



Martock and District Woodturners Newsletter

October 2025

View From the Chair

With last month's competition piece out of the way, I thought it was time to tidy up the workshop. I didn't get very far before more urgent tasks started piling up, so apart from moving things out of the corners in order to remove some of the accumulated sawdust and cobwebs, I think the place is in a worse mess than when I started. Maybe next month I'll find some time to carry on!

With the clocks changing this weekend it definitely feels like the year is drawing to a close. With only 62 days to Christmas it is time to start thinking about those presents...

I hope the darker nights don't stop too many of you coming along on club nights; at least the weather is still fairly mild.



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61568477045030>

If anyone is willing to take on the maintenance of this page please let me know.



Website: <https://madturners.co.uk/>



If you would like to join the club's WhatsApp group, please follow this link:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/Ir6ZZSOyuRmLh3Mc3ajwFf>

Diary Dates

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

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.

September Demonstration – Jason Breach



Jason is a regular visitor to our club. This time he explained the process of thread-chasing by making an acorn box with a threaded lid.

Jason started with a piece of cherry mounted between centres, which was turned down to a cylinder and a spigot made on one end to fit the chuck jaws. This will be used for the acorn cup.

Whilst working between centres, a piece of boxwood was turned down to a cylinder and a spigot made on one end to fit the chuck jaws. This will be used for the acorn “seed”.

Jason always likes to make the more difficult internal thread first, so the cherry blank was mounted in the chuck and the front face cleaned up. The diameter of the opening was scribed on the face and a spindle gouge was used to drill a hole in the centre to the desired depth.

Jason used a bowl gouge to hollow out the centre, under cutting the rim but making sure the opening was kept to the marked size.

To finish the inside shape Jason had a couple of possible tools. The first was an undercut scraper shown here. This is a Henry Taylor HS49 (which they no longer make although Hamlet sell something similar); the profile has been somewhat reshaped by Jason over time.

The second was a home-made tool consisting of a circular HSS cutter attached to a piece of square steel bar. Note that the cutter is fixed to the bottom part of the bar, which Jason believes makes it more stable and easier to control. The top of the cutter was given a slight negative rake using a CBN wheel.



With the hollowing is complete it is time to cut the thread. Before doing this, Jason sanded and sealed the inside and applied a coat of wax; thin CA glue will be used later to harden the fibres and the wax will prevent the glue from staining.

Jason then made sure that the inside edge was square and made a small chamfer on the front corner using a skew chisel flat on the toolrest – this chamfer provides the surface on which the thread will be started.

Thread chasers come in pairs – an angled internal thread chaser and a square-ended external thread chaser. For most purposes a thread of 16-20 tpi is best. They can be sharpened using a diamond card at a slight angle on the top surface.



The speed needs to be reduced right down to 300-500 rpm. Cutting should be done just below centre. When starting the cut do not try to use the first few teeth of the tool. Stroke the tool across the corner. Once the thread has been established the tool will be pulled along by it, so all that is needed is a bit of sideways pressure to deepen the thread. Progressively move the tool round so that it is cutting parallel to the lathe bed. Before completing the full depth of the thread, clean any dust out of the inside and apply a coat of thin CA to harden the timber (do not use an accelerator as this can turn the glue white).



Most of the outside shaping can now be completed. The area next to the thread where the two parts of the box will mate needs to be flat.

Finally, Jason added a small 45° bevel on the inside edge to soften the start of the thread and make it easier to engage when the lid is screwed on.

Most of the top could now be sanded and the inside buffed up.

Before removing the piece from the chuck Jason marked the location of the number 1 jaw so that the piece can be remounted in the exact same orientation if necessary.



The piece of boxwood is remounted in the chuck and a shoulder turned down to be about 2.5mm bigger than the threaded opening in the acorn cup. This ensures there will be enough timber to make the thread.



Before starting to cut the thread, a thin parting tool is used to make a groove at the back of the shoulder to create a run-out area – this will allow the threading tool to be disengaged before it hits the shoulder. A small chamfer is created on the front of the area to be threaded, which is where the thread will be started.

Once again the speed needs to be reduced right down to 300-500 rpm – the exact speed is not important. Start by cutting at an angle across the front corner and avoid using the first few teeth. As the thread progresses bring the tool round to straighten it up and cut the full width of the thread, disengaging it before it hits the shoulder. The action is a sort of circular motion, dropping the tool handle to make the cut, lifting it to disengage and swinging it back to the start. It is important to make light cuts.

Once the thread is cut it can be tested against the other part. Initially the two parts will not fit, or the fit will be tight, so the top of the thread is turned away. The remaining thread can then be cut deeper. This process is repeated until a good fit is achieved (it may be necessary to deepen the groove at the back as well).

The two parts were screwed together whilst still in the chuck and bottom of the acorn cup finished off.

