



WOODBITS

NEWSLETTER

Issue 178

March 2021

Welcome

SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

SHAVINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello!

Good News about resuming at Adeyfield! Following on from the club committee meeting on the 2nd March I am very happy to report that from the 13th July we are hoping to resume our normal monthly meetings at Adeyfield Community Centre. We have been in contact with Scott, the manager, and subject to the scheduled easing of the current lock-down rules, he is looking forward to welcoming us back.

Traditionally the first club meeting of the year has always been a demonstration by Gary Rance and Gary has provisionally agreed to do that for this our first "normal" meeting in July.

Other suggested activities to celebrate may include "A Grand end of Lock-down "Show & Tell" table where members can exhibit their lock-down turnings for everyone to examine and discuss. I think it will be inspirational and I'm very much looking forward to seeing your creations in reality instead of having to rely on photographs or tantalising fuzzy glimpses via web-cams. Further details will appear nearer the time.

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 13th July.

Zoom Meetings

We had a good club Zoom meeting on the 9th March with 38 participants (combined from the H&B, Middlesex and North London clubs). This kicked off with Peter Hoare's presentation on How to Turn a Flat Vase. This was followed by an amazingly varied Show and Tell session where topics included turning wooden balls, a Greek helmet (in the style of Andrew Hall), turning Huon Pine, a Black Bean turned wooden hat, turning a small closed form vessel from spalted Beech, spindle-turning a bow-drill to enable members of a scouting group to start camp fires, turning a vase-plaque, tools and techniques for turning captive rings, the safest wood for making a baby's rattle, making a segmented bowl from an 8 inch (203 mm) wide Mahogany plank. The evening concluded with a video presentation by Tony Taylor on

“Using the Woodcut Bowl Saver”. Illustrated accounts of the two presentations are available in this issue of Woodbits.

Herts & Beds Woodturners on YouTube

For those who may have missed the last Zoom meeting or would like to see bits of it again an edited version is now also available on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqMOhpzlhqijcXOAe1yTmlnV9uD5lBeU>.

The Club AGM, Tuesday 13th April

This will be held using Zoom and you should all have received a formal notification by e-mail. Please log on and support your club if you can. Joining details, an agenda and associated documents will be circulated nearer the time. An important action will be the appointment of new post-holders for the following committee posts: Secretary: So far we have had one nomination, Allen Kaye.

Treasurer: Peter Hoare is resigning but there have been no nominations for this key post. It's worth emphasising that the treasurer is an essential post. Without a treasurer, the continuing existence of the club is put at risk!

Tuesday 11th May Zoom

This will be an IRD demonstration by Emma Cook (The Tiny Turner). More details on this nearer the time. Middlesex & the North London Woodturning Clubs Zoom Meetings. Herts and Beds members are always made very welcome in these excellent meetings and joining details are circulated as and when received. Please support our Middlesex and North London friends by participating if you can.

That's me done for another issue! Please help Allen our editor by keeping the Woodbits contributions coming so we can continue to have an interesting and entertaining monthly woodturning related read.

Tim

Tim Pettigrew

Chairman

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Other Club News

AGM

The following notice was emailed to all members last week. Further documents will be sent nearer the time. If you wish to take part in the AGM but are unfamiliar with Zoom, please get in touch and we can arrange to support you. Alternatively if you cannot attend but have an issue you wish to raise you can email this directly to Tim before the meeting.

Notice of 31st Annual General Meeting Meeting.

To be held (using Zoom) on April 13th 2021 at 7.30pm.

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 2018/19 AGM
3. Matters Arising from Minutes not covered by item's below
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Election of Officers
7. Election of Ordinary Committee Members
8. Election of Inspector of Accounts
9. Motions
10. AOB

It's clearly currently almost impossible for motions and nominations to be submitted in writing, signed by proposer and seconder, and to be submitted by the 29th March in the usual way. Instead motions and nominations will be accepted, discussed and voted on during the meeting.

