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Annual Chapter Seminar - May 7/8th 2016

This year saw the visit of Jason Breach, a well known UK turner. Jason dazzled us with his turning skills and told us a good few stories along the way. He not only demonstrated on the Saturday (described here), but also held a masterclass on the Sunday (not described).

A Digest of The Two Morning Sessions, where he made: -

- i) Skillet-shaped box with wide brimmed convex lid
- ii) Solitaire ball
- iii) Ball-Clock

Item one: Lidded skillet shaped box

Straightaway, Jason is discussing lid fit. He prefers a somewhat tight fit, such that the box should come up when lifted by the lid (the jury is still out). The wood needs to be dry, well-seasoned and crack-free. He mounts a small laburnum log, about 3"x3" between centres; a Stebcentre in the headstock and a ring centre in the tailstock. He generally avoids cone-shaped live centres, "they tend to split the fibres." For rounding, Jason uses the bowl gouge with a 55° bevel.

He always uses a sharpening jig for consistency of cutting angles etc. Two spigots are now formed to suit the circularity of the chuck. The lid/base point is marked out. He mounts the piece in the chuck and, using a 1/16" parting tool, parts the two sections. The lid is turned first. The centre is marked with the corner of the parting tool. The depth is established and a depth-hole bored with a small gouge. The inside of the lid is to be concave, leaving a thin, curved brim. The actual hollowing is done with the bowl gouge in two orientations: from centre to brim with the bevel facing '9 o'clock' and '2 o'clock' in the opposite direction. A recess is formed which will marry with a

corresponding flange in the base. For refining, he is using a negative rake hollow ground round scraper with 44° bevel. Sanding is carried out before forming the recess. The exterior profile, following generally that of the interior is now partly turned. Extreme care is needed so that the wood is not left too thin at the brim. As a finishing agent, he uses 50/50 cellulose sanding sealer and thinners, cutting back with Webrax and concluding with wax polish. The lid is now parted off, to be completed later.

Turning the base

The base section is mounted. The centre is marked as before and callipers used to register the diameter of the flange on which the lid will sit. As this is near-approaching, a compression-mark is registered, with the lathe stationary. At this stage the lid fit needs to be quite tight so the base can act as a temporary jam chuck, allowing the top of the lid to be fully profiled. Firstly, the base is given a convex, skillet shape. The lid is then pressed on (with the help of kitchen towel for tightness, if necessary), and is now given its final working. Jason shows the forming of a small finial using the beading tool. A very light scrape with the oval skew leaves the lid ready for finishing.

Hollowing the base

The technique is the same as with the lid: register the centre, bore a depth-hole, then use the bowl gouge as



Who was winning 10 years ago?

Pictures of Competition winners ten years ago this month. Recognise any of them?

May's answers - Page ??.



Advanced



Experienced



Beginners

described already. Jason quickly removes the material, hollowing very effectively with a square section tool, threaded at the 'business' end, to accept a triangular shaped engineering cutter held in place with a screw. The wood surface is refined as before with the round nosed scraper. The inside of the base is now sanded (Don't sand the flange!) and finished.

Jason now puts up a new blank from which he turns a friction chuck to enable him to turn the lower section and bottom of the base. The latter is skimmed and a small foot created. This work is finally sanded and finished as described earlier. And so, he holds aloft a lovely skillet-box, which is made even more lovely by the pleasing figure in the laburnum.

Item two: Solitaire ball

In essence this is a sphere-turning demonstration. Jason makes solitaire sets, comprising an 18"x20" board, on which are seated 32 wooden balls of approximately 2" diameter. Oak and maple are ideal woods.

The blanks are 2" cubes of scrapwood. One is mounted between centres and rounded to a precise diameter. Its length is marked exactly to this measurement. The centre of this length is marked, and each side is turned to a ball shape, with a spud remaining at either end. The spherical profile is refined by the use of an appropriately sized hole-saw with the teeth ground off, inserted into a handle and applied to the spinning piece in a meandering fashion, thus leaving a perfect part-formed sphere in its wake. The conundrum is, how to remove the two axial spuds! So Jason slips two plastic gaiters over the head- and tail-stock fittings. The ball is captured side-on between these, allowing the spuds to be removed and the modified hole



saw to be used again. Voila!

