



Martock and District Woodturners Newsletter

June 2025

News

Thank you to everyone who completed the all-day demonstration survey. We had 30 responses with about 80% of respondents normally attending at these events and in favour of continuing. Hopefully there will be a good attendance at the next all-day with Jason Breach in July.

I know some of the regulars were disappointed that we cancelled the hands-on sessions over the summer. Colin puts a lot of effort preparing for the hands-on (as well as putting in the miles to get there) so it is always a shame when numbers are low as they tend to be during the summer months. Of course, if anyone wants to put their name forward as his deputy I'm sure they wouldn't be turned down!

Diary Dates

Jun 24 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Paul Hannaby
Jul 5 th	Hands-on – Cancelled for the Summer
Jul 12 th	Yandles Summer Craft Fair
Jul 19 th	All-day demonstration – 10am to 4pm, Ash Pavilion – Jason Breach
Jul 29 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Dave Appleby
Aug 9 th	Hands-on – Cancelled for the Summer

Competition



Don't miss the club competition at the June club night on Tuesday, where the theme will be a goblet.

Volunteers needed...



Later in July is the Yandles Summer 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 myself or Caroline.

April Demonstration – Neil Morris

Neil is a member of Kennet and Avon Woodturners and started turning about eight years ago using a lathe retrieved from a skip! He claims to rarely make anything twice and is therefore not be known for anything in particular, but does like miniature turning and making things for doll's houses.



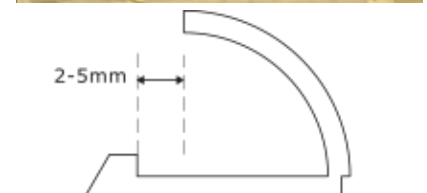
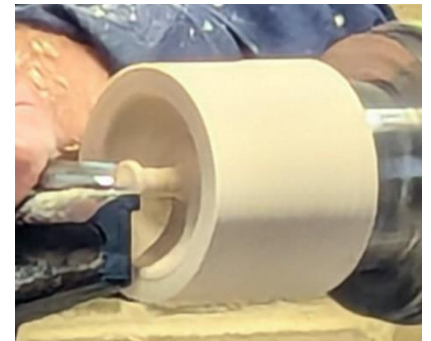
For his demonstration Neil made this “tower spinning top”, which comes to rest as shown rather than falling off the tower.

(It just so happens that the latest Woodturning magazine (issue 409) includes article by James Duxbury which gives full instructions to make a similar top. If you talk nicely to Dave Appleby he will probably lend you his copy).



The spinning top was made in two parts – the top/point and a finial to spin it by (you can make it in three if you wish). The first stage was to form the point on which it spins – this was about 10mm in diameter. The next stage was to start hollowing out the dome and forming the inside stem. The gap between the bottom of the dome and the point piece is about 5mm (any more and it won't catch on the edge). This was cut with a suitably sized parting tool.

After hollowing out the inside and shaping the point projection, Neil made sure that the inside of the point end was a proper right-angle.



Once the inside was complete, Neil started to shape the outside. Before parting off, the inside and the completed outside was sanded.



Neil made a jam chuck with the remaining timber in the chuck which allowed the piece to be reverse mounted and the shaping completed (it was necessary to drill a hole in the middle of the jam chuck to accommodate the projecting point).

A shallow 10mm hole was then drilled to take the finial piece.

The rest of the sanding was then completed.



To add the decoration, the top was first coloured using one of the Hampshire Sheen Intrinsic colours (ruby).

When dry, Neil finished it with sanding sealer and Hampshire Sheen Original wax polish.

The metal highlights were added using imitation gold leaf [from Amazon](#). First some [metal leaf size](#) was dabbed on using a piece of sponge and allowed to dry (after which it remains tacky). The metal leaf is then applied and brushed down with a soft brush to flatten it and remove the excess (a cheap make-up blusher brush is ideal). A coat of lacquer could then be applied but is not essential.



Pen blanks are ideal for making the finial. This had a 10mm spigot at one end to fit into the drilled hole. The finial should not be too thin as it has to be used to make the top spin (neither should it be too long and therefore add too much weight to the top end).



To make the tower, the end of the blank was squared off and the diameter reduced to 20-30mm. The end was then hollowed out by about 7mm using a parting tool and small gouge. A shallow divot was made in centre to help guide the top when spinning.



