



Martock and District Woodturners Newsletter

August 2024

News

Summer is nearly over (did you miss it?) and the nights are starting to draw in. Nearly time to start planning what to make for your Christmas presents!

The first Saturday in September is the Yandles Autumn Craft Fair where once again we need volunteers to man the carpark and help with the club stand.

As you will see below, subscriptions are due soon – please renew promptly as it helps us budget for next year's programme.

Reminder

Subscriptions for 2024/25 are due at the beginning of September



As agreed at the last AGM, these will be £65 for the year to allow us to continue to bring you quality demonstrations most months.

Payment by bank transfer is preferred, and details will be sent out by email before the end of the month.

We hope to have another interesting and varied programme in place for you next year.

Diary Dates

Tues, Aug 27 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Gianni Deidda
Wed, Aug 28 th	Scroll-saw day led by Gianni Deidda
Sat, Sept 7 th	Yandles Autumn Craft Fair
Sat, Sept 14 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles Training Room
Tues, Sept 24 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Colwin Way
Sat, Oct 12 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles Training Room



All-Day Demonstration by Colwin Way

Colwin began with his warm-up piece – a table leg turned with a skew chisel and a spindle gouge, with opportunity to talk through making the basic spindle forms of v-cuts, beads and coves.



Next up was a little Christmas tree in the German style. Colwin used some pine but lime, birch and hazel work really well, with lime being the more traditional.

The starting point is a convex cone. The heel of a skew chisel is used to make a little flare and push it back to create a curl. These are created all the way up the tree leaving a little gap between each one.



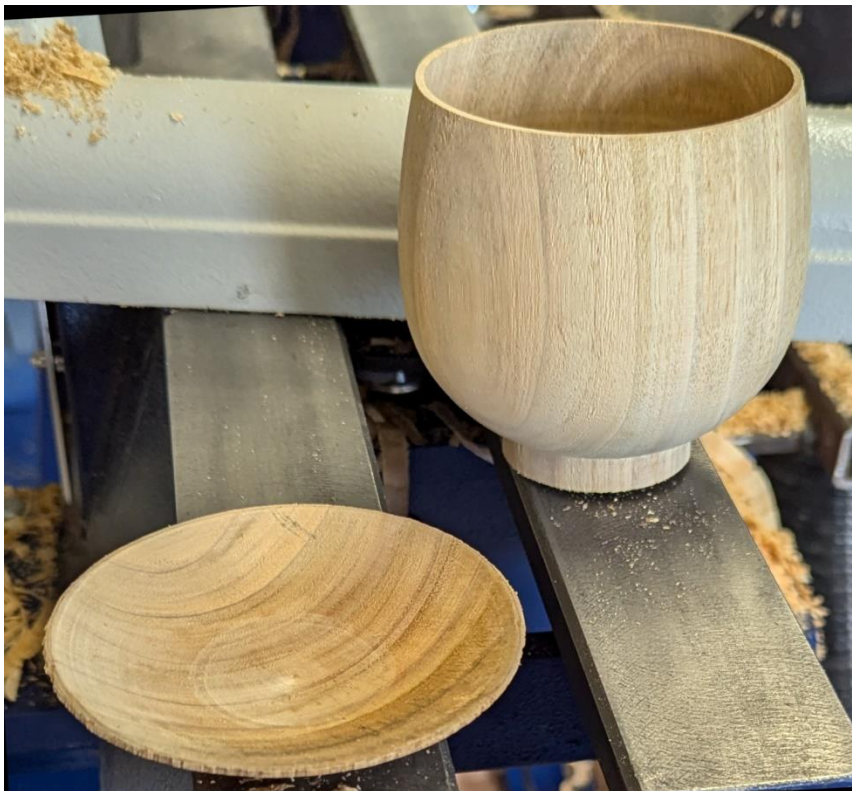
Project three was a mini skew chisel pendant, made with a skew. Colwin gets his students to make these at the end of his skew chisel course.

This was turned from a piece of beech, with a sanding disk used at the end to flatten the sides of the blade.



For his fourth project Colwin turned a thin-walled bowl and platter from very wet eucalyptus.

After turning, these items were left in the sun to start to dry to see how the timber would move and distort.