Item three: Ball-Clock

Formation of the sphere is as previously described. (A simple tip if you are not ambidextrous and need to turn the ball on both sides: turn the piece around for the second cut!) This item is larger than the solitaire ball, so Jason uses a purpose built wooden tube held in O'Donnell jaws which acts as a jam-chuck allowing the sphere to be completed. At this point he sets up a forstner bit in a Jacobs chuck in the tailstock and drills a recess to the depth of the bit's top section. Into this snugly fits a small golden coloured clock movement. At the desired angle a flat is created to ensure the piece will sit at a pleasing and functional tilt on a work station or office desk.

Lunch time is fast approaching, so to finish up Jason shows us the use of his polishing kit. It consists of a specially designed tapered arbor for quick mounting on the lathe spindle. There are three sticks of polish: dark for use on dark wood and light for light wood. Two of the three mops match the above, while the third is a fluffy buffing mop. This is used in connection with a carnauba wax stick. The results are absolutely stunning!

And so, turners as we are, we turn to thoughts of food. I think we will all remember the name of Jason Breach; most interesting, most enlightening, most entertaining.

Pacelli O'Rourke

Saturday Afternoon Session - A Pagoda Box.

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After a good lunch, which some of us had “al fresco”, the afternoon session gave us another treat as Jason Breach showed us how he made another of his signature pieces, the Pagoda Box.

He started by explaining what he was going to make. A box that had a winged lid and four splayed feet, with decorative elements that gave the impression of a pagoda. He explained the steps involved using a beautifully finished sample that he had brought with him.

The Blank. He started with a piece of ash that was approximately 4 x 4 x 5 in, which was already partly prepared. At the point where the lid was to be separated from the base, he had made band saw cuts 1.75 in into each of the four sides, leaving .5 ins of material in the centre. He explained that he does this when making a series of boxes, one after the other. When on the lathe they can be sawn off rather than being parted off; it's quicker. At this point, he also gave the proportions of the lid to the base as being about 1:3 or 2/5:3/5.

Holding the blank between centres he made a spigot on what would be the top of the lid, and also on what would become the feet-end of the base. On the foot-end of the base, he also began to make the undercut that would later become the four feet. He didn't true the blank as the pagoda shape required a square lid with the four feet using the corners of the blank.

The Lid – Part 1. The blank was then remounted - the end intended to be the lid held in the chuck by its spigot. Retracting the tailstock, the base was sawn off and put aside. At this point Jason reiterated that whether you saw or part off, the tailstock should be removed. In place, it causes a tool to bind.

On the bottom of the lid, which was still square, he marked a pencilled circle whose diameter was that of the width of the wood. This marks the limit of completely solid wood which can be worked towards when making the recess, allowing for enough thickness of material. Had this point not been marked, the extent of the solid wood is not always obvious when the piece is whirling around.

Jason then hollowed the lid. Using that same technique that he showed during the morning session, he first made a hole in the centre with a small spindle gouge, checking the depth as he went. He then removed the bulk down to the depth of the previously made hole using a cut from the centre outwards with a small bowl gouge, with the flute at 9 o'clock. He then reversed the direction of the cut, moving outside to the centre, with the flute at 2:00 o'clock, in order to make finer cuts. This gave a better finish too. He widened the depression on the underside of the lid until he was happy that there was sufficient diameter remaining to make the recess later.

He then shaped the underside of the lid that formed the bottom of the pagoda roof (the wings). It was the shape that rose up from the base, outboard of the recess. The surfaces worked on so far were then sanded, that is the depression and the wings. Jason did this by folding the sand paper into a pad and sanding the wings at higher speed than that normally used for sanding. He commented that doing this at a low speed rounds the edges of the wings, because the pressure exerted, pushes the sandpaper into the gaps between each wing. He lowered the speed to normal sanding speed for the hollowed depression.

Next, Jason made the recess that the base will push-fit into. Again he stressed the need to get the face of the recess parallel to the centre of the piece. He used a small angle skew with an oval cross section (and no handle) and he lined it up with the lathe bed when making the cut. The recess should be long enough to give a good friction fit – at least .25 in. The top of the base was left until later. Sanding sealer was then applied to all surfaces worked on so far. The face of the recess was not sanded. He explained that one could sand the recess face, but this would only be done if the fit was too tight for practical use,



and it would be done when the box was finished.

The Base – Part 1. The lid was replaced in the chuck by the base, which was held by the previously made spigot. Jason then made a cylinder of the base for most of its length, being aware of the thickness of material to be left to fit into the lid. The feet were left untouched other than to blend in their top surfaces with the cylindrical base with a nice o-gee curve.

