



Martock and District Woodturners Newsletter

March 2024

News

Spring is sprung and the grass looks as though it never stopped growing all winter, so lots to do in the garden, which leaves little time for turning ☺.

Following on from the decision at the AGM we have a buyer for the club lathe and its replacement should be ready for use for the April club night, and possibly the Yandles Craft Fair. Speaking of which, in return for the support the club gets from Yandles we help them out by manning the carpark at these events for the morning busy period. Please do not leave this to same few people each time – the more volunteers the easier the load.

Diary Dates

March 22 nd	Yandles woodturning demonstration – 4-6pm – Jason Breach
March 26 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Jason Breach (a change from the published programme)
April 13 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles Training Room
April 20 th	Yandles Spring Craft Fair
April 30 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Paul Sweet
May 11 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles Training Room

February Demonstration – Colwin Way



In a change to our advertised program, Colwin was with us a month earlier than expected. As usual, he had lined up a huge number of possible items to demonstrate but only managed to complete three.

Demo 1 – Rocking Pot turned from Green Wood

This pot was turned from wet oak, knowing that it will distort as it dries and take on a unique shape. The blank was mounted between centres (although Colwin did say that if he was turning a batch of them he would drill a hole with a pillar drill and use expanding jaws to hold it in a chuck).

After turning to round, the outside shape was completed and a tenon cut on the bottom for the chuck jaws (this will later be cut off and the bottom rounded over). Before sanding Colwin used a skew chisel as a negative rake scraper to remove any imperfections in the shaping.



As it was wet timber Colwin used an Abranet type abrasive which doesn't clog up as easily as a normal one. He also alternated between flat sanding and using a rotary sander in a drill; this removes any of the radial scratches that can be found when just using abrasive paper. Sanding started at 120 grit, and then progressed through 180, 240, 320 and 400 with each subsequent stage simply removing the scratches from the previous stage. A final sand along the grain with 400 grit and the lathe stationary will remove any remaining sanding marks.

There was some extra timber at the end where Colwin cut away some splits in the blank. This was removed at this stage with a parting tool and small saw.

The blank was reversed into the chuck jaws and the top of the bowl cleaned up with a gouge. The middle of the bowl could be drilled out, although as Colwin demonstrated it can sometimes start to burn and smoke.

The hollowing was completed using a bowl gouge. The first step is to hollow out the first 2-3 cm and turn this down to the target wall thickness of 3mm. When checking the thickness it is best to oversize the callipers so that you are not dragging them over the outside surface, making scratches – by observing the gap you can still judge the actual thickness.

As you continue down into the bowl you can use a bright light on the outside to check that the wall thickness is consistent (this only works for wet timber).

To finish off the bottom Colwin used a gouge with a shallower grind which allowed him to make bevel rubbing cuts. A final going over with a negative rake round-nosed scraper completed the shaping, although one last cut with the scraper was used to chamfer the edge of the rim and make the bowl look thinner than it was.

Sanding again started at 120 grit using Abranet followed by rotary sanding. This then progressed through 180, 240, 320 and 400 with each subsequent stage simply removing the scratches from the previous stage.



To remove the tenon, Colwin has a number of dome shaped formers from which he can select one of an appropriate size and shape to fit the inside of the bowl; these can be reshaped as necessary to produce a good fit.

A piece of kitchen roll is put over the former to stop it marking the bottom of the bowl and the piece is held in place using the tailstock centre (Colwin advises not to use those kitchen rolls with pretty patterns on them as the colour comes off quite easily).

Most of the tenon can now be removed and the bottom of the bowl rounded over. This area can then be sanded.

Another tip from Colwin – if you have a set of chuck jaws where the numbers have worn off, you can easily work out the order by looking at the area indicated here. The #1 jaw will have the smallest gap, the #2 jaw the next smallest gap, and so on.

The remaining blip on the bottom was removed using a small flexible sanding disk, again going through the grits.

