



WOODBITS

NEWSLETTER

Issue 192

May 2022

Welcome

SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello!

Well we had a very different presentation at our May meeting. Robert Till was indisposed but at very short notice Grahame was able to recruit Stuart King. Stuart has almost retired as a demonstrator so we were very pleased that Grahame managed to coax him out to join us for the evening. Stuart's knowledge on the history of woodturning and particularly woodworking by the bodgers of his native Chilterns is second to none.

The diverse videos he showed us began with the history of turning lace bobbins. We then had Constantin; the last of the Romanian pole lathe turners renowned for turning traditional wood drinking flasks using techniques unchanged for at least 2,000 years.

Next up was a video featuring a young Moroccan turner who, amazingly, turned a chess piece with just one tool (a skew chisel held and manipulated by his foot!), whilst his right hand operated the bow to rotate the wood on the small ground mounted lathe. Stuart commented that such bow lathes would have been a familiar sight in ancient Greece or the Pharaohs' Egypt.



In 1974 Stuart appeared on the *Generation Game*, the BBC inter-family game show then hosted by the late Bruce Forsyth. In the episode shown, Stuart demonstrated assembling a Windsor Chair which the contestants then had to emulate with hilarious results!

The highlight for me though was Stuart's history of the Windsor Chair illustrated with some of his beautifully made models which he magically produced out of a disreputable looking case!



Stuart's final flourish for the evening was to effortlessly make a chess piece turned just using a skew chisel on the club lathe.

COMPETITIONS

For the May meeting the topics were a Bud Vase for our beginners and a Vase for our Advanced turners. It was very pleasing to see some more great entries from our beginners (as well as the Advanced and Open categories). I'm very much hoping for a "fruitful" display (intentional pun!) in all categories for our June meeting competition.

ALL DAY TRAINING SESSION (2nd July)

So far we have 7 members who have signed up as trainees for this event requesting tuition on basic turning, sharpening, bowl turning and sanding. We are ensuring that we have the necessary equipment and materials plus expertise to fully deliver on these topics which we hope will be great fun for both trainees and trainers as well as helping to improve members skills in our wonderful craft of woodturning.

That's all from me for another month.

Tim

Tim Pettigrew
Chairman

Tim's contact details:

chairman@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

Telephone 01923 241107,

Mobile 07713803894.

Chairman: Tim Pettigrew chairman@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk
Treasurer: Adam Blackie treasurer@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk
Secretary and Newsletter Editor: Allen Kaye secretary@hertsandbedswoodturners.co.uk

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Club News

April Competition

This month, the judging was by member vote.

Beginners



1st Place – Tony Buttle



2nd Place – Mel Williams



3rd Place – John Leary-Joyce

Advanced



1st = Place – Tony Taylor
& Tim Pettigrew

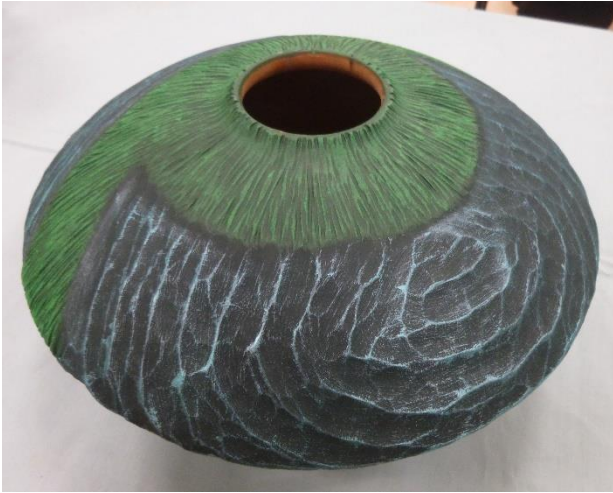


2nd Place – Adam Blackie

3rd Place – Peter Hoare



Open



1st Place – Phil Scoltock

2nd Place – Alan Lewis



3rd Place – Grahame Lester,
Tony Taylor, Adam Blackie

Meetings Calendar 2022

14th June	Club Night
12th July	Terry Smart?
9th August	Mike Fitz (demonstration)
13th Sept	Club Night (includes demo by Graham Lester)
11th Oct	Carlyn Lindsey
8th Nov	to be confirmed
13th Dec	Christmas Social

Club Sweatshirts and Polo shirts

These are available from Mike Sheaf. They are blue and inscribed with the club logo. You can also add your name embroidered at no extra cost.

