



WOODBITS

NEWSLETTER

Issue 182

July 2021

Welcome

SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello!

We were very disappointed not to be able to hold the 13th July Club meeting at Adeyfield as planned but your Committee reluctantly decided that the extension of the Government Covid restrictions which included a limit on numbers attending, would have made it too complicated to organise and manage. I hope that everyone who was able to join in enjoyed the Zoom session that we held instead.

Adeyfield resumption on the 10th August

The good news is that following the lifting of most restrictions on the 19th July, we are confident that the meeting planned for the 10th August at Adeyfield will go ahead as planned. The main activity will be a demonstration by Les Thorne who will give us a wonderful kick start to our resumed face to face meetings. Please do support this event and attend if you possibly can but let us know if you have any worries or concerns which we will endeavour to take into account. We will be having a committee meeting on 29th July and a separate meeting with Scott the Adeyfield manager to discuss any residual restrictions which may be required to ensure the safety and comfort of all our members during this and future meetings at Adeyfield. Final details will be sent out to all members a few days in advance of the 10th August.

Zoom Meetings

We had a good Zoom meeting on the 13th July with a presentation by Tony Taylor on Making a Cocktail Stick Dispenser followed by a presentation by me on Trunks and Chunks; Methods of Dealing with LARGE Woodbits. There is a write up of the presentations in this issue of Woodbits.

That's all from me for this month but I am very much looking forward to welcoming everyone back to Adeyfield on the 10th August!

Tim Pettigrew
Chairman

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Club News

Items for the Sale Table

Bearing in mind the proposed resumption at Adeyfield, Derek (Stephens) who is in charge of the Sales Table is looking for new donations from members. Start putting suitable items on one side from now on and bring them along for Derek on the 10th when we resume our meetings at Adeyfield.

Herts & Beds Woodturners on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqMOhpzlhngggiQzvDqellkiAKBaT5q5A>

This playlist has the following:

- AGM 13th April
- Turning a flat vase by Peter Hoare March 2021
- Using the Woodcut bowlsaver March 2021
- Show and Tell session March 2021
- Meeting 2021
- Converting a small garage to a Woodturning workshop by Tim Pettigrew

Currently the recording of the 13th July meeting has been broken into three parts

- Making a cocktail stick dispenser by Tony Taylor
- Trunks and Chunks – Tim Pettigrew
- General discussion.

These three videos are accessible via another play list:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqMOhpzlhng4w4u02hVRrbO3wMceDo0S>

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Trunks and Chunks Tim Pettigrew

The first in a series of related articles from Tim based around his July Zoom session.

TAMING “WILD” WOOD

This article discusses the challenges of successfully processing raw or “wild” timber and how a hobby wood turner can successfully “tame” it to produce useable timber. Freshly felled wood contains an immense (up to 90% by weight) amount of water. This water has to be reduced and the wood stabilised by careful drying (seasoning). This is a slow process requiring both skill and patience as rapid drying usually results in intense contraction with extensive cracking (checking) of the wood rendering it unusable. In addition a lot of the “trunks” and “chunks” on offer are LARGE and VERY heavy.

MY WOOD PHILOSOPHY

With an interest in nature conservation and trees in general I have chosen to specialise in working with wood from trees that have grown locally. All the wood has a known source location which is a major selling point. Most wood is obtained “green” and free via tree surgeons, estates, parks, friends and family. These sources produce a surprisingly wide range of timbers often with unusual figuring which would otherwise be difficult and expensive to purchase.