The bowl will be given a single coat of finishing oil and left to dry indoors, although not in direct heat. It will distort but should not crack.



Demo 2 – Turning a Bowling Ball

Colwin was requested to make a number of bowling balls by a family member; it was specified that they are turned out of wet timber with no concern that they will become non-spherical as they dry.

Traditionally skittle balls were made from apple or pear, but oak is quite common these days.

The blank was mounted between centres.

The first stage is to turn the blank to round with the diameter needed for the finished ball (4½ inches in this case). Because of the diameter of the piece and the size of the drive centre this was done using a bowl gouge rather than a roughing gouge which can be a bit aggressive.

Measure the diameter and mark the width of the ball to be the same.

The blank is cut down to these marks using a bowl gouge or parting tool.

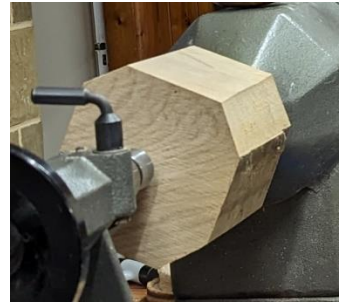
A line is drawn at the middle of the width to act as a reference.

The next stage is to remove the corners at 45° for a quarter of the width at each side.

Each side can then be shaped to resemble hemispheres, keeping the centre line intact. Any irregularities in the shape can be taken out by using a skew chisel on its side as a negative rake scraper.

When satisfied with this initial shaping the piece can be removed from between centres.

Two home-made centres are now used to hold the piece, both with concave surfaces. The first mounts in the chuck jaws as shown and the second is hollowed out at the back to fit over the revolving tailstock centre.



The piece can then be mounted at 90° to its previous position to remove the two spigots and further refine the shape. A piece of kitchen roll is used at each end to help protect the piece from marking if there is any slippage.

As the piece rotates, the ghost image will show where material needs to be removed. Light cuts are needed to remove the spigots to avoid knocking the piece out of its mounting.

Once again, any irregularities in the shape can be taken out by using a skew chisel on its side as a negative rake scraper.

The piece can then be rotated 90° in the other plane and the process repeated to further improve the shape, before a final sanding.

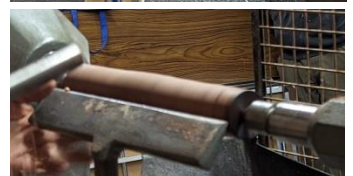
Demo 2 – A Raffan Style Candle Stick

This is a simple, elegant candlestick in a style created by Richard Raffan.

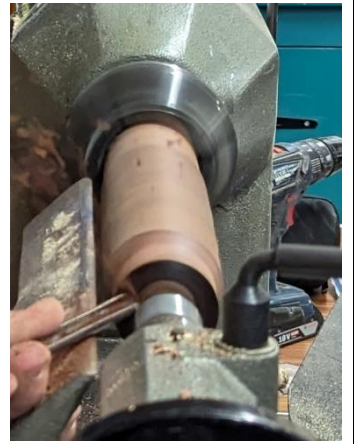
Colwin had brought a piece of walnut and a piece of cocobolo and asked for a show of hands for which one to use – the cocobolo got the vote.

After mounting between centres the blank was turned roughly round using a spindle roughing gouge.

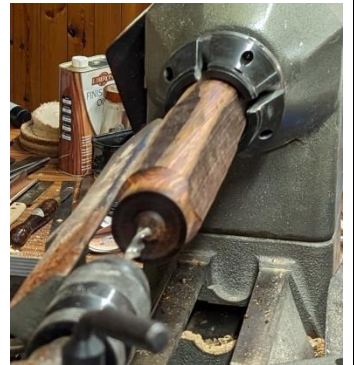
The tailstock end was squared-off using a parting tool.



