the handle, to allow the bevel to glide behind the cut and maintain control and a slight lift to the handle, as the tool will need to finish almost horizontal. With so much happening with this cut, there is little wonder that so many turners find rolling a bead is difficult



The start and finish positions of the skew when turning the left side of a bead



Notice how much movement is involved

## Catch avoidance 3

With this cut you need to use the long point of the skew – right on that point again, just like rolling beads – and rather than just push, you need to slice with an arcing action. It is very important to understand how the bevel affects the direction of cut. If you hold the handle square to the wood, as people often feel they should, the bevel is pointing at an angle to the wood. To achieve a straight and square cut, you need to point the bevel in the direction of the cut, which means bringing the handle round to one side, allowing you to look along the bevel and see it pointing in the direction that you want to cut. You can try this out by making the cut with the handle in different positions and seeing the results.

With the bevel in the correct position, you need to begin the cut with the handle held low and lift it into the cut. The correct arcing and slicing motion is a combination of pushing forward and lifting the handle together, aiming to finish the cut with the point of the tool at the centre of the wood.

As with all cuts with the skew, don't be greedy with the size of cut. If you take too big a cut, the tool will just jam and you won't be able to go much further without extreme pressure, which will almost certainly lead to another catch. Small, light cuts are the order of the day with the skew when making any cut.

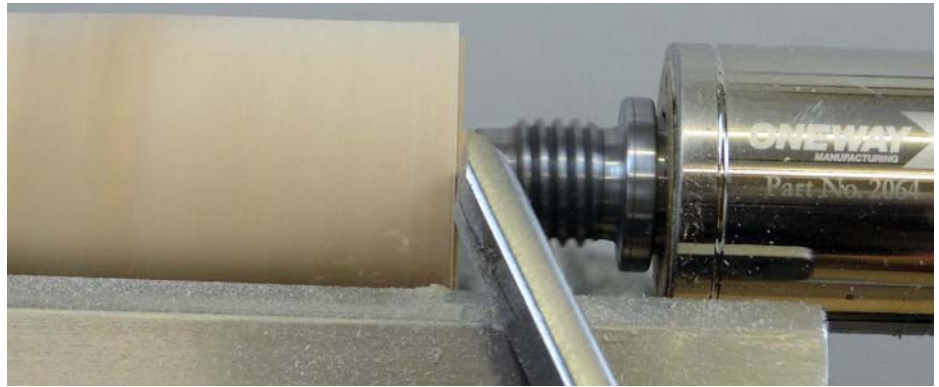
## Cutting shoulders

This is really a combination of the techniques for slicing end grain and that of rolling a bead. The cut needs to stay on the very tip of the long point and needs to begin as a V-cut, which can be enlarged and then sliced into a square shoulder. If a curve is required, then this can then be formed, gradually, a cut at a time, still using the very tip of the long point. Some pommels are square, some have a slight curve, others are a full radius, all of which can be completed with the long point of the skew.

## Rules of the skew – recap

All skew chisels are basically the same. As long as you follow some simple rules, then you will be able to use any skew successfully. The exact size and shape of the skew is totally down to personal preference. The rules are:

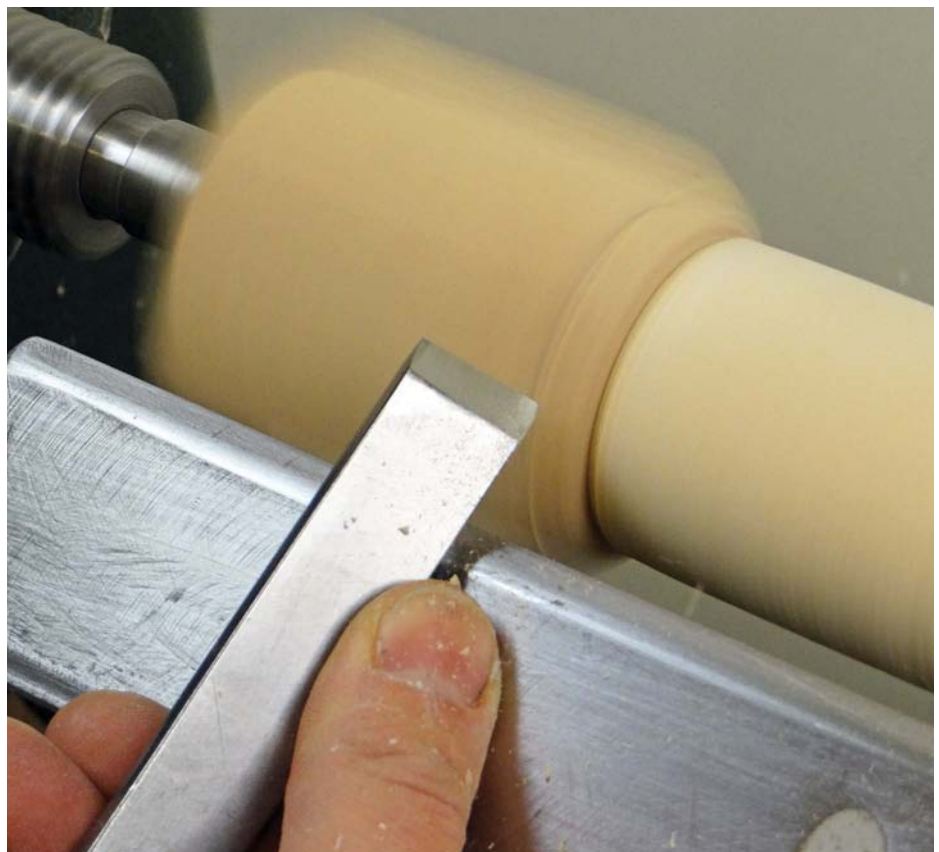
- When planing, use below the centre point on the edge
- When rolling beads, use the very tip of the tool. It doesn't matter which, just make sure it's only the tip
- Take small, light cuts
- When slicing end grain or cutting into a spindle, use a slicing and arcing action with just the long point of the skew
- Keep it sharp! ●



The correct position of the tool when cleaning end grain feels strange, but you should be looking along the line of the bevel to guarantee a straight cut



Cutting the end grain of a spindle blank, pushing forward and lifting the handle means you are cutting in an arc towards the centre of the wood



Cutting a pommel with a skew uses the same techniques as rolling beads and slicing the end grain

# elipse



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# Lathe stand

Robert Wicks shows you how to make a handy bespoke wooden lathe stand

## ROBERT WICKS



Robert has been turning for the past three years and is based in Berkshire. In addition to a busy international sports marketing role, he is the author of five Haynes manuals on a wide range of subjects, including adventure motorcycling and aviation. He says woodturning provides the ideal way to be creative. He has a keen interest in segmented work.

robert.wicks@gmail.com

I started turning about three years ago and to get going I invested in a hobby lathe from Axminster Tools & Machinery. Over

time, my skill level has improved and I am now starting to demand more of the lathe and the hobby as a whole. I have also developed, as is undoubtedly the case with most people who discover turning, an ever-growing collection of tools and turning accessories.

While I have been happy with the lathe itself, the original stand was causing me a number of issues. Firstly, it is made of very lightweight material and hence not very rigid, contributing to unwanted vibration – an absolute ‘no-no’ when it comes to turning. The stand was also simplistic in its design and offered very little in the way of storage, aside from a single tray that seemed to be designed to ensure my stock and accessories were constantly getting covered in dust and shavings. Finally, as I am 6ft 5in tall, the

lathe was a little on the low side for comfortable operation and this was further compounded by the fact that I stand on a 38mm rubber mat in my workshop. With all of these issues in mind I decided building a lathe stand was a great project for the winter.

Before embarking on this project, three key things need to be considered in the initial planning: the length and width of the lathe bed; the need for rigid uprights – sides – to overcome the vibration issue and a suitable and cost-effective form of storage, preferably in keeping with the stand design. Once you are certain of your measurements, I recommend mocking up a cardboard prototype of one of the uprights; this enables you to carefully check the final height of the lathe bed, as well as the height of the shelves.

## PLANS

### EQUIPMENT USED

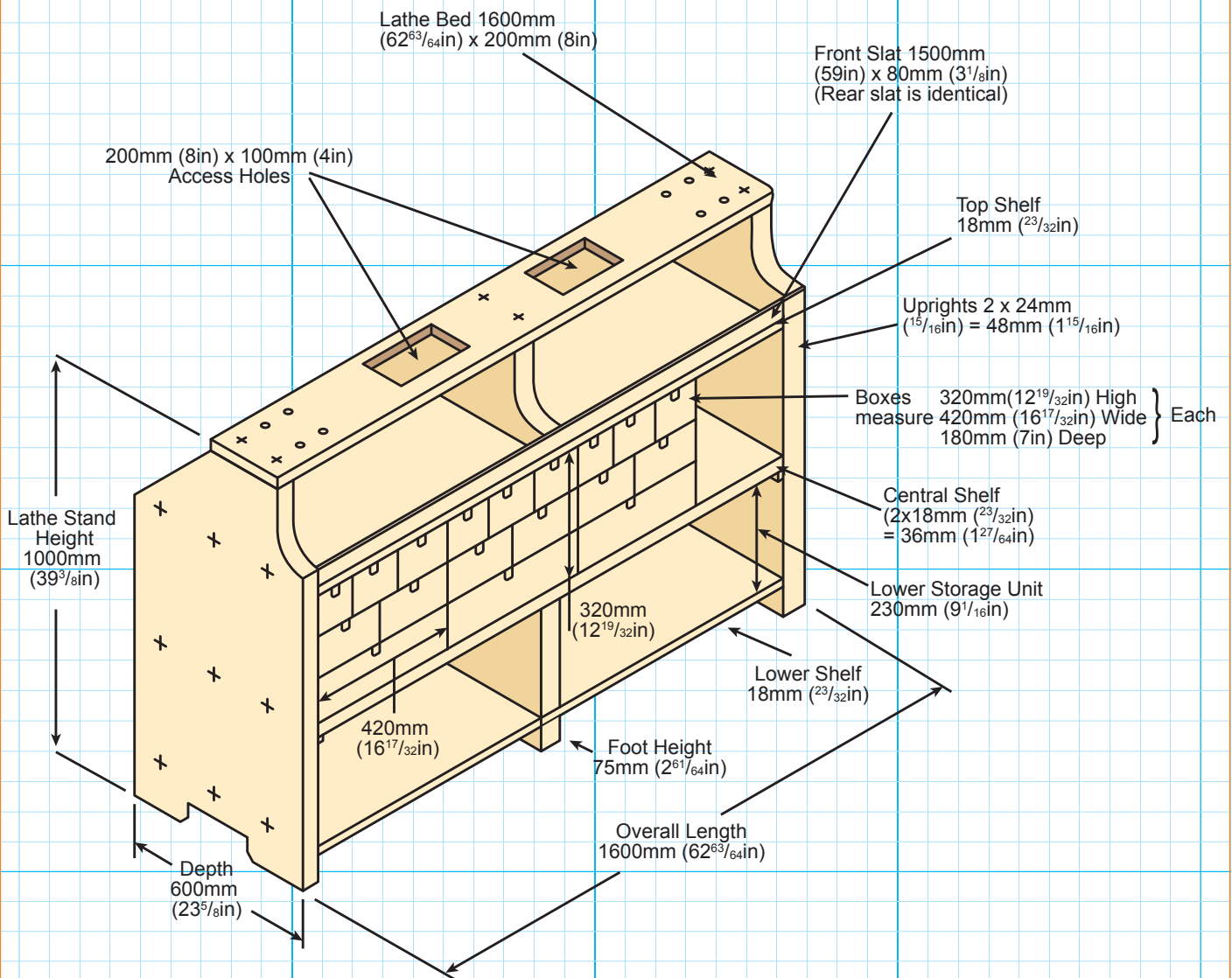
Vertical screws  
 Japanese fine cut saw  
 Masking tape  
 Titebond glue  
 Wood screws  
 Nails  
 A selection of clamps  
 Jigsaw and/or multi-tool with plunge cut

blade  
 Danish oil  
 Bought storage boxes  
 Bosch Multi-tool  
 PPE: facemask, respirator/dust mask and extraction

10 × 10mm plywood strips  
 3 pieces of 18mm ply

### TIMBER REQUIREMENTS

Two sheets of 48mm marine plywood





1



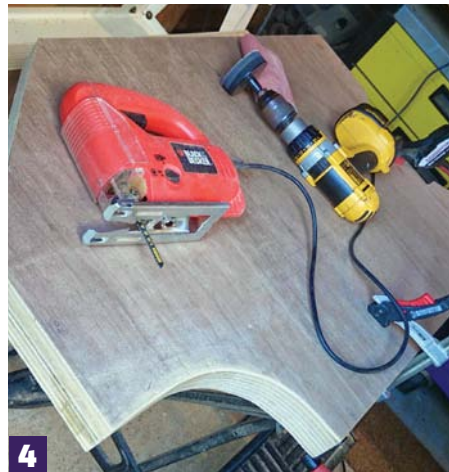
2

1 Start by cutting up your sheet to size and laminating together two pieces of 48mm marine plywood to create the thickness of the pieces required for the ends of the bench. You will find it to be more expensive than standard ply, but it tends to be more durable and with fewer defects. Make sure you have a good even coverage of adhesive on one face, then lay the two pieces together

2 Getting a good bond to ensure good lamination between the two sheets is essential. If necessary, use every clamp you have available at the time



3



4

3 Once you have your two uprights, use a jigsaw and/or multi-tool to cut the feet, tapered backs...

*“Exercise caution when working with the uprights...”*

4 ... and curved fronts. Exercise caution when working with the uprights as they are cumbersome and heavy

5 You can clamp the two ends together and clean up all the faces to make sure both match



5



6

6 Use 10 × 10mm plywood strips on the inside of each upright to support the shelves. Simply nail and glue them into position. They will come in very handy during final assembly, particularly if this is something that you are doing on your own. Remember to apply masking tape above and below the strips to make the glue clean-up easier

7 Create the lower storage shelf out of 18mm ply. Before putting this in place, glue and screw the lower central support leg that runs the full depth of the stand – without this the structure can bow under its own weight and that of the cast-iron lathe bed



7

## HANDY HINTS

1. Make a prototype out of cardboard to ensure the proposed dimensions meet your requirements
2. Cut the sheets for each end simultaneously; this will save time and ensure they match up
3. Don't cut the curved fronts too deep as you might find yourself standing further back from the lathe than you would like
4. Source decent quality timber from a reputable merchant
5. As the old adage goes – measure twice and cut once

8 Make the central shelf a double layer of 18mm ply for added rigidity across the centre of the stand and also bear in mind that this shelf carries the full weight of the accessory boxes content. Then, put a single 18mm sheet in place for the top shelf. In addition to the support strips, screw in each of the shelves using 75mm wood screws, preceded by a pilot hole. I have to admit that my storage boxes came from IKEA, but of course you can make these yourself if you don't want to buy them. The birch ply and general proportions suited the stand perfectly and saved me a great deal of time on the project. Be sure to get boxes that hold everything you need and take extra care in getting the shelf heights exactly right. If the storage boxes are not as deep as the stand, add a rear strip of ply directly behind the boxes, so they don't move backwards



9 You can now add the upper central support – this should have a matching curve to that of the two uprights, but not be quite as deep given the front and rear panels that run the full width of the stand. Secure this upright with wood screws from below and some Titebond. Depending on your own requirements, cut access holes in the base using the plunge cut blade on the multi-tool. I did this should I need to tighten the fixings beneath the tailstock or the toolrest assembly – this has been a recurring issue for me, undoubtedly brought about by the vibrations mentioned earlier



10 Drop in the front and rear panels on the top shelf – cut these to size once the stand is nearing completion. I used my Japanese fine cut saw to make minute, but very accurate adjustments here. Once in place, you have a tray that can be used for your tools during turning and for other items you need to regularly access. This can be further subdivided to create separate areas, depending on your requirements. For a clean front on the stand, use vertical screws every 100mm starting beneath the top shelf and into the underside of the panels. If you've already fitted the accessory boxes, remove these and countersink the screws, otherwise the boxes will foul on the screw heads when you put them back. Use the lathe bed as a template to mark the holes accurately. Drill and secure the lathe bed with good quality bolts



11 Now for the base on which the lathe bed will rest. Place this on top of the three vertical supports and secure with screws only – don't use glue in case you ever want to replace this element

12 At this point you haven't added in a backing board, as if you drop something down the back, it is easily accessible via the lower shelf. To finish, simply apply a couple of coats of Danish oil. To make life easier, it helps to label the storage boxes. You are then ready to put your lathe stand through its paces! ●





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# Modifying slimline pen kits

**Walter Hall** takes you through the steps for modifying two slimline pen kits

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALTER HALL



## WALTER HALL



Walter Hall is a woodturner who has specialised in making pens and pencils for more than 20 years. Based on the beautiful Northumberland coast in the UK, Walter sells his bespoke pens and pencils through local craft centres and via his website.

walter@walterspens.co.uk  
www.walterspens.co.uk

Nowadays there are hundreds of different styles and designs of pen kits on the market and it is easy for a pen maker to make a wide variety of writing instruments without ever doing more than some basic turning and assembling the kits in accordance with the instructions. In order to make a pen that is truly individual, however, more adventurous pen makers choose to move away from basic kit assembly and venture into modification of kits and even making kitless pens from scratch. The first step on this journey for many is making simple modifications to the basic slimline kits that have been around since I began pen making,

more years ago than I care to remember.

