



Martock and District Woodturners Newsletter

November 2025

View From the Chair

Around this time every year it is always a concern/relief to see how many/few members decide not to renew their membership. I was hearing of a conversation with Jason Breach where he was saying that club membership seems to be falling generally with a number of clubs closing down. Yet woodturning as a hobby is as popular as ever, with no shortage of people attending courses. How to persuade some of these new turners that club membership offers one of the best ways to improve their skills and form new friendships is a conundrum – if anyone has any ideas or suggestions, please pass them on!

Our next club night (November 25th) falls on St Catherine's day. As some of you may know, Catherine is the patron saint of woodturners, seen here as she appears on the crest of the Worshipful Company of Turners. Of course, because of her association with the wheel, she has become patron of just about everyone that uses something that rotates - knife grinders, knife sharpeners, mechanics, millers, potters, spinners, spinsters and woodturners to name a few.



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

Nov 25 th	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Colwin Way
Dec 6 th	Hands-on – 10am, Yandles training room
Dec 9 th	Show and Tell – competition night
There will be no hands-on in January	
Jan 27 th 2026	Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – AGM

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.

Competition



December club night is a competition night, where the theme will be Christmas.

Bring something for the competition, along with your show-and-tell piece.

Remember - only one piece per person can be entered into the competition

October Demonstration – Paul Sweet



Paul is another regular demonstrator at the club, and can usually be found selling his wares at the Yandles Craft fairs. One of his best-selling lines is the resin and timber thermal mug which was the subject of his demonstration.



The blank is formed by taking a gnarly piece of timber (in this case acacia), cutting out a section on the bandsaw to fit in a mould and filling up the mould with resin. The mould is about 95mm in diameter by 160mm tall.



The mug insert is obtained by purchasing a cheap mug from [Proper Job](#) and removing the outer casing. This can be done by prising off the bottom plastic section and gripping the metal casing with a pair of pliers and pulling it out (some force may be needed!).



The blank was held on the lathe using a large set of gripper jaws. Tailstock support was added for safety.



The first stage was to turn the blank to round and remove any excess resin to leave the timber section exposed. Paul used the [Hunter Tools Hercules](#) carbide cutter which he has found best at cutting resin.

Do not be too aggressive or the resin will chip out.

Richard Chiswell pointed out that Glenn Teagle at [UK Woodcraft](#) sells a good range of carbide tools and replacement cutters at very reasonable prices.



Using a parting tool, Paul cut a tenon on the end of the blank so that the piece can be reverse mounted.

Normally it is not advised to turn a tenon in the resin as it is brittle and can break off, especially on a large, heavy bowl blank. With this smaller piece it is generally safe, especially with tailstock support for most of the turning.

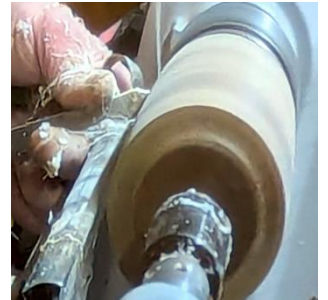


With the blank reversed, Paul removed the remaining excess resin to fully expose the wood and started to do some of the shaping.



The end nearest the tailstock was partially cleaned up to provide a reference for later measurements.

The parting tool was used to reduce the base diameter to about 67mm to fit in a standard cup holder; the position of the base was determined by allowing a required 120mm internal depth.



With the base defined, Paul set about shaping the outside of the mug.



The top of the mug needs to be 82mm (although check this measurement if you are making your own in case the dimensions have changed).

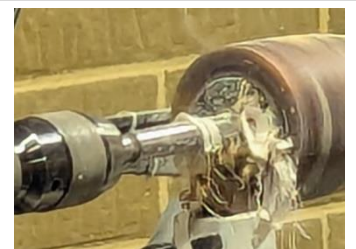
The outside was then made slightly oversized and will be finished later.



The middle was drilled out in two stages. The first stage was to drill down to the required depth (120mm) using a large engineering drill (~25mm ?).