FIELD HARVESTING CONSIDERATIONS

As a hobby woodworker I collect *felled* wood and never attempt felling of living trees which would entail extra authorisation and require specialist equipment and skills I do not possess. As well as gifted wood which sometimes involves collecting from large previously felled trees, I sometimes have the opportunity to collect wood from managed woodlands where recent felling has taken place. I try and keep to the following rules:

- If collecting in a managed woodland, estate or park, I always ensure that I have permission to take felled wood.
- If at all possible I like to establish when the wood was felled and note the time of year as this will give a good idea of how much seasoning is needed.
- It’s best to select only identified wood as this has a bearing on how it should be processed and the problems to expect when converting to useable timber.
- Be sensible on how much is collected bearing in mind the amount of work involved in conversion of green wood to useable timber. Could the wood be shared with other club members? Sharing is important especially when unusual or rare felled timber may be otherwise destined to be shredded or sold as firewood.
- Always remember that freshly felled wood containing large quantities of moisture is EXTREMELY heavy and great care must be taken to ensure no injury is sustained in handling. An extra person to assist in lifting and transportation is essential in many instances.

FIELD HARVESTING EQUIPMENT

Over the nine years I have been involved with acquiring wood for turning, I have fine-tuned the equipment needed for collecting, be it from a tree in someone's garden or from a managed woodland or park. An assumed pre-requisite is some form of transport which in my case is a car. This can accommodate equipment and trunks of wood up to a maximum of 4 feet (1.2m) in length. Don’t be tempted to over collect!

A Bow Saw (Fig. 1).

A Bow saw or similar large saw is essential for cutting trunks or boughs to a manageable size for transport.

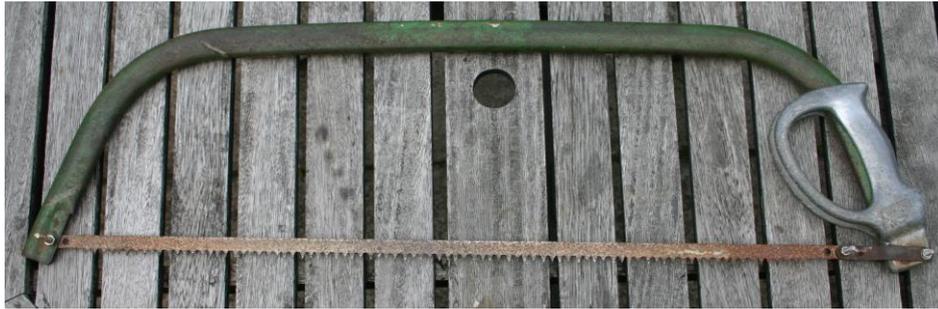


Figure 1. A Bow saw



Figure 2. The Oregon CS300 battery powered chainsaw

Electric Chainsaw (Fig. 2)

A small electric cordless (battery powered) chainsaw is an ideal aid to trimming wood after it has been felled by the tree surgeons. I use an Oregon CS300 saw (Fig. 2) which has a 40cm (16") guide bar and is powered by a 37 volt 4AH rechargeable battery. It is fitted with PowerSharp®, a combined saw chain and sharpening tool that facilitates chain sharpening on the saw in seconds by pulling the red lever on the side. This runs the chain against an internally mounted sharpening stone. Overall although not as powerful, a battery driven saw is much easier to transport and operate than a petrol driven one and is ideal for trimming felled wood into manageable pieces for harvesting.

Chainsaw PPE (Fig. 3)

Chainsaw PPE is essential when using a chainsaw of any kind and Figure 3 shows the kit I wear whenever I operate any of my electric chainsaws.



Figure 3 Chainsaw PPE

Sack-truck plus ratchet-strap (Figures 4 & 5)

This may seem very odd but I have found the inclusion of a sack truck in the boot of the car a wonderful aid in handling large sections of trunks and boughs and transporting them back to the car. Likewise they are a boon when unloading wood after transport back to base.



Figure 4. An extendable sack truck. A useful portable handling aid for large sections of trunk or bough.



Figure 5. Using a sack truck for handling heavy boles and boughs. A section of trunk can be tipped on end and then fairly easily tilted to allow insertion of the sack truck platform underneath. If necessary the trunk can be further secured as shown using a ratchet strap. It is then an easy task to wheel and transfer the wood to the car for transport back to base.