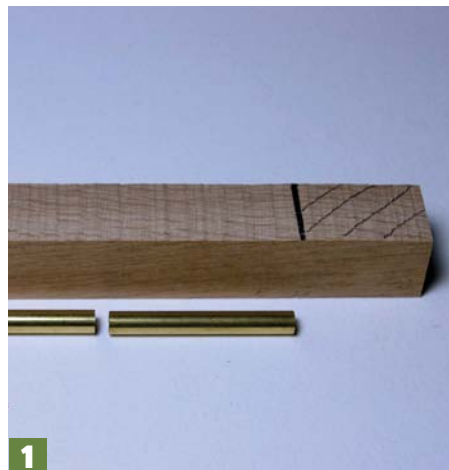
In this article I explain how to make an oak (*Quercus robur*) one-piece pen that is operated by twisting the nib unit and a two-tone sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and African blackwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*) pen that does away with the centre band, which constrains the designer when modifying the shape of the basic kit and results in so many people making 'bow-tie' shaped pens, which I find extremely unattractive.

It is assumed that the reader has a basic knowledge of turning and assembling pens from kits so only those processes that are additional are explained in detail.

## Making a one-piece pen

1 The one piece pen requires a blank that is just slightly longer than the combined length of the brass tubes supplied with the kit; this allows for trimming and squaring the ends

2 The blank is best drilled on the lathe as a pillar drill will most likely not have sufficient quill travel and will require repositioning of the table during drilling. A long drill bit, such as a Colt pen drill, is required and great attention must be paid to centring the bit on the blank at the start of drilling, as such long bits are prone to flexing and vibration if not properly centred. Taking your time to set up properly and regularly withdrawing the bit to remove swarf will result in an accurate hole







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3 Only one of the brass tubes is glued into position for this project. Epoxy is the best adhesive for this and you must make sure that none gets into the other half of the bore or into the tube itself, otherwise you could encounter problems. The tube should be pushed just far enough into the tube to allow for squaring off

4 Once the glue is fully hardened, the remaining tube can be slid into the other half of the bore and both ends trimmed true and square with a barrel trimmer or a disc sander and jig

5 The whole pen assembly, complete with both fixed and loose tubes, can then be mounted on a standard mandrel or turned to shape between centres, depending upon your preferred method of working. In this case, with the loose tube, I find that using a mandrel gives better support

6 Once you are happy with the shape of your pen, sand the barrel through the grits of abrasive to about 400 and then finish with the finish of your choice. I chose to use melamine lacquer here

7 The nib unit and mechanism of the pen are pressed onto the loose barrel using a pen press or vice and the refill screwed into place. I find it best to press the mechanism in just short of the marked line on the body and check the protrusion of the tip and then adjust the fit by pressing the mechanism further in, if necessary. It is much easier to press it further in than it is to retract it from the tube. The clip and clip finial are pressed into place in the top of the barrel, just as they would be on the cap of a standard kit

8 Because there is only the nib unit to grip when removing the mechanism to change the barrel, this may be difficult. In order to make this easier, it may help to remove one or two of the three ridges around the top of the mechanism that are meant to grip the tube. This will facilitate removal without adversely affecting the working of the mechanism

9 Once the components are pressed together, all that remains is to push the assembled mechanism into the tube until it engages fully in the fixed tube

10 The completed one-piece pen should look something like this



10

## ▣ Making a two-tone pen

**1** The two-tone pen requires two contrasting blanks. Their combined length should be the same as the total length of the brass tubes, plus allowance for trimming. A couple of millimetres longer is OK. I have used a piece of spalted sycamore and a short offcut of African blackwood left over from another project. The blanks should first be drilled in the normal way

**2** It is very important to ensure that the mating faces of the two blanks, where they meet in the centre of the pen, are true and square to the tube. This can be done using a barrel trimmer with a spare brass tube slipped over the shaft or, as in the photo, using a similar technique with a disc sander and jig

**3** Slip the ends of the blanks over a spare tube and make sure the fit is perfect before gluing the tubes into place. When held up to a light source it should not be possible to see any chink of light between the components

**4** Glue the tubes into the barrels. The inner end of the shorter barrel should protrude from the mating face as shown. Ensure any excess glue is removed from the mating face. Glue the other tube into the top – non-mating – end of the longer barrel

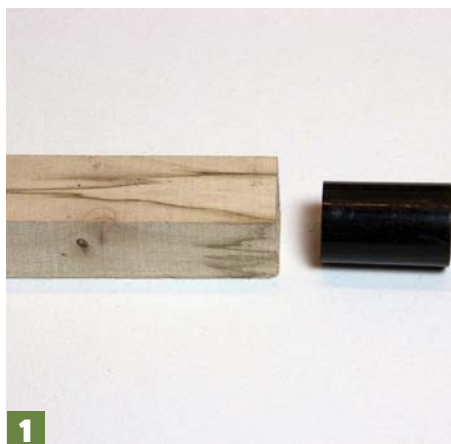
**5** Once the outboard ends have been trimmed square the whole assembly can be mounted on a mandrel and turned to shape. The possibilities for shaping are endless and only constrained by your imagination. There is no narrow centre band to worry about

**6** Once shaped, it is best to sand and finish the two parts separately; this will avoid cross contamination of dark and light sanding dust from staining the blanks. This is especially important with open-grained woods. Finish with your finish of choice. Assembly is straightforward and is just as for a normal kit pen

**7** The completed two-tone pen should look something like this

## Conclusion

I hope you enjoy making these designs and that I have given you some ideas to develop more designs of your own and maybe look at modifying some other kits too ●



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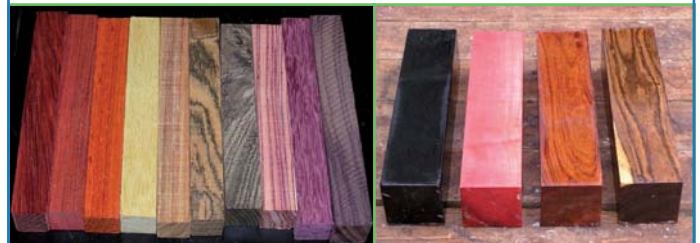
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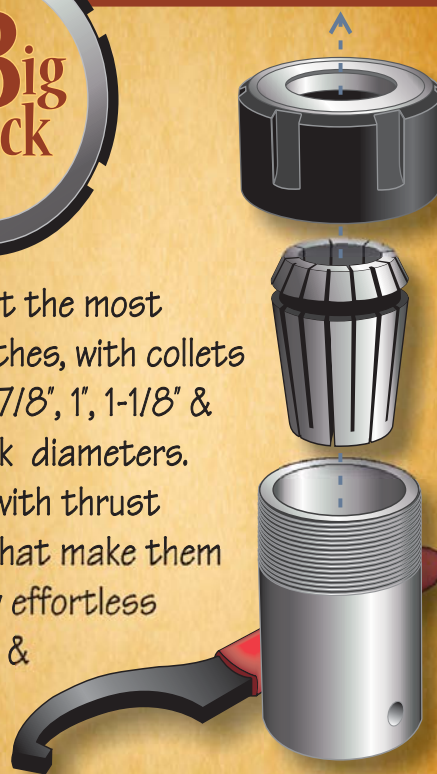
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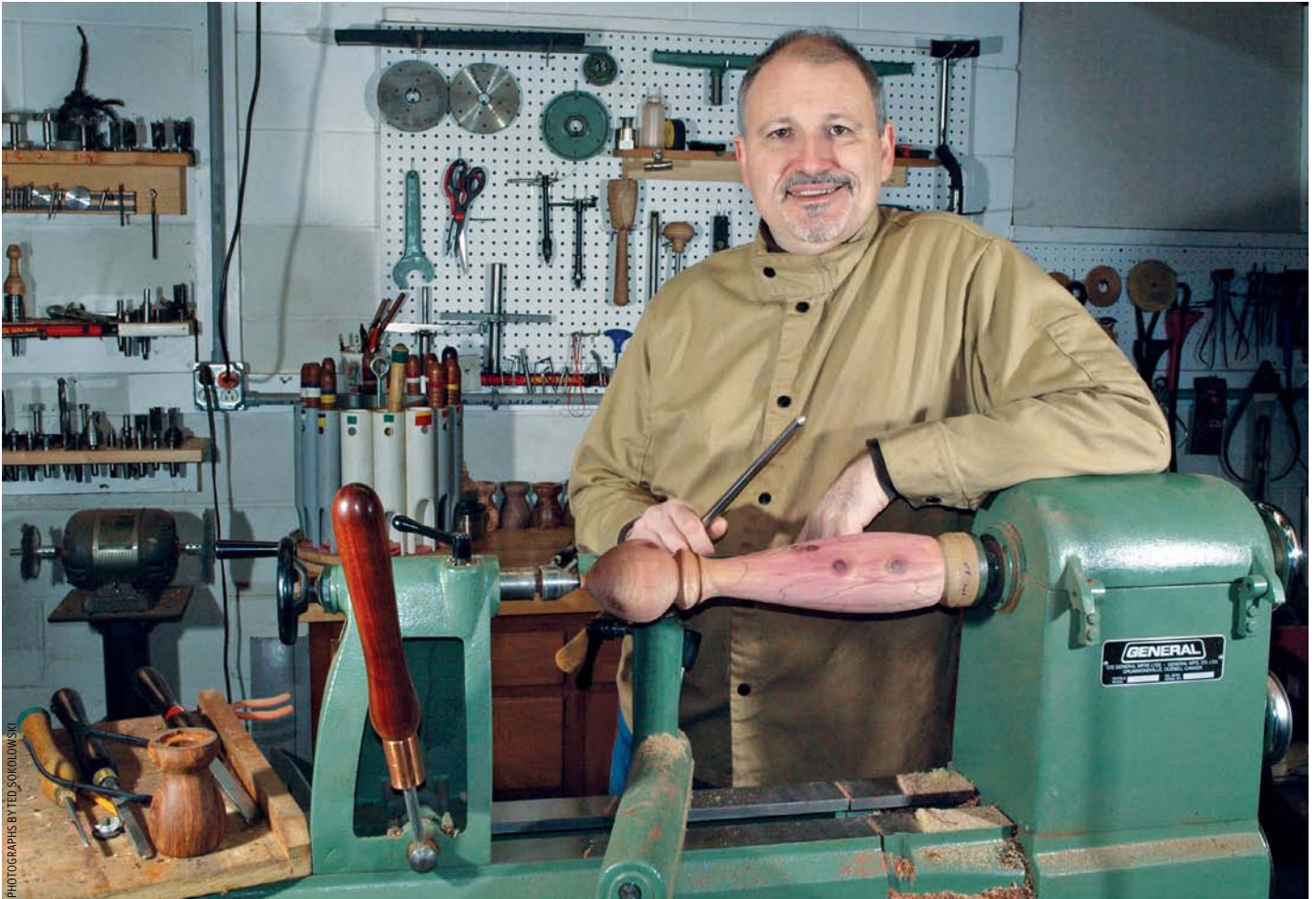
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# Ted Sokolowski in profile

From artist to woodturner – we look at the work of **Ted Sokolowski**



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TED SOKOLOWSKI

**T**ed Sokolowski's start in turning didn't come quickly, but once he started, he didn't stop. Ted began his career in illustration after attending the School of Visual Arts in New York, but his path would lead him in the direction of woodturning.

## Starting turning

Ted Sokolowski has always led an artistic life. His first attempts at trying to make a living using his skills began in the third grade when, after taking a taxidermy correspondence course, Ted proceeded to mount local wild animals of various sorts. It wasn't long after producing several mounts, with 'peculiar' expressions, that Ted learnt the market wasn't interested in mounts exhibiting terror, fear, fright, alarm or even panic.

Next, Ted took his artistic skills over to drawing, something he'd always loved to do. By the eighth grade, he took a course in 'cartooning'. He sent off a number of spot cartoons to magazines, in the hope of being published. Unfortunately, he received only rejection letters. After his second attempt at making a living through his artistic skills, Ted still didn't give up, believing art was in his veins and his heart.

Upon attending the School of Visual Arts in New York, he tells us how he finally felt he had learned how to draw. The school had a major impact on Ted's understanding of art. One of his most vivid 'aha' moments was when he felt the sensation he could immerse his mind into the paper. He tells us: "It was like an out-of-body experience, where my mind and body felt as if I could float into the

paper. It was like a switch that flashed on and off for a split second. What a natural high I had experienced. Needless to say I wanted more of that!"

Ted spent four years in college, cultivating that feeling and sensation of depth. Life drawing class became his escape and college was his foundation into art. Ted also studied photography extensively, which became an important tool to his illustration, and ultimately he chose illustration as his major.

Ted's career in illustration lasted roughly 16 years and included illustrating for magazines, advertising agencies and graphic design firms. He also continued to study art, new techniques, visited museums and he made sure to network with other artists, which led to him finding architectural illustration: "That was my bread and butter





This trio of candlesticks was featured on the cover of *Woodturning Design*, yellow heart (*Euxylophora paraensis*), cocobolo (*Dalbergia retusa*) and bocote (*Cordia spp.*), each with brushed pewter spun cups and bases, 115 × 100 × 150mm high. A one of a kind set

for many years,” he explains, until the housing market tumbled due to a recession.

Ted once again began taking life drawing lessons, to continue honing his drawing skills, eventually taking over running the lessons for two additional years. During that time, he met Debra, who was taking the class. She was also an established and talented artist and the creative director of an advertising agency. Debra’s expertise in graphic design and her understanding of the editing process of video has recently helped Ted produce woodturning DVDs: *Making Peppermills*, *Making Candlesticks* and *Metal Inlay Techniques*. Ted and Debra soon married and a year after their marriage, the couple travelled to Russia and adopted their son, Timothy.

At this point in time, Ted was freelancing in illustration and rendering and getting higher profile jobs in commercial illustration. He tells us: “I thought I had finally made it. A nice portfolio, working for Fortune 500 companies, working out of my home... but all good things must come to an end. As it turns out, the internet wasn’t a fad; the internet completely destroyed freelancing by driving prices down to nothing.” According to Ted, searching and finding commercial art was instantaneous. The style of illustration had changed. It seemed you didn’t need to know how to draw to get published: “Colleagues I went to school with scrapped their portfolios and began producing ‘computer-generated-production-line-illustration’ – finished art in a day or less.

My average colour illustration took about 100 hours to complete. I didn’t like the idea of art in a day so I couldn’t compete. Computers and CAD programs were rendering homes at the push of a button. The industry and my career were now seriously fractured,” he explains.

#### An outlet

While all of this was going on, Ted needed an outlet, so he rekindled an old interest of woodworking. Ted only has a small assortment of portable power tools, but a good supply of wood, which he had procured from his neighbour.

Ted had a large elm (*Ulmus procera*) tree given to him by the same neighbour, which was sawn into 25mm and 50mm boards, stacked properly and left to dry. Slowly, he started to build his workshop by adding a tablesaw, radial arm saw, jointer, shaper and planer. With his elm wood, Ted soon decided to build some kitchen cabinets. Things were going well with the kitchen cabinets, until he ran out of 25mm boards.

“I had been looking at a lathe, but what I needed was a bandsaw to re-saw the 50mm stock of elm in order to finish the cabinets,” he explains. Debra suggested he should get the bandsaw first, finish the cabinets and then get a lathe. Ted tells us he’s glad he purchased the bandsaw first, otherwise all the cabinets would have ended up being round! Woodturning was about to absorb him.

#### The purchase

Ted purchased a mini-lathe in 1998 and borrowed some videos out of the local library by Richard Raffan. Ted studied them closely, but had problems with the skew chisels and catches in general. He begged the local shop teacher for instruction in woodturning, but he refused. Ted then turned to woodturning forums on the internet. Still struggling for six months, he fought the skew until he learnt it. After some more research, Ted found out about the American Association of Woodturners (AAW) and joined a local group. His knowledge of woodturning grew exponentially.

At one meeting, Ted met Dave Souza, who invited Ted to his workshop for a day to test drive two brands of full-size lathes. “I learnt much more that day than which lathe to buy,” Ted tells us. He also learnt that day he could make a career out of woodturning.

Ted did his first arts and crafts show on a local level, charging what he thought was acceptable. After that went well, he soon began doing shows of a higher calibre and quickly realised he was no longer an illustrator, but a woodturner.

#### Style and inspiration

‘Traditional’, ‘minimalistic at times’, ‘sensuous’, ‘voluminous’, ‘fluid’ are a few of the words Ted uses to describe his work, but

most importantly, he strives for the fullness of life. Ted learnt and developed his style by turning wine stoppers – 1,000s of them. He tells us: “I learnt to turn – or developed my style – within production work. It’s very similar to how I learned to draw, from sketching 1,000s of gesture drawings. Whenever I turn a stopper I still approach it the same way: with speed, feeling, capturing a mood and a sense of balance among the relationships of beads and coves. I don’t want to get caught up in the details of the piece, just the overall feeling I get from the curves.”