Officers:

Chairman: Tim Pettigrew (standing for re-election)

Treasurer: Peter Hoare (resigning, nomination pending)

Secretary: vacant (nomination pending)

Inspector of Accounts: Keith Goddard (standing for re-election)

Tim Pettigrew

Chairman

22, Orchard Drive

Watford, WD17 3DY

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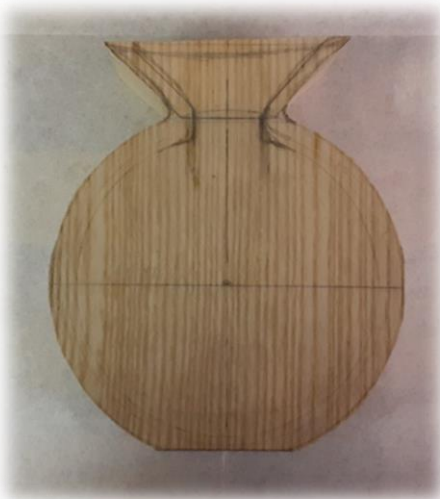
A 'flat' vase – Peter Hoare

This is a summary of the February Zoom session by Peter Hoare

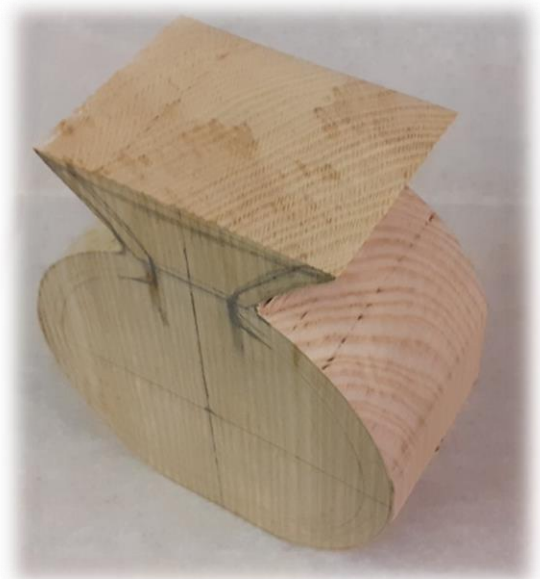


I made the vase following the 13 December 2020 Middlesex Club Zoom meeting. I did a quick sketch of the vase that the Middx member showed us and stated he wanted to emulate it in wood. I'm sure the item was pottery and so the shape of the body and neck could be fabricated relatively easily, but could you make a wooden one? Apparently, an attempt had failed. This is my attempt, you may know an alternative way.

I started with a block 6.5 in. high x 5.5 in. wide x 2.5 in. deep (approx. 165 mm x 140 mm x 64 mm).



I drew the shape of the vase, using a compass for the outer and inner diameters (the compass hole will be used later) and then added the neck details by combination of rule and free hand. At this stage drawing the inner lines was only to visualize the inside and gauge how far I could turn the inside out. As you can be seen I left the top and bottom flat.



The basic shape was the cut out on the bandsaw.

I drew the neck wall thinner than the vase wall as I wanted the finished neck to look as "delicate" as possible, whilst accepting that the vase wall could not be thinner (in this direction) because of the base.

I drilled a hole where the calliper point had been and mounted the work on a screw chuck.

Due to the unbalanced shape, I could only run my lathe at 450 rpm; its slowest speed.

I removed the neck corners just to make it a little safer. Although it's much better just to keep your hands well out of the way!

You can see the chuck foot and the vase profile, on what will be the reverse side, turned and sanded, but with no finish applied.