Camera & Notebook

Useful for recording associated information relating to wood identification and date of felling. Photography of associated leaves (See Figure 19 for example), flowers, berries, bark etc., can be a useful aid to identifying mystery wood.

Freshly felled wood versus old wood

This very much depends on the wood being harvested. Some woods such as Birch, Oak and Beech degrade very rapidly after felling with shrinkage induced cracking, and infestation with fungi and wood boring insects. However, in some instances, long lengths of trunk with cracked extremities can reveal sound wood when cut back a few inches as shown in Fig. 6.



Figure 6. Above Trunk of Cherry with extremity shrinkage cracks. RIGHT The same trunk after cutting back a few inches revealing sound wood.

FIELD HARVESTING EXAMPLE 1



Friends offered me the wood if I could fell this Oak tree in their garden at Bushey!

Felling on this scale is highly skilled needing specialist equipment and great expertise. I refused the offer but was in attendance when the tree was skilfully dealt with by professional tree surgeons.

The photograph shows the Oak in process of being felled. Much of the wood was rotten but the tree surgeons were most helpful in selecting fresh wood (top right) suitable for processing into turning blanks (middle right) from one of which the bowl

Figure 7 above. An Oak tree being felled in a friends garden at Bushey

The selected wood (top right), resulting bowl blanks (middle right), and a finished bowl (bottom right).

FIELD HARVESTING EXAMPLE 2



Figure 8. Apple tree in a friend's garden on the Cassiobury Estate, Watford. A metal screw (top right) originally used to attach a child's swing, encountered the blade of my chainsaw! The harvested wood (middle right) and work in progress rough turning a bowl made from the Apple (bottom right).

This Apple tree in a friend's garden was a rare exception to my rule of not felling. In this instance the tree was small and the branches and leaves had already been cut away. I felt that the job was well within the capability of my electric chainsaw. The only problem was a steel screw which had been used to affix a child's swing to the tree! This encountered my chainsaw and I had to purchase a replacement chain. Such encounters are a common hazard when dealing with wood from domestic sources and I have since purchased a metal detector to check for such unwelcome foreign bodies!

FIELD HARVESTING EXAMPLE 3

Whilst living in Northumberland, I was contacted by a neighbour and friend who owned a large garden centre. A Cherry plantation was being felled at the garden centre so that the area could be planted with Christmas (Spruce) trees. He invited me to take as much as I wanted of the felled wood (Figure 9) which consisted of Cherry plus some Maple. The remaining wood was to be prepared and sold as firewood. It was very tempting with so much wood on offer to over collect. In this instance I was able to take wood for my woodturning club and also for my turning tutor Andrew Hall who rewarded me with a free lesson! Chatting to the tree surgeon who had felled the plantation resulted in a promise to look out for more wood.

A few weeks later I was presented with the Yew shown in Figure 11.



Figure 9. The remains of a Cherry plantation felled at a neighbour's garden centre in Northumberland. I was told to help myself to as much as I wanted (Cherry plus Maple)! The rest was cut up and sold for firewood.



Figure 10 (left). A bowl turned from a piece of the Cherry shown in Figure 9. Figure 11 (right). Chatting to the tree surgeon who felled the Cherry plantation, resulted, a few weeks later, in the gift of this Yew

Figure 12. Work in progress on a bowl made from one of the pieces of Yew shown in Figure 11.



FIELD HARVESTING EXAMPLE 4

This example was next door to my house where several birch trees were felled adjacent to a building where the roots were breaking up the foundations (Figures 13 & 14).



Figure 13. BEFORE and AFTER two Birch trees were felled next door to our house in Northumberland.



*Figure 14. What the tree surgeon left after I asked for a few pieces for turning!
Much more than I had bargained for!*



Figure 15. Two bowls turned from the Birch shown in Figure 14

There was far too much of the Birch to process immediately so that a lot of it had to be stored in a damp garage. When I next looked at it about a year later I discovered that fungi had invaded the wood (very common in Birch) and it exhibited spectacular spalting (Figures 16, 17 & 18).