Ted feels as if he can afford to explore freely the subtle changes he makes on each one, as ‘they’re disposable without too much invested’. It’s also amazing how much one can learn from happy accidents!

Ted would have to say his style is classical/figurative and the work he currently produces is functional. He mostly produces pepper mills, but also makes wine stoppers, pastry pins, mortars and pestles, candlesticks – using his own metal spun hardware – and some custom commissions.

Ted used to turn some hollow forms, but making and selling them on a consistent basis was too exhaustive. The process was certainly fun for Ted, enjoyable and very creative, but when you can’t pay the bills with your art, it’s time to move on. “I realised early on in my woodturning career that you can’t invest countless hours to create a beautiful piece of art and expect to be fairly compensated for your time. I didn’t want to repeat what I tried to accomplish in illustration. I now feel as though I have found my niche and I’m enjoying it,” he tells us.

Inspiration for this turner is being able to watch the growth of his work and being in awe of what truly happens while he’s behind the lathe. He tells us: “I start with a blank and in a matter of seconds or minutes an image, or more appropriately a form appears right in front of my eyes. That’s exhilarating. What’s even more fantastic about the process is that I’m in total control of it!”

Ted’s greatest influence was his drawing instructor at the School of Visual Arts, Jane Rosen. This was who instilled in him a love of drawing. He also mentions the ‘great masters’, such as Michelangelo, illustrators such as N.C. Wyeth and even music had an impact on Ted’s work. He explains: “Music has had an impact on me and continues to flow into my work: curves can be compared and contrasted to timing in a musical score.”

### Development

Ted has watched his work grow in subtle ways over the last 17 years. Early on he struggled with good form, having been trained in two-dimensional drawings. This three-dimensional ‘woodturning-thing called form’ threw him for a loop. He remembers meeting with a good friend who was also a potter and



Classic wine stoppers in a variety of timbers: jobillo (*Astronium fraxinifolium*), satine (*Brosimum rubescens*), sumac (*Rhus spp.*), English yew (*Taxus baccata*), purpleheart (*Peltogyne porphyrocardia*), cherry (*Prunus serotina*) burl, ebonised curly maple (*Acer saccharum*), curly maple with black walnut laminate, black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) with maple laminate, curly maple, bocote (*Cordia spp.*), Brazilian tulipwood (*Dalbergia frutescens*) and cocobolo (*Dalbergia retusa*)



A selection of Ted’s turned pestle and mortars

Ted specifically questioned him on how to create good forms. He couldn’t give Ted a concrete answer. “I was desperately grasping for some direction. I turned to wood related magazines, books and turning magazines for answers to design, but I couldn’t find any,” he explains. He found lots of projects, but that was all about someone else’s work and style. The few projects Ted completed did help with technical aspects, safety and a thought process of how to solve a project in a logical series of steps. “I did see a lot of beautiful work created by skilled turners, but my question was: ‘how does one go about learning design on their own?’ I didn’t want to sell someone else’s design.”

Understanding the fact that he did everything behind the lathe was a revelation to Ted. He realised his chances of cutting a successful design by incorporating an arbitrary shape were quite poor. Over time,

it finally dawned on him: he needed to draw the shape with a gouge and sculpt it according to a plan. So, he decided to go back to his roots and draw. As he explains: “Now every sketch I have drawn over the years as a first draft to a prototype design has evolved tremendously behind the lathe.”

### Workshop

Ted doesn’t call his work space a ‘workshop’, but a ‘studio’. It started out as an overly crowded basement woodshop, with a dedicated area for his General 260VS lathe. His wife suggested expanding the workshop area by putting on an addition to their home. The pair spent hours designing floor plans and scheduling the various stages of construction. Once construction was completed, Ted’s work area had doubled.

He now has two General 260 lathes, three Jet mini lathes, two bandsaws and



Spalted maple (*Acer saccharum*) pepper mill, 305mm

a carving station for all of his metal inlay work and even a lost-wax casting area for making his own bronze embellishments to his high-end pepper mills. Ted also metal spins his own candlestick hardware from pewter or copper by easily adapting any one of his woodturning lathes into a metal spinning lathe.

### Special tools

It used to be Ted's 6mm bowl gouge that he couldn't do without, but it limited the freedom of movement in his body, behind the lathe on all of his curves. So, Ted designed his own scrapers: "I used to say that with a bit of hesitation, because of the taboo associated with the word scraper. But I have done it so much I can't imagine producing the same feeling in my work without these scrapers."

### TOP TECHNIQUES

1. Using a finesse scraper on almost all of my spindle turnings prior to sanding
2. Inlaying copper into contours exhibiting a certain quality of line that appears to have movement that helps to establish a signature style
3. Flowing metal-like copper or pewter over a wooden form that I designed using traditional metal spinning techniques

### HANDY HINTS

1. Learn to draw. Even if it's only the basics, you will see improvement in your woodturning. There are many great techniques that can be applied in order to learn how to draw and you can see progress in as little as 30 days. Essentially, what you really learn is how to 'see'
2. Woodturning is a form of sculpture. Michelangelo was a sculptor. He considered himself as first a sculptor then a painter. He is most known for his paintings because those were the bulk of his commissions. His pencil drawings were spectacular and he considered all the drawings he produced as studies to his sculptures. So learn to draw. It leads to improved 'sculptures'
3. Don't throw away your mistakes. If you get a catch and ruin your work, try to salvage what's left, even if it means changing the relationship of the elements in your form. Learn from your mistakes.
4. Sanding is boring – right? Well, it doesn't have to be. It's in your approach. Sanding is your first intimate connection between you and your creation through the sense of touch. Become one with the piece. Once the foundation is sound and strong, then, and only then, apply your favourite finish

Ted can control the amount of volume, quality of line and add a sense of sensuality to his curves because all of the energy of the cut flows from his whole body. The unique design of the tool provides for free flowing movement of his body, which allows emotion and feeling to stream through the scraper. This is the precursor to sanding all forms. Abrasives or gouges cannot compare to the control of a finesse scraper. Without this tool, he feels his forms would appear life-less. This tool builds a solid foundation to good form.

### Ethos

Ted tells us that he has always enjoyed creating something from raw materials. Being able to create a piece that reflects an emotion and exudes life, not only moves

him, but he can also see how it moves those who visit his booth. Their response to his work inspires Ted to want to create more. "I look forward to working in the studio in anticipation of learning something new every day. If you pay attention to the details, it's amazing what you can learn in solving problems or achieving that new subtle curve you've never seen before," he explains.

When asked how long it takes for Ted to complete an item, he tells us that it'll depend on the piece and how creative he wants to get. Lately, he's been spending more time on his pepper mills with various inlays. That's the creative part. He loves to hand carve motifs into his work and incorporate copper, brass or bronze and even peppercorns into the channels and crevices he carves. This has become sort of a signature for Ted. He used to only carve defective wood with blemishes or subtle cracks, but now his customers seek out those pieces, so he now carves and inlays on a regular basis, whether the wood is cracked or not. Ted's traditional mills take anywhere from two hours to 10 hours to complete, or more depending upon size and level of detail.

### Typical day

"When you're self employed there isn't anything typical about a day," Ted tells us. Ted wears many 'hats' and enjoys the variety of tasks he needs to accomplish. When turning, he does break down the processes into an 'assembly-line' to save time on repetitive tasks. "I may spend a week turning blanks round for the upcoming craft show season. Then, I may spend several weeks laying out the orientation of the mills and drilling the cavities. I then dry these blanks. With stock like this on hand, I can turn, sand and finish rather quickly, even days before a show!" Ted explains.

The turner also has his own photo studio, so he can shoot his work as he produces it, which keeps the images fresh for jurying purposes. Writing has also taken up days for months at a time. Writing DVDs or magazine articles for woodturners isn't in a typical day for Ted, but can be for long stretches of time. "I'm currently working on my fifth DVD, which should be out this year sometime. I'll be focusing on my finishing techniques and how to notice the details for a successful finish," he tells us.

### Highs and lows

Finding retailers to carry his DVDs has been a high in Ted's career, saying: "It's nice to be accepted and respected as a teacher on a particular subject." He feels fortunate that companies such as Rockler Woodworking and Hardware, Craft Supplies, Woodcraft, Packard Woodworking, Lee Valley Tools, Grizzly Industrial and Turners Retreat are stocking some or all of his DVDs.

One of the lows that come to mind, for

Ted, is the debate on whether he is making 'art' or 'craft'. Getting his work accepted into prestigious art shows is still a challenge for him, as he goes on to tell us: "I suppose pepper mills aren't regarded as art by the judges of these shows, but it doesn't matter; I still feel as though I am producing functional art and I still get a thrill turning them knowing my customers appreciate my work."

We asked Ted what the best thing about turning is, to which he answered: "I feel free. I don't punch a clock from 9-5. I don't have to take orders from a boss. I can still apply everything I have learned in my lifetime and express myself through a creative process." Ted has always liked challenges and turning wood is certainly a great one for him. The gouge is his challenge. He draws with it. Just by manipulating a gouge over the surface of the wood, he can create something of beauty and that makes him feel free.

### Promotion

Craft shows have been a great method of promotion for Ted's work, because he feels his pepper mills need to be seen and handled to be truly appreciated. His mills are generally

in a higher price range and he feels the competition online is great. He tells us: "I am getting more serious about an online presence. I have used email marketing with some success from lists I've built from the craft shows I attend. Debra has revamped my website, started an Etsy store for online sales and we are currently looking at other avenues for online promotion. Having an in-house creative director has its benefits." Debra also designs advertisements for Ted's woodturning DVDs that he has authored as well as placing ads in most of the woodturning magazines on a regular basis. The duo have even recorded and aired a local radio commercial during the Christmas holiday, with some success!

### Future aims

Ted enjoys teaching as much as he enjoys the process of turning. Right now, turning is where his heart is, but in the future when setup and packing at craft shows becomes a chore, he may want to teach more. Whether it will be doing demos or additional DVDs, he's not sure, but the future will certainly entail sharing what he's learned over the years. ●

### LIKES

- Woodturned art – I love to see the art being created in the woodturning industry today. Much of it is becoming woodcarving and some woods are pushed to their extreme limits, but whether you call it carving or turning, they're just titles that don't matter. The art speaks for itself
- The camaraderie of woodturners – from early on in my career, the sharing of ideas and techniques from total strangers in the woodturning field has been a wonderful experience. I feel as though I could travel the world and wherever I met a woodturner, I would be welcomed as a guest

### DISLIKES

- The myth that scraping spindle orientated work is taboo. When approached the right way, finesse scraping can add a tremendous amount of volume and feeling to a form that no traditional cutting tool can match
- The golden mean – there's too much talk about the golden mean

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# Bowls & platters for you to make

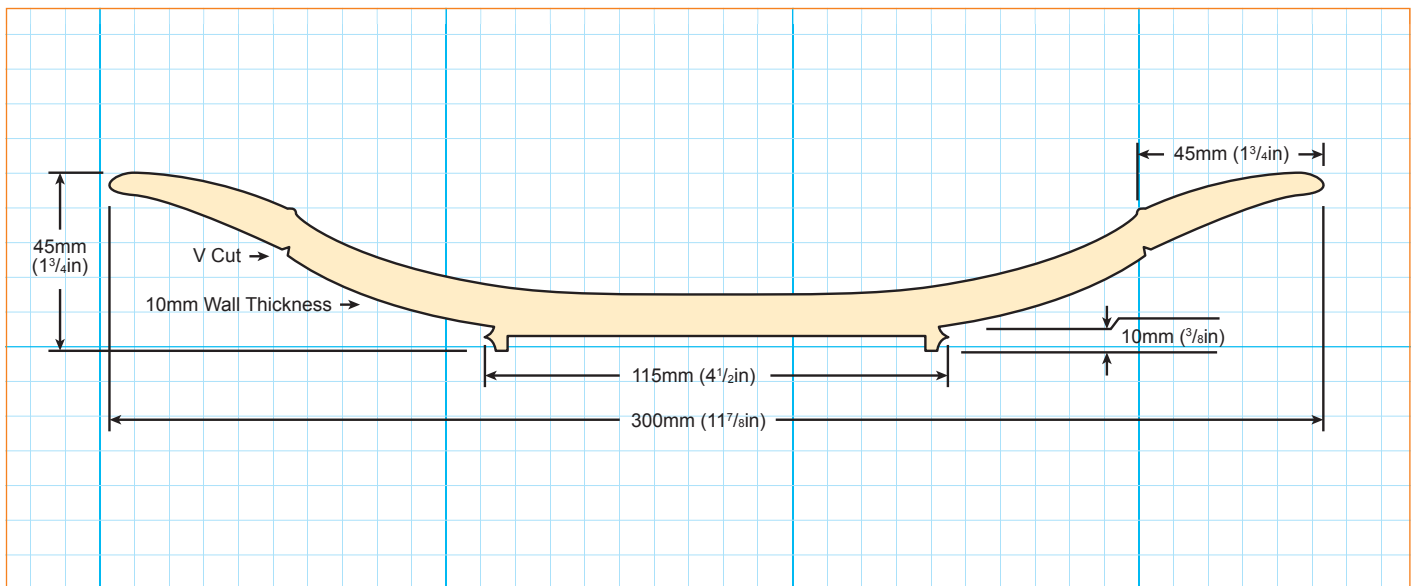
Mark Baker shares three different designs for you to make, this time featuring bowls and platters

## Chilean laurel burr bowl

All of the bowls and platters shown here are inspired by ancient forms. This one in Chilean laurel (*Laurelia sempervirens*) burr is one that reminds me of ceremonial type-vessels. I find it quite a mysterious shape, but one that is very adaptable in function. By scaling it down and altering the internal

hollow, it makes a delightful tea-light holder, but scaling it up, it would also work as a wonderful sink design. Of course, the finish and wood would have to change, but with the addition of a hole in the centre and appropriate fitting and pedestal taps, it has possibilities.

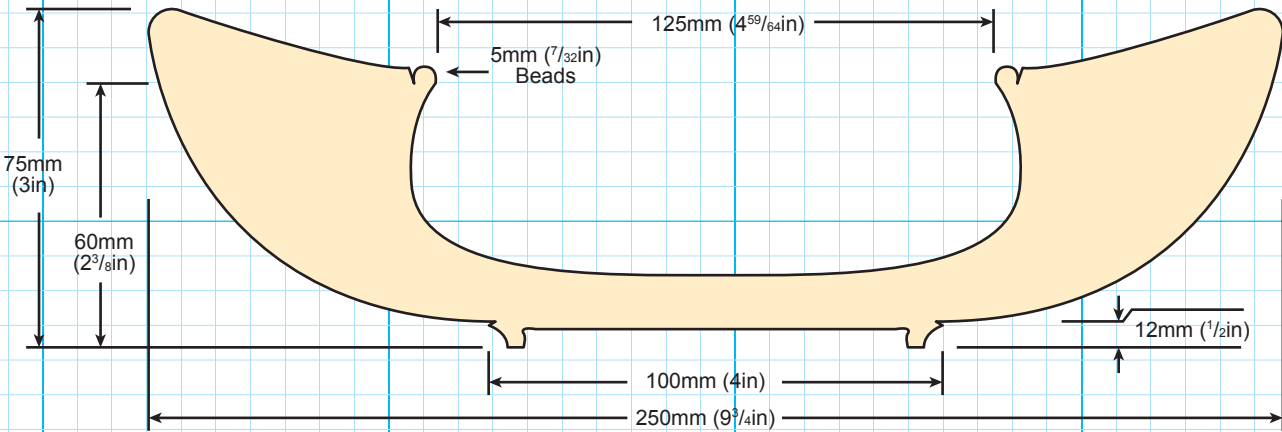
Good designs can be scaled up or down proportionally and still work. I love the size of this form and use this shape a lot. The internal hollow is undercut so is ideal to hold things and the large rim area shows off the wood to its fullest, without the piece looking too heavy.



