



Dublin Chapter Newsletter

Irish Woodturners Guild

January 2022



Meetings are back under 'new normal' rules.

Please check both your email and the Chapter website (<http://www.dublinwoodturners.com>) regularly for updates. General photos were provided by Rich Varney

Inside this issue:

Introduction	P.1
December comp	P.2
Multi axis boxes	P.6
Wednesday demo	P.9
Saturday demo	P.10



By the time you are reading this I hope you will all have had a safe and peaceful Christmas and are looking forward to '22, hoping it will be much better than '21. As we start a new year let us think about those who did not make it this far, may they all rest in peace. For those who are unwell, may they get well soon and get back to turning as soon as possible. As we start a new year we hope to be back to our old selves that is, first Saturday demos followed with our usual Wednesday demos, all keeping the government rules to keep us safe.

It will be a few months until we start the trade shop. if you need anything ring the carpentry store and they will get it to you.

On the first Saturday in January we will have the AGM followed by a demo.

I am looking forward to a new year, hoping for a better year and maybe going towards a normal year whatever that will be. Looking forward to meeting you all in the new year but most of all stay safe

John Doran

Editors comments

Its a new year and hopefully a better one.

Woodturning can be described as a craft and an art form . We all produce pieces which need to be seen and enjoyed. So with that in mind you may notice a change in the presentation of the competition pieces. The pieces are given more space and I have asked the woodturners involved for some background to each piece. How they were turned and finished if of interest to fellow turners. If anyone has ideas on what they would like to see in the newsletter please let me know.

Happy turnings for 2022.

December Competition Results

1st James Gallagher

Starting this month with the Artistic section.

This natural edge thin walled bowl by James is a piece that could hold its own in any gallery. The rings give the piece that amphitheatre look and serve to deepen it.



Tony Hartney

"My Gnome was made from Walnut for the hat and any piece of Deal or Pine I had lying around for the body. The nose is a piece of dowling. The beard/hair is faux fur I got in a fabric shop in town, glued on with super glue.

The body was hollowed out to make it light enough to be able to hang on a tree.

The ring on top is just an eyelet screwed in and the string is elastic cord I got years ago in Lidl. The top has a coat of Microcrystalline and buffed. Just getting basic measurements and drilling rather than any special turning. "



Jonathan Wigham



"The wood is a bark burr from a 100 year old Apple tree planted in 1919. The base is from the same tree.

The finish was Danish oil. The main problem in turning was the amount of "air turning" involved. Also a lot of superglue was used to stop the edge from breaking off. Sanding it was not easy!

No knuckles were lost while making it."

The Advanced section had three entries.

1st Brendan Phelan



"I used Yew on the centre section which is a box, the pedestal and finial are Ash which was Ebonised with lacquer and buffed afterwards with Carnauba wax

The centre section was finished with Cyanoacrylate and later buffed with Carnauba Wax.

As regards the design and scale the aim was to make it pleasing to the eye and use the thirds rule a lot to help guide scale .

The lid got a little tight after finishing otherwise everything went smoothly."

Tony Hartney



" Sycamore, a bit doozy.

Just worked from a design in a book of classic designs and scaled up/down based on the dimensions of the wood.

The finish is Chestnut spirit stain applied with an airbrush and when fully dry a coat of Microcrystalline wax and buffed

The problems were all around the wood, due to it being a bit past it's best. Real sharp tools and had to avoid the parting tool and use a skew instead to get a clean finish on the base.

The neck was too narrow to allow for hollowing so just drilled a hole as its purely decorative."

The Advanced section continued.

Michael Fay

"The piece was made from three different types of wood, Ash, Sumac, and Pink Ivory on top, finished with three coats of danish oil.

The Sumac was branch wood of poor quality from a local garden, it was what I could salvage from it that decided the size of the piece.

This is not difficult to make requiring approximately three tools, spindle roughing gouge, parting tool, 3/8 spindle gouge, or the dreaded skew. "



The experienced section had three entries.

