



# Martock and District Woodturning Club

## Newsletter

April 2026

### From the Chair

Sometimes there are so many things on the job list that you can feel guilty being in the workshop doing some turning, so it is nice when they coincide. This week I spent a day making and painting finials for the end of some curtain poles, so that is another job ticked off.

As a club we are always looking for new members, either through word of mouth or by advertising the club. In June Ash village will be holding a fete on the recreation ground and the club has been asked to take part, which will be a good opportunity to attract some local people. Unfortunately I am booked to be away that weekend, but I do hope as many members as possible will support the event.



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

|                       |                                               |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| May 26 <sup>th</sup>  | Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Bryan Milham |
| June 13 <sup>th</sup> | Hands-on – 10am, Yandles Training Room        |
| June 20 <sup>th</sup> | Ash Village Fete, Ash Recreation Ground       |
| June 30 <sup>th</sup> | Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Paul Hannaby |
| July 28 <sup>th</sup> | Club night – 7pm, Ash Pavilion – Mike Parsons |

### Competition Time



The club competition will be at the club meeting on June 30<sup>th</sup>), where the theme will be birds and animals.

## April Club Night – Jason Breech

As a regular visitor to the club, Jason is always having to come up with new ideas for his demonstrations. This month he chose a box with an off-centre top and base.



With the blank mounted between centres, turned to round and a tenon cut on each end to fit the chuck jaws.



After deciding which end should be the lid (by considering the grain and other features to show off on the body), Jason used a thin parting tool to separate the two parts about 2/5<sup>th</sup> of the way along the blank.



A ¼ inch spindle gouge was used to “drill” a depth hole. The inside of the lid was then hollowed out. The inside was given a round profile – the first one he made had a square profile which he manage to cut into when shaping the top ☹.

The final shape was refined using a round-nose scraper.



The inside was sanded. Jason then cut a recess with the point of a skew which will be used to hold the lid on the box body, then applied a coat of sanding sealer and a wax finish.



Jason then did some work on the outside of the lid to define the thickness at the join.



The lid was put to one side and the body blank put into the chuck. The size of the lid opening was measured and transferred to the end of the body.



A spigot was turned on the end of the body and carefully trimmed down to size to make the lid a good fit.



With the lid in place and the tailstock providing support, the outside shape was completed.



The body was hollowed out in the same manner as the lid. The inside was then sanded and finished with sanding sealer and wax.

A small recess was made with a parting tool to create a “shadow line” between the lid and the body.



For the next stage, Jason used a piece of scrap timber that had a centre line drawn on each end and across one side. Two points were also defined – one at the centre and the other offset by 12mm in the same direction on each end.



This blank was then mounted between centres and turned to a cylinder. A tenon was then turned on one end to fit a set of wide jaws, and a slightly smaller tenon cut in front of it.



The blank was then mounted between the offset points and the smaller tenon turned down to fit the smaller (Axminster 'C') jaws, leaving a large tenon with a smaller, offset tenon on the end.



This blank was then reversed into the set of large jaws (using the outside tenon) and another tenon formed on the end to make a jam chuck to hold the lid.

With the box assembled, Jason lined up the grain and decided where to put the offset on the lid. This was marked with one edge of a piece of masking tape and a dot used to indicate this edge. When the lid was fitted on the jam chuck, this edge was lined up with the centre line still showing on the scrap wood.



The jam chuck was then mounted in the small-jawed chuck using the offset tenon and the tailstock brought up for support.



The top of the lid was shaped using a gouge to remove all the flat areas on the side (a piece of white paper on the lathe bed helps see the shape when doing offset turning).

This was then sanded. The tailstock was then removed and the speed reduced to allow the remaining nub to be carefully pared away.

A shallow recess was drilled to take a small decorative insert. Jason makes the inserts from exotic timbers using a plug cutter in a pillar drill to match the drill used to make the recess.



The insert (in this case desert ironwood) was glued in place and the lid removed.