### Figured silver birch platter

This is a classic ogee form with a small V-cut incision on the outer S-shaped curve, which delineates the upward curve of the main body and the outward sweep of the rim. The internal curve is a small raised partial bead form, which is almost inline with the outside V-cut and again provides a visual and tactile break, but also lets you – if you choose to do so – adjust the internal

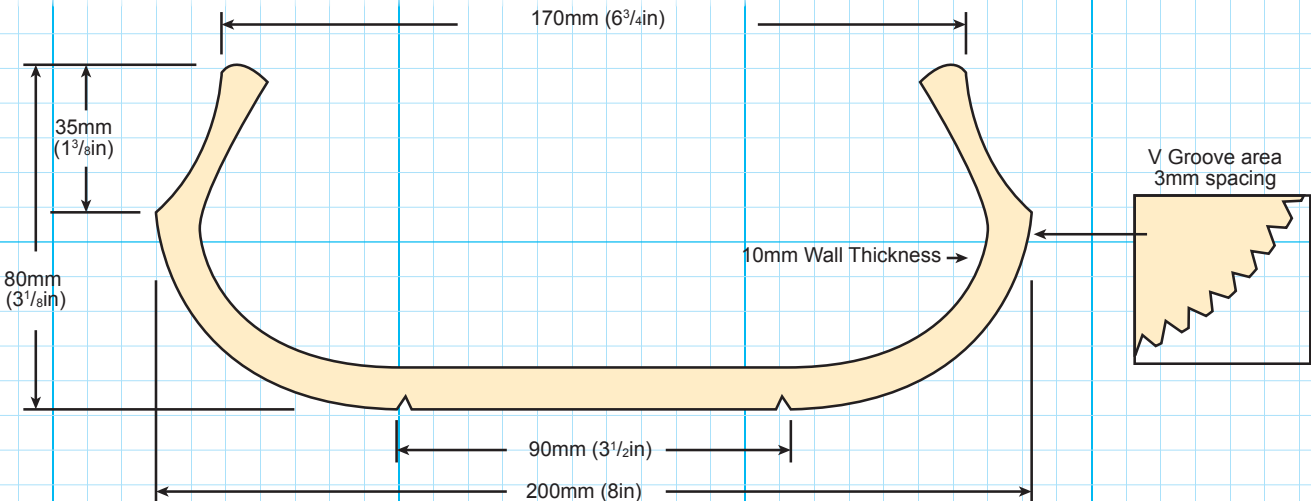
hollow area to be more defined by allowing you to alter/create a deep internal curve rather than just directly mimicking the outer body line. If you opt to do this, you need to thicken the rim area near the raised partial bead to give you enough thickness.



### Figured horse chestnut bowl

This bowl form is seen in many variants in ancient pottery, some of which are lidded and others as a standard open bowl form. It is a shape that is a nice departure from just having a standard upsweeping curve or even one that may start as an upsweep and then curve back on itself. I love exploring forms and by having a cove-like inward curve

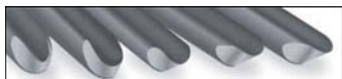
at the top, you do not compromise the bowl's ability to hold things. The nice sweeping internal curved surface is perfect for holding things, but creates a visual element that I find to be delightful. It also creates a perfect boundary that allows you to decorate the lower external bowl section. ●



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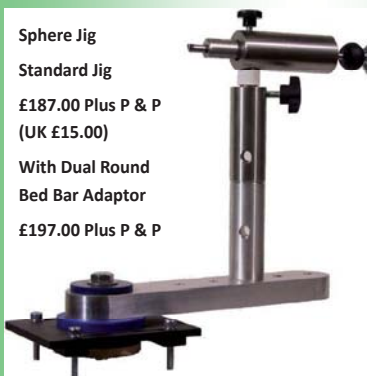
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# What you need to know about creating irregular shaped holes

Kurt Hertzog shares his top tips for piercing and creating irregular shapes

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KURT HERTZOG



## KURT HERTZOG

Kurt is a professional woodturner, demonstrator and teacher and writes for various woodturning and woodworking publications in the United States as well as writing for *Woodturning* magazine. He is on the Pen Makers' Guild Council and is currently president of the American Association of Woodturners (AAW).

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There are many reasons to create irregular shaped holes in your turning or other project pieces. Probably the most common reason is artistic expression. The carving, piercing, sculpting or distressing of the wood or other material can be used to attract the eye, make a statement or prep that area for additional processing. One reason can be to create assembly pockets for fitting and gluing that aren't the regular round shape that can be created with a twist drill or Forstner bit. Created holes or pockets can receive inlays, accent materials or just be visual. In this issue, we'll cover the piercing and creation of irregular shapes, whether through or partially through, in your turning or other parts of your project.

## Safety

Use of all the standard safety items is assumed. You will use safety glasses with appropriate side shields or a face shield whenever you are doing any work in the 'shop. It is a good practice to put them on the moment you walk in. In addition, for the processes we'll be covering you will certainly need breathing protection. Use a facemask at minimum or better yet one of the filtering systems available, such as the powered filter helmets. It can provide you with filtered air having removed the dust and debris you are creating prior to breathing it. Using overhead or all 'shop filtering systems will clean the air but it does so after you've been breathing the dirty air. It may help with 'shop cleanliness but it isn't the most effective for protecting

your lungs. Breathing protection is always important but particularly so when you are using other materials, such as shell. The proximity of your face to the source of the particles along with the particle sizes created by piercing requires attention to breathing protection at all times. Remember, ignoring the health and safety concerns doesn't always have immediate consequences. It may take years for the negative effects to show in your health. Some of the processes we'll be discussing may involve you hand-holding the material while you bring a rotary tool to bear. Use hand protection should you ever have a slip. I use a Kevlar carver's glove when my workholding hand is in a place of concern. I have found it to work nicely. Make your own selection but use something protective since slips can happen. Always be thinking safety.



Keys to good, safe piercing are: plenty of light, eye protection, magnification, breathing protection, plenty of ventilation and good support for work, arms and elbows



A Kevlar carver's glove can provide protection to your workholding hand when needed. When slips occur, cutters and burs are oblivious to what material they cut



The fingers of my right hand provide 'anchoring' for the hand doing the piercing. Safe control is impossible without good support and anchoring

### TIPS ON SAFETY

1. Breathing protection is imperative in addition to eye protection because of the proximity of your face to the dust creation and the size of the particles
2. Small burs rotating in hand tools, particularly at higher speeds, require time to coast to a stop. Be careful to allow time for the rotation to stop before setting the tool down
3. Small burs are deceiving in their ability to cut. Do not underestimate them. They deserve respect and careful handling
4. Use quality burs rated for the RPM, or higher, you will be using with your tool
5. Anchoring your hand to your work will help you maintain good tool control while cutting. It will provide better results as well as ensuring safety

## Piercing

Piercing is usually an artistic alteration. Creating through holes and shapes in the turning, stands or other parts of your turning project is usually done for the visual appeal controlling the viewer's eye. Thin stock works best for through hole piercing. Working with thick stock is not only more difficult but also has a tendency to cramp the freeflow of artistic freedom. If you can make a single pass when piercing a piece, it lends itself to 'drawing' in the wood and creating smooth, freeform shapes and patterns. Nearly any rotary tool will work for piercing but I find that the super high-speed tools work best. Also, tools that are lightweight in the hand make piercing easier and less fatiguing. Powered base systems with a flex drive shaft to the handpiece work but are speed limited because of the flex shaft. The flex cable can also be restrictive to free motion and resolution. Your desired piercing can be an irregular paisley shaped cutout or some specific design. Planning your layout

is valuable since there really isn't an eraser available to correct mistakes once you've cut the wood. From my experience, the most common mistake made is a pattern being cut without markings that approaches the end point having too much or too little space to finish properly. It can't be completed with the same sized cutout having the same spacing as the rest of the pattern. Like painting yourself into the corner. Now what? Nothing can be done that won't attract attention whether a different sized pattern, smaller or larger, or a varying amount of space separation compared to the rest of the piece. Use the lathe and the indexing head to divide your turning into the proper number of positions and mark as needed. Even a simple cloth tape measure, protractor or compass can aid in equidistant space markings. Patterns printed from the computer or other artwork that you can photocopy is very helpful. Artist's spray adhesive will hold your pattern to your material allowing you to pierce right

through it. Both the computer and the photocopier allow the patterns to be enlarged or reduced to fit the work being done. Layouts and designs researched and created on the computer can open the entire world to you via the web. Scaled as needed then printed at the appropriate size, they can be attached to the work surface providing a pattern to pierce right through. For simple designs, I will often draw my pattern on the top of painter's tape that I have applied to the turning. It can be planned and marked on the flat and then applied to your piece. The low tack painter's tape is pierced through and then easily removed upon completion, leaving no residue behind. Of course, you can freehand draw your design, pattern or picture directly on the wood with a pencil. Many appreciate the hand-drawn shapes created this way. It avoids the cookie cutter perfection that makes things appear to have been created by a machine. You'll need to set your own standard of marking so you cut away any



Piercing can be done with one of any of these tools ranging from about £20-265. Your material, thickness and budget will drive your selection



Cutters and burs are available in a wide variety of designs. With the proper collet, they will fit in most of the rotary tools available to the woodturner



A machine tool grade die grinder and my two favourite high-speed tools. The die grinder is used with thicker materials and the high-speed tools with shell and thin stock

patterns marked directly on the wood. You don't want to need to remove those marks afterwards. You can use an eraser or sand the pencil marks away but that is an extra step and additional time. It might be best to have them disappear as you perform the process by cutting to the outside edge of the line.

There is a huge array of cutters, often called burs, available. Not only from the machining, tool and craft industries but also from the dental trade. From among all the burs that are available, I find that the router-style bits work best for my type of piercing work. These straight or slightly tapered sidewall cutters allow for piercing straight into and through the stock, then tracing around the desired shape until I reach the entry point again. The burs I use act exactly like a straight walled router bit as I 'draw' with them. If you are using any of the super high-speed rotary tools, be certain that your burs are marked by the manufacturer as safe for those speeds. Though the bur is small, any mishap with one running at very high speeds presents a real hazard. Being safe, you can always run the high-speed rated burs slower than indicated but not the slow speed ones faster. I am in the habit of a clockwise rotation as my standard cutting direction. By reversing your direction of travel within your pierced pattern, you can clean up the interior wall surface and any burning that might occur because of the bur rotational speed. What is the correct speed? For piercing through thin or fragile material, I recommend as fast as possible. It is a function of the thickness more than anything. With thin stock, 2mm or less, I use my NSK Presto, which runs at 400,000rpm.

It has super high speed but not much torque. The entire mechanism is in the lightweight handpiece. It is an oil-less turbine that runs on compressed air. The RPM is a function of the air pressure. Any speed greater than 400,000rpm puts unnecessary wear on the turbine. It is a replaceable part but at £115 it is quite expensive. There are other brands and styles of super high RPM rotary tools available. I own or have tried nearly all of them and I favour the NSK or Turbo Carver because of their super high speed, light weight and compressed air, oil-less operation. There are other manufacturers to choose from in the super high speed category whether oiled or oil-less.

My favourite wood to work with is cherry (*Prunus serotina*). The high-speed piercing and cutting creates a burnt surface on the inside of the hole. It has the appearance of being painted black on the inside wall. I like the look so I leave it as cut for appearance's sake. The super high-speed handpieces are quite pricey but there are many lower cost alternatives. With a sufficient capacity source of compressed air, you can use small machinist's die grinders. Using the proper collet, they accept the same as well as Foredom and Dremel-type cutters. They do not run as fast as the very high-speed turbine designs but they are far faster than most electric motor types. Most operate in the 50,000 to 70,000rpm range. Depending on the manufacturer, the die grinders range in price from very inexpensive to quite pricey. I have found die grinders at both extremes of price spectrum to work for the purpose. The difference is their service lifetime and

repairability. For convenience, whenever I use one of the air-driven die grinders, I use a foot-operated air valve rather than the twist valve built into the shaft. There are many styles, sizes and price ranges available. In the lower speed ranges, you can work with any of the rotary handpieces from the Dremel attachments to any of the Foredom or lookalikes. Micromotor products work well in these speed ranges too. They all are great for thicker work because of their higher torque but they can be used for thinner work with care. The slower speed is less workable in thin and fragile materials from my perspective but certainly doable if that is what you have.

### TIPS FOR PIERCING

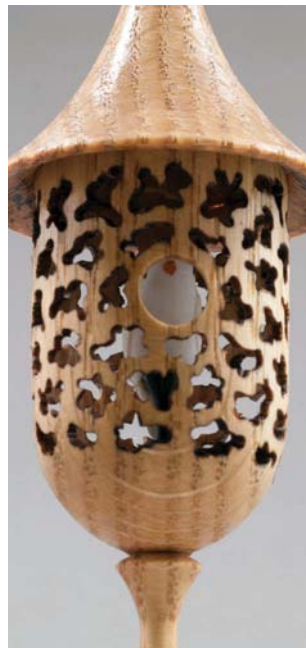
1. Workholding hand protection as needed provides protection in case of slips
2. High-speed capability with lightweight handpieces helps enable artistic expression
3. Thin materials are far more conducive to piercing
4. Systems requiring oiling run the risk of contaminating your material with oil
5. Pick a standard for piercing and cutting direction to help make it rote
6. Magnifying headpieces and plenty of light can improve your results and reduce fatigue
7. Be certain your burs and other cutters are rated by the manufacturer for the RPM you'll be using
8. Slow your rate of movement as you feather your endpoint to your entry point



My most used tool and piercing bur design. Notice the manufacturer's speed limit maximum at 450,000rpm. Always heed the cutter and bur speed limitations



The super high-speed tools lend themselves to shell and thin woods. For best results in wood, a 1-2mm wall thickness works best



A simple birdhouse of oak (*Quercus robur*) makes a home for this paper bird sitting on his blackwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*) base. The piercing allows for decoration and the view in both directions



Some of my early piercing work. The blackwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*) base was turned to follow the curve of this goose egg surrounding a chicken egg housing a faux diamond stick pin



A paper bird in his house of cherry (*Prunus serotina*) roof and a pierced chicken egg. The irregular holes reinforce that this is a handmade creation



The naked eye can be aided considerably with good light and magnification. Whether head mounted or magnifiers sitting on the table, any of these help

## Piercing thicker materials

When piercing thicker materials, the higher speed, lower torque tools need to work too hard. The wood burns excessively, the turbine struggles and the bearings are stressed far too much. Use the lower speed rotary tools for these applications. These have far more torque, which allows them to muscle through denser and thicker materials. They are less expensive to buy and usually are tougher. Their cutters and burs can be the same concept and design but are thicker and tougher for the heavier work. Using your super high-speed burs in these applications will usually cause a much higher breakage rate. Unless you need the very thin diameter to get into corners, save the very small diameter burs for the more delicate work. The technique of marking and piercing is exactly the same, just slower. Pierce straight through and draw with your cutter only as fast as it can deal with the wood. Trying to go too fast will leave a more ragged edge and unnecessarily stress the bearings in your tool. Great tools for these applications are the micromotor tools with their variable speed and great manoeuvrability. With their higher torque, yet handy size and weight, they can cut the material well. Depending on the



The slower micromotor tools with their beefier cutters work well in thicker materials. The slow speed minimises any burning



A cherry (*Prunus serotina*) goblet with piercing. It has a 2mm wall thickness. Notice the effort to maintain uniform spacing between the holes and the distance from the rim for strength

brand, even the higher quality units can be lower in cost than the NSK-type super high-speed dental tools. With the cutter rotating at a far slower speed, there is less burning on most materials. Woods that are prone to burning, such as cherry, may still burn. That can be left as cut for the appearance of having black painting on the inside. It can also be removed somewhat by tracing your cutter in the reverse direction. Tracing the pattern in reverse will clean up the inside face rather than cutting provided you use a light touch when tracing backwards. Other tools that work well in these applications are the Foredom and similar tools, Dremel with the available handpieces and all of the other similar powered handpieces. The Foredom, Dremel and various micromotor type tools will accept a wide range of cutters and burs with their available collets. Running at far slower speeds, let the cutting edges do the work. Most users have a tendency to try to cut too fast. The tool is usually capable of the additional stresses put on it but the resulting cut edges are less than optimal. Slow, smooth movements let the cutter cut cleanly. Less stress and wear on the tool, the cutter and the user.



With the correct adaptors, carving vices and other adjustable workholding equipment can receive your standard lathe workholding devices



Repeating or flowing pierced through patterns really enhance even pretty woods. This pierced koa (*Acacia koa*) lidded box by Pat and Peggy Bookey is a great example

## TIPS FOR PIERCING THICKER MATERIALS

1. Use tools with lower speeds and higher torque built for higher stresses on the bearings of the tool
2. Be certain the tool and cutter or bur selected is sturdy enough for the heavier work being performed
3. Pierce through the entire thickness if possible and draw your desired shape at a rate that the cutter and tool can effectively manage
4. If too thick, a shallow pass can be made followed by the cut through pass and then a cleanup pass. This is time-consuming and more difficult
5. Hand protection is strongly recommended in addition to the customary eye and lung PPE
6. Most burs are disposable rather than sharpenable. Change burs before they begin to cut poorly
7. Plan ahead and mark as needed to avoid problems as you go around and finish at the starting point
8. Magnification and task lighting will improve results and reduce fatigue

## Controlling depth

In the cases where you want an irregular shaped pocket with a flat bottom, there are ways to control the cut depth. Usually used for fixed inlays, there are depth tools used by luthiers that work nicely. The inlay piece to be used is traced on the surface and the area inside the lines is trenched with a flat-bottomed, router-style cutter. The luthier's depth tool allows for great visibility while routing with fine resolution on depth. Depending on depth, multiple passes might be necessary. Though these depth control mechanisms are designed for flat surfaces, they can be used for curved surfaces with some care. They are far more workable on larger diameter pieces than smaller but can be used with care. They are available for both die grinders as well as Dremel and Foredom tools. Once the majority of the needed area is routed, a smaller diameter router bit is used

to get close to the line and clean up smaller radius areas. Once completed, the inlay can be positioned and secured or the pocket filled with cast or embedded materials. With smaller work, handholding is a possibility as well. The same safety cautions prevail. Eye, nose and hand protection should be in place for your personal protection. Depending on size, using the lathe as a workholding device works very well since you will have an array of clamping devices, headstock indexing and locking and stabilising mass. You can also use most of your woodturning chucks, clamps and faceplates in the highly manoeuvrable carving vices with adaptors that are available. There is more information on this in *Woodturning* issue 248 'workholding aids and chucking', part 11. The beauty of using the lathe or a woodcarver's clamp is that you'll have both hands free to work with. The amount of control available

provides much more resolution, making this option the most desirable.

