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Editor's Comments

The AGM will take place during the November meeting, and the necessary documents will be distributed at the October meeting, and posted to those not attending that meeting. It is important that you, the members elect the officers and committee that you want, and not leave it to somebody else to do it. Please consider carefully who you wish to represent you, and make the proper proposals having secured the agreement of the person whom you wish to propose, and also another member to second him or her.

At the September meeting, Adrian Needham, the present Chairman, announced that both he and Mike Collas, the present Secretary, would not be standing for re-election. He was concerned that members might think that this signified a rift in the present Committee, but as he explained as he is also currently Treasurer for AWGB, and Mike Collas is the Secretary for AWGB, they were both faced with not being able to do justice to those jobs and also to similar positions with MWA. They both felt that MWA is in extremely good health, and that their commitment to AWGB could safely take priority. Adrian said that the present MWA committee is in very good shape, and the appointment of a new Chairman and a new Secretary would strengthen it by introducing fresh approaches to its work. The outgoing committee will propose Tony Champion to be the new Chairman, but it will make no proposal for Secretary. Nomination for that position will be up to the members to decide.

To ensure continuity, Richard Bird, the current Treasurer, who had earlier said that he would stand down, has decided to offer himself for re-election for a further year.

With a current membership of 114, it should be possible to fill the various positions. Please give some thought to whom you wish to nominate as officers and committee members, and submit your nominations to the Secretary in good time. All positions must be voted for at the AGM. Please do not assume that current holders will serve for another year. They will all need to be nominated if you wish them to continue.

And another thing: Please **DO NOT** pay your AWGB subscription direct to AWGB. It is included with your MWA subscription, and the Club forwards it to AWGB.

Alan

August Workshop Evening

Two lathes were set up, and Stuart King and Tony Champion each demonstrated two very different ways of finishing their work. Tony began with the preparation of a bowl prior to polishing. The secret of a flawless finish is in meticulous sanding through the grades of abrasives. Good tool techniques should allow sanding to begin with 120 grit. It is important to sand with the shape, not to the shape; i. e sanding should not be used as a shaping tool. Progressing through the grades, it is important to keep the abrasives on the move to avoid deep ring shaped scratches forming. Should any such scratches appear, it is necessary to go back a grade or two in order to sand them out. How far along the grades one should go depends upon the wood. Very fine grained wood needs very fine abrasive, such as 400 grit through 600 and even 1200 grit. Coarse grained wood, does not benefit from the very fine abrasives.

Tony chose a sealed and waxed finish for his bowl. Fast drying cellulose based sealer was applied, allowed to soak in for a few moments, and then the surplus wiped off. As another well known turner once put it: "You want the sealer in the wood, not on it." After drying, any 'nibs' should be removed with very fine steel wool, or preferably fine "Webrax" abrasive pads.

From this point Tony used a technique used in metal finishing. He produced a buffing kit marketed by Beall, an American firm. This comprised a tapering threaded spindle, to be held in the chuck via an adaptor (other versions plug into the Morse taper of the lathe spindle), a set of three disc shaped cotton mops which could be screwed in turn onto the spindle, and a set of two abrasive blocks, plus a Carnuba wax block to complete the outfit.

Removing the bowl from the chuck, Tony set up the taper spindle and mounted the first mop. This was a stitched mop made of relatively coarse

cotton fabric. The lathe speed was set at anything between 1200 and 2000 R.P.M. A new mop should be conditioned by pressing a sharp edge, such as an old file against it as it revolves to open up its surface. If this produces a lot of loose threads, these may be burnt off with a flame. With the mop spinning, Tony applied the first brown abrasive block, (known as "Tripoli" from the source of the very fine sand used as its abrasive). With the mop now loaded, he pressed the exterior of the bowl against it, moving it in an upward direction against the rotation of the mop, so as to progressively polish the whole of its surface. He took care not to let the rim of the bowl catch on the mop. The mop can damage sharp edges and other detail on the work piece. Care in the presentation of the work to the mop will reduce the chances of that happening. Think about it!

The improved finish of the bowl was apparent at this stage. Next Tony mounted the unstitched coarser fabric mop, and went through the process again but with a white abrasive block commonly known as "Diamond White". This contains a superfine synthetic abrasive which produced a superb smooth finish. Finally Tony mounted the third mop, which is made of very fine cotton. (a "Swansdown" mop). He loaded this mop with a brief touch of the Carnuba wax block, and again applied the bowl to it. The result was a truly superlative finish, which is durable as well as good looking. The hard wax finish has the advantage that it can always be restored if damaged.