Sweatshirt. £19.00

Polo Shirt. £16.00.

Polo Shirt Long sleeves. £17.00.

Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL

Forms for ordering are available from Mike Sheaf or the secretary. All forms to be returned to Mike.

Profits go to the Rennie Hospice

For more details or to order see Mike at one of our meetings or email him at:

michael.sheaf@gmail.com

Raffle

I am always looking for the usual helpers and newbies to help buy the goodies for the raffle. Please contact me if you can help.

At the moment only May is covered and I need volunteers for the rest of the year. As a volunteer you would be responsible for choosing and buying a selection of up to 6 prizes up to a total of £60 and then bringing them along to the meeting where I will recompense you for the money spent.

If you commit to a particular night but need to swap it contact me so that cover can be maintained

Full receipts are required for each spend made

If you need to discuss any of this information with me, feel free to do so

Steve Beadle

Herts and Beds Raffle Coordinator

Tel 07720 677456

Email ~ Stevebeadle1960@hotmail.co.uk

Competition Subjects 2022

June	Beginners – Tea Light. Advanced- Fruit
July	Platter
Aug	Kitchen roll holder
Sep	Table lamp
Oct	Candle stick
Nov	tba
Dec	A toy

Project Table

Again, for new members and old it is worth a reminder that any and all items are welcomed for the project table. These will not be judged and might include unfinished items as well as ones that 'did not quite work out as planned'

Axminster Discount

I checked this weekend that Axminster are still offering a 5% discount for club members. There are some limitations on machinery so check first and this only works for in-store purchases. Take your AWGB and Club membership cards to get the discount.

Video Loan

Finally, I came across a box of videos in the storage area last week that used to be available for members to borrow. A number of them were marked as on loan from members but no names were given on the paperwork I found. If you did loan any videos to the club and want them back now please let me know. I will list the remaining titles in the next newsletter and make them available during meetings in the future.

Allen.

Projects

Fluted Vase – Phil Scoltock

Having been asked to do a write up of one of my projects, I had taken loads of photos on my first ever fluting project using the Paul Howard fluting jig in Jan 2021.

There's a good chance of messing up the first one, or later with more experience/skill it would be disappointing – so I selected a cheap chunk of Mahogany I'd got from Steve Earis – the shape of the blank was ideal for a vase and I'd watched every William Hunt YouTube on fluting and liked the idea of a through-fluted vase as my starter project

So, the 135mm sq x 235mm mahogany was mounted between centres in an end-grain orientation



Turned the exterior to have a graceful shape keeping in mind:
- Needs a strong enough tenon and foot given it will project out of the chuck by 200mm so a long long parallel tenon for type G gripper jaws
- Foot needs to be small enough to not get in the way when fluting
- The foot should allow clear access as far down the side wall of the vase as possible



Remount the vase in a chuck and drill a pilot hole using a sawtooth Forstner bit to remove the slow moving wood and provide a depth datum



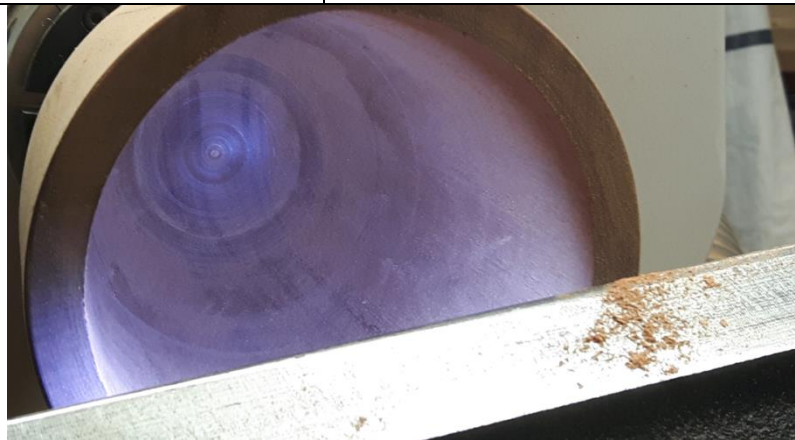
All of the hollowing was done by hand (i.e. no jigs nor lasers) because it is fast and I like the challenge for small/easier/safe projects.