### TIPS FOR DEPTH CONTROL

1. For casting pockets or other non-critical excavations, depth control can be controlled by hand with simple depth markings on the bur shaft
2. For precise control of depth, buy or make support tools with the adjustment and control resolution you need. A luthier's purfling fixture works well
3. Do the coarse excavations well inside the lines. Creep up on the final outside edge markings with light cuts and a sharp bur
4. For handholding of work, be certain to use protection for your hand in case of slips



For thicker pieces requiring multiple passes or non-critical depth pockets, the slower speed micromotor tools work well. Depth can be marked on the cutter with tape



Where depth of pocket is critical such as inlay, a luthier's purfling attachment can be used. They are available with many different rotary tool mounts



My practice pieces in mother-of-pearl, cut and inlaid. Inlay can enhance flat surfaces regardless of the inlaid material and smaller pieces can be done in the round

## Conclusion

Are you ever going to pierce your work? Will you branch out into using material removal as an artistic alteration of your bowls, platters, ornaments, hangers or other turning projects? Will you explore creating pockets in your turnings so you can cast in resins or embed coins, medals or other designs of a different species? I can only encourage you to do so. There is certainly pride in using a beautiful piece of wood and exhibiting your craftsmanship by altering it into something useful that demonstrates both. That said, there is so much more out there just beyond the lathe. You can not only enhance what you've done but also create beauty with far more bland woods and other materials. There is no need to spend a fortune to get a high-speed dental tool. You can begin with your Dremel tool or equivalent. Experiment and explore. As you begin to find your wings, you can expand your horizons and tools if need be. I'd suggest you begin on scraps or turnings that are destined for the woodburning stove; they will work quite nicely for practice pieces. I think you'll find there is a whole new world of enhancement beyond your talents at the lathe. Give it a try. ●



Whether you pierce wood, plastic, shell or other material, you can add the alterations to your creative arsenal. Here is my blackwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*) lidded box with pierced shell lid



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### *He continued:*

'These are not the usual miniature tools but seriously reduced length versions of full-size tools. They are specifically designed to make turning easier on smaller lathes where the reduced swing and length between centres can make access with long-handled tools difficult. They allow the turner to more easily attain the correct positioning of the cutting edge and handle movement when working within the constraints of a small machine, thus making it easier to exercise good practice and better tool control.'

### *And concluded:*

'These are well-designed and robust tools made from excellent quality materials. They will make an excellent partnership with any of the smaller lathes and fill an important niche gap in the market'

In fact, all of these things were said by Walter Hall when he reviewed the Compactool set for 'Woodturning' in Issue 276 (Feb. 2015).

We find ourselves agreeing wholeheartedly with Walter, but then we did design these tools and they are unique to The ToolPost. So, naturally, we're proud of them - and of the great success they have been, helping many turners become better turners. But it's certainly nice to have truly independent corroboration of our views from such a well-respected, experienced and knowledgeable turner as Walter Hall. We take our hats off to this very insightful gentleman.

A typical small lathe has just 6 inches of space between spindle axis and bed. A typical bowl gouge is 23 inches long. You can't fit that into a six-inch space and present it to the workpiece correctly. The new CompacTool bowl gouge measures just 10½ inches overall so it isn't hard to understand why that fits so much better into the available space is it?

Between headstock and tailstock you've maybe got 20 inches at most - and 4 inches less when your workpiece is mounted in a chuck. A standard bowl scraper is 17 inches long. The new CompacTool bowl finishing scraper has the same cross-section as a standard heavy scraper but is only 10 inches long. That fits. Comfortably.

So you see, now at last someone is thinking about your needs when you work on your mini lathe. That's why the new CompacTool set is unique to The ToolPost: we're the folk who think about your needs first. CompacTool: designed for you. By us. Manufactured exclusively for The ToolPost by Hamlet Craft Tools in Sheffield, UK.

Invest £120.00\* in a set of new CompacTools, today, or buy them individually and you'll have six of the best reasons ever for owning a compact lathe. And six new ways of creating great work. Available from their creators, The ToolPost, right now.

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# In the workshop with... Manfred Diekenbrock

German woodturner Manfred Diekenbrock tells us about his workshop and turning experiences

**M**anfred is a German engineer who worked for the computer company IBM for more than 25 years. After a life-long interest in wood, he has moved from refitting an old farmhouse – including building much of the furniture – to the more relaxing hobby of woodturning. However, this is a relative term as he usually spends 4-6 hours a day in his well-equipped workshop. And if he isn't there, he and his wife travel all over Europe in their Ford Transit, which he fitted out himself, turning it into a mobile home, using mainly wood.

## How, when and why did you start turning?

I didn't start turning until after my 70th birthday when my wife gave me a lathe as a birthday present. I had enjoyed working with wood for many years but turning it presented a new challenge. We bought a lathe at Stiles & Bates in southern England and at the same time, I enrolled on a course.

I really enjoyed my first course and my wife claims that I had it in my fingertips right from the very beginning.

## What and who have been the greatest influences in your work?

In a way, first of all my wife. After my first course with Dave Bates who really introduced me to the art of turning, we started to investigate the German woodturning scene. I attended a few more courses and got to know some well-known German woodturners, such as Helga Becker, Michael Werner, Johannes Volmer and others. I also had the pleasure to be taught by Phil Irons, Nick Agar and Peter Hromek.

One great advantage is that I enjoy watching people, get inspired by them and in this process, learn a lot by just using my eyes. And when I am back home, my lathe and I try to use these new and other techniques I have seen for my own projects.

## If you were to offer one sage piece of advice to someone what would that be?

Start off with good equipment – not just with a good lathe but also with all the other tools in excellent condition and don't forget to sharpen them.

## What music and which book are you currently into?

I enjoy a wide range of music and the radio is always on in the background – in a way, it influences my mood when I am working. Sometimes I have the feeling that classical music slows me down and when I listen to jazz, it makes my fingers dance. I am reading several books and magazines at the moment. There is so much happening in the world and it's difficult to keep up with all the information. I just want to mention two books: Henning Beck's *Hirn-Rissig – myths of how our brain ticks* and *Terrorism in the Western World* by Noam Chomsky and Andre Vltchek.

### ◀ What is your silliest mistake?

Actually, I think I made more than one – but some mistakes make you more aware of how you should pay attention to safety regulations.

### What has been your greatest challenge?

This is a bit difficult to decide as there have been quite a few. One of them has been that three years ago, I started to forge some special tools and was very pleased with the end result.

### Name one thing on your turning 'to do' list

I have an enormous walnut (*Juglans regia*) root in my barn. It has been there for at least four years and I just cannot decide what to do with it. I would also like to learn threading.

### Tell us about the piece you are currently working on

I don't have only one piece I am working on as most of the time, I have several projects on the go. The main one at the moment is a big natural-edge bowl made out of a birch (*Betula pendula*) tree that had guarded an old monument in a neighbouring village. I am also into some oval turning but of course without a special device. And as always, I have some little projects I am working on: a little gallery of spheres made out of discarded grape vine wood (*Vitis vinifera*) and some figured turned wood glass bottle stoppers. In the photos opposite you can also see the giant egg I turned.

### What is the one piece of equipment or tool you would not be without and why?

Without my lathe I would not be able to turn, so therefore, I think I need more than only one piece of equipment because I just love the diversity!

#### HANDY HINTS

1. Use good quality tools and above all, keep them sharp
2. Always watch out for safety regulations, such as wearing a face shield and don't forget to switch on the air cleaner
3. When you have the opportunity, watch how your fellow woodturners work
4. Spend time when you come to the end of turning a project and put thoughts and work into the finishing process
5. Take your time when you first start a project and don't give up too easily – just call it experimental time

*“Turning is so much fun and I always like to try out new things...”*

### If you could change one thing what would it be and why?

On the whole I am quite happy with how things are at the moment, but looking at my workshop, I sometimes think I built it too small – considering I had more than enough space when I first started out. But then I didn't think of the future and how many machines and tools I would need and collect over the years.

### What is your favourite type of turning?

I am not quite sure as I really don't have a specific type I favour more than another. Turning is so much fun and I always like to try out new things, but of course, some techniques I like better than others.

### If you had one wish what would you wish for?

Looking at all the wood in our barn, which we have collected for many years – even before I started to turn – it would be great if I could turn and work with wood until I am 120 years old!

### If you could have one piece of equipment what would it be and why?

Again, this is a difficult decision! Right now, I think I have every tool I need but how do I know what I might need tomorrow? Quite often, I think I will never need another one, but right round the corner, a new piece of equipment is already waiting for me! ●

**Email:** [manfred.diekenbrock@web.de](mailto:manfred.diekenbrock@web.de)



A variety of turned bottle stoppers



A selection of turned spheres made from grape vine wood (*Vitis vinifera*)



The large egg in yellow plum (*Prunus*) once turned

Manfred's lathe-turned egg mounted on the lathe



The large burr which the egg was turned from, being hoisted onto the lathe

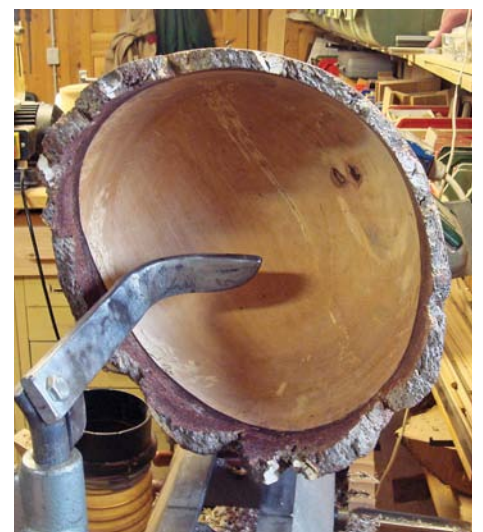
### LIKES

- Turning wet wood and looking forward to the finished result after a few weeks or months – the outcome is often amazing!
- When turning I let my fantasy gallop away. I also like the concentration that keeps me glued to the lathe
- Enjoying the company of other woodturners and visiting woodturning events, such as the forthcoming German Woodturning Meeting at Bad Fallingbostal on 16 and 17 May, 2015
- I love spending a lot of time in my workshop just turning and making other things out of wood, such as furniture and pieces of art
- One of my favourite pastimes is turning natural-edge bowls
- I really like is to pass on my knowledge to others. My youngest pupil was one of my grandsons and at the moment, a very interested clergyman likes to join me in my workshop for extra tuition

### DISLIKES

- That a lot of turners sell their produce too cheap – I'd rather give it away!
- Getting rid of all the shavings and cleaning my workshop, but you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs!
- Sometimes I disappear too often into my workshop, which my wife doesn't appreciate all the time
- To be taught by a chunk of wood that it has a life of its own
- That I don't have enough time left for all the projects I would like to tackle because, as I have experienced all too often, time is just slipping away

### LATEST HOMEMADE JIG



This is my homemade jig – it is a toolrest for turning and I forged it myself

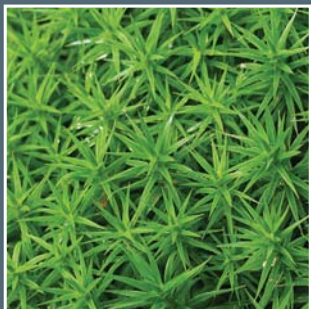
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**14 MAY**

Cover subject to change



# Routing on curved surfaces

Anthony Bailey and Mark Baker look at making even depth router cuts on curved surfaces

Cutting even depth router cuts on curved surfaces is not as difficult as one might assume. Once again, we will look at using the homemade version and also a ready-made manufactured vertical router holder and fluting jig seen in the previous parts of this series.

## SAFETY

- PPE to be worn at all times and it is advisable to use ear defenders too
- Be aware of the cutter at all times. Shield the cutter in some way if possible and always keep your hands behind the cutter position
- The lathe is always unplugged as there is no need to switch it on when routing. Also, when using a router, remove the plug from the wall socket when changing cutters, moving jigs and suchlike
- Ensure your work is held securely and the router table on the lathe is secure

## Holding the work

Fluting of any sort requires that the work be held in such a way that it is stable while you cut it. This can be on a faceplate, screw chuck, in a chuck or, as with previous articles, between centres.

Some fluting requires that the work can be indexed off so you can work at a set or given number of positions to enable a cut to be made in a specific place. Indexing helps with this issue no end.

If you are working on a project that can be done in one go and not worry about any movement in the wood later, you can initially mount the work on a faceplate, screw chuck or similar to start with. After which, you turn the outside, then rout that outside surface after that, so you can then reverse the piece, hold it in a chuck and then turn the inside.

If, however, you are working rough turns where you have rough-shaped the inside and outside already and want to shape the outside, you will likely have to use a between centre holding method to refine the outside



1 Fluting of any sort requires that the work be held in such a way that it is stable while you cut it

shape and top edge first. Then you can, depending on the routing required, either leave it between centres while you rout it, or mount it in something like this Longworth chuck – or similar holding device – so you can work unrestricted on the outside face, before remounting in the chuck to refine the outside. Later on, you will see a completely turned bowl held in the Longworth chuck so only the decoration is left to sort out prior to sanding the outside.

## Using the homemade fluting jig

When using a homemade jig or, in some cases with ready-made ones too, you are going to have to work out a way of mimicking the curvature of the bowl. In other words, make a follow template or guide to suit the shape being routed; this will allow you to follow the exact form of the item you are working on. One way of doing this is to have a light source directly above the held work – in this case, the work held on a screw chuck – and have a piece of paper underneath it sitting on the baseboard used for the router. The light source needs to be exactly central and perpendicular above the work and you should end up with a shadow, which echoes the shape of the work, on the paper.

You can then draw around this shadow, cut out the shape drawn and then lay this on top of a suitable piece of thick ply or MDF before cutting the shape to match the paper template. Next, you need to clamp it in

place so that the front end of the fluting jig base touches the follow template all the way round. Yes, you will have to adjust the position by putting the fluting jig with router and cutter in place up against the template and adjust the position of the template until the router cutter just touches the surface of the work, all the way round. When you are happy that you have the right position to create an even depth of cut all the way round the work, then clamp the follow template in place.

The next step is to adjust the cutter to give you the required depth. Make sure you have indexed off the work, or held in the right position, then start at the point on the work you need to and then run the router round, maintaining contact with the follow template and pressure downwards on the fluting jig to keep it stable until you reach the other end of the flute being cut. You can clamp or glue

blocks at either end of the required travel range to give you a definitive start and stop position. Likewise, you can freehand or ‘wing it’, but freehanding can lead to cutting too short or overshooting the cut position required.

It doesn't really matter what cutter shape you use as long as it is the shape you need and of a size that is correct for the router. You might find that you need to make multiple passes if you need to go deep. Also, keep the router moving or you might burn the surface during the cut.

You can see two types of flutes cut on this bowl: the one being cut now requires three passes to get it to depth. Note the stopping short of the outer foot area. Any minor adjustments and cleaning up can be done later. It should be noted that the cutter does not have any safety shielding or guidance at the tip, unlike the ready-made example.



**2** Draw around the shadow, cut out the shape and then lay this on top of a suitable piece of thick ply or MDF and cut the shape to match the paper template



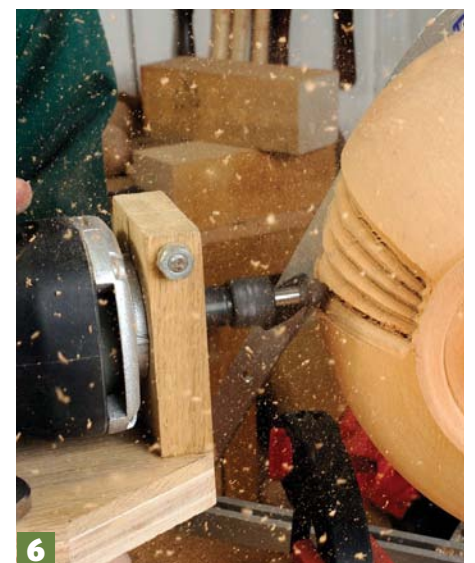
**3** Make a follow template or guide to suit the shape being routed



**4** Adjust the cutter to give you the required depth. Note the indexing keeps everything in place



**5** You can see two types of flutes cut on this bowl. Various cutters can be used to good effect



**6** Keep the router moving or you might burn the surface during the cut

## Using the shop-bought manufactured jig

This unit has a protective device or overshield on the cutter – not all shop-bought units have this, so you might need to use the follow template method described earlier. Here, it has a metal retaining ring, into which can be screwed in place home-made wooden or plastic collars of a diameter that slides over the cutter being used, as long as the cutter is not too large. You can turn the outside of the collar of a size to fit the ring and then drill the inner hole to suit the cutter head size. You can see that head in place here and the cutter just poking out of the end of the shield. This shield can also act as a depth cut limiter, as

long as it is always in contact with a solid part of the bowl mimicking the curve of the bowl or surface.