The top can be used to define how long and wide the top of the tower needs to be to ensure that it will end up horizontal.



After that the rest of the tower was shaped and decorated before being sanded and finished.

The tower was parted off leaving a 10mm spigot to fit into a base turned from another piece of timber.



Neil went on to demonstrate a [finishing technique from India](#) using shellac that he is trying to master.

The shellac is bought as flakes, melted using a heat gun, mixed with coloured mica flakes and allowed to harden again.

The shellac is first applied using friction heat to melt it, then evened out using a pandan leaf (available from your local Asian supermarket!). [\[this YouTube video\]](#) implies palm leaves also work]



Gallery

Here are some items made by club members in recent weeks and shown on the inspiration table.



Horse chestnut burr bowl by Dave A



Another piece by Dave A, this one in mulberry



Two LED table lamps by Ged M. The shade/lamp mechanisms were sourced from [Temu](https://www.temu.com/).



Two small pots decorated with iridescent paints. Maker unknown.

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.

Timber of the Month – Tamarind



Tamarindus indica, commonly known as Tamarind, is a tropical evergreen tree native to Africa, India, and the Middle East but now widely planted throughout tropical regions worldwide. The tree grows to a height of 50-80 ft (15-24 m) with a trunk diameter of 2-3 ft (0.6-1 m) and a lifespan of up to 200 years. It can go by a number of other names such as Indian Date, Tamarindo, Imli, Sampalok, Asam Jawa, Goraka, Chinch, Amli, Tomarind or Kaluduru.



Tamarind has a dark brown to reddish brown heartwood (sometimes with a purplish hue) with a medium to coarse texture and a straight to slightly interlocked grain. The heartwood portion of the tree tends to be narrow and is usually only present in older and larger trees. The pale yellow sapwood is very wide and sharply demarcated from the heartwood; spalting and other discolouration is very common in the sapwood. Wide boards are rare as the trunks tend to become hollow in the centre.

The timber has many uses in construction, furniture, flooring, door and window frames, and shipbuilding. It is also

used for making poles, bridges, and beams. Tamarind's natural oil content makes it resistant to water absorption, which makes it a good choice for outdoor furniture and structures. Smaller pieces are used for cabinets, carving, musical instruments, bowls and other turned objects, salad servers and other small specialty wood items.

Tamarind trees are best known for their fruit, not wood. The seedpods are widely used for food in the tropics. The trees commence bearing fruit at 7 - 10 years of age and can continue yielding for 200 years. Yields of 200 kilos per tree have been recorded. The immature pods are used in a variety of ways, being eaten fresh mixed with spices, pickled like green mango, or added whole to soups, stews and sauces. When fully mature, the pods contain a sticky paste which can be eaten raw, used to make drinks, jellies, syrups, etc., and, mixed with salt, is a favourite flavouring in Indian curries.

The tree also provides a number of other edible products; mature seeds are dried and roasted then ground into a flour or used as a coffee substitute. Young leaves and flowers can be eaten raw or cooked and seedlings are used as a vegetable.

Various parts of the Tamarind tree have a wide range of medicinal usages - the bark is made into lotions or poultices to relieve sores, ulcers, boils and rashes and may be taken as a decoction against asthma and amenorrhea. Leaf extracts are a common ingredient in cardiac and blood sugar reducing medicines. Young leaves may be used in fomentation for rheumatism, applied to sores and wounds, or administered as a poultice for inflammation of joints to reduce swelling and relieve pain. A sweetened decoction of the leaves is good against throat infection, cough, fever, and even intestinal worms and as a remedy for measles. A decoction of the flower buds is used as a remedy for children's bedwetting and urinary complaints. Syrup made from the ripe fruit is drunk as a remedy for coughs and chest colds, the flesh of the fruit is eaten to cure fevers and control gastric acid and may be used as a massage to treat rheumatism. Powdered seeds may be given to cure dysentery and diarrhoea.

The pulp of over-ripe fruit, sometimes mixed with sea-salt, is used to polish silver, copper and brass. The seed contains pectin that can be used for sizing textiles and when ground, boiled, and mixed with gum, make a strong wood cement. Oil from the seeds is suitable for making paints and varnishes and for burning in lamps. Leaves and bark are rich in tannin used in ink or for fixing dyes, whilst the leaves themselves yield a red dye.

Finally it also makes a good firewood and produces an excellent charcoal!!

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 newsletter@madturners.co.uk.

Thanks, Dave H