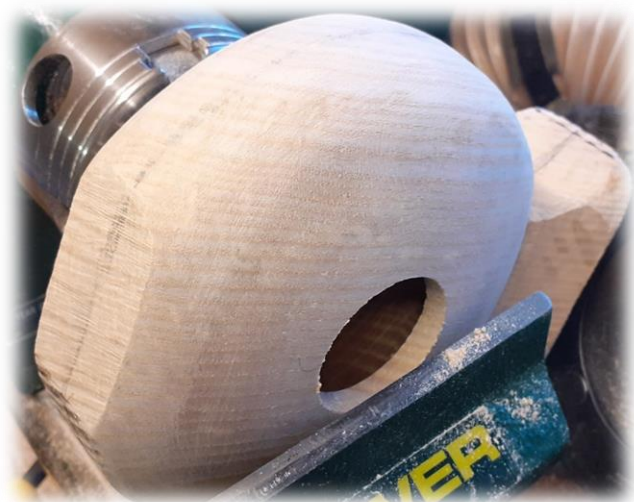
As the side profile of the vase and neck would need to be finished by hand, I decided I would treat the vase when completely finished with Lemon oil or similar.



With the work reversed and held in the chuck the profile on the front is turned to match that on the reverse.

At this stage you can see I drew a line down the middle of the thin side, to help with the shaping of the vase later.

I also started to think about the size of hole I was going to bore in the side to enable me to turn the inside. I was probably being a bit too minimalistic, as the hole (or what covers it, will be a feature.



I've bored through the side and started hollowing out. At this stage I thought it might be good idea to give some form to the outside; mainly to feel how thin I was going! I removed the wood with a micro-plane and then sanded.



I also roughly marked out the shape of the neck lip, but made the mistake of using a "Sharpie", which penetrated the wood a little too much. I would just use pencil next time!



I had trouble determining the thickness of the face nearest the chuck. I didn't want to go through and I didn't want it too thick (though it probably doesn't matter). To give me some indication, I measured the overall thickness as best I could (as the chuck was in the way), then subtracted the measurement from the front face to the back of the hole.

The other measuring problem I had was the inside diameter. In this case, I didn't want to go through the base. I held a rule against the base and bent a piece of wire held against the rim of the hole, so that there was a gap between the tip and the rule equal to the thickness I wanted. Then, as I continued to remove wood from the inside, I could put the wire in the hole and judge how much more I could remove. I wish I'd taken a photo!



You can see the line from the “Sharpie” refusing to go!

Although I shaped the outside edge of the vase on the lathe, I transferred the chuck and work to my carver’s vice for the final shaping of the neck and breaking through into the vase base. I just drilled a couple of holes through to start with, then carved, filed and sanded.

The work has been returned to the lathe and I’ve turned a register ready for an insert to be glued in - see below

This face is also finish sanded at this stage.



I cut a piece of wood, from the original stock, adjacent to the piece I used for the vase in the hope the grain of the insert would match. I debated with myself whether to colour the insert, or carve it or indeed use a different wood. Eventually I settled on plain wood and added the rings for decoration and to (maybe) confuse the eye regarding the grain.



I made a jam chuck to fit the register in the front of the vase and reversed the vase to remove the chuck foot.



Foot was removed and face blended with initial turned surface. Face then finish sanded. I removed the foot remnant off the lathe with a carving tool. Plus a bit of sanding.





Vase finished with Lemon oil.

Using the Woodcut Bowl Saver – Tony Taylor

This is a follow up to the February Zoom presentation by **Tony Taylor**.

Hollowing a large bowl in the conventional way is quite laborious, wastes a large part of the wood and produces a lot of useless shavings. An alternative is to use a coring system, which allows one to make several bowls from the one blank. Three main systems are available: Woodcut, Oneway and Kelman. In all three, curved blades are mounted so as to cut an arc shape into the wood and so free an approximately hemispherical piece. This can then be remounted and the process repeated to give several roughed out bowls, to be set aside for drying and finishing.

The **Woodcut Bowlsaver**, which was demonstrated was the original two bladed version, which is suitable for blanks up to 12 inches diameter. There is now a three-bladed version which can cope with larger pieces. Bowl corers work best on fresh or partly seasoned wood, indeed professional bowl turners routinely use this method to prepare batches of blanks for seasoning.

The first steps are just as usual for making a bowl from half a log. It is mounted on a face plate (or a secure screw chuck) and the outside of what will be the largest bowl shaped in the usual way with bowl gouge with swept-back grind (Irish, Ellsworth etc., etc.).

