



Martock and District Woodturners Newsletter

April 2024

News

Many thanks for all the help at the Yandles craft fair – especially Liz and Eddie who displayed their turning skills to the public, those who arrived early and stayed to the end to help with setting up and clearing away, and the car parking team whose efforts were much appreciated by Yandles.

The new club lathe has arrived and will be put to use at the next club night.



Diary Dates

April 30 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Paul Sweet
May 11 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles Training Room
May 28 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion
Jun 15 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles Training Room
Jun 24 th	Visit to Axminster Tools – see details below

March Demonstration – Jason Breach

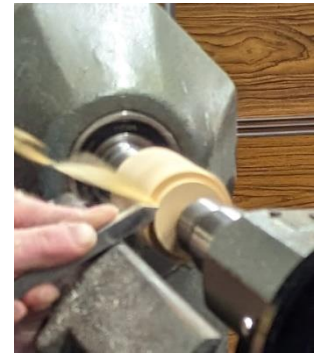


Jason is a regular visitor to our club and likes to bring something with a bit of a challenge. This time he made a “simple” acorn box, with a hand-chased thread, although to make it more difficult for himself he chose to use ash for acorn cup – a timber not normally used for threading because of its relatively coarse grain.

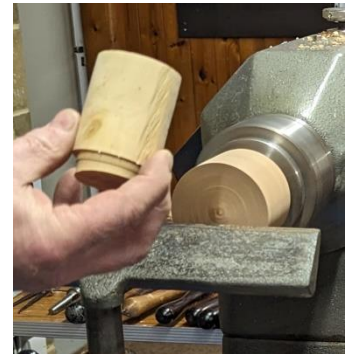
Jason started with a piece of ash mounted between centres, which was turned down to a cylinder and a spigot made on one end to fit the chuck jaws. This will be used for the acorn cup.



Whilst working between centres, a piece of boxwood was turned down to a cylinder and a spigot made on one end to fit the chuck jaws. This will be used for the acorn seed.



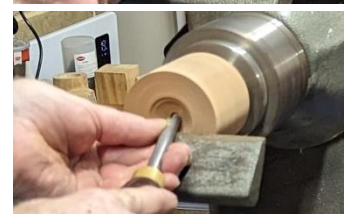
Jason always likes to make the internal thread first, so the ash blank was mounted in the chuck and the front face cleaned up. The diameter of the piece of boxwood was measured and a smaller diameter marked on the ash to show the maximum opening.



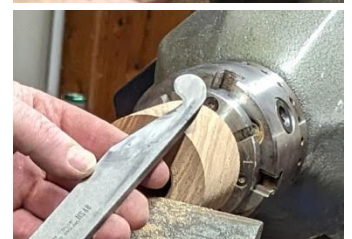
A spindle gouge was used to drill a hole in the centre to the desired depth.



Jason used a bowl gouge to hollow out the centre, under cutting the rim but making sure the opening was kept to the marked size.



To finish the inside shape Jason had a couple of possible tools. The first was an undercut scraper shown here. This is a Henry Taylor HS49 (which they no longer make), although it has been somewhat reshaped to meet Jason's needs.



The second was a home-made tool consisting of a circular HSS cutter attached to a piece of square steel bar. Note that the cutter is fixed to the bottom part of the bar, which Jason believes makes it more stable and easier to control.



With the hollowing is complete it is time to cut the thread. Before doing this, Jason made sure that the edge was square and made a small chamfer on the front corner using a skew chisel flat on the toolrest.



Thread chasers come in pairs – an angled internal thread chaser and a square-ended external thread chaser. For most purposes a thread of 16-20 tpi is best.



Whilst you can use the thread chaser with the toolrest across the front of the piece, Jason prefers to angle the toolrest away from the piece and use a hook-shaped [armrest tool](#) to support the internal chaser. The speed needs to be reduced right down to 270-300rpm. When starting the cut do not try to use the first few teeth of the tool. It can sometimes help to use some thin CA glue to harden the fibres; before you do this it is best to sand and finish the inside to prevent the glue from staining (having previously forgot, Jason corrected this now!).



The inside has been sanded and finished with sanding sealer and a coat of wax polish. Jason applied some CA glue to harden the fibres and went on to complete cutting the thread.



Most of the outside shaping can now be completed. The area next to the thread where the two parts of the box will mate needs to be flat. Before removing the piece from the chuck Jason marked the location of the number 1 jaw so that the piece can be remounted in the exact same orientation.



The piece of boxwood is remounted in the chuck and a shoulder turned down to be a couple of millimetres bigger than the threaded opening in the acorn cup.



Before starting to cut the thread, a groove is made at the back of the shoulder to create a run-out area – this will allow the threading tool to be disengaged before it hits the shoulder. A small chamfer is created on the front of the area to be threaded.



Once again the speed needs to be reduced right down to 270-300rpm – the exact speed is not important (although I have heard other turners say the using the same speed for both threads helps make them more even). Start by cutting at an angle across the front corner and avoid using the first few teeth. As the thread progresses bring the tool round to straighten it up and cut the full width of the thread, disengaging it before it hits the shoulder. The action is a sort of circular motion, dropping the tool handle to make the cut, lifting it to disengage and swinging it back to the start. It is important to make light cuts.