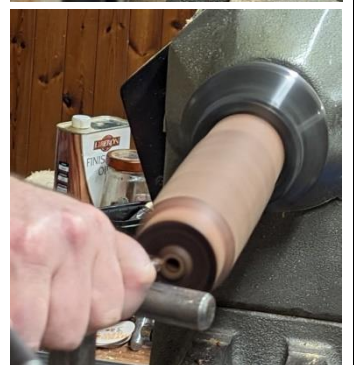
The piece was then held in the chuck and re-centred using the tailstock. This end was then turned to round with a bowl or spindle gouge and the end of the piece given the start of a concave shape.



Since the candlestick is designed for a tall taper candle it only needs an 8mm hole. Although it was not done in this case, regulations state that all candle holders should be fitted with a glass or metal insert, in which case a slightly bigger hole may be needed.



Once the hole is complete, the concave shape of the end can be finished off and the tailstock centre replaced. Small cuts are needed to avoid a lot of vibration (caused by working a long way from the headstock support).



This surface can then be sanded.

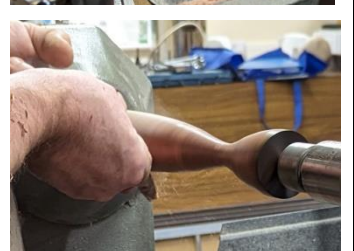
The position of the “neck” follows the one third/two thirds rule, and Initial shaping was done with a spindle roughing gouge...



...before switching to a skew chisel to finish off.



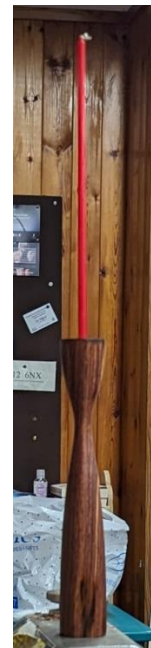
Cocobolo is a very dusty timber, so Colwin used some wax with his sanding paper. The resulting wax finish is fine for a decorative piece, but a functional candlestick really needs a harder finish such as a lacquer to avoid any dripped candle wax damaging it.



After switching to a smaller (ring) centre the bottom can be cleaned up with a parting tool and left slightly concave.

The base is finished off with a small flexible sanding disk.

These candlesticks look especially good in pairs, or in groups of three of different heights.



Save the Date

Colwin will be back for an
ALL-DAY DEMONSTRATION
Sunday 14th July

Volunteers needed...



Later in April is the first Yandles craft fair of the year where **we need half a dozen volunteers** to do a few hours car-park duty in the morning.

If we can muster enough support we will also be having our usual stand outside the shop. For this we need a few able bodies to help set up and clear away at the end, as well as people to man the stall and demonstrate to the public. We also need plenty of items to display and sell on the stall (a chance to earn some cash from your hobby!).

If you are prepared to help in any way please talk to Caroline.

It's still not too late...



A number of club members have already booked up to attend the [Chestnut Woodturning Weekender](#) next year. The cost is only £45 pounds (plus travel and accommodation – the intention is to travel by train from Yeovil Pen Mill). This is a fun, relaxing weekend features four full-length demonstrations (the demonstrators will be Chris Parker, Andrew Hall, Mary Ashton and Gary Rance), as well as a Saturday evening two-course barbecue with bar & surprise entertainment, clinics & smaller demonstrations and trade stands. It is also an ideal opportunity to get to know some of your fellow club members better. If you think you might be interested in joining them, have word with Dave P to find out more.

Gallery

Here is where we display any items made by club members in recent weeks.



Apologies, but I neglected to take details of the maker of this bowl...



...similarly for this piece



This was one of a number of railway milk-churn trophies made by Brian H for a local cheese making competition.

Please send photographs of anything you have made to newsletter@madturners.co.uk, or better still bring them along on a club night to put on the inspiration table for all to admire.

Notes from the February Committee Meeting

1. Treasurer's Report: - Cheques paid to Web, AWGB. Still no village hall invoice.

Actions: -Dave has redone the removal of signatures as it has not been completed by the bank.

Ray to remind Caz at the village hall for invoices.

