

## Getting Back to Normal with Gary

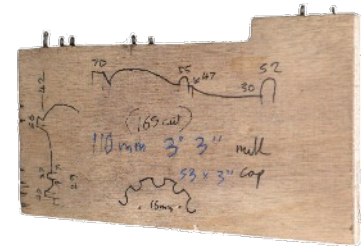
After seventeen months of suspended meetings, it was a special day in August when members got together again at Robertsbridge. There were some differences in routine, as precautions against covid will always be necessary.

The demonstration however, followed the usual format and we were pleased to welcome Gary Rance back to the club.

Gary's first project was a peppermill turned from ash. I shall not describe this in detail as instructions for a similar project can be referred to in the October 2019 newsletter, available on the website if you no longer have your copy.

One useful idea to take from Gary's project was the idea of a scratcher, a template for marking out the shaping. This was a piece of board with the outline of the design on it and pins knocked in at the critical divisions. When held against the blank the pins scratched the relevant lines. It is important not to scratch the highest point.

Gary also added extra detail by making grooves around the top of the mill. These were spaced out evenly, cut first with a square file then finished with a round file.



Scratcher board showing pins and measurements for the mill.

Gary turns a great many apples and pears to sell all over the world and an apple was his next project. He used a 60mm laburnum blank mounted on a screw chuck and after shaping most of it from the top, reversed it onto the screw chuck to finish the stem end starting close to the stem. Gary then mounted it on a stick to spray finish with lacquer. He added a clove and small piece of twig for the finishing touches.



Finished mill



For the next project a humming top was the subject. Tops have been made over hundreds of years and some of the antique ones, especially those made from ivory, are very valuable. Wooden ones need to be straight grained.

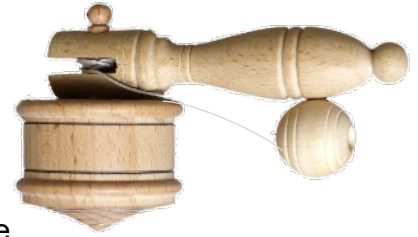
Gary mounted an Amerello blank 3"x2¼" between centres and turned a spigot for mounting in the chuck. He marked out the blank using a scratcher again and removed some of the waste from the top handle area before mounting in the chuck making sure it ran true. The hole which would produce the whistle was drilled next in the side grain and on centre while the blank was solid. It was about 6mm deep.

Guided by his markings, Gary shaped the body of the top and the spigot for the handle.

This was turned to a diameter of just under 7mm to be a close fit in the winder. He rounded off the end of this spigot then, using the point of the skew and enhancing with a pencil in the groove, produced some decorative black lines around the top. This was then sanded. Using a narrow parting tool this upper part was parted from the base leaving a witness mark as reference for fitting back together.

The base was hollowed out with a spindle gouge using a pull cut followed by a skew or box scraper to straighten the sides of the walls as far as the witness mark. Ideally the walls should be about 2mm thick. The size was then refined for the lid to fit back on, as for a box. The base was then reversed onto a jam chuck and the bottom turned to a shallow point before adding more black lines and sanding. Gary then removed it from the lathe and glued the upper part back onto the body ensuring the grain lined up.

After lunch Gary turned the winder for the top using a piece of ash. He drilled a 5/8" hole into the blank and a 1/4" hole through the side. He secured it on the lathe with a step centre then shaped it and cleaned the end round the hole and sanded and finished it. Gary fitted the top in and used a bradawl to mark the position for the hole which takes the string. After parting off, a slot would be cut in it on the bandsaw. The hole was then drilled in the top as previously marked and the hole in the body of the top was filed to a square shape with the sides angled at about 45°. To finish the project a nylon string was attached to a small turned handle and Gary tried the top out. It certainly hummed and then continued to spin for a long time.



Humming top with winder and pull string

Gary then demonstrated three more items, a pepper grinder, an idiot stick and a bottle stopper.

The grinder was turned from a 4"x3" blank with a 1" hole drilled through to accept a shop bought grinding accessory. When shaping, remember there is a hole through the middle and that the top face needs to be flat to mate with the mechanism.

We have seen idiot sticks turned before but not everyone knew the secret and they spent some time trying to snare the elastic band.



Pepper grinder



Idiot stick and bottle stopper knob

The bottle stopper is a simple turned knob to use with a wine bottle stopper kit.



A concentration of idiots deeply engrossed in solving the puzzle?

Gary's projects, particularly the last two are good ways of using up some of the many offcuts we are reluctant to throw out. With varying degrees of difficulty there was something for everyone and I am sure everyone found the demonstrations useful and enjoyable especially after such a long break. Our thanks to Gary.

Thank you to the audio visual team who came in early to get the system set up for the meeting, particularly as there were potential problems with equipment not being used for so long.

It makes a huge difference being able to see clearly what a demonstrator is doing, so thank you Brian Rowson, Roger Smith, Lynn Chambers and team.

Thank you also to Anne Smith and Maggie Wright for overseeing the new tea and coffee arrangements

## Members' Work



Three legged Ash bowl by Gareth Garner, winner of the monthly competition



Cherry burl bowl with resin by Malcolm Page.



Large spalted beech hollow form by John Turner



Horse chestnut burl bowl by Robert Hollands



Hollow sphere in beech by Mike Moon.



Lattice work by Peter Castle

## Competition Reminder

### This Month's Meeting

September 19<sup>th</sup> 10.00-4-00

Stuart Furini Demonstrating.

Please remember to bring your own mugs.

Masks are optional

Mainly for the benefit of new members the Christmas competition subjects are:

Novices. A set of eggcups.

Intermediate. A vase with textured embellishment.

Advanced. A box within a box.

Frank Elworthy Cup. Open class for spindle turning.

Charlie Newson Cup. Partners' choice.

There is to be a new annual award for Member of the Year. Nominations will be put forward and members will have the chance to vote for their preferred candidate.

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](http://www.wealdenwoodturners.org.uk)

### October Meeting

October 17<sup>th</sup> 10.00-4.00

#### **Hands on**

Follow up from professional demonstrations.

Please bring your tools and ppe etc.