

November 2019 - Colwin Way

We were delighted to welcome Colwin back to our club and he offered us a number of demo alternatives on which we voted as follows ...

Pod

This was a greenwood turning project which had us on the edge of our seats as the thickness of the stem got increasingly narrow!

- Starting with an about 3" diameter wet log of unknown origin mounted between centres and with the lathe at about 1200rpm Colwin removed the bark up to about 3" and turned a spigot.
- Remounted on the spigot and the front face cleaned up the centre was opened out to a depth of about 30mm and then the outside shaped to match to create translucence using a hand torch to check progress.



- The tailstock was then re-introduced with paper packing for protection, bark removed and the stem diameter carefully reduced using the bottom edge of a bowl gouge.

Top Tip 1 - once down to thinness don't turn the lathe off as the torque generated as a result of start/stop will cause breakage.

- The base was shaped with a spindle gouge
- To part off the base, remove the tailstock to prevent 'whiplash' and support lightly by hand on the stem





Pendant

Colwin explained that he uses a combination of wood and resin to make attractive pendants and lights etc. He showed examples of some blanks and the processes involved. However, to demonstrate the making of a pendant with an offset hole he used a laburnum blank of about 50mm diameter and 4mm thickness which had been sliced on a bandsaw.

- The blank had a small beech spindle hot glued to one side and this was mounted in appropriate sized chuck jaws
- The outside edge was turned down to round with a small gouge with the lathe running at 1800rpm
- The front face was then tidied up with a slight convex curve, scraped with a skew and then sanded 150,240,400,600
- The pendant was then reversed and mounted in a set of wood jaws made to take a variety of diameters and the beech spindle turned away



- This side of the pendant was then shaped, scraped and sanded as above
- After remounting on offset jaws an 8mm hole was drilled completely through and then the hole opened out with a bowl gouge and sanded
- Reverse onto the offset jaws and use the same 8mm drill to centre the other side, open out the hole and sand as before
- Finally buff up at about 1400rpm



Christmas Carousel

The final demonstration was the making of a Christmas Carousel. Colwin showed the making of one of each of the components - the complete piece would take of the order of 2 days!

The dimensions and construction guide were fully described in a 2-part article in the Nov & Dec Woodturning magazine issues 311/312.



Top Tip 1 - make all the constituent parts a tightish fit so that the carousel can be disassembled after Christmas for safe storage during the year

Top Tip 2 - run all appropriate pieces through a thickness planar

Top Tip 3 - to decorate the candle holders use a thread chaser tpo get an evenly spaced design

Top Tip 4 - when tidying thin pieces turn inwards from the edges to avoid breakout

Top Tip 5 - when drilling the centre column with the fine drill - drill slowly and constantly remove the swarf from the drill to minimise drift which would seriously affect the rotating ability of the shaft

Top Tip 6 - when drilling the 12 holes in the edge of the centre boss use a drill jig mounted in the toolrest post and the indexing facility on the lathe

The speed with which Colwin demonstrated the making of the parts was breathtaking!. I suspect that duplicating the parts to get a matching set was possibly not as quick and like all such tasks, accuracy in preparing the blanks is key.

Thanks to Colwin for a fascinating and very instructive evening from a superb demonstrator.

David Langan