Figure 16. The spalted Birch



Figure 17. Some of the spalted Birch after rough turning



Figure 18. A completed bowl made from the spalted Birch

FIELD HARVESTING EXAMPLE 5

Permission was granted to harvest some pieces of a felled Horse Chestnut in my local park (Figures 19, 20, & 21). Most of any felled wood in the park is left as an important wildlife habitat for insects and other invertebrates. In this instance an exception was made as the resulting turnings were to be used in fundraising for the associated charity *The Friends of Cassiobury Park*.



Figure 19. Harvesting some newly felled wood in Cassiobury Park, Watford. The battery powered chainsaw was essential to trim pieces selected from the large heavy trunk and bough segments to a manageable size. Note the inset (top left) showing a leaf. This was the only obvious clue as to the identification of the wood as Horse Chestnut



Figure 20 (above). Three selected pieces ready for transport to the car. Figure 21 (right). Stages in the preparation of the timber which needed urgent processing to convert into useful turning blanks. If left in the round such wood will quickly degrade.

Making a Cocktail Stick Dispenser – Tony Taylor

This material is drawn from the Zoom presentation that Tony Taylor gave in June.

Tony gave a very detailed and useful description using video and live commentary. He decided to speed up the video which was a very effective way of covering the process and it made the whole presentation quite slick and professional.

If you can, watch the video as well because within the video, there are lots of useful 'by the way' of incidental hints and tips relating to the choice and use of tools used for each of the steps, appropriate rpm's, sanding, the use and value of callipers etc etc. See video link below <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8EPLXxsILU>



After remounting one end, a lid was parted off from one end leaving about 110mm for the body. A beading tool is used to put a 3mm bead at the bottom.



Constructing the base

Tony explained that although it is quite an involved project, he had found many people liked them and that he had been successful in selling some.

A piece of season cherry was used in this presentation. Mentioned at the start and later, the need to consider the tolerances of the inside dimensions is important. Although it is tempting to turn the outside of the internal holder close to the inside hole of the base, this can cause problems over time as the wood warps in different house conditions so slightly loose is good.

The blank initially turned to 16mm diameter about 7 inches long. A tenon was turned on each end as if you were making a box.

A roughing gouge is used on body to turn the base shape - 60mm at bottom and 40mm at the top. A bead is added at the top. Base is sanded now but care needs to be taken to avoid changing the crispness of the bead shape. Finished with Sanding sealer and microcrystalline wax.

The end of the body is drilled using a Forstner bit. Take the hole to about 1cm short of the bottom. Sand inside using sandpaper wound round a scrap piece of wood. Turn off the base.

Using a jam chuck, the bottom is tidied up and decorated and then finished as before.



Turning the Lid

Mount the lid in the chuck using the tenon, clean up front surface and turn down to match the diameter of the top. Callipers needed here for accuracy.



The inner cup is now turned using a plain piece of spare wood.

The diameter needs to be reduced to smoothly fit the inside of the base – not too tight!

The cup needs to be deep enough so that it easily holds the cocktail sticks but not so long as to make it stick within the base. Depth is checked to allow about a 5mm bottom.



A central hole is drilled to accommodate the dowel at one end and the finial at the top. Finally parted off. The top is now shaped and a matching bead added. Tony reminded us to ensure the top has a slight concave surface so that the finial will, when fitted not show a gap.

A 6mm wood drill is used to accommodate the central dowel. Add a small chamfer on bottom corner to help it to slide in.

Dowel is best inserted using a Jacobs chuck to ensure it is inserted parallel to axis. After glue set – part off and clean up outside base.

Finial is now turned with some contrasting dark wood – in this case ebony. Sanded to 1000 grit in this case and waxed.

With wood as dense as ebony, maybe sanding sealer not needed.