Hollowing depth approx 6in, so 7in overhang over the toolrest needs 28in or more tool+handle length. My Hand Hollowing tool of choice for bulk removal is a Hope Pro Carbide hollower in a home made handle for bulk and weight so it is comfortable tucked under my arm.

It is important that hollowing doesn't cause back strain, headstock is rotated for easy access standing in front of project, handle tucked under my arm for comfort and control and the hollowing motion comes from body movement – ie. never the arms, and never bent over peering into the form.



The intended fluted lattice design needed the side walls to be thick enough initially to retain strength given the projection put of the chuck, but also thick enough to be the exterior vertical flutes and the interior radial bead. As I first project I played safe planned on 5mm flutes + 5mm interior beads so needed 10mm wall thickness. No need to at this stage for a clean interior finish, but it is good to practice so I cleaned up the inside to be consistent wall thickness and nice finish using a Hope 19mm hollowing shaft, a large Sorby teardrop scraper in a Hope heavy duty handle

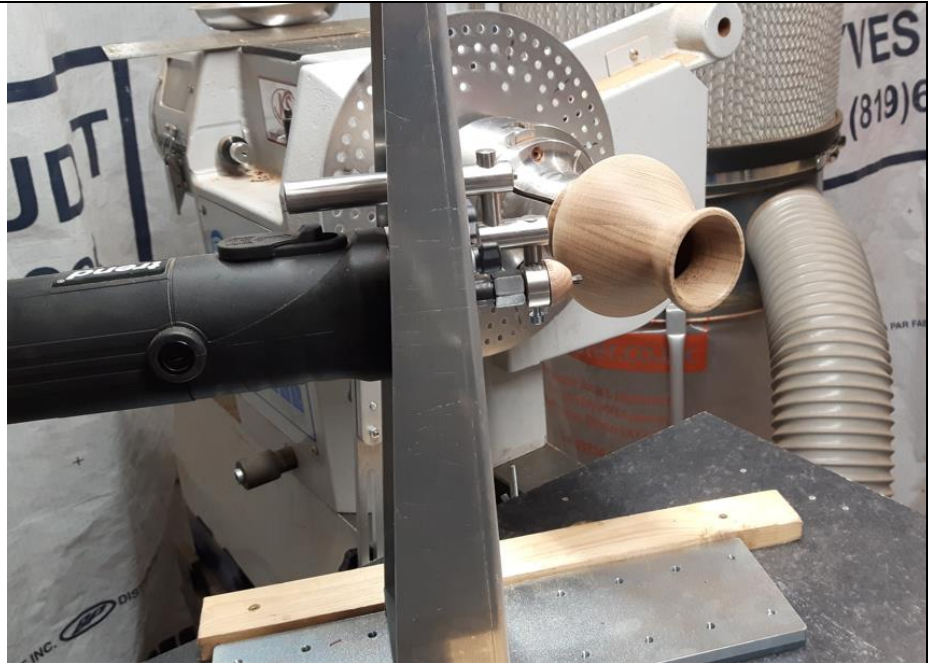


I forgot to take photos whilst fluting this vase – but did on my 2nd fluted project. I have some scrap kitchen worktop clamped to the lathe bed bars. So some strips of baton screwed in to the worktop so that it limits the cut at the ends (for the vase, just the bottom).

Also there is a Howard indexing wheel mounted under the chuck that enables 60 48 36 14 and their divisors.

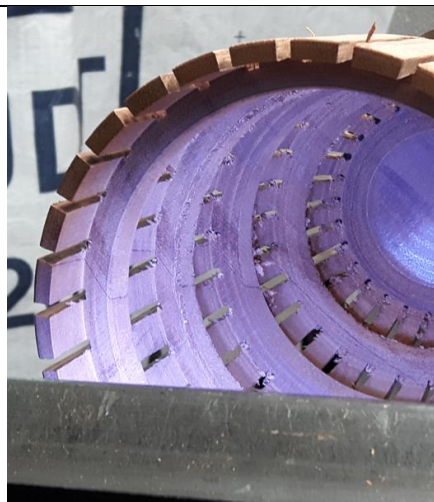
From looking at loads of other projects, I knew that a small router but making lots of narrow flutes is far nicer than a fewer bigger flutes – but the down side is small router bits cut slower – they can't be pushed to fast (because of flex and vibration – yet too slow sings)

It is important to consider safety when using power tools on a lathe – so lathe is unplugged. Everything double checked that it is tight – chuck, headstock, worktop, indexing system.