It is sensible to have the tailstock engaged, especially if using a screw chuck. The cuts can be pull cuts starting at the centre and moving smoothly into a push cut up the side. The alternative is to cut from the top edge down to the centre. This has the advantage of directing the shavings away from the turner. A foot and tenon are then cut to fit a good- sized chuck. It is important to make the size of the tenon such that the chuck is nearly fully closed when tightened and to match the shape of the jaws, whether dovetail or gripper.

The work is then reversed into the chuck and the free surface trued up. Next a chucking mortice is cut in this face, to permit subsequent remounting of the piece cut out by the corer.

The Bowlsaver is then mounted in place of the toolpost and with the large blade in place the height adjusted so that the cutting point is on the centre. It is useful to mark out rings on the surface to show where cuts are to be made. The wall thicknesses allowed should be about 20 mm and the blade is 8 mm wide. The device must then be positioned so that the blade enters at the right point and will end at the right depth. This can be checked with a template supplied by the makers, or with callipers or with a simple laser device, which was demonstrated.

An additional anchoring point is fixed in the tail stock. With the lathe running at about 500 to 700 rpm the blade is steadily advanced, clearing the cut from time to time. As the cut approaches the centre the sound changes. One can stop and test to see if the piece can be broken free or just carry on till the centre comes out.





The outer bowl is removed from the chuck and the centre part remounted on the chuck in expansion mode. This permits a foot and chucking point to be cut (for a smaller chuck).

The piece is once more mounted and the smaller blade set up in the Bowlsaver. Again, this is correctly positioned, clamped in place and a second cut made. This piece removed can once more be chucked in the mortice and a new foot and tenon cut. The final stage is to remount this smallest piece and hollow it in the usual way with a bowl gouge. Thus, we end with three rough-turned bowls to be put away to dry and to be finished later.

There are several excellent Youtube videos available. One interesting variation is that shown by Glenn Lucas who uses the Oneway system and cuts the smallest bowl first. This is quicker, because it avoids re- chucking, but leaves one with the problem of remounting the bowls once dry.

Members Projects

Greek Corinthian Helmet, Sea Lion and Ball – Keith Goddard

I have been watching the Record Power live demonstrations which have been very interesting in learning new techniques.

Two of them relate to the Theo Haralampou's demonstrations. The first used a different type of jig to produce a spherical ball. The sea lion is made from Huon Pine and I made the jigs to produce it. The off-centre jig was very easy to make. The third project was the Royal Greek Corinthian helmet.

Ball

Theo Haralampou, from Brisbane, demonstrated his method of turning a ball. This involved using an LED light to produce a shadow on a drawn circle behind the ball to help with the outline. Then turning the shape until the ball matched the image on the screen.

I utilised this method with a Record Power magnetic LED and my own method in which I cut out a plywood semicircle shape of the ball to help with the turning. The large ball is made from two pieces of sapele. I made the mistake of not having the distance the drive and tail stock greater than the diameter of the ball which of course is important when finishing the ball. Turning is always a learning process.