Using callipers, he then measured the inside diameter of the recess, transferred half of that measurement onto dividers, which he then used to mark a circle onto the, as yet un-worked top of the base. The centre of the piece was established with the tip of the skew. This centre was then used by one leg of the dividers, the other scoring a circle on the end of the rotating piece. The leg of the dividers that made the mark was supported on the tool rest, but using a safe angle to the wood.

Jason then used a parting/beading tool to cut almost down to this mark, forming a spigot that would fit into the recess in the lid when finished. Jason stressed that this was the most crucial step in the overall making of the piece, and it should not be rushed. It was also important to continually check the fit of the lid and not become impatient when removing material from the spigot. He emphasized that in parting down to the mark, that he had made a slightly tapered spigot – tapered towards the centre line. By doing this, and continually checking the fit, a point was



reached where the lid could be partially pushed onto the spigot - about 20% of its length. Jason showed how this could be seen. By pushing the lid onto the spigot, and rotating the base by hand (i.e. rotating the chuck) a smooth friction mark was produced around the spigot on the right-hand end. It gave a visual indication of the required diameter that the spigot needed to be. He then proceeded to make the spigot's left-hand end conform to that diameter. He did this by using the left-hand tip of the parting tool to remove material, continually testing the fit, and making parallel cuts for the remaining 80% of the spigot length. The taper remained for the 20%, but the spigot was sufficiently long that it could be removed later. It had done its job. Jason stressed that the fit should be tight. It would be a jam-chuck in for the completion of the lid, later. However it should be capable of being removed. Should the lid become looser as it was taken on and off, then he used spittle to raise the grain and bring back the tight fit.

He measured the available depth of the lid recess, and checked it against the height of the spigot. The spigot height was adjusted as required.

The outside of the base was then finished off. He wanted a parallel body with the feet blended in, and a small bead above the feet. This, he accomplished deftly.

The Lid – Part 2. With the lid jammed firmly onto the base, the lid top was then shaped. The pagoda roof was to be dome-shaped with a finial on the very top. To make the dome shape, which had wings remember, the technique that he used to ensure a good entry cut on the upper side of the wings, was to firstly, find the point of contact. This he did by gradually feeling with the bevel against the outer face of the wing tips, which produced a chattering noise. Then, moving the tip of the gouge outward, by moving his elbow out from his body until the gouge cutting edge was in fresh air, he move the gouge a fraction to the left and reversed the movement. This resulted in a clean entrance and a fine cut.

He explained that this technique reduced the risk of a catch which can be caused by either taking out too much material or being at the wrong angle. He described it as an essential technique for this winged objects, which is useful for making entry to cuts in other situations.

Jason also cautioned being too gung-ho when shaping the top. A lid with a hole in the top is no use to anyone, so one should regularly remove the lid and check the thickness. Fingers are best at this. He put four beads on the top – tapering them into a final doughnut shaped one at the tip. He explained that there is no need to sand the lid yet, it can be done along with the base, when the base is more developed.

The Base – Part 2. Jason then hollowed out the base using a similar technique to the lid. He reamed out to the required depth with a spindle gouge, then bulk- removed material down to the depth of the hole, leaving enough wall-thickness for finishing. At this point he introduced us to a specialised tool for completing the hollowing of parallel sided boxes. The tool (made by Henry Taylor) was made from square section bar that is ground at 88 degrees? on left-hand edge; ground at 45 degrees at the end; and slightly hollow ground, or dished, on the top to the left side and across the end. This is used to cut the inside and bottom of the base. *{Having used this tool during the Masterclass on the following day, I can vouch for its ease of use – MS}*.

Jason then sanded the work done on the base, so far, however he did not sand the spigot face. He also sanded the top of the lid while it was fitted to the base. He then applied sanding sealer inside and out, removing the excess with kitchen towel.

The Feet. Removing the base from the chuck, Jason explained that he would now make another jam-chuck to hold the base by its spigot end, as he had done in the morning session. Taking a fresh blank, he quickly made a depression and recess in its end, into which the spigot on the base was fitted with a tight push fit. Again, tightness was important as there was quite an overhang. He explained that the tailstock could not be used for support as it would obstruct the bowl gouge handle during the finishing of the foot.

With the base held in the jam-chuck, Jason removed the spigot on the foot, and blended in the foot undercut. He also put some decorating grooves at the centre of the underside.

Finishing. He did not sand the edges of the pagoda roof or the edges of the feet as he did not have a sanding block. He cautioned people who wanted to do this, that they should not sand across the edges, as they may break off. Sand along the edges, that is, across the grain.