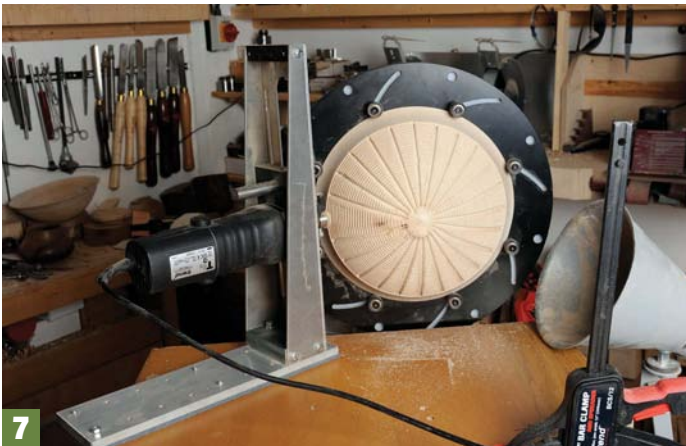
In step 9, you can see that it is now in contact with the wood and we can maintain contact with that all the way round without the need for a follow template. By all means, use that too or when you cannot, use the shield in the way just mentioned.

Note the hand position in step 10. Using the router, we are maintaining pressure into the wood and the other hand is on the jig itself providing downward pressure to maintain contact at all times with the wooden router

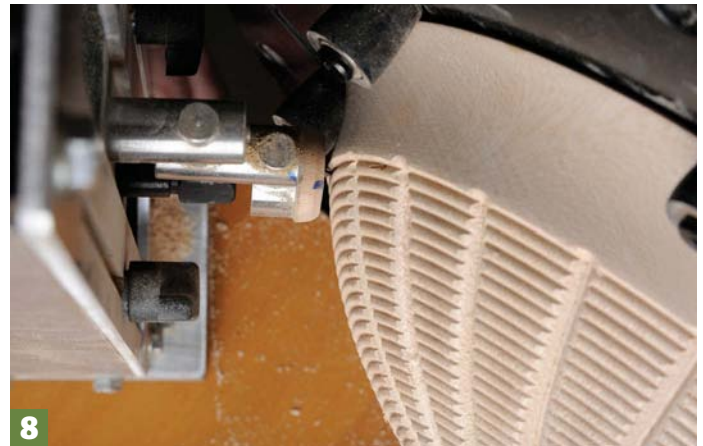
platform on the lathe.

We previously mentioned the depth stops on the board. In this case, in step 11, the router was used freehand and the shield is marked with a blue line, which, when lined up with the lower marked button edge, is the stop position.

In step 12, you can see that one pass with a heavy cut resulted in a not very cleanly cut groove. Also, the third groove up from the left shows where the router was not kept stable on the router bed and climbed in the cut. Ensure to maintain pressure in all the right places and take multiple light cuts. ●



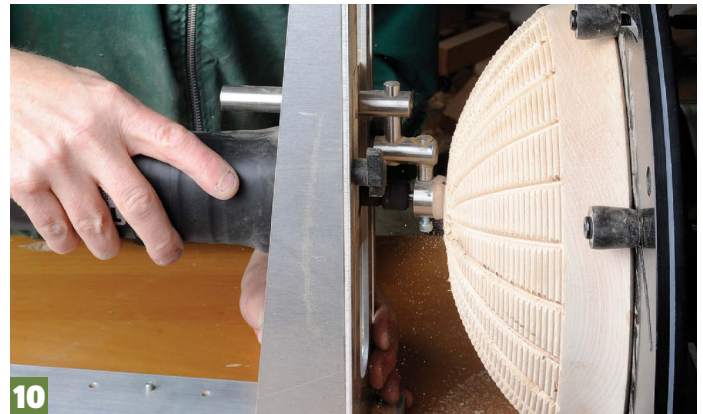
7 Shop-bought unit in use on a stable platform



8 The head in place and the cutter just poking out of the end of the overshield



9 Here you can see the shield in contact with the wood



10 Note the hand positions used here: pressure down and pressure in



11 Using the router freehand with the shield marked with a blue line so you have a visual reference at which positions to stop the cut



12 One pass with a heavy cut results in the router climbing during the cut, ruining the overall effect. Multiple light cuts are the way to go

# The relevance of woodturning

**Rowland Penfold** argues the relevance of woodturning, from the past, into the future and why the skill should be passed on to the future generations



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROWLAND PENFOLD

**A split bowl exploring shape and proportion**

In the June 2014 edition of *Woodturning*, the Editor, in his leader lobbied the proverbial hot potato with the question: "Is there any future in woodturning and is it relevant to what people are doing today?" He was asking for responses, so I thought I would oblige!

To understand the relevance of woodturning today, a little understanding of its past is probably needed. Most crafts have derived from functionality and necessity and woodturning is no exception. It would be an interesting exercise to list all the 'historical' items made by woodturners – from the work of the woodland bodger, to the fact that it was said that it was woodturners who won

the battle of Trafalgar! An interesting point, but British ships were able to manoeuvre far quicker than any others due to the efficiency of their rigging and in particular the quality of design and manufacture of their pulley blocks – made in part by woodturners! This led to what was perhaps the very first production line. The tools and machinery used have also greatly influenced our work: the pole lathe, treadle lathe, power lathe – water and electricity – variable speed, the use of chucks rather than just faceplates, high speed steel and other recent developments. All of these have seen woodturning develop not only in production gains, but also in access to technical ability. Wallace Chan, a jewellery designer, once said: "I feel grateful every day because the history accumulated from the past is helping us make things today. The technology, the craftsmanship, the knowledge left to us from our ancestors have become our foundation today." The relevance of woodturning? Look around, history dictates that.

## Woodturning in the future

Will woodturning have a future when the world is developing smart materials, 3D printing and all things micro-electronic? I would like to think a resounding 'yes'

for many of the reasons that follow. The relevance of woodturning? If we don't understand materials and how to manipulate them, our ability to design becomes impaired.

## Woodturning as an art form

Is woodturning considered to be an art form by those who 'run' the art world? Occasionally, the answer may be 'yes', but frequently it is not. A quick glance at some of the many antique programmes that are aired, shows that they highly prize paintings, pottery, textiles, metalwork and stonework, whereas wood, with perhaps the exception of furniture, is relegated to the category of 'novelty items'. On the flipside, the battle is there to be won. There are a few galleries purely devoted to wood; there are a number of private collectors of artistic woodturning



**The pulley block, which was used in Ancient Egypt and still to the modern day**

and there are shows and competitions that highlight the importance of shape, form, texture, proportion and aesthetics as well as functionality. I recently saw on display a most stunning piece of work: high craftsmanship, sympathetic finish quality, the most beautiful burr you could wish to see and a bystander who said that it was 'very good' but asked 'what could they use it for?' A case of being able to look but not being able to see or understand! The relevance of woodturning? A huge void that needs filling.

## Woodturning as a profession

I am not a professional woodturner, but as I see it, a professional's work would fall into four categories: production, restoration, decorative and tuition. I am sure that

## ROWLAND PENFOLD



Rowland rekindled his love of woodturning after retiring from the teaching profession. His preference is to create bowls from what can only be described as 'botanical roadkill' using

native timbers, such as those shown here. He is an active member of Cambridge Woodturners – [www.cambridge-woodturners.co.uk](http://www.cambridge-woodturners.co.uk)

[rpenfold@pdandt.demon.co.uk](mailto:rpenfold@pdandt.demon.co.uk)



professionals will be very quick to put me right on this one if I am way off the mark. Certainly with my first two categories, there will always be a niche market for the professional's skills. The short run of items or the single copying of an historic item can best be done by a craftsman, whereas a run



A natural-edge burr bowl from a piece of holm oak (*Quercus ilex*)

of 10,000 hammer handles is best produced by an automatic machine, which can produce these at a rate in excess of 10 a minute. Tragic events like the burning of York Minster, Windsor Castle and the *Cutty Sark* have all thrown up the demand for high quality craftspeople and thankfully, we are still in a position to rise to that challenge – if it were not for the professionals this may not be the case. Woodturning is very much an art and a skill that is still in demand.

### Woodturning as a paying hobby

There are many woodturners who use woodturning, for whatever reason, as a source of earning that extra penny, and as we all know, wood is getting more and more expensive. Places to sell work are various but these include professionally organised craft fairs, small events at schools, churches, charities, galleries and selling from home. Having attended a few of these craft events myself, the range of what the organisers consider to be crafts is extremely wide. On more than one occasion, I have attended events where much of the 'craft' originated in a far flung foreign factory and buyers have been heard to say that at least there was one craft stall present! And then you hear the questions: 'What? You make it all yourself? Don't you buy it in?' The relevance of woodturning? Fundraiser – self and charity.

### Woodturning as a hobby

Or should that be woodturning as a therapy? The two are almost indistinguishable. Whether you have had a bad day in the office, been upset by the neighbours or lost your winning lottery ticket, nothing beats the challenge of turning a piece of wood even if the end product is only shavings. Being able to say 'I made that' and to be able to say it with some pride is great for the soul and so very important. It keeps the brain ticking –

until it hurts on occasions. As long as you can still count up to 10 with all digits intact, then you have had a good day. The relevance of woodturning? At any stage of life, it provides a creative distraction.

### Woodturning in education

The formulation in the early 1990s of the National Curriculum was no doubt a necessary evil, but it did do some considerable damage to some areas of the curriculum. By the very nature of the beast, it provided a very formulaic approach to teaching and learning and, as a result, within design and technology a number of individual crafts that were in existence in some schools quickly faded. Space in schools became precious and as such, many schools parted with their machinery and woodturning lathes. This is why we see so many Harrison Graduate lathes for sale now. The outline above is not universal. Thankfully, there are pockets of excellence where some of these crafts, including woodturning, are still being taught. Long may this last but these pockets are in an extreme minority. How many of us first turned at school, appetite whetted and then took up turning many years later. Where are the appetites being whetted now?

One answer to the last question must include the excellent work being undertaken by a number of woodturners in our various clubs with the Scouts. At a variety of jamborees and other gatherings, youngsters have been flocking to the woodturning events. The tutors need no other thanks than to see the grin on a face of that embryonic woodturner. Another answer to that question is 'dads'. I have seen a number of father-and-son combinations attending club meetings, and a final answer must be 'us'. There ought to be an unwritten rule that every woodturner is duty bound to pass on both skills and enthusiasm to at least three other people: one of them will give up; one of them will do just a little bit of turning, but one of them will go on and inspire three more to take up woodturning. The relevance of woodturning? The challenge of taking on a skill that you never thought you could do.



A liberated ex-education Harrison Graduate in all its working glory



Botanical roadkill – a huge oak (*Quercus robur*) rootball from Westonbirt Arboretum

### Woodturning and the environment

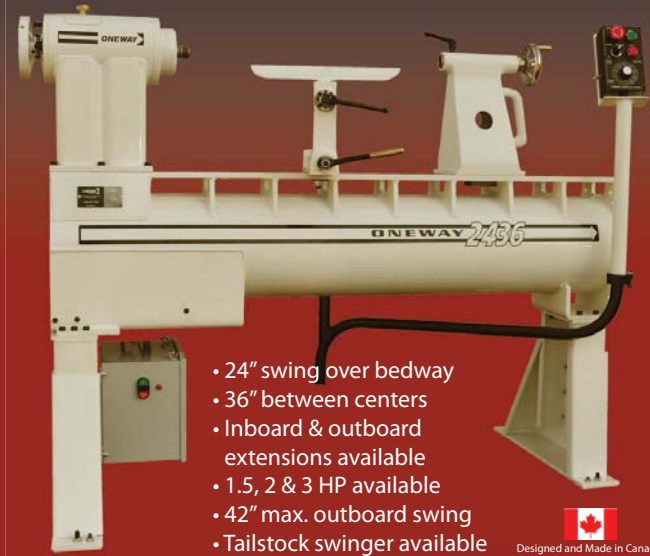
What proportion of our raw material is ethically sourced? I don't know the answer to this but I do have some concerns. For my part, I very rarely buy imported timbers. I will use imported timbers if given to me or if they have had a previous life, such as my collection of ebony (*Diospyros spp.*) piano keys. Where possible I use native timbers and, again where possible, use locally sourced. I fully realise this is not always possible, nor even desirable in some instances. I like the phrase 'botanic roadkill', it sums up well how I obtain a proportion of my timber. In fact, I would go one stage further and say that this is my preference as I can often obtain a piece of timber with more character. Some will see this character as a defect or flaw be it split, hole or rot, but I see it as an opportunity and a challenge. The relevance of woodturning? Using what nature naturally provides rather than just feeding the logburner.

### Woodturning and tuition

There is of course a huge distinction between the professional woodturner who teaches as an income generator and a professional tutor who teaches woodturning. The two are not mutually exclusive, but good woodturners do not automatically make good tutors. I guess I will be in trouble for that one! The aim of every teacher/tutor is to end with a position whereby the student, of any age, is able to become a better woodturner than the tutor. As the student progresses and nears the attainment of the tutor, their tutor still has a role to play, be it sounding board or critic. The good tutor will know the huge difference between a critique and a criticism. The relevance of woodturning? A vehicle for learning how to pass on skills and enthusiasm.

So, the final question must be 'is there a relevance for woodturning?' and the answer must be 'you bet your life there is!' I rest my case. ●

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# Irish Woodturners' Guild

## 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Seminar

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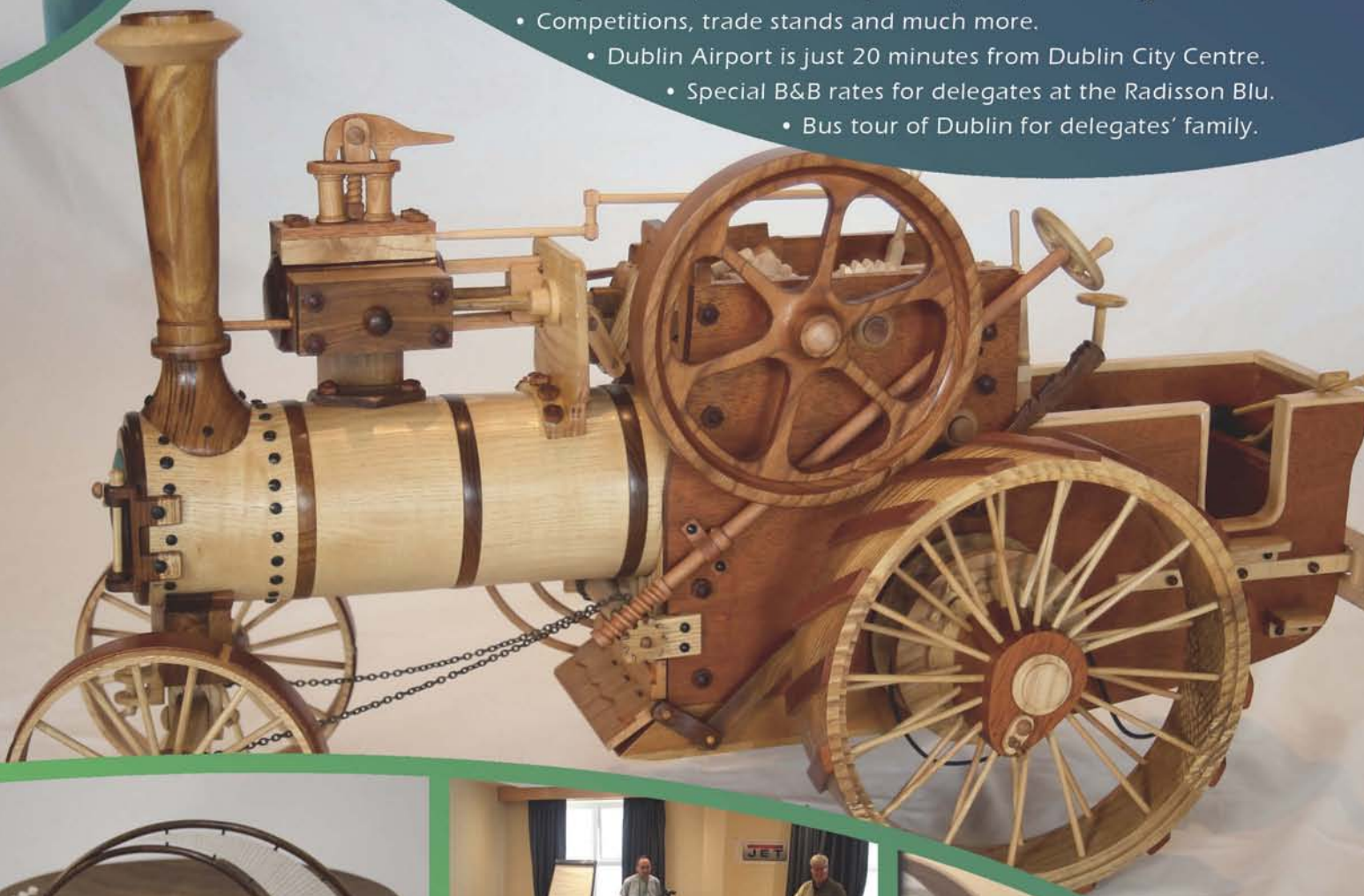
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# Garden trees & shrubs

In the final part of this series, **Dave Bates** looks at the common trees and shrubs found in your garden, which can be turned



A holly (*Ilex spp.*) vase

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE BATES, UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

## DAVE BATES



Dave started turning when he was about nine years old but didn't start taking it seriously until he saw three bark edge bowls by Bert Marsh in the early '80s. From a background in horticulture and then tree felling, he took up arable farming in 1979, and in 1987 following the Great Storm, set out to acquire a few trees for his hobby. Dave, along with his wife and son, runs Stiles & Bates and is also on the Register of Professional turners (RPT).