Sea Lion

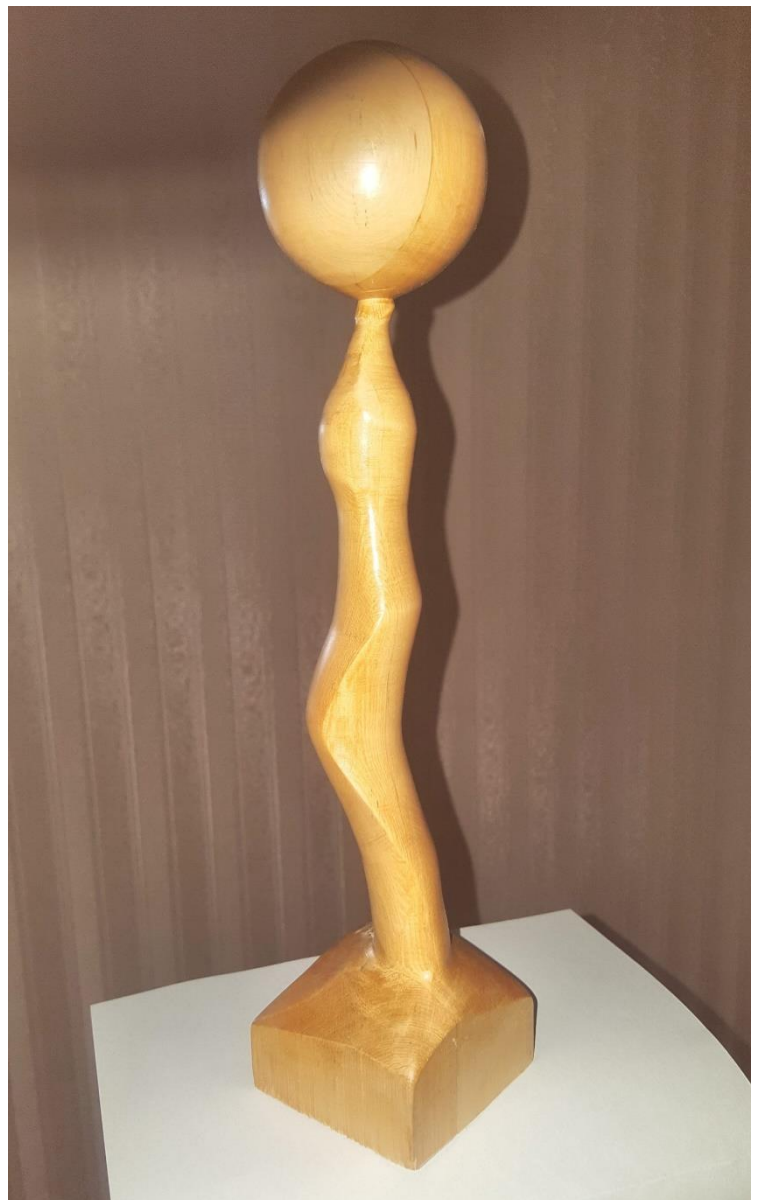
Theo's next demonstration involved turning a ball and an off-centre figure to represent a Sea Lion.

The ball is turned in line first and then held in Paul Howard rotating cup chuck when turning off-centre. The sea lion is made from Huon Pine and I made the jigs to produce it. The off-entre jig was very easy to make.

The pins are screws with their points ground to remove the threads at the end. The centre screw projects out slightly further to aid positioning the chuck on the end of the work. The first attempt was a disaster with the ball detaching. The second attempt was more successful as Huon Pine is very forgiving.

Huon pine timber (extract from web)

Huon Pine is the prince of Tasmanian timbers. ... Its durability and workability make it one of the best boat-building timbers known. The wood contains a natural preserving oil with an unmistakable perfume, and it's fine and even grain make the wood exceptionally easy to work with hand tools.