Fluting on the vase went well. Left un sanded at this stage.

Next was to remove the interior walls to expose the flutes from the inside (but without cutting in to the flutes) and leave some large rings than can be made in to interior beads. Not too difficult – just remove the interior walls until the inside is paper thin and can be removed with a needle-file.

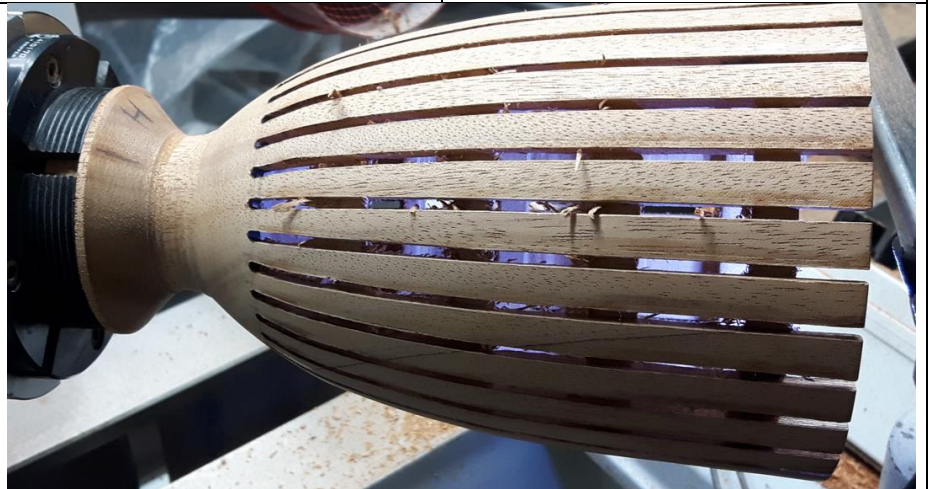


Two main challenges - finding a tool to reach behind the bead rings and then rounding the corners off to make them rings. Most of the wood could be removed with the mini-swanneck bit in the Hope Pro Hollower. But to really get behind the rings, I found a rather extreme (and normally too excessive) set up of a Sorby pic cutter was best for the job



After very carefully forming some interior beads via a scraping action. Time for some clean up and sanding – after trying various things, I finally all those needle files I was given to be really useful !!

But care if needed to remove the debris but not lose the crisp lines.



Then in terms of finish, can't easily buff wax or lacquer on flutes, so a coat of Danish Oil works for me.

Time to step back and see how well it worked. For me, the foot was graceful and well proportioned relative to the vase – but I thought it was a distraction – so I parted it off removing the foot.

Then mounted a Jacobs chuck in the headstock with a sanding arbour in it, to clean up the underside of the vase.



The finished piece 130mm \varnothing x 170mm tall. Mahogany with Danish Oil

For a first attempt pleased with the end result. Most importantly many lessons learnt

– for this project specifically: the resultant vase looks a little heavier than ideal – it has 30 flutes – 36 would have been possible with my indexing wheel, but a better improvement would have been thinner wall thickness for both the fluted outer and less chunk beads.
- And more general lessons learnt – lots of process learning and establishing good safety habits.

