



Martock and District Woodturners Newsletter

July 2025

News

It was good to see so many entries in the last competition, with lots of different shapes and sizes of goblet. In future we will be limiting entries to one piece per person. You can still bring other pieces along for show, but only one can be selected as the competition entry.

Later in August Yandles are running a second Masters of the Lathe event (see below). Once again we have been offered an opportunity to showcase and advertise the club.

Diary Dates

Jul 29 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Dave Appleby
Aug 9 th	Hands-on – Cancelled for the Summer
Aug 23 th	Masters of the Lathe 2 at Yandles
Aug 26 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Stephen Long
Sep 6 th	Yandles Autumn Craft Fair
Sep 20 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles training room
Sep 30 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Jason Breach

Competition

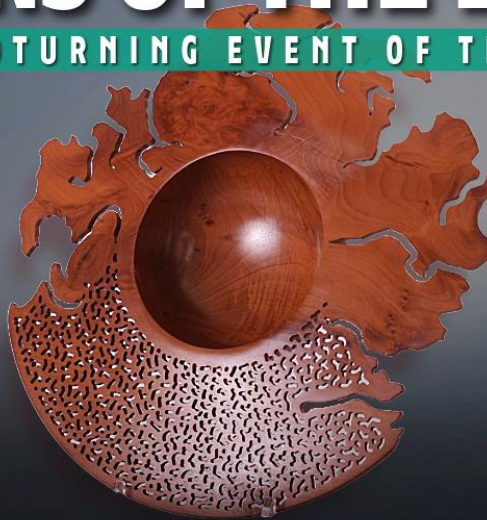


The next club competition at the September club night, where the theme will be a bowl with a decorated rim.

Decoration can take any form – texturing, carving, piercing, colouring, pyrography, etc., etc.

MASTERS OF THE LATHE II

THE WOODTURNING EVENT OF THE YEAR!



23/08/2025

Special guests demonstrating:

- Emma Cook RPT
- Colwin Way RPT
- Mick Hanbury
- Katie Armstrong RPT
- Steven Gordon RPT
- Dan Tarrant RPT
- Paul Ridler RPT
- Stephen Rickets
- Stuart Mortimer RPT
- Richard Strutt

Supporting brands & clubs:

- Record Power
- Klingspore
- Planet Plus
- Beaufort Ink
- GMC
- Jo Sonja
- MAD Woodturners
- AWGB

With a brand-new line-up + more demonstrators + Special offers!

June Demonstration – Paul Hannaby



Paul is [based in the Forest of Dean](#), Gloucestershire and is a regular demonstrator at the club.

This month he described the process and techniques of thread chasing in wood.

The basic tools for thread chasing consist of a side cutter for making the inside thread and an end cutter for making the outside thread (Ashley Isles make a “unichaser” which can be used to cut both threads, although it is something of a compromise since the teeth need to be upright rather than angled to match the finished thread). Various thread sizes are available with 16 or 18 TPI being best for most circumstances.

A recess tool is also needed to cut a groove at the end of the internal thread in order to allow the thread chaser to be removed before it hits a shoulder (an ordinary parting tool can be used for a similar purpose on the outside thread).

The timber needs to be dense and close grained. Boxwood is an ideal choice, along with most of the exotics such as ebony, rosewood, African blackwood, etc. Softer woods can be used but generally need soaking in wood hardener or impregnating with CA glue to stand any chance of getting a decent thread. Alternatively you can make an insert out of a harder wood and cut the thread in that.

Some preparation may be needed before attempting to cut a thread:

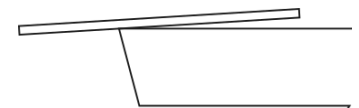
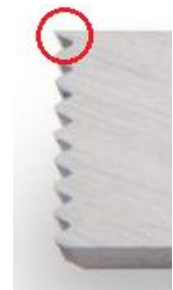
1. The toolrest should be cleaned up to remove any dents and nicks that will stop the tool from sliding freely.
2. It is worth rounding the bottom two edges of the tool with a file or some abrasive to help it slide easily.
3. It is also worth removing the half tooth on the external thread chaser, particularly if it is on the left-hand edge where it would form an incomplete thread.

The cutters can be sharpened using a diamond card. They are sharpened on the top only with the card at a slight angle to give the teeth a slight bevel.

