



## WEST SUSSEX WOODTURNERS

### LOCKDOWN 2021 NEWSLETTER

#### EDITION 7

*An Associated Club of the AWGB*

Welcome to another sparkling Edition of your club's monthly Newsletter.

I understand that there is some kind of Football tournament on at the moment and I am told England are doing quite well. However, my love of football is such that the last game I saw was in 1966 when we won the World Cup.

In other news (harking back to Ian's email) it looks like Covid restrictions are with us for a little bit longer. Cases are increasing but I'm not sure what the Government is doing anymore.

This month we have an item from our beloved chairman (or should that be chairperson) on fence post finials.

This started as I was erecting a short section of fencing and a gate. The 3 posts involved are 5ft high mounted on concrete spurs but the fence posts are 6ft. So there were 3 sections of typically rough 4"x4" softwood left over. What to do with them? How about post finials.



So the project started, what shapes, how long and what detail? The answer, an apple, a pear and for some reason an onion (never done one before so why not).



I wanted the bases to be kept square but then it's how to secure them to the top of the posts and then how to hold the blanks for turning. A bit of measuring followed and I decided thereabouts on a 25mm stem, 8mm deep chucking tenon, 25mm square section and then the fruit/veg shape. The initial shaping was to be done by holding the piece on a 4 prong drive and live centre in the tailstock.

First find the centres and punch for the drive and live centre .



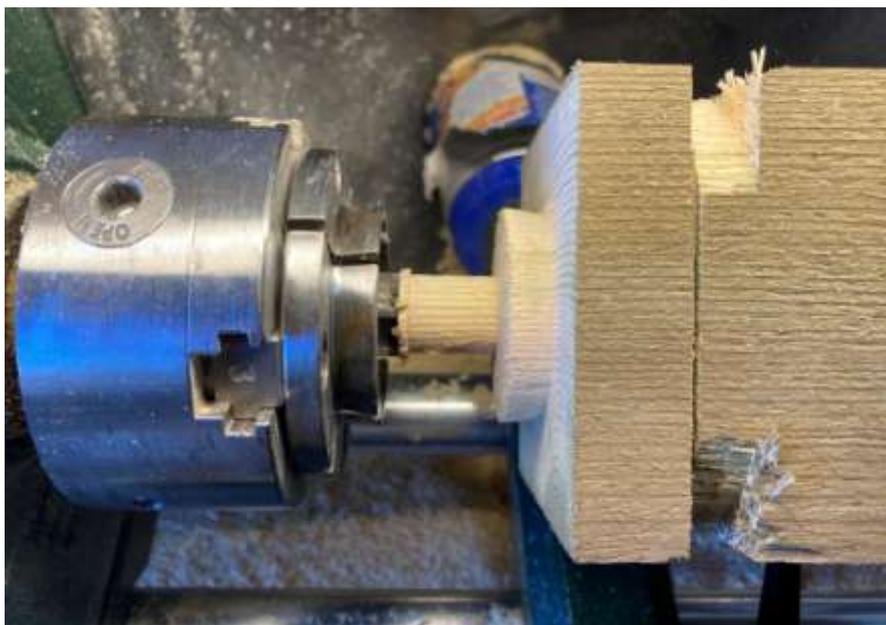
(Editor's note: I think most people would have used a hammer but if the finger works why not).

Mark the square section and to help avoid corner chipping/loss of the corners by my tool mishandling and due to the tight confines and the rubbish wood I cheated and cut 2 slots on the band saw,



which, are to a depth no greater than the diameter of the base and the chucking tenon. The latter obviously depends on what type of chuck you have.

The blank was then mounted on the lathe and first cuts are to the base end.



Turn down to the chucking tenon with whatever chisel you are happy with. Due to the confined space I started with a roughing gouge, tried a spindle gouge and quickly changed to a parting tool to get down to the chucking tenon diameter. To the left of that I continued down to 20mm (being careful not to foul the drive) forming a long tenon. 20mm is a suitable size to fit up the central opening of my chuck and is also a forstner bit size to form the fixing into the top of the post which is simply a 20mm hole (mortice to the carpenters out there) cut with a forstner bit in a hand drill. Starting is fun but it works or you could use a simple spade cutter. Either way, keep it upright and square. Next is the cutting of the jaw grip angle on the chucking tenon. This I do with a suitably angled skew used in the scraping mode. You will note I also started a cut to the right of the square section just as an experiment but preferred to stop until the blank had been remounted on the chucking tenon but still retaining tail stock support. After tidying up the underside of the base now is an ideal time to cut a suitable water drip groove.