2. Secretary's Report: - Mr Shepherd's membership application needs to be redone. It did not make printing and the email is illegible.

Dave to ask if everyone is receiving the Newsletter to check if the Club has their correct address. Done during meeting and everyone seems to get the Newsletter.

Previous years membership forms have been sorted by Ray and given to Andy to check against current membership.

Actions: - Ray to contact Caz again.

3. Programme Report: No report. The new Calander is up and running. Colwin has swapped to do this evening's demonstration.

Do we need a booking conformation form, information sheet? Does one exist? Dave will talk to previous Programme coordinators to see if we have one already put together.

4. Hands-On Report: - Unfortunately, Colin was not at the meeting

5. Health & Safety Report: Steve is making good progress in redoing the Health and Safety documents for the club. He is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through.

He has attempted to get conformation about the insurance details for Hands-on at Yandles, their Risk Assessments and 3rd party liability. He now needs to talk to more senior management at Yandles.

The question was asked about PAT testing. Did anyone know someone who could carry out these tests? Leads are being pursued.

Dave P and Dave A are to run a demonstration/ have a go session at Yandles once insurance liability and Risk assessments have been sorted.

The sound system at the Hall belongs to the Club. It needs to be put on the list of equipment and PAT test list.

6 A.O.B

1. Purchase of the new Lathe. Dave is acquiring quotes for the new Lathe. So far he has information for :- Midi Pro, from Simon Hope about £1900.00 including legs, bed-extension

AP350WL, from Axminster, currently not in stock, about £1389.00, not sure what this includes.

Nova Neptune, from Yandles, about £1200.00, also not sure what this includes.

2. How should the old Lathes be sold? After a general discussion it was decided that Dave would send out an email to all club members asking for closed bids to be sent to him before the 20/03/24 deadline for bids over £250.00. The Yeovil Men's Shed has already put in an offer for £300.00 (via Steve).

3. Andy asked if the changes to the constitution that were approved at the 2023 AGM have been made.

4. Dave P asked if other Clubs membership could have a concessionary rate if visiting. No decision was made.

The next committee meeting will be on 30th April. If there is anything you would like the committee to discuss please email Caroline (secretary@madturners.co.uk).

Timber of the Month - Bocote



Bocote is the Spanish name for several Central American species of *Cordia* (more commonly *cordia gerascanthus* and *cordia elaeagnoides*). *Cordia* is a genus of flowering plants in the borage family and contains about 300 species of shrubs and trees found worldwide, but mostly in warmer regions. Many of the species are also called manjack, and bocote may be referred to as Mexican rosewood, Spanish elm, cyp, cypre, canaletta or grande palisander.

Cordia is a tree 65-100 ft (20-30 m) tall with a diameter of 3-5 ft (1-1.5 m). The timber is predominantly a yellowish brown, dramatically marked with darker brown to almost black stripes. It is hard and heavy with a somewhat oily feel. It is not uncommon to see a number of "eyes" in Bocote which look like knots (see photo), however they do not present any special challenges in machining. The colour tends to darken with age.

In Central and South America the wood of several *Cordia* species is commercially harvested and used to make furniture and doors. Elsewhere it finds use in fine furniture, cabinetry, flooring, veneer, boatbuilding, musical instruments, gunstocks, turned objects, and other small specialty wood items. Book-matched panels can be particularly striking.

A number of the tropical species have edible fruits, known by a wide variety of names including clammy cherries, glue berries, sebesten, or snotty gobbles. In India, the fruits of local species are used as a vegetable, and can be eaten raw or cooked, or pickled. In parts of Asia the white, gooey inner pulp of the fruits is traditionally used to make a glue.

Finally *Cordia* leaves can be dried and used to smoke marijuana with (or so I am informed by Wikipedia!).

If you have anything you would like to share through this newsletter, or have any ideas of what you would like to see included, please let me know by emailing me at newsletter@madturners.co.uk.

Thanks, Dave H