Beall supplies special mushroom shaped mops for getting into the interiors of bowls etc. These are used in exactly the same way as the regular mops, but require more care and skill in use if a 'catch' is to be avoided. Using these, Tony quickly polished the interior of his bowl to a high standard. Very impressive!

August Workshop contd.

To round off, Tony stressed how important it was to avoid cross contamination between the three mops and the abrasives. Each mop should be kept in its own polythene bag, and each abrasive, and the wax, should also be kept each in its own bag.

Stuart King took the second session. Stuart constantly looks for alternative ways of presenting his turned work. One line he has been following is the use of iridescent metallic colours for decorating turned work, and it was this he concentrated on for this evening. He had prepared some small pots beforehand, and took us through the procedure for maximising the effects of these colours. The finish on the pots did not need to be as smooth as for bare wood, and he did not use the very fine grits. Metallic colours do not show up well on bare wood, so the first task was to paint the pots all over with matt black acrylic paint. Stuart uses standard artist's acrylic colours. They are quick drying, and heavily pigmented. Any nibs seen after painting could easily be levelled with fine steel wool, leaving a matt surface. He had a few metallic colours with him, and proceeded to demonstrate the very fine effects which

could be achieved on the black surface. Only simple equipment was required. just brushes, kitchen paper, and an artist's palette. In fact one of the best effects was made using a finger instead of a brush. Acrylics dry quickly, enabling over painting to be tried, and the colours mix well. Partial mixing can make a subtle striped effect possible. Acrylics are durable, but if thought necessary, the finished work may be sealed by a coat of acrylic sealer. Stuart emphasised that only the best quality materials should be used to obtain the best results and good durability. It was an eye opener to see the sparkling effects obtained by simple means, guided by a good artist's eye.

A note from the Editor Both lathes had a safety screen fitted, but unfortunately these made photography difficult for my small auto-focus camera, and I did not get any good pictures. Unfortunately, a DSLR costs more than my pension can stand! On reviewing the evening, the Committee realised that the video camera etc. should have been deployed to make it easier for members to see what was going on. The lesson has been learned, and we shall endeavour to use it on other similar occasions.

Les Thorne

Les Thorne was our demonstrator in September. Les is a natural teacher who also entertains his audience. He said that he would demonstrate the making of a bowl, but this was to be no ordinary bowl. As we would see, it was to be decorated with colour and carving. Les does not just demonstrate things. He uses his demonstration as the foundation of solid teaching concerning all aspects of the task in hand.

He began by discussing the best types of wood for the project. It should be pale in colour, and

fine grained. If it was an easy to work timber, that was a bonus. He had a suitable blank, which he proceeded to rough out into a bowl. As he worked, he produced a stream of information about different grinds, where and why they should be used, ways of presenting the cutting edge to the wood, what could go wrong, and why..... The list just went on and on, and everything was demonstrated, including mistakes that could happen, and what to do about them when they did. There was advice for everyone, from beginners to experts.

Contd.

Les Thorne contd.



Les did not spend much time on sanding, though he would have preferred to get a better finish, given more time. However, a very workmanlike finish was achieved in quick time, and he proceeded with the decoration.

Carving with the Arbortek cutter in an angle grinder is not for the inexperienced or the apprehensive turner. The machine is, frankly, dangerous, as the cutter is largely unguarded. Les used decisive strokes to carve the pattern shown in the picture into the outside of the bowl. Slight whiskering was easily removed by light sanding. Carving continued across the rim of the bowl, and into the inside of the bowl. Les had turned a small recess where the inside of the bowl met the rim to delineate the carving. After a light sanding it was



time to apply colours. Les uses spirit (Meths) stains, and these will leach through a surprising thickness of wood, especially the end

grain, so it was necessary to seal the surface of the wood with sanding sealer. This done, Les sprayed the carved surfaces of bowl with black Cellulose. He protected the lathe with a polythene sheet while doing this.

Once the cellulose was thoroughly dry, careful sanding removed it from the peaks of the carving, while leaving it in the troughs. A little careful turning and sanding dealt with the inside of the bowl, and after blowing off the dust, the bowl was ready for colouring. Les applied green spirit stain sparingly with the pump-spray, then when it was dry, sanded off any over-spray. The finished bowl could again be sprayed with sealer once the colour had dried. Les had made a very attractive bowl from a fairly nondescript piece of wood, and using a machine for the carving made the job quite quick to do.



As he worked, Les answered questions, and produced such a stream of information that your scribe could not hope to record it all, and all the time, his natural wit and banter kept us all in extremely good spirits. Not many demonstrations are as good as this one was!

MINI-GALLERY