The finished item



Follow up

The presentation was very well received and it promoted a number of questions and comment.

Grahame Tomkins showed the group a few that he had made, experimenting with different woods, shapes and finishes including colouring. Grahame reiterated the comment by Tony about how important it is not to make too tight a fit.

Over time, he explained changes in temperature and humidity as well as the natural drying of the wood can easily cause the central portion to be trapped inside.

After a question, he stated that although laburnum is a favourite wood it does move a fair bit like beech. Ash is a favourite as well and he has used scorching to highlight the grain.

Editors note – working with laburnum is known to have some side effects because of its toxicity

One problem that was echoed by both Grahame and Tony was the difficulty of placing a value if they were being made to sell. Because of the time taken, they need to be sold at from £25 to £30.

One further question was about whether the central part could be turned from one piece – as a challenge perhaps. Generally, the response was that it was possible but it was not worth it because of the waste of wood that it would involve and the ease by which dowels can be found.

Examples by Grahame Tomkins



Sandpaper holder – extra note.

In passing, Tony showed a very useful but simple technique for managing the various grits of sandpaper. The construction and use are obvious from the image.



Members Projects

Apples – Chris Squires

My first attempt in making my first screw chuck to turn apples,

This was an exercise in turning apples, using differing woods -Walnut, Ash and the last one probably Elm.

The first two apples on the left of the image below are examples in solid woods, while the third apple was a small box with lid, turned in elm, (not quite) a Popov Russian fit.



Lidded box – Melanie Williams

In olive ash and finished with Chestnut Food Safe oil.



Rustic turned candle holder - Mark Sole

I turned this from some shrub branch-wood, no idea as I was given it by one of my neighbours.

It was wet and very fibrous but finished quite well with Gloss Acrylic Lacquer.



Eccentric stemmed goblet – Keith Goddard

This project came from the latest Record Power live demonstration.

It is an eccentric stemmed goblet. I think that the wood is ironwood. It is more dense than water and will sink.

I have enough to turn two more goblets and hopefully improve on my efforts. Great fun and very satisfying. It turned very easily and produces a good finish.

'Ceramic' Vase – Don Guy

This ceramic lookalike vase was turned from a piece of oak, not the best choice as I had to conceal the grain. To finish this, I used a few coats of high build primer then actinic spray and air brushed the bottom half then finished off with spray acrylic varnish.

Dimensions: 140mm x 100mm diameter



Finishing Notes

Back to some extracts from the Chestnut Newsletter.

Getting the sequence right – is it ‘sealer, then oil’, or ‘oil, then sealer’.

That’s easy – neither is correct! Using both of them is wasteful and could potentially ruin the look of the piece being made. An oil needs to soak in to start forming a bond with the timber. If the surface is sealed first, this cannot happen. This could lead to adhesion problems further down the line. So using a sealer first is not good practice.

Oils also do not like other coating used on top of them. Waxes are ok, or more of the original oil, but they will resist a sealer or lacquer, and could again cause adhesion problems later.

And, of course, they are both trying to do much the same job. The sealer does what its name suggests, preparing the surface for the next coat (wax, lacquer etc). An oil seals the wood, making it ready for more oil or a wax.

Removing the Bloom when using superglue accelerant

The best answer is to avoid it in first place, which is surprisingly easy to do – just don’t use so much of the Accelerator! Only a small amount is needed to do the job. It might be that you’re working on something small and it’s hard to limit how much is sprayed – in which case, spray from further away, so less of the Accelerator lands on the glue.

An alternative would be to spray into the air, and pass the item through the mist.. Finally for this week, I was asked about the best way to remove the white bloom that can occur when using the Accelerator to speed the drying time of CA Superglues. I’m not really sure of the answer to this; DeBonder might help, or it’s a case of sanding the offending bloom away.

