



Martock and District Woodturners Newsletter

September 2025

View From the Chair

Membership subscriptions are due again. As our members age, inevitably some will reach the stage where coming out on an evening is just too much effort, so without an influx of new members the club will slowly decline. I sometimes think that somehow the club needs to evolve in order to grow, and that just "turning the handle" does not suffice.

We are always looking for new members on the committee, especially newer members of the club who can offer a "worm's eye" perspective and maybe inject some new ideas and fresh enthusiasm. If you would like to get involved in the running of the club, please have a chat with any of the committee; there are no qualifications needed and proficiency in woodturning is definitely not a requirement!

Does anyone a regular user of Facebook? The club has a [Facebook page](#) which is useful to advertise the club and help new people find us, but we need someone to keep it up to date by regularly posting details of our events, etc. (which I frequently forget to do!).

If anyone is willing to take on this task please let me know.



Diary Dates

Sep 30 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Jason Breach – Competition Night
Oct 11 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles training room
Oct 28 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Paul Sweet
Nov 9 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles training room
Nov 25 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Colwin Way
Dec 6 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles training room
Dec 9 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Show and Tell

Competition



Next club night is a competition night, where the theme will be a bowl with a decorated rim.

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

Remember - only one piece per person! (You can still bring other pieces along for show, but only one can be selected as the competition entry.)

Reminder



Subscriptions for 2024/25 were due at the beginning of September

These will remain at £65 for the year to allow us to continue to bring you quality demonstrations most months.

Payment by bank transfer is preferred, and details will be sent out by email before the end of the month.

August Demonstration – Stephen Long



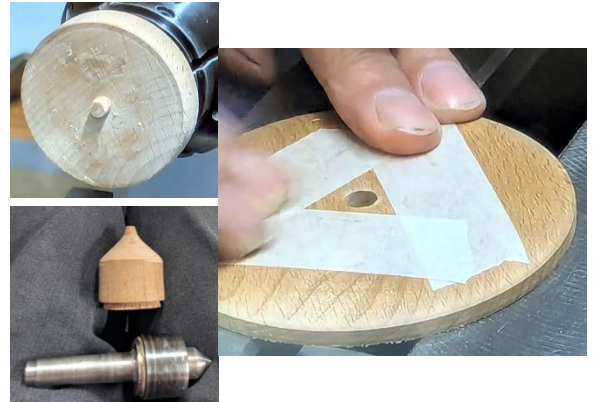
Stephen is the chairman of Woodbury Woodturners, just outside Exeter. During covid lockdown he bought a number of items to make into kitchen utensils, including a pizza cutter. He was very unimpressed with the quality of this item and decided to make an all wooden one. His process for this was the subject of the first demonstration.

The starting point for the wheel of the cutter was a piece of beech about 110mm square which had been resawn on the bandsaw to produce pieces 8mm thick. An 8mm hole was drilled through the centre and the corners removed on the bandsaw.



Two homemade adapters were made to mount the blank. The first was a plate that can be held in the chuck with an 8mm dowel protruding 4mm from the middle. The second was a wooden cone that fits over the live centre with an 8mm "point".

The blank was fixed to the plate using hot-melt glue, with some pieces of masking tape used to aid later removal.

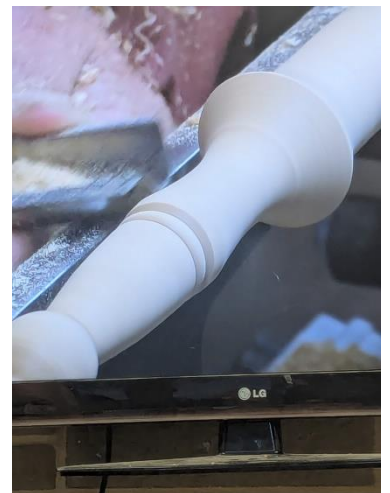
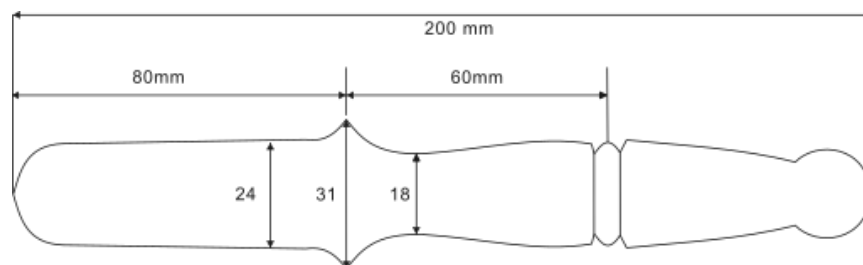


The blank was first turned to round with a diameter of 100mm, before removing the tailstock support to enable the front face to be cleaned up and outer 20mm shaped; the edge is reduced down to half the thickness of the blank. This face was then sanded.