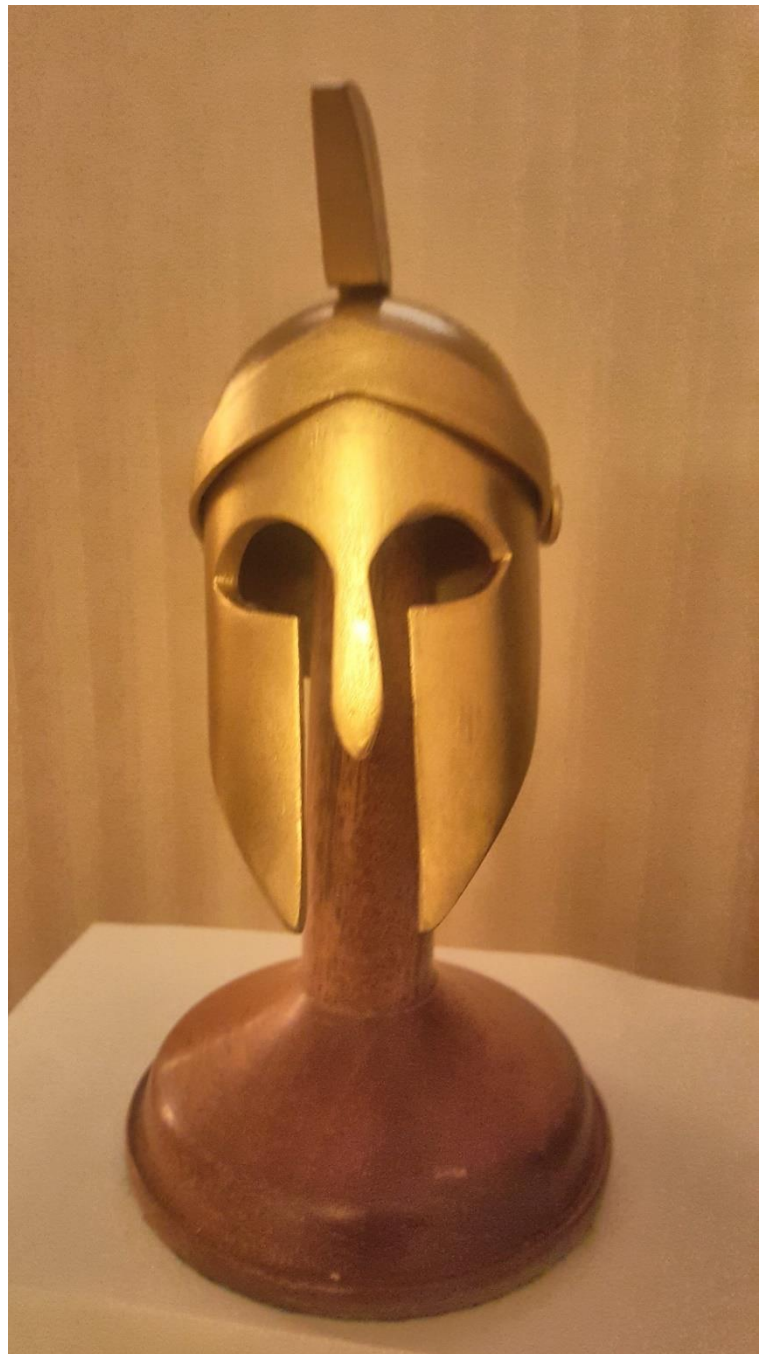
Royal Greek Corinthian Helmet.

Finally. Andrew Hall specialises in making wooden hats and Corinthian helmets which he demonstrated. I did not attempt a wooden hat but did have a go at making a helmet.

Having found examples on the internet I made a 15mm model of a Royal Greek Corinthian Helmet. It involved turning the helmet, carving the plume and moulding the band by heating in water and drying in a microwave.

The worrying part was cutting out the eyes and nose plate with a fret saw.

The helmet itself is made from two pieces of wood and the plinth from five pieces of recycled Brazilian Mahogany.



Small confits dish - Teraina Hird

Small (6" dia.) confits pedestal dish in European Oak. I highlighted the grain with ebonising fluid & HS Intrinsic black. Finished with Yorkshire Grit & MyMix Friction Polish.

The piece of oak I used for the pedestal had some very bad cracks so I treated them with CA to stabilise and Black Milliput to fill & contrast.



Paintbrushes in Ash with Oak case - Allen Kaye

I have been making a number of different items for the local Woodwardens group. Each year they need some gifts for members who are leaving the group. The key requirement is that the wood used comes from the woods that they helped to manage. The woods are mainly oak and hornbeam but there is a wide variety of other species in there in smaller quantities.

Up to now their preference has been for spalted hornbeam bowls. Mostly turned in the normal way but once I did turn one with a natural edge.

As well as some bowls this year something different asked for was a set of paintbrushes. At first I was planning to make some non-functional but decorative ones for display but youtube as ever helped me to make ones that actually work as art brushes. To make it easier however I made fairly large ones.

The turning was minimal of course although the first results using spalted hornbeam just looked like dirty wood as the spalted grain was not visible in such narrow pieces. I then retrieved some ash from my woodpile that was otherwise destined for the fire and was reminded what a pleasant, easy and forgiving wood it was to use.