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www.stilesandbates.co.uk

spalted/rotten wood, nuts, seed pods, plastics, acrylics, resins and other man-made compounds, horn, bone, soft metals, stone, etc. Furthermore, some of these materials can be used together or embellished with a range of coatings, coverings or tool work to change the look of the materials utterly. One lifetime is hardly enough to explore all the materials and possible projects.

## Trees from your garden

We work in sizes from as large as can be lifted with a block and tackle into the mega lathes down to lace bobbins and parts for miniature furniture items and best of all, we can harvest some of our own materials from forest, hedgerows and gardens.

One of the great things about being a woodturner is that if a tree falls from your garden into your neighbours', you may be able to turn up something from the tree, either useful or decorative and present it as a peace offering. And if one falls from your neighbours' into yours, you can turn up a club to help with the insurance settlement. Seriously now, of all the woodworking crafts, for woodturning, we have available the very widest range of materials to work with from dry wood to wet wood, sound wood to



A block of pear (*Pyrus communis*), ready for turning

PHOTOGRAPH BY GMC/ANTHONY BAILEY

hardwood shrubs and tree branches.

We are fortunate to have a large garden with a number of mature trees and shrubs we are passionate about. Discounting the regular timber trees, just in our garden I counted 14 different trees or shrubs I have put on the lathe at one time or another:

- Apple (*Malus sylvestris*)
- Bay (*Laurus nobilis*)
- Berberis (*Berberis vulgaris*)
- Boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*)
- Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)
- Holly (*Ilex spp.*)
- Laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides*)
- Lilac (*Syringa spp.*)
- Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*)
- Mulberry (*Morus alba*)
- Plum (*Prunus spp.*)
- Pear (*Pyrus communis*)
- Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*)
- Yew (*Taxus baccata*)

Most of the shrubs have taken years of nurturing and pruning to establish and shape, so it would be a shame to cut them down just for the wood and maybe lead to a divorce, but pruning is necessary from time to time, of course.

I also spotted four more that look possible: mahonia (*Mahonia aquifolium*), laurel (*Laurus nobilis*), pieris (*Pieris japonica*) and even a hardy fuchsia (*Fuchsia excorticata*) in need of a good prune. At other times, I have used rhododendron (*Rhododendron ferrugineum*) and rhus (*Anacardiaceae*) but the former will not grow in our lime soil and the latter would involve a midnight raid into our neighbours' garden. There must be dozens more.

## Turning branchwood

As a kid playing on a cast-iron Victorian lathe converted from a treadle to run from a washing machine motor – as we did then – turning was just spindle work with the occasional lamp base. Bowls were cumbersome things with thick bottoms to hold the faceplate screws, which were later covered with green baize to cover the screw holes. The timber was not too interesting either looking back – mahogany (*Khaya ivorensis*), oak (*Quercus robur*) or beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) held in a 180mm three-jaw chuck one end and a greased dead centre in the tailstock.

My first departure from the norm was a branch from a tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), which I haven't seen since but have now learned is classed as an unwelcome invasive species and skin irritant, but I digress. Between centres I cut some crude shapes to expose a boldly striped grain and the next day it had cracked from one end to the other. There ended my interest in branchwood for a number of years and that

can be the problem with branch or shrub wood. It is all about tension. As timber grows, the bark cracks and tree expands and grows a new cambium layer – or growth ring – and the heartwood shrinks and hardens.

This shrinking or compression creates tension in the timber and once the branch or trunk is cut or milled or turned, combined with the shrinkage caused as the timber dries, this tension causes planks to cup and branches to split. Try cutting a thin biscuit off a branch and leave it somewhere hot to accelerate the process. It will likely open up right to the pith.

With the more porous timbers like that old tree of heave, which is similar to sumac or rhus, lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), birch (*Betula pendula*), fig (*Ficus carica*), magnolia and to some extent yew, the chances are that left to dry gently, the timber might dry and de-tension without splitting but even then, a log that has been left for ages can split a day or two after the outer layer, which has been holding it together, has been turned away and out comes the tension with a pop and a

split. So, why bother? Well, the wood can be spectacular, is rarely available commercially and is usually free. And there are ways we can make good use of it with some forethought.

Whether leaving branchwood in the round or cleaving or sawing them into halves or quarters, it is important to coat the fresh cut ends with a good sealer to reduce the checks that open down the medullary rays, which radiate out from the pith, but, as I have found, no amount of sealer will hold or prevent the tension from splitting round logs in most timbers.

If the wood has been cut for some time, cut back to green wood so the sealer bonds into the wood. There is a proprietary emulsion end seal out there but I could not get good results working through 10 gallons of the stuff years ago, but have found since then that the best sealer is any thick PVA, such as that which builder's merchants sell. It is messy and slow drying and you can even add different paints to create colours for different years. Old oil paints can be effective but simplest of all is to dip the ends in hot paraffin wax.

## Working through the garden list

### Apple & fruitwoods



PHOTOGRAPH BY GMC/ANTHONY BAILEY

#### An apple (*Malus sylvestris*) blank

Working through that garden list, apple and all fruitwoods are notoriously prone to buckle and split as they dry. Halving or quartering the branches through the pith will allow the tension out and yield some useful spindles but left round, splitting is almost inevitable. Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) is a timber used in this way for chair spindles, cleaved green and part turned by the old bodgers.

### Bay

Bay turns OK, slightly coarse and plain throughout but dries quite well in the round.

### Berberis

Berberis is quite the opposite as it is tight and hard and is a fantastic bright yellow throughout. The wood is prized by furniture restorers for marquetry but, in my experience, branches split without fail. Cleaving down the pith seems to be the only option.

### Boxwood

Box has been written about many times. It is slow



PHOTOGRAPH BY GMC/ANTHONY BAILEY

#### Boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) vessel by Mark Baker

to grow, pale yellow to cream, possibly the best timber for fine thread cutting, peels off the tool to a high shine and is a real delight. The old boys said the large logs needed 10 years to dry and one way to slow the drying down was to store the logs in boxes of dry sawdust, which were changed as the moisture from the boxwood seeped into it. I did this once but only changed the sawdust a couple of times and after six years, had some grey timber with pretty spalting lines. Not the intended result but it did not split.

## Elder

Mature elder wood looks similar to box and was stained black in Victorian times to imitate ebony (*Diosyros spp.*). Elder also roots very easily from cuttings. Some years ago, I hollowed the centre out of a fresh log to a kind of vase shape, left the bark intact for about half of it and potted it up. It rooted and was sprouting shoots from the outer bark but when we went on holiday, I forgot to ask our neighbour to water my vase! I haven't acquired a piece since and the birds own the one in our garden.

## Holly



A holly (*Ilex spp.*) vase

Holly is a fantastic timber to turn green. It is a tight white timber with rich reds, browns and greens in the pith of old trees. Turned fresh and sappy, it can be hollowed to a very thin wall thickness. If the wall thickness is even, it usually dries without splitting, albeit with some warping. Preserving the whiteness of holly timber is something I have never personally succeeded with. Not many trees are viable for milling anyway but the best one we ever milled ended up with grain stain despite us end racking it and turning it as we were told.

A restorer bought the whole tree despite the grey, saying that he had never found truly white holly anyway so always bleached it. He did the same with walnut (*Juglans regia*) and other timbers when looking to match a broken part, then stained it back up to match the original. Clever.

## Laburnum

Laburnum is a popular timber with turners, thanks to its rich dark colour and contrasting pale sapwood. The problem with it is its tendency to split during drying, which is especially true of the larger branches. I am not sure if laburnum is classed as a shrub or a tree but have seen a multi-stemmed stock in Wales with trunks up to 0.6m diameter and I estimated the total stock had about 10 tons of timber in it!



A halved lilac (*Syringa spp.*) log, berberis (*Berberis vulgaris*) lace bobbin blanks and boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) spindles

## Lilac

Lilac is a superb timber with pale sapwood, prominent fine grain and pale purples and browns in the centre. It makes great pen blanks but is one to cleave or saw into halves for drying reliably.



Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) enclosed form

## Magnolia

No specimen magnolia is worth felling for timber surely, but if one happens to fall your way, grab it! The timber is pale and light weight, dries reliably in planks, turns and hollows very easily but can be sanded away like chalk if you go too hard at it. The grain is very prominent and the wood does not darken as much as most timbers do.

## Mulberry

Mulberry is probably one of the slowest growing trees in the UK. After many experiments, we managed to get some seeds scraped from a local pavement to germinate. 35 years later and the three stems are about 75mm in diameter. So big trees are rare and usually preserved by surgery and props, but the timber is superb to work with. It dries reliably in planks and even the branches dry well in the round. It can also be turned and hollowed fresh off the tree with minimal distortion. It is similar in appearance to laburnum but the timber is softer and a real delight to work with.



Flowers turned using pieces of privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*)

## Privet

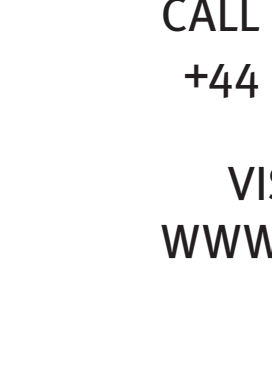
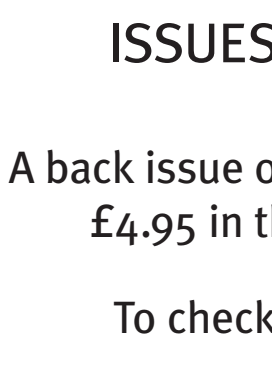
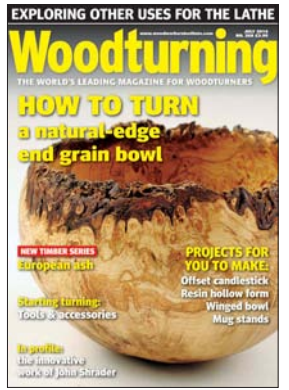
Privet is a pale, tight wood, slightly darker than holly but similar to turn. It also makes great wooden flowers if turned fresh.

Using fresh cut small branches, turned wooden flowers are great fun to make. They can be turned in minutes and if they go wrong, it is all good practice. Short pieces can simply be grabbed in a chuck and turned in one go but for longer stems, I prefer to turn the branch down to a small diameter spindle and slide it through the chuck onto the Morse taper hollow, then slide it out in stages to reduce the stem further. ●



A natural-edge vase in mulberry (*Morus alba*)





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# Two-part mirror variations

Philip Greenwood takes you through the steps for creating a multi-functional mirror on a stand

## PHILIP GREENWOOD



Philip has been turning wood since 1980 and started turning professionally in 1986. He was accepted onto the Register of Professional Turners (RPT) in 2006. He is also a member of the AWGB.

He can be seen working in his workshop in North Yorkshire and has demonstrated at the woodworking show at Harrogate since 2008. He runs courses at his workshop.

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This hand mirror has a separate stand so you could just make the hand mirror if you wished. This style enables the mirror to be used separately and placed back in the cradle for hands-free use. The mirror frame part is straightforward to turn, as you will see in the steps, with the mirror fitting in the frame from the front. The downside of this design is a small gap around the mirror edge. The half circle cradle frame is just made from a single disc of timber, which



The mirror can easily be detached from the stand

is turned and shaped, then cut in half across the circle diameter and glued back together on the outer face. This is then attached to a stem to fit in the base. The stem has a ball joint on the end to allow the mirror to be tilted to a suitable angle. The downside to this design is that you need a larger base to allow the mechanism to be fitted and also to give stability, or the mirror may overbalance if tilted too far backwards. The base will require you to measure carefully so the components fit and operate correctly. Besides the timber, you will need a small spring that works in compression mode, a couple of screws and a mirror. Mine has a bevelled edge and some silicon sealant to stick the mirror to the frame or some double-sided sticky foam pads. This type of stand could be used for other items besides a mirror stand where you need to adjust the angle. I have used sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) for the whole project, but contrasting timbers could be used for the mirror frame or stem. The finish is carnauba wax over a sanding sealant, although an oil finish is another choice for this project.



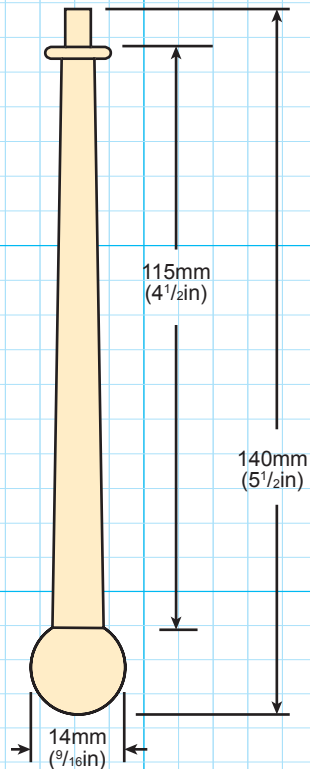
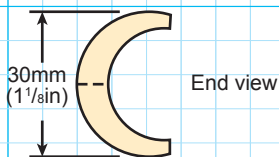
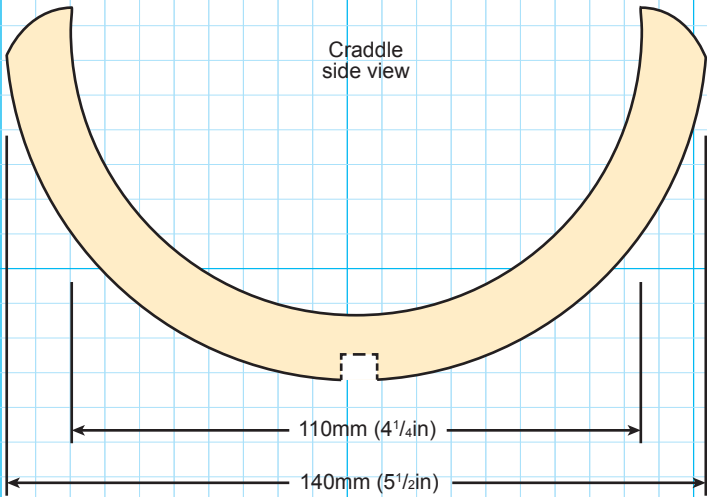
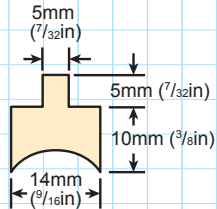
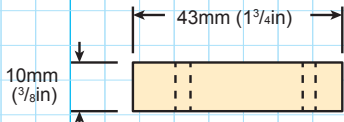
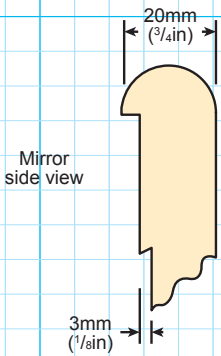
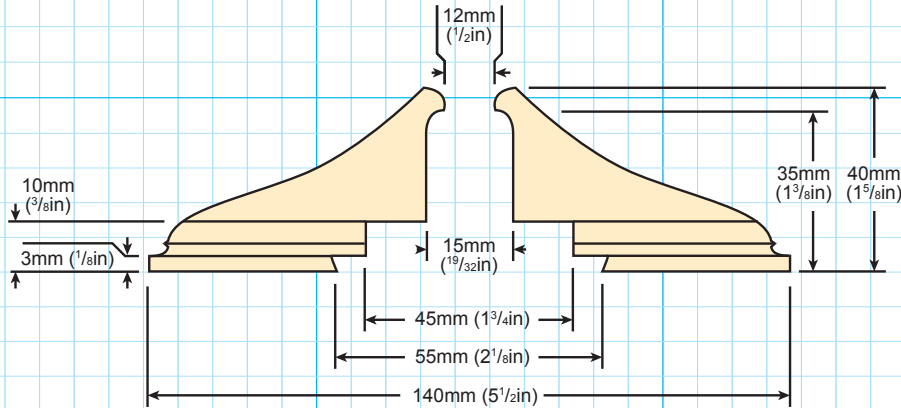
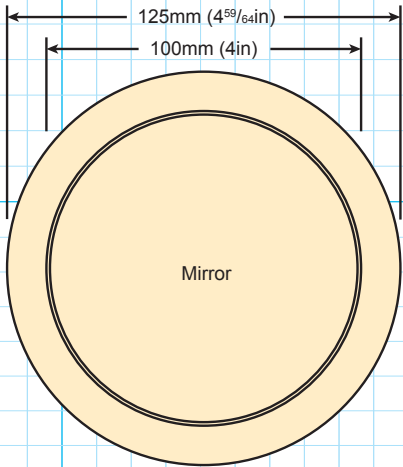
### EQUIPMENT USED

10mm bowl gouge  
25mm French-curve scraper  
3mm parting tool  
20mm skew chisel  
20mm spindle roughing gouge  
10mm spindle gouge with a fingernail profile  
Double-sided tape  
Piece of mirror – 100mm dia.  
Bandsaw  
Variety of abrasives  
Bradawl  
Three-part buffing system  
Silicon adhesive  
PPE: latex gloves, facemask, respirator/  
dust mask and extraction

### TIMBER REQUIREMENTS

Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)  
**Mirror frame:** 135 × 25mm  
**Cradle:** 150 × 20mm  
**Stand:** 140 × 55mm  
**Stem:** 155 × 25mm  
**Ball support disc:**  
20 × 10mm

PLANS



## SKEW CHISEL USE



A planing cut using the skew chisel

I know a lot of people have had bad experiences when using the skew chisel and this is mostly down to not knowing how to use the tool correctly. I use mine with the longest point or toe upmost; this is the way I was taught. To use this for a planing cut as in the photo, use the lower third of the tool to half way up. If you use the upper part of the tool, you will have a dig in. To present the tool, rub the heel at the bottom of the bevel, find the bevel, then slowly present the cutting edge to the timber and slide the tool on the bevel down the timber with light pressure only. Let the tool do the work. My tool is ground with 23° sides and a skew angle of 30°. Seek advice on how to use the tool if you have problems.