To prepare to cut an external thread, make sure you have a parallel cylinder and, using a parting tool, create a run-out groove at the left-hand end of the area to be threaded. Make a small chamfer on the right-hand end.

The ideal speed is about 400 rpm, which gives time to disengage the tool when it reaches the run-out groove and before it hits the shoulder (otherwise your nice thread will become a series of parallel grooves...). The toolrest should be adjusted so that the cutting edge is on centre with the tool horizontal.

The thread is started by moving the tool from right to left diagonally across the corner at a steady rate (getting this right takes a bit of practice, but is equivalent



to one tooth per revolution); the chamfer lets the tooth travel along rather than getting stuck on the corner. If the thread has been struck properly you will see the tool propel itself along if it is simply held against the cut.

Having started the thread, a number of cuts from right to left are made progressively bringing the tool round until it is at right angles to the piece and can be taken all the way down the cylinder.

Continue to take cuts until the thread is fully formed and reaches the bottom of the teeth in the tool; don't go beyond this point or the top of the threads will start to tear out (similar to when using a beading tool). Paul will usually rub on a bit of paste wax before making the last few passes, which helps clean up the finished cut.

Some tools produce a very sharp profile and it can help to sand the tops off the thread to stop them binding.



Having covered the basics of thread chasing, Paul then went on to make a spinning top box.



Paul started with a piece of boxwood mounted between centres which he rounded to a cylinder and cut a spigot on each end to fit the chuck jaws. With one end in the chuck, Paul used a thin parting tool to cut the piece in half.



Using a spindle gouge, the face was cleaned up and some shape given to the sides before starting to hollow out.



To undercut the rim, Paul used a swan-neck hollowing tool, leaving about ¼ inch at the rim for the thread.



Before cutting the thread it is essential that the sides are parallel. This can be checked by holding a straight-edge against the edge and sighting along the lathe bed, or by using a set of internal callipers. There is no need for a run-out groove as the thread tool can run into the box interior.



Cutting an inside thread is the same process as an outside thread. Start by making a chamfer on the front edge, turn the speed down to about 400 rpm, strike the thread at an angle and continue to work the tool round to parallel with the lathe bed then proceed to cut until the thread is full depth. Cutting should be done about on centre, but make sure the bottom of the tool doesn't catch.

Before removing from the chuck, Paul made a mark so it could be put back in the same orientation.

The other half of the blank was mounted in the chuck and the face cleaned up.

A spigot was made on the end to take the thread; this was made just over the diameter of the opening plus twice the thread pitch (the pitch being approximately the same as the depth). A thin parting tool was used to make a run-out groove and the thread cut as described above. This was tested against the internal thread and found to be too large. The process then is to use a parting tool to take the top off the thread (but not obliterate it) and continue to recut the thread until a comfortable fit is achieved.



A section behind the thread was cut down to make a shoulder that will be recessed into the base.

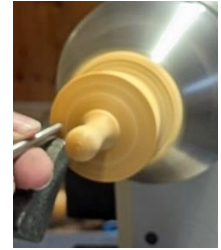
(At this stage Paul should have reduced the length of the threaded section which was made deliberately long as it easier to cut a long thread than a short one. A lid should only need two or three turns to put on or remove. A small chamfer should be made on the end to help locate the top in the base and the inside of the lid shaped and decorated. Fortunately he was able to hold it in the chuck and do this later.)



The base section was remounted in the chuck and a shallow recess cut to take the shoulder on the top (about 2mm). The top can then be screwed into the base and shaped to form the spinning top handle.



A small v cut was made where the lid and base meet.



Paul used a texturing tool to add some decoration to the top.



A thread was cut on a piece of waste wood held in the chuck to allow the base to be reverse-mounted.

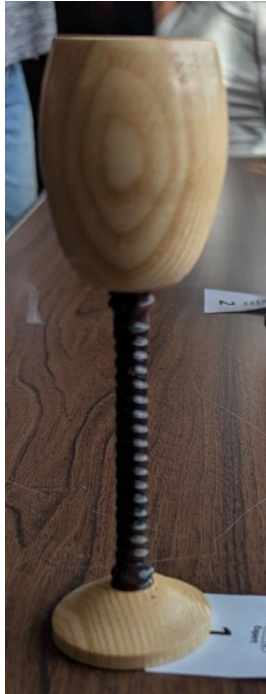


The base of the spinning top could then be shaped and finished off.