Colouring superglue

One customer of Chestnut’s wondered if he could colour thick superglue with the Iridescent Paint. He wanted to give some interest to the crack he was looking to repair, rather than have a clear streak in his work. This is, sadly, not an option here. The Iridescent Paints are acrylic based (water), and the Superglues are moisture curing – water will accelerate the drying time.

Even though the Thick Superglue is slower drying, mixing it with the paint could make it cure before it can be used. The customer decided that a better way may be to add some redwood sanding dust to the glue to improve the dried appearance.

Woodturning sessions on-line

Apart from our own Zoom sessions there are others that members might want to participate in. If you do come across any others one that look useful please let me know and I will include the details in next month's Woodbits. There are many turners and also clubs offering Zoom and youtube sessions now. I will try to keep track of recommended ones here in the newsletter and by email but you may want to register with some of these directly to ensure you get reminders and details delivered straight into your inbox.

Chestnut Products CONKERS sessions

Dates already published for these free sessions

- 2 August 2021
- 26 August 2021

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

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

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AWGB Talking Turning Online Sessions

The sessions have changed focus and AWGB will be talking about various turning subjects and having Q&A during the sessions. These are all free of charge to anyone wanting to participate and you can connect from almost any internet enabled device. Check out the link below.

<https://www.awgb.co.uk/talking-turning-zoom-sessions/>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Please register in advance to ensure you receive the email with meeting details.

The meetings are at 7:30pm GMT every Tuesday and Friday evening. They will open the meeting at 7:15pm to allow everyone time to get connected before the meeting.

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Record Power free interactive demonstrations

It is difficult to keep up with their new demos here when this newsletter is published only once per month.

Record Power are arranging many demonstrations and the best way to keep up is to register yourself directly with them to receive your invites and up to date lists of what is happening. Don't forget to check the time in our own time zone as some of these are international,

Simply send an email with RSVP in the subject line to miked@recordpower.co.uk – and they will reserve a spot for you. Your log in details will be sent in return.

For sale and wanted

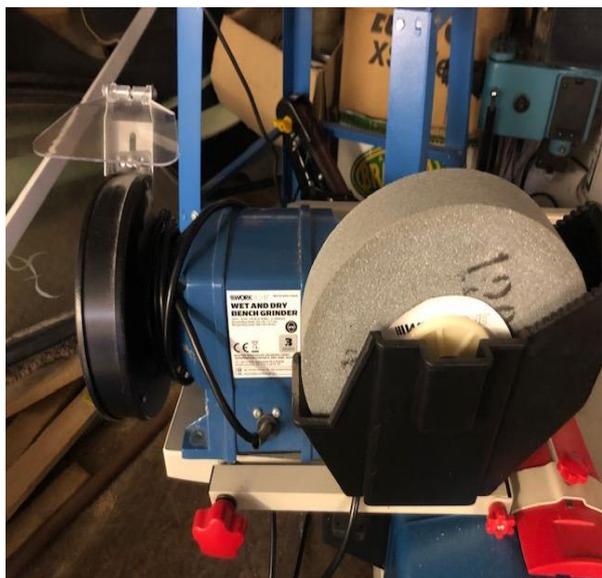
This is a selection (below) of woodworking tools by a keen DIY enthusiast and some items are hardly used
If you want more details, please feel free to give me a ring

I am working on behalf of the family helping to clear personal effects

Steve Beadle

07720677456

Steve Beadle1960@Hotmail.co.uk



Work zone Wet and dry bench grinder £ 30



Clarke 190 mm bandsaw model CBS 190 £ 70 (nearly new)





Various turning chisels £8 each or 3 for £20



Various turning chisels £8 each or 3 for £20



Various turning chisels £8 each or 3 for £20



Circular saw MSCS 1200watt £ 10



Clarks dust extractor model CWVE1 £ 70 (nearly new)



Record hand plane £ 8



Work zone 1250 W router-6 mm £ 25 (nearly new)



Hand sander £ 8



Black & Decker hand sander £ 8



Clarke woodworker over and under planer (nearly new) £100



Hand electrical player £8



Work Zone 6 mm router bit set £10 (unused)



Black & Decker light duty 6 mm router £ 10



Work zone table router £25 (nearly new)



Nearly new unused chisels £ 10



Record DML 300 24inch between centres in working condition but no tool rest but they are available from record free to first timers wanting to try woodturning or open to offers

-----ooOOoo-----

Hollow, hollow all delight!