1st Sean Earls



Vinny Whelan



Pat Costigan with his own notes & images taken during the process

Notes from Pat

1. The off-center turned body is made of Elm if I recall correctly and the wings are made from Zebrano.
2. Form/Scale: The scale I just made up from the wood I had available. (See notes below for details)
3. Opening: The openings I cut with the use of a Fostner bit followed by a Bandsaw. (See notes below for details)
4. Finish: I finished this piece with paper up to 1,200 grit, Yorkshire Grit then Hampshire Sheen.
5. Problems: First time around I drilled and cut the wings out while the block was still solid. I had a good catch which split the first set of wings so I made another set of wings. This time I made them without drilling or cutting which was much cleaner to work with. I then finished off the whole piece, drilled and sawed it into shape using masking tape on the surface to mark it out.



This is not my original design but merely my version of it.

The original YouTube Video which explains it all can be seen here:

<https://youtu.be/4ncp1eAeNjg>

The only originality in my design is the Off-Center Turned body and the wood choice.

some images of the process used by Pat



Sean Loughman



A Different Spin on Multi-Axis Boxes - Mike Sims

The humble box is something of a “rite of passage” for the woodturner: an item that denotes a step up from simpler beginnings. But having made quite a few, I was looking for something to make my boxes stand out a bit more. Thanks to an article written by Ian Stuart, in the AAW American Woodturner magazine of February 2017, I was inspired to take his idea of the multi-axis hollow form and apply that to a box that had a dual-purpose lid/spinning top. This is my take on the subject, having made several of them.

This is not a tutorial on box-making. It assumes that the reader is familiar with the overall process. It is a description of how you can give a simple box an interesting shape that is different, and which also makes the lid into a spinning top.

Make the Bottom. Start by taking your chosen blank, which will be about 10 x 6 cm, and mount it between centres on



Left .. Iroko/US Black Walnut,
Centre.. Elm/Australian Sheoak,
right.. Cocobolo

the lathe. For this item, I prefer to make the lid of a contrasting wood and that is what this article describes. If you want to make the lid and bottom from the same piece of wood then add 6 – 7 cm to the length. Round the blank and cut a tenon at



either end. The tenon can be parallel or slightly domed to facilitate being pushed off-centre, and its diameter should suite your chuck jaws. Remove the piece and re-chuck it by the tenon with tailstock support, re-trueing it, if it bothers you.

With a parting tool cut a groove about 5 mm from the chuck jaws which are now shouldered on the tenon. The diameter of the groove should be similar to that of the tenon. This groove gives clearance for cutting close to the chuck when the piece is pushed off centre. It also gives a reference shoulder for the jaws when the piece is brought back onto the original axis centre at a later stage.

Next, review the proportions of the bottom that you want to make. Lid aside, decide how much you want to have below the waistline caused by the second axis turning. I work to the rule of thirds, which usually means 1/3 below the waistline. Mark your blank accordingly. The waistline positioning should also be done with grain or other features of the wood taken into consideration, avoiding any nasty knots around the future waistline.

Step 1. Disengage the live centre, loosen the chuck and push the piece off centre. Then, for safety, re-engage the live centre and tighten the chuck. The degree to which the piece is pushed off-centre depends not only on the visual effect that this will have on the final shape, but also upon the amount of wood that will be removed as a result of the offset.