Gallery & Competition

Here are the competition results as well as any other items made by club members in recent weeks.
(Apologies for the hastily taken photos that probably don't show your work at its best.)



Entry 1 – Phil O (Seasoned) – Score 6.3



Entry 2 – Mike C (Intermediate) – Score 6.9



Entry 3 – Mike C (Intermediate) – Score 5.2



Entry 4 – Dave H (Seasoned) – Score 8.1



Entry 5 – Brian H (Intermediate) – Score 6.6



Entry 6 – Andy R (Intermediate) – Score 6.6



Entry 7 – Charlie W (Seasoned) – Score 6.7



Entry 8 – Tony R (Intermediate) – Score 7.7



Entry 9 – Ged M (Seasoned) – Score 6.8



Entry 10 – Dave A (Expert) – Score 8.2



Entry 11 – Rod P (Expert) – Score 6.6

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.



All-day Demonstration – Jason Breach – Making Boxes

Box 1 – A Simple Box

Jason started out by going through the various stages in making a box.

Starting with a piece of plum mounted between centres, Jason turned it to round and put a spigot on each end to fit in the chuck jaws.

With one end held in the chuck, the piece was cut in two using a thin parting tool to form a base and lid section; when using a parting tool to do this remember to keep widening the cut so that the tool does not bind.



The section remaining in the chuck will become the lid.

This picture attempts to show Jason's preferred grip; the left hand is holding the tool rest with the thumb resting on the top to guide the tool. The right hand holds the tool with the top of the handle resting on the heel of the palm.



Having cleaned up the face, Jason gave some shape to the underside of the top and then hollowed it out using a spindle gouge. This was initially scooped out from the centre, but then Jason used a push cut from the edge to the centre to give a better finish.



The inside was then sanded before a small recess was cut to fit onto the base – the sides of this recess need to be parallel, which Jason checked with a set of internal callipers. A coat of sanding sealer was applied before waxing and buffing.



The top was removed from the chuck and replaced by the bottom section and the front face cleaned up. Using a set of callipers the dimensions of the inside of the top were transferred to the front face.

Using a parting tool a slightly oversize spigot was made and carefully trimmed down to give a good fit in the lid.



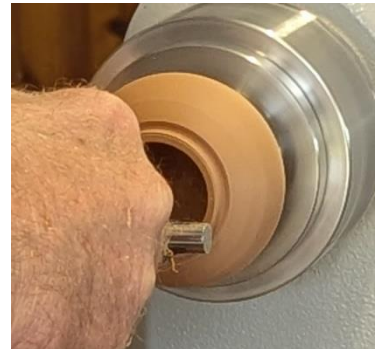
The outside of the box was then shaped to establish the size of the box interior.

The top was then fitted onto the base. If the fit is not sufficiently tight then some moisture (saliva) can be used to raise the grain, or a single layer of paper towel used to improve it.

The top was then be shaped, sanded and sealed.



The top was then put to one side and the inside of the base hollowed out, initially with a spindle gouge.



To undercut the sides and finish off the bottom corner Jason used a homemade tool consisting of a carbide cutter fitted to a steel bar which had been drilled and tapped to take a suitable bolt. This tool is used with the cutter underneath the bar, rather than on top as with most carbide tools.

To sand the interior Jason used a set of locking forceps to hold the rolled-up abrasive.



With a piece of scrap timber in the chuck, a jam chuck was made to allow the base to be reverse mounted and finished off.



The spigot was shaped to make a foot for the box, ensuring the base was slightly concave. This can then be sanded and sealed.

Finally Jason used a set of polishing and buffing wheels to shine up the outside and apply a coat of carnauba wax.



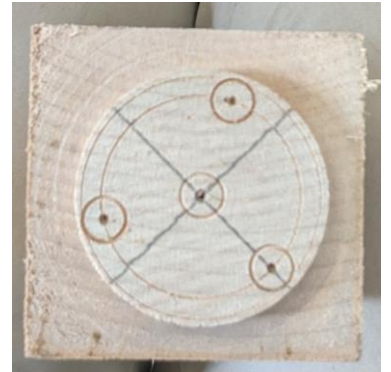
Box 2 – A Triangular Box

The next box Jason made was a three-sided shape, which is turned off-centre.