Thus shrilled the ghost of Gawain in Tennyson's *The Passing of Arthur*. Was this the first account of the thrill of the woodturner achieving a perfectly hollowed form? True or not, it certainly is the desire of many woodturners to complete a deeply hollowed piece. However, although the full-time professional may seem to do this with smooth efficiency, the amateur is often discouraged by the fear of the dreaded catch and the sheer hard labour of deep hollowing. Many devices have been described which help to overcome the difficulties and they are generally of the 'captive bar' type. The principle is that in addition to the tool rest there is some other means of restraining the tool, either a horizontal slot or a pivoting arm. The best-known system in the UK is the Hope Easy Arm. This is beautifully constructed, but is heavy and bulky and costs more than most amateurs are able to pay.

An alternative, which I have developed under my brand name of Lion Wood Art combines the tool rest and horizontal restraining bars in one welded steel jig that fits simply into the tool post socket. The kit includes a hollowing bar, which being of 16 mm square section steel is restrained from twisting as well as from vertical deviation. The cutter is an HSS scraper, though this can be replaced by a carbide cup if desired. To take the guesswork out of getting the right wall thickness a laser pointer is provided, which is easy to set up. Hollowing to a depth of at least 8 inches is remarkably quick and stress-free with this device. It is about one third the cost of the Easy Arm.



The first model used square section restraining bars and was made of welded mild steel. Two of these are still available at the reduced price of £95 plus postage. In the later model the jig is made of welded stainless steel and has round bars. Five of these are available at £120 plus postage. Full instructions are provided.



Robert Sorby have also recently introduced a hollowing jig of similar principle, but this has only a single restraining bar. It does not include the hollowing tool itself and has no provision for a laser thickness guide.

Contact me on t.taylor29@googlemail.com

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Poetry Corner

A mixed day of emotions

Cricketer's embarrassing capitulation at Edgbaston or
Footballer's Triumph at Wembley.

BOTH on June 13th 2021

A MIXED DAY OF EMOTIONS

Usually the two games are a season apart
Unusually they happened with the same day start
Such a mixed day depending your sway
Despair if it's cricket
On a perfectly good wicket
Or triumph at Wembley
With a devoted assembly
Hold your head down in shame
Or proud uplook depending the game
Utter dejection is what we hear
Or celebrate now and quoff that beer
Back to the nets to banish the frets
Or into the dressing room
To relive boom boom
If you follow both you have mixed emotions
Hitting our sporty pride with all its notions
But with one or the other
Up is good and down is bad
Happy to cheer or sad to drive mad
Moderation is our normal aim
But on this day it was easy to blame
Batter's demise or praise strikers goal bound rise

martin sexton. Sunday June 13th 2021.

And finally .. from the internet

Sideways looks at new technologies from Mark Sole

Zoom meetings are just modern seances



"There's someone who wants to join us."
"Elizabeth, are you there?"
"We can't hear you."
"Can you hear us?"

A Senior's Version of FACEBOOK

For those of my generation who do not, and cannot, comprehend why Facebook exists: I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles. Therefore, every day I walk down the street and tell passers-by what I have eaten, how I feel at the moment, what I have done the night before, what I will do later and with whom. I give them pictures of my family, my dog and of me gardening, taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having lunch, and doing what anybody and everybody does every day. I also listen to their conversations, give them "thumbs up" and tell them I "like" them. And it works just like Facebook. I already have 4 people following me: 2 police officers, a private investigator and a psychiatrist.