The blank was then removed and remounted the other way round (after removing any glue from the mounting plate). This side was treated in the same manner. The disk should end up about 6mm thick in the centre.



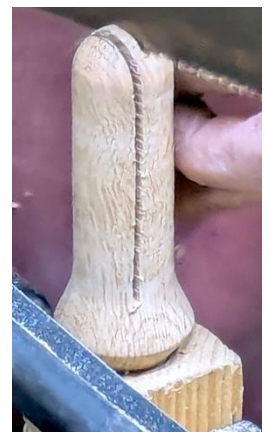
The handle was made from a spindle blank 40x40x210 mm. This was turned to the following shape and dimensions before being sanded and parted off.



To cut the slot, Steve held the handle in a jig made from a square piece of wood with a 22 mm hole down the centre. This was then cut in half and held together with elastic bands. Once in the jig, the handle can be held upright in a vice.

The slot is 6mm wide which Steve prefers to cut with a handsaw, then using a coping saw to cut along the bottom.

The slot was cleaned up using sanding paddles made of 4mm ply with sandpaper glued on the side.



An 8mm hole was drilled 15mm from the end. A piece of ply in the slot helped keep the handle level. The hole was drilled from both sides to prevent any breakout damaging the surface.



The parts are soaked overnight in finishing oil, drained off, wiped and left to dry.

The hole in the disk is enlarged slightly using rolled-up sandpaper and held in the handle by a piece of 8mm dowel that is glued in place.



For his second demonstration Steve made a wooden-bladed letter opener.

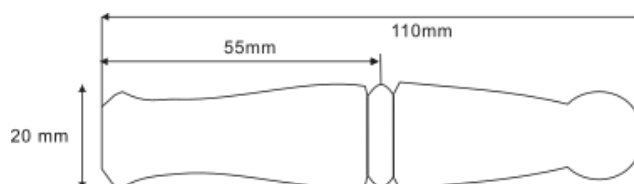


The handle was made from a spindle blank 25x25x120 mm. This was held in a chuck so that a 6mm hole could be drilled about 30mm deep in one end.

A homemade drive centre was then used to mount the blank between centres. This drive consisted of a piece of timber turned to match the morse taper of the lathe spindle, with a piece of 6mm metal rod glued in a hole at one end (epoxy the bar in the blank first, then hold the bar in the chuck to shape the morse taper).



The handle was turned to the following shape and dimensions before being sanded and parted off.



The blade was turned between centres from a blank 8x25x150 mm. Steve drew a line 30mm from the tailstock end for the length of the tang. The shaping was done using a beading and parting tool with the lathe running as fast as possible. Light cuts were needed to avoid dislodging the blank. The tang needs to be turned down to 6mm diameter.



Final shaping of blade was done using a homemade sanding disk held in the chuck.



Gallery

Here are items made by club members in recent weeks.



A shoehorn made by Phil O.

This ash and yew candle holder was also the work of Phil O.



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.

Coming up at Yandles



Timber of the Month – Tanga Tanga



Tanga tanga (*albizia versicolor* aka *albizia mossambicensis*) is a medium to large deciduous tree, often with a spreading crown, distributed throughout tropical Africa. The tree can grow to 100-130 ft (30-40 m) tall, with a trunk diameter of 2-3 ft (0.6-1 m).

Albizia is a genus of more than 160 species of mostly fast-growing subtropical and tropical trees and shrubs often with a short lifespan. They are commonly called silk plants, silk trees, or sirises. The genus occurs in all tropical areas - in Asia, Africa, Madagascar, America and Australia. Some species are considered weeds. The name honours the Italian nobleman Filippo degli Albizzi, who introduced *Albizia julibrissin* to Europe in the mid-18th century. For this reason they may be called albizzias (with a double 'z') although this spelling is now obsolete.

The heartwood is golden brown, frequently with bands of lighter and darker coloured wood. The sapwood is pale yellow. As with a lot of timbers the colour tends to darken with age. The grain is usually interlocked, with a coarse texture a good natural lustre. It is moderately easy to work, though the interlocked grain can cause tearout during surfacing operations. It turns, glues, and finishes well.

The seed pods from the tree contain a toxin called tetramethoxypyridoxine which can cause a disease known as albiziosis. Poisoning usually occurs in late winter when pods are blown off the trees and ingested by animals, resulting in a variety of neurological symptoms progressing to death. For this reason it is sometimes called Poison-pod albizia.

Albizia stands as one of the few genera with a distribution spanning different continents where the heartwood of all species consistently fluoresces under UV light.

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 <mailto:newsletter@madturners.co.uk>.

Thanks, Dave H