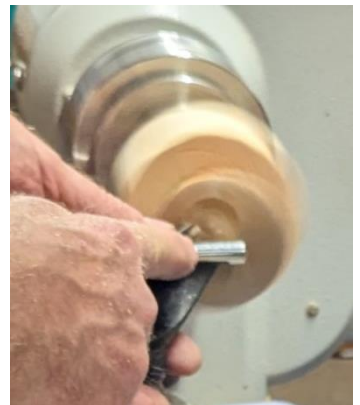
The scrap piece was then put back in the large chuck and the tenon removed to be replaced with a recess to hold the spigot which is on the top of the base.

The edge of the masking tape on the base was lined up with the centre line again, although in this case it is the opposite side of the line.



The scrap piece was transferred to the smaller-jawed chuck using the offset tenon and the bottom of the base shaped as was the top.

After sanding and removing the nub a small flat or hollow was made in the base for the box to stand on.



The outside was given a polish and wax using a buffing wheel.



## Gallery

Here is where we display any items made by club members in recent weeks.



**“Viking Sunset Bowl” by Dave H**



**Timber from Charlie W, turned by Dave A, decorated by Dave H**

Please send photographs of anything you have made to [newsletter@madturners.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@madturners.co.uk), or better still bring them along on a club night to put on the inspiration table for all to admire.

## Stick Carving with Phil C

Club member Phil, who is an experienced wood carver, was cajoled into leading a stick carving day at Dave P's house.

Phil supplied a number of rough cut blanks in the form of swans, hares and dogs as well as some finished examples he had made (shown here). Dave had sourced some hazel sticks. And with these we all set to work.

Hopefully there will be some of our hard labour on display on the inspiration table at the next club meeting!



Starting work, sitting outside Dave's workshop.





Individual pieces start to take shape



Enjoying lunch in the tranquility of the garden

## Timber of the Month – Red Alder



The Red Alder (*Alnus rubra*), is a deciduous broadleaf tree native to western North America. It is the largest species of alder in North America and one of the largest in the world, reaching heights of 20 - 30 m (65 - 100 ft) with a diameter of 25 - 50 centimetres (10 – 20 in). It is a fast-growing tree with a graceful habit, and can live to about 60 years of age before being seriously afflicted by heart rot. Other common names are Californian red alder, Oregon alder and tag alder. It was introduced to Britain before 1880 and has received periodic attention in species trials where it initially grows well but can quickly decline so has little commercial value. It is usually found in the UK as an ornamental species.

Red Alder is a versatile and sustainable timber, with a uniform texture and a pleasant but not outstanding figure. The heartwood, which is not clearly separable from the sapwood, is light-tan to red-brown in colour and reddens with age. It is a fairly straight-grained wood, ideal for a variety of uses. The timber is easy to work with both hand and machine tools; it sands easily and turns, glues, and finishes well.

Typical uses include veneer, plywood, furniture, cabinetry, millwork, pallets, musical instruments (electric guitar bodies), and chip/pulp wood.

The tree found many uses by Native Americans. A russet dye can be made from a decoction of the bark and was used to dye fishing nets to make them less visible underwater. The bark was used to treat poison oak reactions, insect bites, skin irritations, and open wounds and recent clinical studies have shown that red alder contains various compounds that are effective against a variety of tumours. The burning timber produces an oily smoke which works well for smoking salmon.

Red alder can be used by scientists in biomonitoring to locate areas prone to ozone pollution, as the leaves react to the presence of high ozone levels by developing red to brown or purple discolorations.

## **Don't Forget to Use Your Club Discounts**

Just present your club membership card (it may be worth checking beforehand whether a discount will apply to your intended purchase).



10% off most items, except power tools.



10% off all timber and finishes

## **Your Committee**

Dave Horner (*Chairman*)

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Andy Rossall (*Treasurer*)

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Ray Fraser (*Communications Secretary*)

secretary@madturners.co.uk

Colin Churchill (*Hands-On Co-ordinator*)

Steve Aldred (*Committee member*)

David Parnell (*Committee member*)

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