With a large part of the waste removed, the hole can be enlarged to 55mm using a [sawtooth bit](#) without risking it overheating.



A 3-4mm tenon was turned to fit under the top rim of the mug insert (where the original metal casing used to fit).

The outside was then turned down closer to the required diameter.



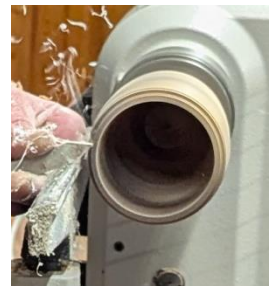
The inside was hollowed out initially with the Hercules cutter and later with a [Jason Breach box cutter](#).

Paul uses a small magnet on the shaft of the tool as a depth mark so that he doesn't catch the bottom when working the inside.

There needs to be some room around the mug insert to allow it to be glued in.



The lip was adjusted to be a snug fit under the rim of the mug and the outside turned down to its finished size (at home Paul has an insert that he accidentally broke the handle off which he can hold in place with the tailstock to use as an accurate guide for the finished size).

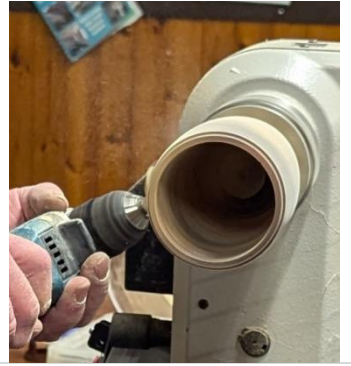


Paul used a bowl gouge to shear-scrape the outside and give a good finish on the timber part of the mug.



Sanding was done using an electric drill (corded preferable to cordless), being careful not to generate excessive heat that will melt the resin. Paul only sands from 180 to 320 grit and then applies lacquer – if you want to polish the surface you need to sand to at least 1000 grit to remove all the scratches.

Paul will apply 3 coats of spray gloss or melamine lacquer, leaving to harden and then cutting back with Tripoli compound between each application. After a fourth coat, the piece will be left to harden completely before cutting back with Tripoli and polishing with carnauba wax.



Paul uses a special former to hold the piece whilst the base is finished off. Multiple layers of electrical tape are used to accommodate the actual inside shape and ensure a snug fit.



Cleaning up the base, which is finished by power sanding to remove the final nub. The insert is glued in place using [CT1](#) or [Sticks Like Sh*t](#), applying a bead of adhesive about 2/3 of the way down.



Gallery

Here are some items made by club members in recent weeks.



Resin bowl by Steve A



Dave A turned this bowl



An apology – last month I wrongly attributed this wooden rattle to Phil O.
It was in fact made by Richard D.

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 – Xylia (Sand Ash)



Sand ash (*Xylia torreana*) is a small to medium-sized deciduous tree, 6–15 m tall, with an upright habit, often multi-stemmed, with an oval to spreading crown. The tree is found growing naturally in Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa. It is also known as Hairy sand ash or Zambezi ash.

The name *Xylia* is derived from the Greek word *xylon*, meaning ‘wood’, which refers to its strong, hard, timber. This species is named after Antonio Rocha da Torre (1904–1995), a Portuguese botanist who collected plants in Mozambique and Angola in the 1940s and 1950s. *Xylia* is a small genus of nine species in the legume family (*Fabaceae*), with six species that occur in Africa south of the Sahara, two in Madagascar and one in tropical Asia.

The heartwood is dark red with darker purple brown streaks and lighter curly bands. It is extremely durable. Sand ash timber can be used to make furniture because of its hardness and durability. It is also good for turning and carving, and is used to make artworks. Tools need to be sharp and it sands to a fine finish, takes varnish and glues well.

The *Fabaceae* family is the second largest family of medicinal plants, containing more than 490 species which are being used as traditional medicine. Tests have shown that *Xylia torreana* is a promising candidate for the development of useful antimicrobial/antioxidant preparations with a low cytotoxicity that may be useful in promoting animal health and productivity.

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