Marking out is important; first draw the diagonals to mark the centre, then draw a circle for the tenon to fit the chuck jaws. Draw another circle 4mm inside this circle and starting from one of the diagonals [divide this circle into 1/6ths](#). Mark the three alternate points. (Jason used ring centres to secure the piece, hence the four small circles. A ring centre gives a much more secure hold than a normal cone centre without the risk of splitting the timber.)

Both ends are marked the same, making sure the three points line up along the timber (if they do not, you will end up with a twist in the shape, which could make an interesting box if you want to experiment!)



The blank was pre-prepared by mounting between centres and turning a spigot on each end down to the outer circle and cutting into two pieces on the bandsaw about 1/3 of the way along.

Jason set a pair of callipers to the radius of the inner circle. This will be used to set the size of the box opening.



The smaller, lid piece was mounted in the chuck and the corners rounded off using a roughing gouge.

The front face was squared off and a circle marked using the callipers previously set.

Here Jason can be seen using a [depth gauge](#) to determine how deep to hollow the lid.



Hollowing out the lid, as per the previous box. Once again, a parallel sided recess was made where the lid will fit onto the base.



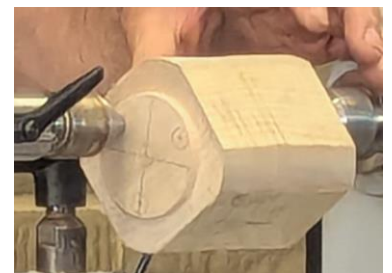
The larger, base piece was mounted in the chuck and the corners rounded off using a roughing gouge.

The front face was squared off and a spigot cut to give a good fit for the lid. The inside of the box can then be hollowed out.



The two parts of the box were fitted together and mounted between centres using one of the sets of off-centre marks.

Using a spindle roughing gouge, material was removed down to the chuck spigot, which served as a reference point.



This was repeated for the other two sets of off-centre marks.

The outside surfaces were then hand sanded using a sanding block and working through the grits. Jason used a set of callipers to check the thickness on each side; if any are too thick then further sanding may be required to make sure things look right whichever orientation the top is put on.

To further disguise any mismatch, a parting tool was used to remove the top edge of the base and make a small gap between the base and the top (see picture below).



The top was refitted to the base so that it could be given its final shape.



A jam chuck was used to reverse mount the base so that it could be cleaned up and shaped – the three corners were shaped into little feet.

To sand the bottom Jason once again used a set of locking forceps to hold the rolled-up abrasive and protect his fingers from the rotating feet.



Box 3 – A Gallery Piece Box

This piece is definitely a decorative item and not much use as an actual box. Each half is made in two pieces, so that the finial is turned as a separate section.



The timber was pre-prepared by mounting between centres, cutting a spigot on each end, then sawing the blank in half on the bandsaw.

The first half was mounted in the chuck and given a convex shape, leaving a flat area to be hollowed out for the box.



This piece was hollowed out to form the box “lid”, as previously described. A small flat area was cut on the front face so that the two halves will come together neatly.



The second piece was put in the chuck and a tenon formed to give a good fit into the lid. The outer part was given a convex shape to match the lid piece.

Here Jason is checking that both pieces have the same curvature.



The centre was hollowed out to the same depth as the lid, plus the height of the tenon.



Each piece in turn was reverse mounted in a jam chuck to shape the back, making sure the rim sections were even in thickness and the same on both pieces.

A small (3mm) tenon was made in the middle for fixing the finial.

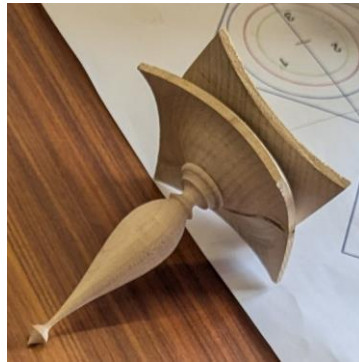


The finial can obviously be any shape you like – Jason had previously made one with a round ball instead of a finial.



To support the end of the finial whilst it was being turned, Jason used an [electrical terminal](#) with the metal insert removed, which fitted nicely into the [revolving centre for a pen mandrel](#).

To drill the hole for mounting the finial Jason slipped some pieces of garden hose over the pin jaws which protected the finial from damage when it was held in the chuck. The area around the hole was made concave to ensure a snug fit.



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