## BALL JOINT COMPONENTS



Components for the ball joint

Here are the components for the ball and socket joint for the stand, from left to right: the fixing plate to hold all the components in place and adjust the spring compression; the compression spring and the ball socket with the spigot to centralise and hold the spring in place, which is dished on the top face as in step 17 and finally the ball on the stem.

*“I know a lot of people have had bad experiences when using the skew chisel...”*

## PERFECT SANDING



Sanding on the lathe

I start with 120 grit, which removes any tool marks on the surface and then move on to 180, which removes the scratch marks left by the 120 grit. Next, I use 240 and 320 and the last grit for most projects is 400, which removes the marks left by the 320 grit. If I find any marks on the surface, I will go back through all the grits in order and not miss any out; this is faster and produces less heat than staying with 400. When the abrasive stops working, throw it away. Don't think worn out 240 will now be OK for the 320 grit; the particle sizes will still be the same as unworn 240 grit. Only press lightly when sanding – pressing hard will wear out your abrasives and will damage the timber due to the heat.

**1** You need to start with the disc that will hold the mirror, which you can see here. Find the centre, drill an 8mm hole and drill all the way through. Next, screw this onto the screw in the chuck and true up the outside

**2** You need to turn a spigot so you can hold it when you turn the front face. Mark the spigot diameter and then, using a parting tool, cut a groove to the left and the mark for the spigot diameter to a depth of 4mm. You can then remove the waste from the top section to expose the spigot, then use the skew chisel to cut the dovetail

**3** The disc can now be held on the spigot. Clean the face and then mark the recess for the chuck jaws so they expand into a recess. Now cut in with the parting tool to a depth of 3mm and remove the waste towards the centre; this will allow you to accommodate the mirror, then try the mirror for fit. Round over the corner of the disc. Try for an even curve as this needs to be matched on the other side, then you can sand and seal

**4** Hold in the recess on the front face and remove the spigot with the bowl gouge. Replicate the curve on the front face and use a template to make sure the curve is the same for the front and back. Any discrepancies will show when the mirror frame is placed in the cradle. You can then sand and seal all the surfaces





5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12

**5** This piece is for the cradle. Repeat the steps in step 1 and also clean the face of the disc. When using the bowl gouge on a face like this, try to rub the bevel; this will give you an even surface and a more controlled cut

**6** This recess is the same diameter as the mirror surround and half the depth of the mirror frame thickness. The radius needs to match the radius on the mirror frame. Use a bowl gouge to remove most of the waste before moving on to the scraper. Ensure the face is flat as this will be glued together. Use a template to check the curve; this is the convex one compared to the concave template used to check the radius on the mirror frame. Only sand and seal the middle part at this stage

**7** Rough cut a disc the same size as the cradle – in my case it was hardboard – and stick this with double-sided tape to the cradle. Next, drill a hole in the cradle frame through to the disc; this disc stops the cradle from coming loose when you part through later

**8** Here you can see the hardboard disc attached. Shape the outside of the cradle with a nice curve. Remember that you have a concave surface on the inside so you don't want to go through the wall. The centre part is waste so you don't need to sand and seal that part

*“Glue up the two pieces back to back and clamp together”*

**9** Measure the mirror, which is 100mm diameter, then add on 10mm so part of the mirror frame will show when inserted into the cradle; this means you need to part through at 110mm. Part though to the right-hand side of this, very slowly, and you will hear the sound change when you are almost through

**10** Unscrew from the chuck and remove the centre. You need to cut this cradle in half. Here I have set the bandsaw fence to half of the cradle width. Keep the blade guard as low as possible and slowly push through, keeping your finger well clear of the blade. Remove the hardboard from the cradle frame

**11** Glue up the two pieces back to back and clamp together. Sand the ends with a curve to remove the flat edges. I used a belt sander, but this could be completed with a bit of hand-sanding

**12** Place a piece of timber between centres to a round. In the photo, you can see where I have marked the ball position. Turn a spigot on the right-hand end; this is to fit into the bottom of the cradle. Use a skew chisel to clean the main part of the spindle

13 Use a spindle gouge to shape the ball end and try to achieve an even shaped ball so it will rotate freely in the socket. Sand and seal the entire spindle. Once removed from between centres, you will just need to finish the ball end by hand. Mount the base piece on a screw held in the chuck jaws and true up and turn a spigot on what will become the top of the base. Hold on the spigot and clean the base, then mark and turn a recess for later



14 Cut a second recess for the holding plate, which is just smaller than the recess for the chuck jaws. Next, use a parting tool to cut a hole for the ball end of the spindle to fit in; this needs to be around half the depth of the base thickness. Next, using a round-nose scraper, dish the bottom of the hole, which is the socket for the ball end. Sand and seal the underside



15 Hold in the recess on the bottom and turn a small recess in the top to allow the stem to tilt backwards. Start to shape the base to make the design look lighter without compromising the stability of the piece



16 Use a push cut to clean the surface; this will reduce sanding. Try to keep the bevel in contact with the surface at all times. Use a scraper to refine the surface if needed – make sure it is sharp or it may tear the timber fibres and require a lot of sanding. Finally, sand and seal the whole surface

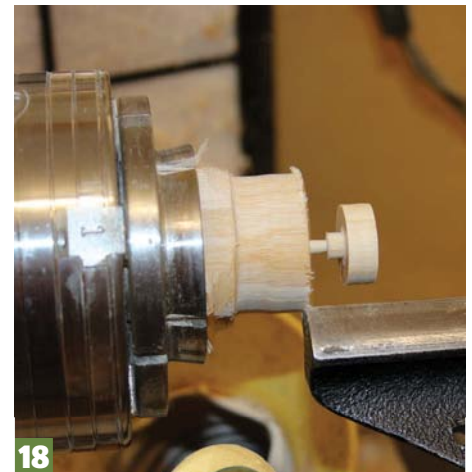


### *“Sand and seal the underside...”*

17 This piece is to fit on the underside of the ball on the stem. Use a scrap piece of timber as this will not be visible. This must fit the hole in the base so turn to a suitable diameter. You can then dish the end so it fits the ball end



18 You can see a small spigot on this piece, which is to locate the spring when you assemble the base. Cut this off and place aside for later



19 The cradle needs to be drilled to take the spigot on the stem. You can create a cradle to support the work but the gentle pressure used to drill this small hole is minimal. Mark the centre with a bradawl and then drill an 8mm hole in this. All the parts are now polished on the buffing system. Once you are happy with the finish, assemble all the parts. See the ball joint components section for more information. Assemble the base components first before you attach the cradle to the stem top. Finally, glue the mirror in with some silicon adhesive



20 The final mirror on a stand should look something like this ●



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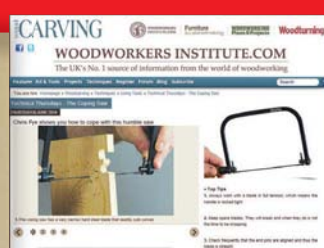
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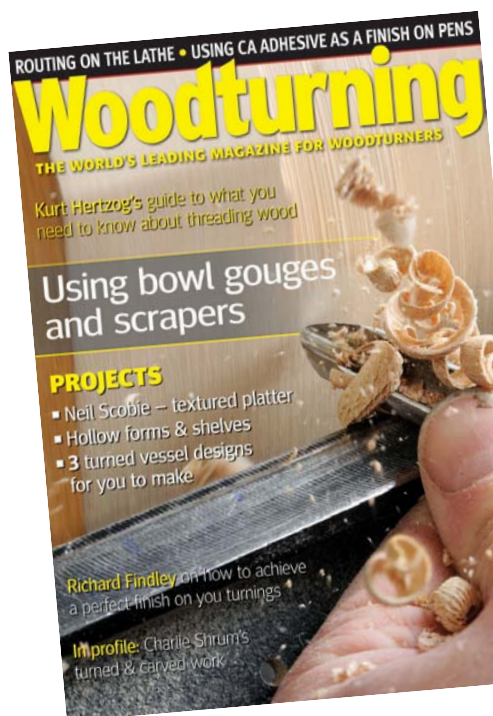
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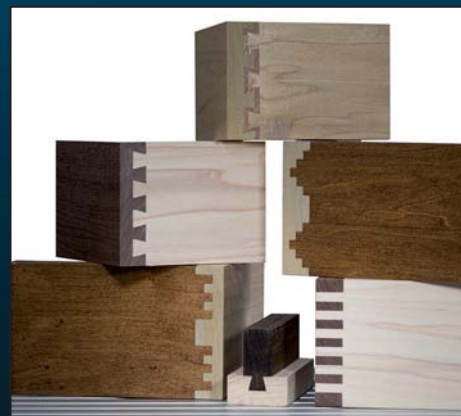


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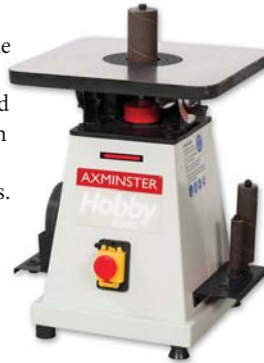
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## Getting Started in Woodturning DVD



Rockler Woodworking and Hardware has introduced the latest informational DVD release from *Woodworker's Journal*, which demonstrates the fundamental techniques involved in woodturning, including the functionality of turning tools, sharpening, spindle turning, bowl turning, as well as sanding and finishing on the lathe. The content is designed for guiding beginners as they learn about the craft and attempt their own projects. From understanding how a lathe functions to completing their first project, new woodturners will find guidance and easy-to-follow instruction in this DVD.

The DVD is presented by Ernie Conover, who has more than 40 years of experience teaching woodturning and Kimberly McNeelan, who is a professional woodworker and author.

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Many of you will be familiar with CamVac dust extraction machines. In October 2014, the CamVac brand and full range of machines was acquired by Record Power and the company are delighted to be continuing to manufacture in the UK.

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## ERRATUM

In issue 277, we featured Beaufort Ink's pen refills, which gave slightly incorrect information. Beaufort Ink produces refills specially for pen turners using Swiss-made components and ink.

Manufactured to exacting standards and tolerances, they are available loose, either individually or in bulk, and also in retail packs that allow turners to sell refills to their own customers at a profit. All refills feature

stainless steel tips and tungsten carbide balls. They don't skip or scratch and are designed to only dry up where they are supposed to – on the paper, not in the refill. See below for further details.

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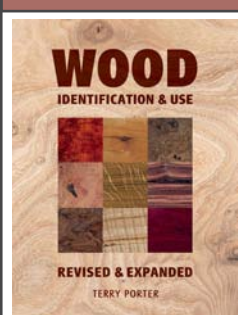
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# Nick Agar – ‘Key to the City’

Nick Agar shares this sculptural turned piece with us, whose design reflects the industrious heart of the city of London



PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK AGAR

‘Key to the City’, sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and birch ply, bowl and key are both 300mm dia.

This piece, which depicts a turned plate with a wooden key going through its centre, is made from sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and birch ply, with the gears being cut from the plywood.

This is a functional as well as an aesthetic piece and it has actual working gears on the surface, which can be turned by hand. I like making pieces with gears and enjoyed the

challenge of evolving a simple turned platter as a base for this design.

The design is meant to reflect the industrious heart of the city of London and the Key to the City is an honour bestowed by a city upon esteemed residents and visitors. This piece was recently on show at an exhibition put on by the Worshipful Company of Turners in the City of London,

which is where the connection stems from.

The piece was airbrushed using the colours of the Union Jack flag, which helps to give the piece a really three-dimensional feel and black patinting wax was used to add a further deeper colouring to the gears on the platter’s surface.

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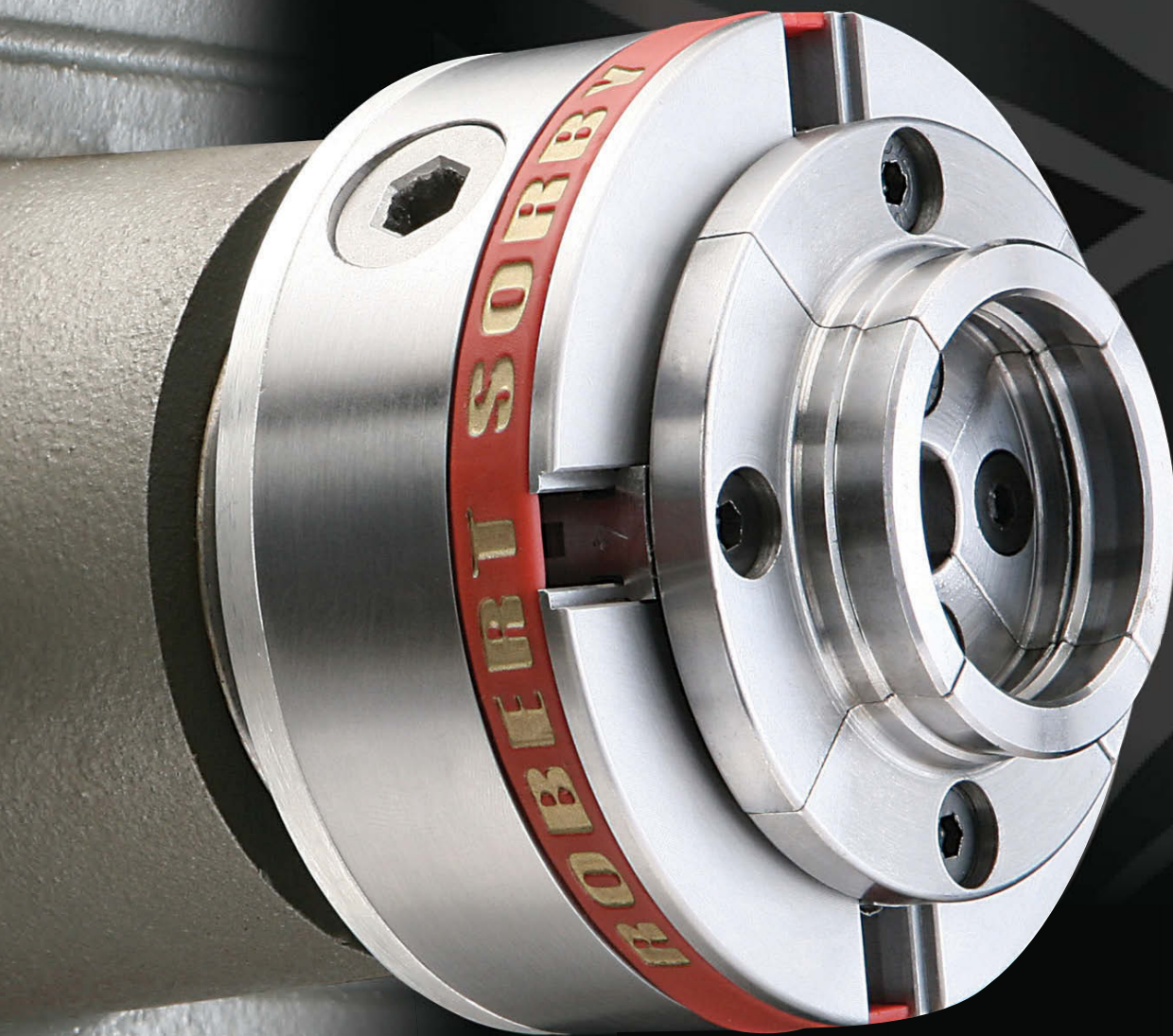
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