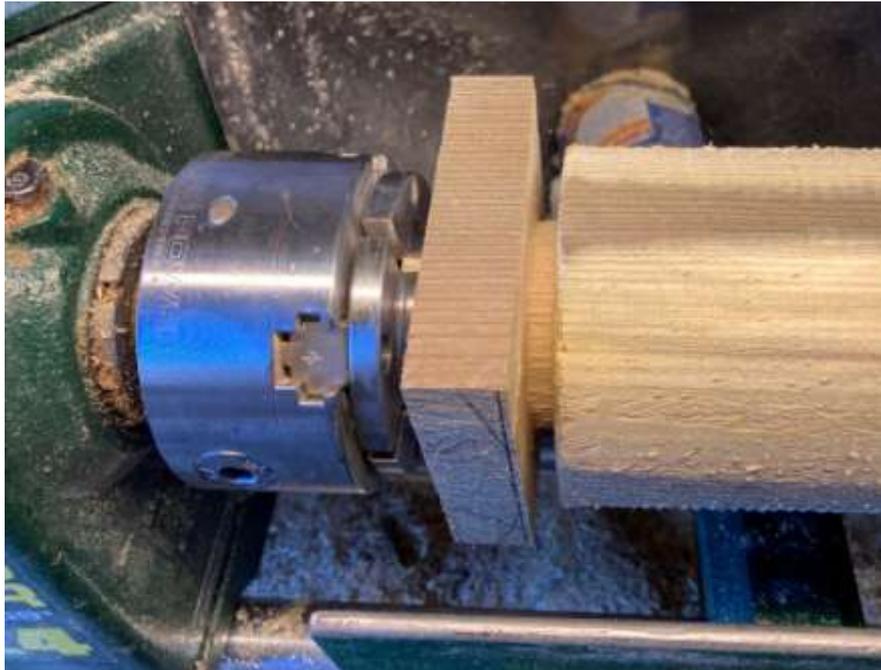


This I forgot to do which then involved remounting on the prong drive and associated hassle in getting things to run true etc. The drip groove can be simply cut using a suitable parting tool as there is no reason to cut anything fancy.

In tidying up the base I started by using a pull cut on the wing of my fingernail ground bowl gouge but as you are cutting air some of the time on the outer edge a ragged finish resulted and it is also very easy to break the edge off. So a push cut was tried which obtained much better results. However, a warning here take fine cuts only or

you will take off those edges destroying what you are trying to achieve. In addition the top edge should have a slight convex curve to help throw off rainwater.

Now remove the part turned piece from the lathe, remove the prong drive, open the jaws slide the tenon into the chuck and tighten the jaws on the tenon. Before tightening up bring the tail stock up with the live centre still in place, engage it with the previously formed hole and tighten the chuck jaws. All should still run true but you now have a much more secure set-up. Now turn your fruit shape (in this case the onion) first to a cylinder, then shape the base and work along to the top





retaining the tail stock support until the last moment. When happy with your shape, sand to whatever grit you are happy with. As this is for outside and its pretty poor timber I just finished at 120 grit.

The chucking tenon is more important for the shaping of the apple and pear as to get the dimple in the top the tail stock support has to be removed and the top shaped with either a spindle or bowl gouge in the normal way. I also cut a 4mm hole in the top and shaped a bit of leather to fit so forming a stalk.

The final cuts mean the piece has to be remounted on the prong drive with the tail stock live centre in its original position (in the case of the onion) or in the previously drilled hole for the apple and pear. When mounted, the chucking tenon can be reshaped to match the base of the fruit itself which is the last cut. However, for the onion the stem can be cut with a hand saw and sanded.

The finish is optional, I went for a clear sprit based preservative. Expensive but at least it soaks in and shows the grain etc. to its best, even when considering the rubbish nature of the wood used.

## **NEXT MONTH:**

I'm still looking for ideas or contributions as usual. If anyone has any **Hot Tips** please let me know.

## **MEMBERS SHOW AND TELL TABLE:**

See the Club's website for examples of work done by club members.