The fifth project was a “rocking pot”. This was essentially a repeat of one of the demonstrations he gave in his February visit. Details are in the March 2024 edition of the newsletter (available on the website at <https://www.madturners.co.uk/newsletter.php> if you want to revisit it).



This brings us on to project number six – a pendant with an off-centre hole. For those that were around and have a long memory, Colwin has previously made one of these at the all-day event in March 2022. If you want to know how it was done, details are in the April 2022 edition of the newsletter (once again available on the website at <https://www.madturners.co.uk/newsletter.php>).

Last month Dave Appleby demonstrated an alternative method of producing these pendants and has produced a project sheet detailing this (see below).



On to project number seven – a hummingbird. This project came from a “viewer’s suggestion” on Colwin’s YouTube channel by a lady in Minnesota. You can watch the video of him making it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6oDhGRkkNw>.

The base and flower are turned from yew, and the hummingbird from pink ivory. The bird is turned in two pieces with a flat sanded on each so they can be glued together. The wire for the stalk and the bird’s beak fit into a 3mm hole drilled through the flower; the hole in the base needs to be offset from the centre to allow the model to balance.



One last project to finish – a toffee bowl made from a piece of Japanese maple, which has a very interesting figure.

The blank was initially mounted on a home-made screw chuck that had a fairly short screw so that the back can be shaped and a tenon made. It was then mounted in a chuck so the rim can be shaped and the bowl hollowed out.

Unfortunately I didn't get a photo of the finished bowl, but I'm sure you can get an idea of its shape and design from the pictures below.



July Club Night – Dave Appleby

Back again this month, Dave spent the evening showing us how to make a number of small projects, starting with a whistle and moving on to a wooden bracelet, a pendant with an off-centre hole and finally an egg. In some cases he showed us the special jigs he uses to hold the piece in order to turn it.

Rather than me trying to describe all the steps involved in each project, Dave has kindly offered to supply project sheets to anyone interested in making one of these items. These describe in detail how to make the jigs as well as the items themselves. If you would like any of them please email Dave at info@daveappleby.co.uk.



Gallery

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



Another piece of spiral work by Phil O

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.



In September we have another Yandles craft fair 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.

Timber of the Month – Bog Oak



Bog Oak, much like Brown Oak featured last month, is not a specific species, but refers to oak that has been buried in a peat bog for hundreds or sometimes thousands of years. The extremely low oxygen conditions of the bog protect the wood from normal decay, while the acidic nature of the peat along with iron salts and other minerals react with the tannins in the wood, gradually giving it a distinct dark brown to almost black colour.

As well as oak, other forms of bog-wood can be found including, pine, yew and swamp cypress. Sites of high quality bog-wood in the world are very rare. Even the sites expected to yield it, bog-wood is hard to find and access often difficult, sometimes requiring the need for professional divers. Since there is such a limited supply of the wood—with bog-wood essentially being the very early stages of fossilization—prices for this type of wood can be very high.

In England and Ireland, the three main types of bog-wood that can be found are yew, oak and pine. Bog-oak can also be found in Russia and Ukraine, Croatia and Serbia.

In England a lot of bog oak comes from East Anglia, where many thousands of years ago the fenland basin was very densely forested by gigantic oak trees. Around 7000 years ago rising sea levels caused the rivers to back up and flood the fens. As the trees died they fell into the silt of the forest floor and many have been preserved. As the land is farmed these sub-fossilized trees are coming to the surface. At one time piles of black bog oak would line the fen roads. Significant quantities also come from the peat bogs of Ireland.

Bog-wood may be used in joinery to make furniture or wood carving. Due to its natural colour, it has been used traditionally for making dirks (biodagan) and sgian-dubh in the Scottish Highlands. Small pieces are often sold as an aquarium ornament. During the nineteenth century bog oak was used to make carved decorative items such

as jewellery, and in the Tudor period, bog oak was prized for its dark colour and used to construct the throne of Peter the Great as well in the construction of Venetian palaces and the bedroom suite of Louis XIV.

The timber contains a high percentage of minerals, reaching up to 12%, which makes bog-wood especially resistant to burning and therefore ideal for tobacco pipes.

Today, modern drying techniques have made it possible to preserve larger planks of bog oak that are suitable for floor coverings, furniture, doors, window frames, and sculptures.

Because bog-wood can remain free of decay for thousands of years it can help to build up the tree-ring data used in dendrochronology, often providing records much older than living trees.

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