The challenges turned out to be finding ferrules and bristle. Most ferrules it seems are made in the east these days (and I don't mean Essex) but by a happenchance I was put in contact with a local specialist brush manufacturer who kindly gave me half a dozen ferrules. The next challenge was to find some bristle – I took apart a new brush from B&Q and tried that but I ideally I wanted a natural bristle. Apparently, Kolinsky sable is the bristle of choice for artists but that is expensive and difficult to source in a small quantity. In the end I found some horse hair (thanks to our chairman's Tim's wife who rides a horse that was by chance ready for a haircut) and some very fine collie dog hair from a veterinary practice. To shape the hair I used some starch that I extracted from a couple of potatoes.



To stop the bristles from coming loose I tied them at the end as much as possible and then dribbled superglue into them. To avoid the superglue travelling too far I almost immediately used the spray activator.



Notes from Chestnut Products

This month again I chose a couple of things from the Chestnut Newsletter. I have edited them slightly to reduce space but all info comes from Chestnut.

Some people may have seen the recent streaming by Richard Finlay (he stood in at the last moment for Les Thorne and his presentation included the use of pewter as a decorative inlay. This month I thought you may find it interesting to see what Chestnut say about how pewter is finished.

If you saw Richard's demo, you'll have seen him polish his pewter casting with Burnishing Cream to bring up a very bright shine. He mentioned that the Burnishing Cream also works on many of our polishes and lacquers – if you're not sure which ones have a quick check on Chestnut Compatibility Chart.

How long do you need to leave a finish before using burnishing cream?

The general rule for this is to allow the coating to dry completely; it needs to be 'hard dry' so that the abrasive in the Burnishing Cream doesn't remove it accidentally. So for oils it'd be 2-3 days, for Friction Polish I leave it until the surface has cooled after application (usually just a couple of minutes) etc. Melamine Lacquer is a bit of an odd one. It can be burnished after about 20 minutes as the lacquer has air dried by then. But if you can leave it another 24 hours it will have started its curing process and will be just that bit harder yet, and will polish up even better. So in that case, it depends how patient you can be!

Can you put lacquer over pewter?

In his demo Richard finished his pewter with lacquer and we know it will help dramatically slow down the tarnishing process.

One thing to consider is that there are differing grades of pewter, if you think that there is some contaminant then make sure the surface of the pewter is as clean as possible, a wipe over with Surgical Spirit is always good for this.

And finally a reminder about the storage of superglue

The experts tell us that cool, dry and dark is best for Superglues, away from heat sources and direct sunlight. So a fridge meets all of these requirements, although a shaded cupboard would probably be as good for most of the year! Freezing the glues, incidentally, could have an adverse effect.

<https://chestnutproducts.co.uk/chestnut-products-videos/>

The link above is to Chestnuts main video page – they do I think produce some excellent videos and is worth a check.

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. As Tim noted at the beginning of this newsletter, 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

19 March 2021

12 April 2021

12 May 2021

2 June 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. We 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

Nothing reported to me this month but as Tim mentioned in his shavings, you might want to think about our plans for a big sale of items once we get back to meeting in Adeyfield. If you have been tidying your workshop or maybe buying new tools then remember that you can always bring redundant stuff to sell at the meetings. Things can be donated or you can offer a small percentage of anything sold to club funds,

If you want more detail about how you can dispose of items at future meetings then contact Derek Stephens – his email is derek.stephens@ntlworld.com

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Poetry Corner

Pachelbel Canon in D. Arpabaleno

Irish or welsh, neither flat nor sharp
More likely germanic, their enchanted harp
Six angels sans wings
But what pleasure this brings
His melody repeats and in our heart sings
Such a well known tune
From tonic solfa hewn
So simple composition
By this world renowned musician
Pluck to the left pluck to the right
Played the six harpists, every note's flight
Demanding we hear
With sound charmed ear
Renewing our faith
In his oeuvre so dear

martin sexton. 21st February 2021

Pachelbel Canon on Six Harps – something to watch and listen to.

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=MWQO-BudhrY&feature=share>