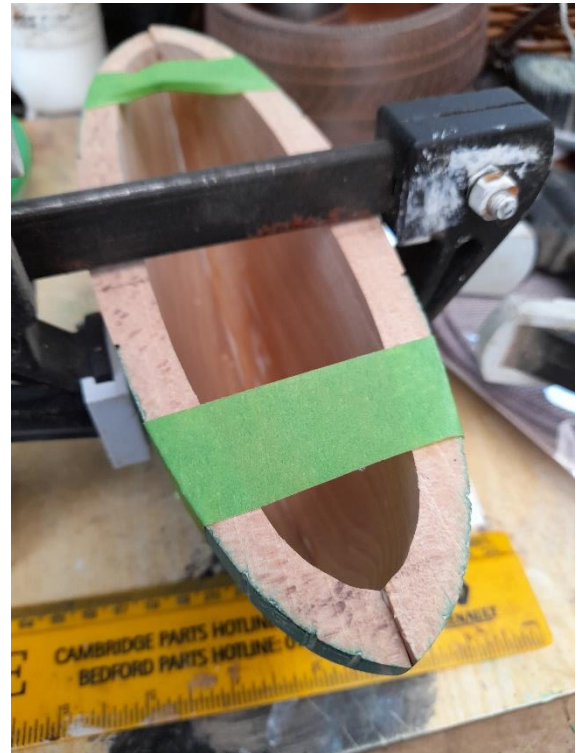
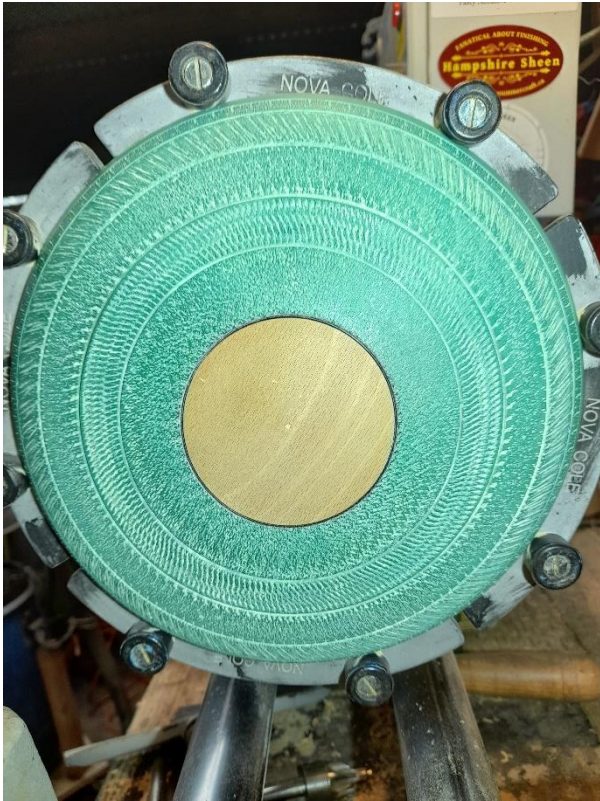


Note: If you are interested in the jig Phil used, please see the following link.

[Paul Howard Woodturner : Fluting Jig](#)

Split Bowl – Terainia Hird

My Jeff Hornung inspired split bowl is finished at last. This had been a big learning curve. I've only attempted one of these before, about a year ago which was okay but lots of mistakes. This one is much better in many areas. Finished with Chestnut Products



Process

Mount blank on a screw chuck.

Turn the back of the bowl with a tenon, texture & colour. Reverse and hollow.

Reverse again on Cole jaws & turn off tenon. Cut in half on bandsaw, glue two halves together, add more colour as required. Make a top & base a finial



Green stain with Iridescent Green for the centre & edge. Lid & pedestal are stained with Teak spirit stain. My Robert Sorby texturing tool was used for the texture & highlighted with Hampshire Sheen White Embellishing Wax.

A Dremel bur used to create the texture on the lid & pedestal.

The piece was finished with 2 coats of Chestnut Products Acrylic Satin Lacquer.



Hats – Tony Taylor



Three hats turned from Black Bean.
(*Catanospermum australe*). I now have
some Poplar logs large enough to make
a full-sized hat. Tony Taylor

Chestnut Products

Terry Smart runs the company and as part of the support he offers to turners, he produces a monthly newsletter. If you want to receive them direct then use the **Subscribe** link on the main newsletter page – see link below:

[Welcome to our Newsletters – Chestnut Products – First for Finishes](#)

Future Chestnut Products CONKERS sessions

Check out their website and sign up if you want reminders and updates

<https://chestnutproducts.co.uk/conkers-live/>

Also – in case you are not already aware Chestnut Products are arranging and promoting another weekend event this July

Join me at
**The Woodturning
Week3nder 2022**
Full Steam Ahead
30 & 31 July 2022
The Museum of the Great
Western Railway,
Swindon

Get Your Tickets at:
www.woodturningweekender.co.uk

[Weekender 2022 Shareable Content – Chestnut Products – First for Finishes](#)

Woods

Continuing the series on woods commonly used in Woodturning – we are now at E.

Ebony

Ebony is one of the densest woods in the world, heavier than water. It has a lovely texture and produces a really smooth finish when polished. Ebony is a slow-growing wood, which is why it's so difficult to come by.

Black Ebony takes 100 years to mature, it's no surprise that it became increasingly rare and expensive. Ebony is a classic choice for finely crafted woodwork, including chess pieces, musical instruments, and furniture.