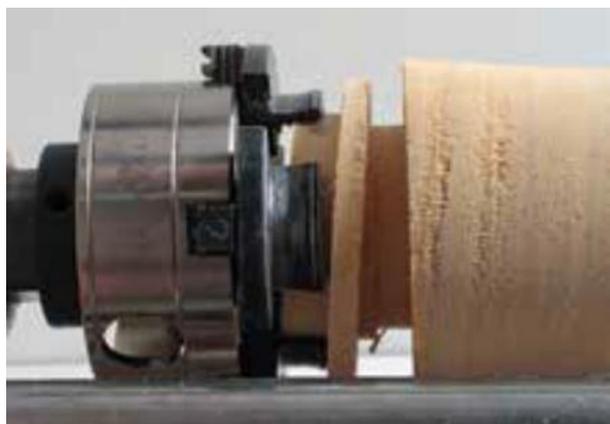
Pushing too much will result in a very narrow top of the in the next step. This can only be learned by experience, but in my pieces the new centre at the tailstock is around 8 mm from the original centre point.

From this point, you will be turning with an object that is unbalanced. Start the lathe on its lowest speed and increase the speed gradually until you are confident that the piece is secure. Next, recut the groove on the new axis, removing material from the right-hand side of the groove. This forms a reference plane that will eventually become the base of the box. Removal of wood, when a piece is off-centre, means that the tool will experience "air" wood. That is, for part of a revolution it is cutting, and for the other part it is not. For this reason, one should take light cuts and ensure that the tool is held firmly on the toolrest. I prefer to use larger gouges in this situation - they have more weight and rigidity. Also, stop the lathe periodically and see to what extent a shape is developing.

You can now form the surface below the waistline. I use a medium bowl gouge cutting downhill towards the chuck, making successive cuts to form a curve towards the base, moving



gradually towards the intended waistline. This cut will be rough initially and one must watch the ghost line to see where material is being removed. But it will eventually become round. When you are nearing the waistline, you might want to switch to a spindle gouge to make a final finishing cut. At this stage the foot of the bottom should be where the bottom of the groove is. The surface produced can now be sanded, and the finish applied.



Step 2. The piece can now be returned to its original centre and the area above the waistline shaped. Tighten the chuck and provide tailstock support. Here you need to decide if you want a continuous bottom-to-lid join, as with traditional boxes, or to have a non-continuous join with a lip on the top of the bottom. I favor the second option with a lip at about 45 degrees and extending between 3 – 5 mm out from the outside diameter of the top. The shaping above the waistline is done as per the area below, except that you will be working towards the tailstock, leaving enough material for the lip. When you are happy with the shape, true up the end of the bottom as much as you can before removing the live centre to complete it. Then, proceed to hollow the box.

You need to decide if you are going to make a hollow form with the profile of the inside following that of the outside, or to keep the inside diameter constant. I am not an experienced hollow form turner, so I stick to a parallel inside diameter. Using a suitable Fostner bit, drill a hole leaving 1 – 2 cm of material at the bottom. This leaves some weight in the piece. Clean out the bottom with a box scraper and clean up the sides. The inside of the opening should have parallel sides at the top. This will make a better lid fit. Sanding and finishing, inside and out, can now be done. However, because the waistline is not truly circular, avoid rounding it over when sanding the outside. I suggest using sandpaper backed by something more rigid than your fingers. A cork block or a small, flat piece of wood works here.

The chucking tenon should remain in place in case you need to remount it to make adjustments or you are making a continuous join at the lid/bottom meeting.

Step 1 and Step 2 can be carried out in the reversed order. They have been described above as making the area below the waistline on the on a second axis, then the area above the waistline on the original axis. Alternatively, you can make the area below the waistline on the original axis, and then make the area above the waistline on the second axis. Both options produce a well-shaped box. However, this second option does not require that you re-cut the groove.

Make the Lid. Take a blank of contrasting wood, approximately 6 cm long by 5 cm across and mount it directly in the chuck. Turn the protruding end round and cut a tenon at the outer end. It must have parallel sides and be about 10 mm long. Its diameter should provide a snug fit to the inside of the bottom. The degree of “snugness” is up to you. Take light cuts at the end of the blank to form the point of the spinning top. Gradually move backwards towards the chuck removing material until approximately 5 mm of the tenon remains for a snug fit.

