



Focus on Finishing

The programme for our October meeting was changed slightly as Terry Smart and his partner who were due to be with us for the morning, stayed for the whole day. This was Terry's first all day demo, the idea being that he would show his products in the morning then members would have a hands on turning session in the afternoon with the opportunity to try out the Chestnut range before buying. Terry would be able to give advice on any issues which came up during the afternoon. Unfortunately a certain member who shall be nameless, asked so many questions that Terry's demo continued into the afternoon cutting short the hands on time although there were a few shavings to clear up at the end. I do not feel too bad about it though, as several members said to me afterwards they were glad I had asked a particular question as they had the same problem or query. If you do not ask you do not learn. I am sure every one of us uses some of the Chestnut range so this was the perfect opportunity to understand the applications and limitations of these products.

Terry began with a general word about finishing. It is one of the most important parts of turning. A poor finish can ruin a good piece of work whilst a good finish will greatly enhance it. The process should be relatively quick and easy but does require care. Preparation is key, obtaining the best finish possible from the tool, then considered use of abrasives to obtain the smoothest possible surface to reflect the most light.

Terry had several spindles made up from a combination of light, medium and dark wood for demonstration purposes and began with sanding.

Chestnut products have a range of cloth backed abrasives and also the Nyweb pads in a much finer range. Terry recommended using the coarse grits with the lathe off to avoid obvious scratches then further sanding with the lathe on. Demonstrating this, by the time he used the white Nyweb pad the wood already had a good sheen. After sanding, always remove any dust. Chestnut tack cloths are ideal for this purpose but need to be kept in an airtight container between use.

The next stage would be to seal the wood.



Terry Smart applying cellulose sanding sealer to one of his prepared spindles

Terry discussed the three types of sealers, cellulose, acrylic and shellac, available in bottles or aerosols and their uses. When using from a bottle always wipe the neck of the container to facilitate opening next time, a point I should take note of. I usually end up getting a pipe wrench on the lids to open them! Terry also recommended not to thin the cellulose sealer, something I think we have all been taught to do. Apparently the sealer contains sanding particles which help to fill the pores and when cut back, gives a smoother finish. Thinning the product reduces the effectiveness. There are a few circumstances when it may be thinned, if a large area needs to be coated or if evaporation has occurred in the container, but twenty percent thinners should be adequate.

The next group of products covered were the waxes beginning with the basic woodwax 22 then microcrystalline wax. The latter is water resistant and has a higher melting point so also resists marking from fingerprints. It is also available in stick form which contains no solvent so is quick drying.

A new wax, cut and polish wax is now available which is a mild abrasive. It can be used over sanding sealer or on bare wood after sanding to 240 grit. As a wax product it has the advantage of abrading without producing dust. Terry also recommended using food safe oil for wet sanding with the net abrasives. This reduces dust, acts as a lubricant and also a grain filler.

Lacquers were also covered there being three main types. The cellulose group are probably not very hardwearing.. Really tough lacquers are the two part catalyst lacquers but these have limitations affecting ease of use. The melamine product comes somewhere in between. Once dry it cures in seven days but reaches maximum durability after twenty eight days.

The gloss qualities of lacquers are measured in sheen levels with a mirror being one hundred percent. A gloss finish would be eighty to ninety percent, satin about thirty five percent and matt, twenty percent. Lacquers can achieve higher gloss when finished with burnishing cream.

The lunch break began as usual with the raffle, thanks to Robert and Margaret Hollands. We then had a small entry of tools to auction with a donation from proceeds going to club funds.

Thank you to the auctioneer, Peter Castle.

During the lunch break members had the chance to talk to Terry and his partner and to purchase products from the impressive array on show.

After lunch Maggie Wright showed attentive members the process of marking spindles to cut bines or barley twists and explained the method of cutting using saws and rasps.

Will we see this knowledge put into practice in our winter competition? Hopefully everyone is busy with their entries, a pair of wizard's wands for your class and a piece of spindle work for the Frank Elworthy Cup.



Maggie with an attentive audience

Terry began his afternoon session by demonstrating the use of some of the decorative products. He used a bronze liming brush to open the grain on a pot then sprayed it with several coats of ebonizing lacquer and left it to dry. This is a satin finish but it could be burnished to achieve a gloss finish.

Terry then rubbed a little gilt cream into the grain and removed the excess with food safe oil. After twenty four hours this would be sealed perhaps with wax. Gilt creams come in a range of gold, silver and copper colours. Liming wax can also be used decoratively on open grain wood.

In addition to food safe oil other oils in the Chestnut range include Tung oil, slow drying and amber in colour but hard wearing and Finishing oil, also amber. Hard wax oil is clear and will produce a high gloss after several coats. Lemon oil is also clear with a lovely fragrance but thinner so it does not overpower the work. It does however, take longer to dry and will not produce a gloss finish.

Finally Terry showed the buffing system which consists of a chuck based mandrel and three different wheels to use in conjunction with the three buffing compounds. Dome shaped buffs are also available for the inside of bowls. This concluded what was for me, an interesting and informative day about Chestnut products. I am sure other members felt the same.



Terry's ebonised and gilded pot

There was just time for a quick session of hands on before the meeting closed.

Once again thank you to Brian Rowson and audio visual team and everyone who helped with the setting up and cleaning up.

Members' Work



Left, Oak candlesticks and Crucifix made for Saint Michael's Church, Playden by Lynn Chambers



Egg box with stained butterflies by Sandra Day

Pen in acrylic by Mike Pollard



Bowl by Brian Blanks



Bowl by Jim Moger



Excellent first bowl in teak by Tim Cornwall

November Meeting

Remember change of date

November 26th 10.00am

Colwin Way

Please would last year's cup winners return cups this month ready for December

Please return library books promptly so that other members may use them.

For Sale

Workshop Contents

Axminster Bandsaw 310N floorstanding on cabinet.
Complete with new blade.
Axminster lathe similar to club lathes, with chucks etc.
Nu-tool lathe with chucks etc. Bench top pillar drill.
Nu-tool wet and dry grinder.
Fox craft bandsaw NF28-128.
Assorted tools and accessories
Contact Neale Sands 01892 750129 (Frant)

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

www.wealdenwoodturners.org.uk

December Meeting

Winter Social and Competition following the usual format with entertainment in the afternoon

December 10th 10.00am

Friends and partners welcome. Please bring a plate of food towards the buffet lunch and of course your competition entries. (See above)