Ebony can be difficult to work due to its extremely high density. Has a dulling effect on cutters. Tearout may occur on pieces that have interlocked or irregular grain. Due to the high oil content found in this wood, it can occasionally cause problems with gluing. Finishes well, and polishes to a high lustre. Responds well to steam bending.



Ebony is among the most expensive of all available lumbers: usually about two to three times more expensive than most species of Rosewood.

It is listed as endangered due to a population reduction of over 50% in the past three generations, caused by exploitation. **Wenge** is not related to ebony, but is a very dark wood that turns nearly black when a finish is applied, and has been considered as a direct replacement to ebony. It is on the Red List as endangered.

It is however possible to dye woods that are less expensive and more readily available to match ebony's black colour. In addition to this dark colour, desirable ebony substitutes have similar wood grains and performance characteristics.

Chemical stains, followed by dye stains create the most effective ebonizing, according to William Duckworth writing for Fine Woodworking. He notes that this is particularly effective on woods with high tannin levels, such as oak and mahogany. Some manufacturers have used dogwood as an ebony substitute. A quick and easy old-fashioned way to give a fine-grained wood the appearance of ebony is to apply a black varnish. Varnishes, of course, provide only a thin layer of colour so are less durable than dyes that penetrate the surface.

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Elm

It is likely that people will find English Elm most easily in shops and fairs although there are a number of other varieties of Elm – especially American Elm.

Heartwood is light to medium reddish brown. Paler sapwood is usually well defined. Burls of English Elm are frequently referred to as Carpathian Elm burl.

Grain is well interlocked (making it very resistant to splitting). With a coarse and uneven texture. It is rated as non-durable and susceptible to insect attack. Living trees are susceptible to Dutch elm disease.

It can be a challenge to work because of interlocked grain, especially on quartersawn surfaces. Planing can cause tearout and/or fuzzy surfaces. Poor dimensional stability. Glues, stains, and finishes well.

Elm usually has a strong, unpleasant smell when green - though once dried has very little odour. Although severe reactions are quite uncommon usually most common reactions simply include eye and skin irritation. See the articles [Wood Allergies and Toxicity](#) and [Wood Dust Safety](#) for more information.

American elm is wonderful for turning since it has a reddish-brown color. The Chinese elm is another species whose wood is light in colour – creamy white. Both are excellent turners and are well worth trying. Grain patterns might be random or uninteresting; consider some decoration for uninteresting grain to liven things up.

Elm is good for turning because it's a resilient wood with good hardness. However, it has a tendency to cup and warp, so it's best used in smaller projects that won't be exposed to much humidity or heat.



AWGB

Revolutions by email

As part of their continued efforts to reduce our environmental impact, the AWGB send out Revolutions by email to all current members who have given us an email address. If you are a member and haven't received the email copy and would like to for future issues, please contact the AWGB data manager to update your email address.

If you received the email and wish to continue, you don't need to do anything but if you wish to receive just the paper copy or the email copy, contact the AWGB data manager to inform him of your preferences. They have no intention of phasing out the printed edition of Revolutions - just giving members the ability to choose.

Check their website for how to can register to get yours directly.

Still Talking Turning: Zoom sessions are still happening once per week on Friday evenings. Topics include a variety of subjects each session (some of them are even related to turning!) and include opportunities to show what you have been working on, ask questions. Details are on the website, the sessions are free and open to all. You just need an internet connection and suitable device to use Zoom.

More Volunteers needed: They still have vacancies for more helpers so if you have a little time to spare and would like to contribute to the running of the AWGB, help out with shows, training, the seminar etc. Please contact the AWGB secretary who will answer any questions.

2022 Seminar: AWGB will shortly be launching the 2022 Seminar which will be held at Yarnfield Park, Staffordshire on the 7-9th October 2022. Look out for the news coming soon and start working on those pieces for the instant gallery!

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For Sale and Wanted

Axminster Table Saw Kit

I was contacted by a non-member who is looking to sell an Axminster Table saw kit – see photos below.

He said in the email

it's in good condition with some light rust in places. I've just not had the time to use it as it deserves so hoping it can be of use to a someone else who will get lots of enjoyment from it. I'm based in North-West Bedfordshire and can be contacted at this email address if anyone expresses any interest. Thanks in advance.

Matt Rush
mattrush92@gmail.com



Editors note: I emailed him back asking roughly what money he was expecting and he said about £650. This seems high I guess but it does depend on what extras are included. Worth checking out exactly what is being sold and be prepared to haggle if interested.

Allen

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