You can now reduce the overall diameter of the bottom of the lid until it is your required size. I favor a diameter that is less than the outside of the lip – it is simpler to make. If you prefer a continuous or uninterrupted join of the bottom to lid (without the lip), then you can remount the bottom of the box in the chuck with the lid inserted as a friction fit (jam-chuck) into the bottom between the chuck and the live centre in the tailstock. The outside of the lid and the bottom can now be rounded together, and the lid’s finial completed. This is the traditional way to finish a box. Either way, the underside of the lid can be sanded and finished.

I chose a smaller diameter lid so, I reversed the lid and chucked it by the tenon to complete the lid separately from the bottom. If you are worried about your chuck marking the tenon, then make a collar to fit around it. Making a collar is quick and easy to do. It should be the

length of the tenon and 10 mm bigger than the diameter of the tenon. It should have a 5 mm piece removed from the ring to allow for compression. The collar can be used to grip the tenon in the chuck and the live centre used for as long as possible to complete the finial. The finial can be any shape of your choice but, remember that the lower the centre of gravity of a spinning top, the better its performance. So, keep the finial simple to reduce the lid's overall weight and the top's CG. You can now sand and finish the finial. If you are not that enamored with a dual-purpose spinning top/lid, then the lid can have an off-centre slant to it (the finial, that is). It can be achieved the same way that the bottom was made, by pushing the piece off centre before completing the finial.

Finally, the bottom's chucking point can be removed. This can be done by hand or by bandsaw, followed by hand-sanding or using some other sanding device. I have sheets of sandpaper in various grades attached to MDF disks that I can rotate on my lathe.

So that's it. I hope you will have as much fun as I have had making these off-centre boxes. The sizes and shapes are only limited by your own imagination so, do have a go and have fun experimenting with your own ideas.



In this article

Photos: 1 & 5 by Mike Sims. 2, 3, & 4 by David Forrester

Wednesdays demo by Colm Murphy
Barrell tapered tealight holder
Notes by John Doran, pic by Colm

Colm used a piece of 200 year old oak from Stradbally Co Waterford. He started with a block of 250 x 80 mm and turned it down to a cylinder, parting off about 70mm and made a chucking point at the base.

A hole to accept the tealight was drilled in the top using a 46mm forstner bit, to a depth of 10mm.

The piece was mounted in the chuck using the earlier turned chucking point and the barrel was tapered top to bottom.

Two rings were made using a 4mm parting tool and these were burnt with a fine strip of oak to produce black rings .



Bees wax and condron put on to finish the barrel. Then bees wax and danish oil buffed then shine produced with polishing mop.

Suprise piece

next Colm used a piece of Ash. Parting off about 50mm. Took out the piece and made a chucking point. Cleaned the face of the wood with a skew and put an ogee on it. Then used a wire brush n the outside to finish



Saturdays demo by Joe O'Neill

Photos by Rich Varney

Notes by Sean Earls

December's wood turning demonstration has been done by Joe O'Neill for as many years as I can remember. Covid changed Joe's normal presentation this year, no Christmas gear and he turning was not a specific Christmas theme. Joe was turning Pepper or Salt mills, which was part of Joe's helping hand to a fellow turner. Joe turned two pepper mills. The first one was a two part pepper mill, the second was a single column mill. Both pepper mills had to be centrally bored to accommodate the pepper or salt. Recesses then had to be made so as to accommodate the grinding unit and the retention plates or bars. On the other piece a recess was created to accommodate the turnplate. Sounds somewhat complicated at first, but each unit comes with clear instructions as to what to do. Using the unit instructions that Joe had I will endeavour to show you how Joe tackled the two-unit pepper mill.

