WEST SUSSEX WOODTURNERS

NOVEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

An Associated Club of the AWGB

Ian opened the meeting without audio aids as the system in the hall appears not to be working at the present moment.
Leeside Tools in Yapton is closing down and is offering discounts on some items.
Next month is a member led day and the committee is looking for volunteers. Terry Hooper will be doing Christmas trees (turning them not selling full grown trees). We should also have the sharpening station open as well.

This month we have as a guest professional turner, Richard Findley, who visited last in February 2016. Richard is mainly a production turner but is also well known for his excellent articles in Woodturning magazine.

He was going to kick off a table leg with a twist. Most of his work is spindle turning and he has 3 main tools. A Spindle Roughing gouge ground to about 45 degrees. A standard Spindle gouge with a fingernail grind at about 35 degrees but he puts a secondary bevel on (he actually uses both a 1/2 inch and a ¼ inch) and lastly a Skew, which is really a Beading/parting tool.

Richard drew a line across one side of the blank, he says he only does the one side as once the lathe is going you can see the line. In his experience if you draw the line all around they probably won't match up. He stated off using the Beading/parting tool. He made the first cut into the body of the blank and then worked back to the line using small light cuts. The angle of the cut looked a little odd but you need to cut with the bevel. He started with the handle low and gradually lifting it rather than going in straight. Having established the square end he then rounded off the blank using the Spindle Roughing gouge.

The next step is to mark up the blank with where you require the beads, coves and fillets. Richard uses a template of thin MDF on which he has drawn half of the piece. On each line is a small notch, which is very important as it ensures that your pencil is in precisely the right place. He then blocks out the rough shape using calipers. He suggests that you ensure that the points of the calipers are rounded off to avoid possible catches. If you are not used to doing table legs Richard suggests you block them all out first. If they match at that stage they are likely to match at the end.

Richard tends to turn at about 2,000 rpm. When doing a bead he suggests marking down the middle with a pencil line. Always try to ensure that your hand is in contact with the tool rest. Most Production turners will have their Skew chisels much squarer than those you would normally buy. When he says use the long tip he means the tip. Take light cuts. Richard tends to leave the line and sand it away when the piece is finished. Richard then demonstrated how to turn a bean with a Spindle gouge. Turn the gouge through 90 degrees then sideways and swing and lift the handle.

If you have end grain damage you will have to turn it away as sanding will not work.

Next up was the coves, You need to leave a slight corner. The gouge needs to be upright to cut properly, if it's at an angle it will skip. Leaving a fillet is important as they give a definition to the design. To get the taper just lift the handle of your Roughing gouge.

He then showed a planning cut with a Skew. Firstly identify the middle of the Skew and always cut below the middle. As his Beading/parting tool is more or less the same width as his safety zone on his Skew he tends to use the middle.

Sharpen up the edge of the fillet using the Beading/parting tool. He made gentle cuts coming in at a slight angle rather than straight on. On banister spindles he only sands to 180 grit as decorators do not like finely sanded spindles as the paint tends not to stick.

Someone asked how long it took him to turn a leg so he volunteered to do a speed test. It took him about 5 minutes to turn the plain leg.

The next item was a double twist leg as in the picture above. As it's a double Richard needs to have 4 start points. He drew a line down the leg from the corners on the top. He then numbered each line. The rule of thumb is that the twist will be about double the width. He marked a line approximately halfway down and then added 3 more lines on each side of the middle. He drew a line through the grid connecting all the 1s and all the 3s to give him the top of the twist. Using a different coloured pencil he drew a line connecting all the 2s and 4s, which gave him the valleys. Using a saw he cut a line to mark the valleys. He enlarged the line using a square microplane file. He recommends wearing a glove for this as the file does rather cut into your fingers. He then switched to a larger version.




Some of the tools Richard uses.