Once the thread is cut it can be tested against the other part. Initially the two parts will not fit, or the fit will be tight, so the top of the thread is turned away. The remaining thread can then be cut deeper. This process is repeated until a good fit is achieved (it may be necessary to deepen the groove at the back as well).

The two parts can now be screwed together and bottom of the acorn cup finished off.

The waste is removed with a bowl gouge or spindle gouge and the end of the cup turned to leave a small "stalk" at the end.

This part can now be sanded and finished before being unscrewed and put to one side.

The length of the thread can be reduced (so that only a couple of turns are required to screw the two pieces together) and the boxwood piece hollowed out. Hollowing follows the previous process of drilling a hole with a spindle gouge and enlarging this hole using a bowl gouge and scraper.

The inside can then be sanded and finished.

Jason began the shaping of the outside of the acorn nut ...
... before removing it from the chuck

To finish the bottom of the acorn nut, Jason put a piece of scrap timber in the chuck and turned a recess slightly smaller in diameter than the threaded portion of the nut. He then proceeded to chase an internal thread in which to remount the nut (although he did admit that a jam chuck would have worked as well).

The bottom of the acorn nut was then shaped and sanded and a finish applied.





The finished box

Gallery

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



This mega bowl was turned (and coloured) by Steve A



Two different bowls from Dave A



This three-cornered box was turned by Eddie M



A menagerie of birds made by Charlie W

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.

Advance Notice of a Club Visit to ...



On Monday 24th June there will be an opportunity for a behind-the-scenes visit to Axminster tools. It will run from about 10am to about 3pm and include a tour of their manufacturing facilities followed by a demo. There will be an opportunity find some bargains in the clearance area and browse the store with a 10% club discount.

Tea and coffee will be provided and there is the "Lunch Box" on the estate which offers burgers, etc., but otherwise I would advise you to pack a lunch.

Spaces will be limited to about 20, so please let me know if you are interested – Dave H.

Timber of the Month - Tulipwood



Most commonly, tulipwood refers to timber from the tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), found on the Eastern side of North America or a similar species (*Liriodendron chinense*) found in some parts of China. In the United States, it is often called tulip poplar or yellow poplar, although the tree is not related to the poplars. Elsewhere it may be called American tulipwood. The tree can grow to a height in excess of 190 ft (58 m), often with no limbs until it reaches 80–100 ft (25–30 m) and is the tallest eastern US hardwood. The name of the tree comes from its tulip-like flowers.



The timber is light, but very strong, even though it is fast growing. The sapwood is a creamy off-white colour and the heartwood is usually a pale green, sometimes with darker streaks. The lack of lower limbs leads to timber with long length and few knots making it useful in many applications, including furniture, joinery and mouldings. It can be stained very easily and may be used as a low-cost alternative to walnut and cherry in furniture and doors. It is often used in making organs, as it can take a smooth, precisely cut finish which helps to seal pipes and valves. Nectar is produced in the orange part of the flowers. The species is a significant honey plant in the eastern United States, yielding dark reddish, fairly strong honey.



Brazilian tulipwood (*Dalbergia decipularis*) is a timber with a confused botanical history. At one time Brazilian tulipwood was thought to be the product of the Brazilian rosewood tree, but later it became clear it was from a tree of the *dalbergia* species and was labelled as a variety of *d. frutescens* – a much more widely found tree. It wasn't until 1966 that two Brazilian botanists collected a sample and identified the species as *d. decipularis*. It is a small to medium sized tree, often misshapen and with multiple trunks, only found in a small area in Western-Brazil where it grows to a height of 10m (32 ft).

Brazilian tulipwood is a classic high-quality wood, it is very dense with a striking figure. It was known as “bois de rose” and used extensively in furniture of the Louis XV and Louis XVI period of the 18th century. It is usually only available only in small sizes, so is rarely used as a solid timber. It is used for inlays in furniture and for small turned items.



Australian tulipwood comes from a range of tulipwood trees from the species *Harpullia* – Queensland tulipwood (*H. pendula*), Cooktown tulipwood (*H. arborea*), Blunt leaf tulipwood (*H. hillii*), Wing-leaved tulipwood (*H. alata*), etc. These are small to medium sized trees up to 24m (78ft) and 60cm (2ft) in diameter, although often much smaller. Certain varieties of *Harpullia* are prized for their dark coloured timber which is excellent for turnery and cabinet making. The one most commonly planted species is *Harpullia pendula* which is widely planted as a street tree in towns and

cities along the east coast of Australia.



Yet another variety of tulipwood comes from the African tuliptree (*Spathodea campanulata*). This tree grows between 7–25 m (23–82 ft) tall and is native to tropical dry forests of Africa. It is used extensively as an ornamental tree throughout the tropics, appreciated for its very showy flowers, although it has been nominated as among 100 of the "World's Worst" invaders. As a timber it is too weak for construction use but ideal enough for boxes and toothpicks. The flower buds hold water and on Fiji children sometimes use them as water pistols.

Don't Forget to Use Your Club Discounts

Just present your club membership card (it may be worth checking beforehand whether a discount will apply to your intended purchase)



10% off most items, except power tools.



10% off all timber and finishes

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 <mailto:newsletter@madturners.co.uk>.

Thanks, Dave H