Finally Jason finished the box with buffing compound and carnauba wax the same way that he did with the box produced in the morning session.

Overall, a great demo that revealed lots of tips and tricks of the trade, along with a few good stories. Jason certainly

Masterclass given by Jason Breach - 8th May.

Firstly, the Committee would like to thank those people who lent or brought lathes along for the attendees to use. Everyone made a box, "a la Jason". The day was a great success and everyone got something out of it, even if it was only where to stand to catch the lid when it came off!

Here are a few pictures of the day.



Demonstrators 2016

Saturday

June - Tom Murphy
 July - Kriston Doherty
 August - Francis Corr
 September - Pat Walsh
 October - Charlie Ryan

November - tbc (AGM)
 December - Joe O'Neill

Wednesday

June - Willie Reville
 July - Pat Walsh
 August - Sean McMorrow
 September - Tony Hartney
 October - Vincent Whelan

November - J. Wigham
 December - Joe O'Neill

Useful Links - Interesting and useful items related to wood.



Came across a blog conversation that relates to the picture on the right which is a poster held by a tree. Check out the Tree Puns, such as "The poor **sap**. At least he's not a **rootless** wanderer, though the family has apparently gone to **seed**. I hope he is able to **leave** this Spring."

If you want to see more, the blog can be found at
<http://j-walk.com/puns/treepuns.htm>

(Given some of the spellings, I think its from the USA)



April Competition Entrants



Open



Artistic



Experienced



Beginners



Advanced



**May
Competition Winners**

Pat Walsh - Artistic & 3rd Open



Martin Boyle - Experienced



Michael Fay - Advanced & 1st Open



Pat Walsh - 2nd Open



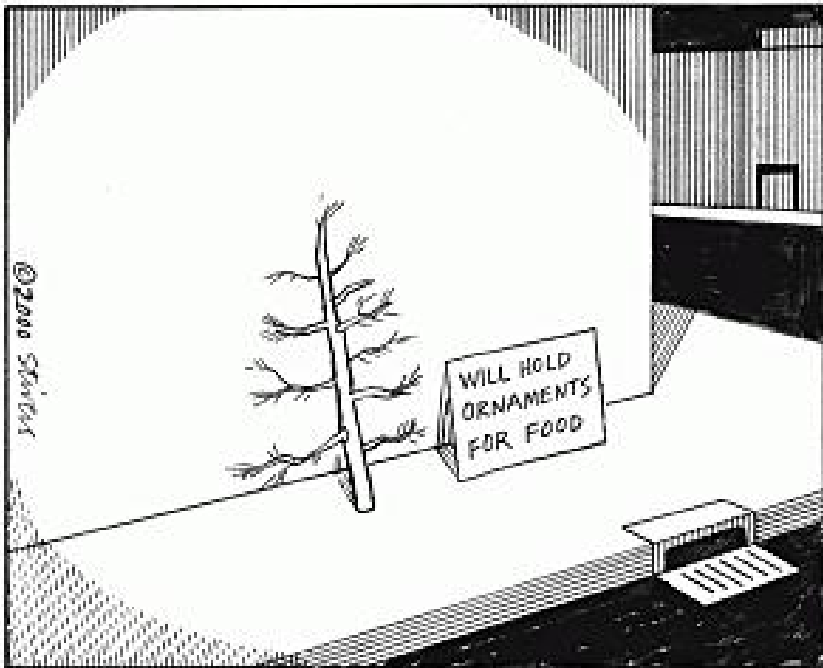
Jack Wright - Beginners

A recently received "thankyou" email.

>Dear Mike,
Would you please pass on my appreciation to all the wood turners for their support and generosity they have shown to me since Owen's death in Sept. Woodturning was a huge part of his life and he always enjoyed the monthly meetings and the annual seminars.
Kindest regards,
> Paula Furniss

Trade Stands at the Saturday Meetings for remainder of 2016.

Apr. The woodshed	Sept The Carpentry Store
May. The Carpentry Store and The Hut.	Oct. The Hut
Jun. The Carpentry Store	Nov. The Woodshed
Jul. The Hut	Dec. The Hut
Aug. The Woodshed	Jan. The Woodshed



The Bay Area Woodturners Association, from San Francisco, have asked us to place a link to their website on ours. This has been done under the "Useful Links" page of the Chapter website. Take a look at their site, its an interesting publication. They will be linking to our website.



<http://bayareawoodturners.org/>

Who were the winners 10 years ago - May 2006?



Adv - Michael Fay



Exp - Richard Murphy



Beg - John Killoran