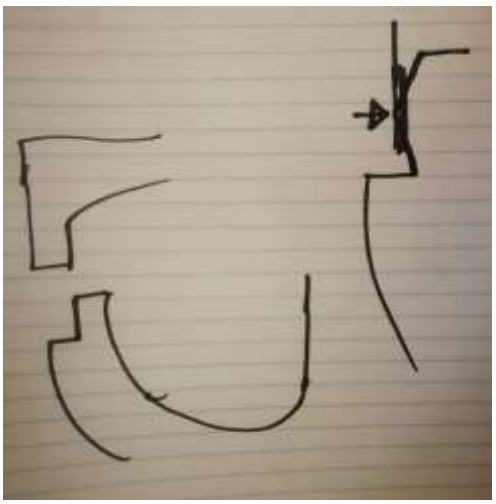
Having filed down one way Richard turned the piece round so he was still going with the grain. He sanded it down using 120 and 180 grit. He turned the piece again and sanded some more. The change of light will show up bits you may have missed. He further sands with strips of abrasive. At long last he turned the lathe on to sharpen up the edges of the coves. If you prefer you can blend the twists into the coves.

The afternoon project was a box with a pewter inlay. First thing was to do was to make a mould for the pewter. Richard took a scrap piece of wood and rounded it down. He placed it in the chuck. He drilled a hole and then scribed a line on the blank using his calipers the same as you would when turning the base of a bowl. He then hollowed this out. He tends to make his pewter piece in the shape of a mushroom. Ensure that the wood you are using is completely dry if it's not the pewter will spit at you when you pour it. The pewter melts at about 240 degrees so a standard camping gas stove can be used. Having poured the pewter into the mould **DO NOT** move it.

Next was the box. Richard was using a 3"x 3" by 4" long piece of Walnut he feels the dark wood goes really well with the pewter. He rounded off the blank between centres using a Spindle Roughing gouge, he then put a tenon on each end. In order to give him an idea of shapes he uses a book entitled "50 Turned Boxes" by Chris Stott.

He parted off the top and having put his chuck on the lathe he put the tenon in the chuck and proceeded to hollow it out. The flute of the gouge was at about 10 o'clock. An aggressive cut will leave you with a poor finish. To get a good finish you must take light cuts. He used a Negative Rake Scraper. To sharpen a Negative Rake Scraper sharpen the top first to get rid of the old burr and then the bottom. Burnish the burr with an HSS rod. The advantage of a Negative Rake Scraper is that it can be presented to the work either handle up or handle down.

You must ensure that the inside is dead straight. He placed the base in the chuck and cut a tenon to take the lid. Richard uses what he described as the "Jimmy Clews way" of fitting the lid. (check the videos in the club library for full details).



(I hope the drawing from Richard may help).

Using a Spindle gouge drill a hole in the middle and proceed to hollow it out. Richard ensured that the lid was a good fit as he still had to hollow out the top of the lid to fit the pewter in. He made a jam chuck so that he could finish off the base of the body of the box. Use a Spindle gouge but start with the flute closed and having started the cut open the flute. Finally we arrived at the pewter bit of the demonstration. Richard placed the piece of pewter in the chuck jaws. Richard said that In general the softer the metal the higher the speed of the lathe. He cut the pewter to size by taking very small cuts. Having got the size he wanted he put a slight dome on the pewter.

Using his Spindle gouge Richard created a chatter pattern, but decided he didn't really like that so he removed it. He sanded the pewter to about 1,200 grit but the surface was still rather dull. He applied Chestnut Burnishing cream (other brands are available). Finally he finished off using a buffing wheel and the white compound.


ADVANCE WARNING:

The first 3 weekends of December are Kids Activity days at Amberley Museum and Heritage Centre. As usual Keith Greenfield is on the look out for volunteers. We need turners, meeters and greeters, drillers and decorators.
If you have a child or grandchild who would like to have a go bring them along and they could end up with a beautiful Christmas tree decoration.

FOR SALE:

Peter Corcoran has a lathe for sale.

“It's a performance power lathe, don't know the hp, it will take about 36 inch I think and a swing of 13 inches speed change via belt (not variable) it is very heavy.”


NEXT MONTH:

The December competition is “Surface enhancement on any turned item”.