The bulk of the waste was removed with a thin parting tool, and the end of the cup shaped with a bowl gouge to leave a small “stalk” at the end.

The top was then sanded and finished before being unscrewed and put to one side.

The outside diameter of the boxwood piece was reduced to suitable thickness and the inside hollowed out. Hollowing followed the previous process of drilling a hole with a spindle gouge and enlarging this hole using a bowl gouge and scraper.

The inside was then sanded and finished.

The length of the thread was reduced so that only a couple of turns were needed to screw the two pieces together and a small 45° bevel added to the outside corner to soften the start of the thread. Jason began the shaping of the outside of the acorn nut, before parting it off slightly long.



To finish the bottom of the acorn nut, Jason used the timber remaining in the chuck by turning a recess slightly smaller in diameter than the threaded portion of the nut. He then proceeded to chase an internal thread in which to remount the nut. The end portion was shaped with a bowl gouge and small pip was formed on the very end. The piece was then sanded and a finish applied.

Jason used a buffing wheel with brown compound to polish the surface before changing the wheel and applying a coat of carnauba wax.



A finished box

Gallery & Competition Results

Here are the competition results as well as any other items made by club members in recent weeks.



Entry 1 – Andy R (Intermediate) – Score 6.4



Entry 2 – Dave H (Seasoned) – Score 9.0



Entry 3 – Mark M (Intermediate) – Score 6.8



Entry 4 – Charlie W (Seasoned) – Score 7.4



Entry 5 – Phil O (Seasoned) – Score 6.0



Entry 6 – Tony R (Seasoned) – Score 9.4



Entry 7 – Rod P (Expert) – Score 8.8



Entry 19 – Nick C (Intermediate) – Score 8.2



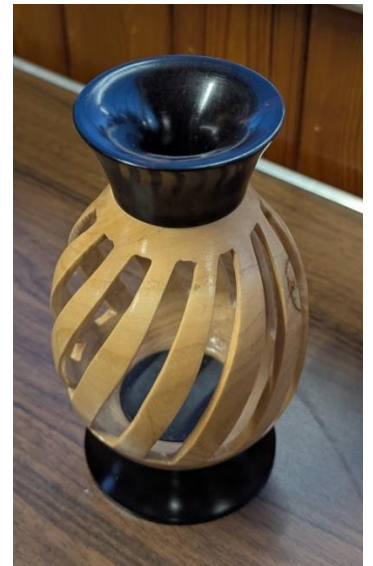
Entry 20 – Richard D (Intermediate) – Score 4.3



Entry 10 – Dave A (Expert) – Score 7.8



Entry 8 – Steve A (Seasoned) – Score 6.6



Two pieces by 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 – Wild Mango



Wild Mango (*Cordia Africana*) is a deciduous African tree that grows up to 25 m (82 ft) tall, with a diameter up to 2.2 m (7 ft 3 in). It has a large, spreading crown. It is found in large river valleys and coastal swampy evergreen forest along the eastern parts of central and southern Africa. It is also known as Mtondo, African Mango or Bush Mango.

The mature bark is rough, dark brown and fissured. The upward-facing flowers are without petals and are nectar-filled, attracting a wide variety of birds.

The tree was first described from Portuguese East Africa by the Jesuit priest João de Loureiro (1710–1791), who spent time as a missionary, but was also a naturalist and mathematician.

The heartwood is light golden-brown to pale yellowish in colour, often with attractive streaks or variations that give it a unique character; it is reasonably distinct from the 5 - 8cm wide band of pale yellow sapwood. The wood is moderately dense, with a fine, even texture, making it suitable for carving, furniture making, and decorative items. Though not as hard as some tropical woods, Wild Mango is easy to work with, finishes well, and can be used for both indoor furniture and artisanal pieces, often used for making African drums. It is valued for its sustainability, often sourced from responsibly managed forests.

Locally, the tree is harvested from the wild for its edible fruit as well as timber. It is sometimes planted for shade and along the sides of avenues. The fruit is rich in vitamin C and is sought after by many mammals, including elephants. The cooked fruits have an unpleasant smell and only tend to be eaten by old people except in times of hunger. A gum resin exudes from the bark and is used mixed with water to make a kind of whitewash for houses.

Your Committee

Dave Horner (<i>Chairman</i>)	chairman@madturners.co.uk
Andy Rossall (<i>Treasurer</i>)	treasurer@madturners.co.uk
Ray Fraser (<i>Communications Secretary</i>)	secretary@madturners.co.uk
Caroline Murray-Gourlay (<i>Minutes Secretary</i>)	
Colin Churchill (<i>Hands-On Co-ordinator</i>)	
Steve Aldred (<i>Committee member</i>)	
Graham Winter (<i>Committee member</i>)	

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