

Carousels and Candlesticks

On a cold but bright day, the club welcomed demonstrator, Colwin Way. With a good number of members attending, Colwin introduced himself with a little about his background and his planned programme. He started turning as a youngster on work experience and then as an apprentice in a production workshop. In my view this is probably the best place to learn the basics of all aspects of turning. Colwin then set up on his own, adding to his skills those of chainsawing and timber conversion. For some years he has been a course tutor and demonstrator with Axminster power tools. He demonstrates widely in the UK and abroad and also writes for Woodturning magazine.

Colwin's demonstrations were generally aimed at our novice members though everyone benefited from his tips and techniques. He was keen to get everyone using the skew more confidently and started by turning a lace bobbin with a skew. Colwin was using a style of skew developed from the German toymakers' tools. The blades were hand forged and flattened and widened at the business end. The blade was also longer than standard skews and the handle was more for balance as the tool was held by the blade. Colwin had a few for sale and though tempted, I think expertise with a skew is really down to practice. The bobbin was turned from rosewood but Colwin also talked about using other materials such as bone and recalled as an apprentice, boiling up bones for turning.

Scaling up from the bobbin, Colwin turned a coffee table leg from good quality pine, still concentrating on skew work and showing members how to create the pommel at the top.

Colwin used a bowl gouge for shaping the coves. He explained the difference between spindle gouges and bowl gouges, the stronger bowl gouge having a much deeper flute, but also differing in sizing. Spindle gouges are measured by the diameter of the bar whereas bowl gouges are measured by the width of the flute. Having completed the table leg we had the coffee break.

Members' Work

Once again there was a good entry of members' work although not all of it was entered in the monthly competition.



Hollow form turned from a large Chestnut burr by John Turner



Box showing pretty grain by Robert Hollands



A pair of oil lamps with unusual burners by Gaya Taylor



Bowl by Chips Bishop

After coffee Colwin developed his theme by turning a candlestick from ash. He began with the base mounted on a screw chuck and showed members how to pack out the screw if it is too long. He used a bowl gouge on the base and turned a chucking recess. He also demonstrated that a skew can be used as a scraper. The base was then sealed and waxed before reversing. After cleaning up the surface Colwin demonstrated how to drill a mortice to accept the spindle. He discussed drill bits and we learnt that forstner bits are designed to be used on side grain and saw tooth bits on end grain, something I was not aware of. The shaping was done with a gouge using a pull cut but finished with a smaller gouge and push cut to achieve the best finish. Finally Colwin returned to the skew and rolled a bead around the edge. The base was then sanded, sealed and waxed as before.

Moving away from spindle work to bowl turning, Colwin mounted an ash bowl blank using a faceplate which he feels is a more secure way of holding the blank. He trued up the edge and face then turned a chucking spigot which would be removed later. He shaped the outside, finishing with a push cut at a higher speed. After lunch Colwin sanded the bowl by hand and with a rotary sander alternating both through the grits to remove the ring scratches. He was ably assisted by Fred Mitchell managing the dust extractor. Well done Fred! The bowl was then reversed and the face trued up. This left a sharp edge on the rim which Colwin recommended cutting back with abrasive before proceeding. He then shaped the inside, stopping to check the wall thickness.



Fred Mitchell helping Colwin

As he worked on the inside, Colwin turned the tool rest into the bowl for maximum support. If unable to do this he would use a bigger gouge. Once finished, Colwin reversed the bowl onto a plywood disc on a faceplate covered with router matting. He brought up the tail centre for alignment and turned away the chucking spigot using a small bowl gouge.

Whilst demonstrating in Germany, Colwin had the opportunity to visit Seiffen, the centre for traditional toys and Christmas decorations including the amazing candle powered pyramids. He showed us his version of the nutcracker figures and a simplified carousel which he produced as a project covered in Woodturning magazine issues 311 and 312. He proceeded to enlarge on the techniques for the Carousel which were not difficult but complex so I shall leave members to follow the steps from the magazine. To finish the day he then turned a curled Christmas tree to adorn the carousel. Thus ended a very enjoyable demonstration.

December Meeting

December 10th 10.00 am

Winter Competition and Social
Welcoming everyone with their partners
and friends, entries and a plate of food.



Colwin's German Queen and Carousel

January Meeting

January 21st 10.00am

AGM and Critique

Please bring some of your work for
admiration and helpful evaluation.



Wishing all our Readers a
Very Happy Christmas and New Year

Chairman	Maggie Wright
Vice Chairman and Competition Secretary	Peter Castle
Secretary	Anne Smith
Treasurer	John Turner
Events organiser	Greg Collett
Librarian	David Spice
Newsletter editor	Sandra Day
A-V co-ordinator	Brian Rowson

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