Both pieces of timber were rounded between centres. The two piece pepper mill was divided into lengths according to the dimensions on the mechanism diagram. On the longer section a spigot was turned on both ends in order to facilitate the holding and drilling from both ends in order to complete the central hole of the mill. During the drilling the drill size indicated in the instructions was used and the lathe speed was reduced before the drilling started. A small section of the hole was drilled each time, then cleaned out and occasionally the bit was wiped with candle grease to reduce friction. When the second spigot was placed in the chuck and the lathe turned on a wobble appeared. Joe had a very simple and effective way of taking



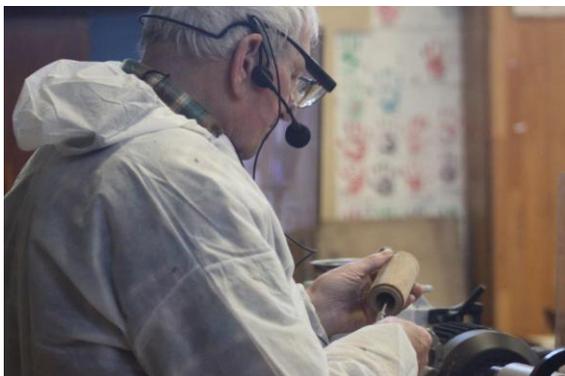
the wobble out of the piece of timber. He got a steel bar, placed it on the tool rest and pressed it against the turning piece of timber until the wobble in the timber was corrected. The second section of the hole was then drilled. Then both top and bottom of the section were clearly marked.

The grinding unit, the spring and spring bar had a recess made for them, either by a drill bit of the correct size or by creating the recess with a narrow parting tool.

On both occasions Joe used a narrow parting tool to make the recess to the correct depth. Then he made a second recess to accommodate the retention plate under the grinding unit

recess. At this stage Joe coupled the unit and internal mechanism to see if they fitted and the depth of the recesses were correct. He checked with the other piece of timber that it would be sufficiently long to complete the job properly. He also ensured that there was sufficient length between the grinder and the base of the mill.

Next he placed the retention plate on its base and marked the positions for the screws. He drilled the holes with suitable bit.



Repositioning the grinding unit, Joe then screwed the plate in place. The top piece was then checked with the protruding turning shaft in order to work out what height the top piece should be. Joe recessed the base of the top. He then drilled a central hole through the top section to accommodate the drive shaft. Both units were then fitted and checked, and the protruding shaft bar was used again to estimate the height of top section of the mill.

The grinding unit was now dismantled in order to shape the complete unit. Joe did the shaping work between centres. Firstly he plugged both ends of the bottom unit with ready made spigots, then placed them between centres. Having shaped the bottom, he took out the spigot on the top of the unit and placed the top section on to complete the full design of the pepper mill .

Joe assembled the unit fully. Both units fitted perfectly, he also checked for grinding. A job well done as usual by Joe. Joe is keen to point out that if one reads the instructions and carefully checks all the parts the grinding mechanism one will be able to make the pepper mill. The final design shape will be up to you.

The other pepper mill was certainly easier to make and the instructions and design given proved sufficient for anyone to follow. One observation I would like to make is that Joe, Michael and Pat each created a new tool to tackle certain parts of their design. Creativity is in every thing they do. Also the same professionalism was present in each of their demonstrations, even when the units themselves were simple or small. A lesson for all of us that we should endeavour to be professional in all our turning.

Interesting items from the web

Woodturner and furniture maker from Co Carlow

Darragh Sinnott <https://www.darraghsinnottdesign.ie/shop-wood-turning-homewares/>

Furniture maker from Wexford who also turns.

Shane Tubrid <https://www.shanetubridfurniture.ie/>

Made in Ireland exhibition on in Kilkenny until January 30th, several woodturners involved.



I still need articles for the newsletter. It's difficult to find interesting content every month so I need some help.

Not looking for novels but if you have learned or figured out something or skill that may be useful to others, share it with us!

So can some of you go on Google and research a topic of interest to wood turners.

Woodturners are always interested in how the other guy turns his pieces so if you have something that you think may be unique or novel jot down a few notes and pictures and send them on.

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