



Dublin Chapter Newsletter

Irish Woodturners Guild

August 2023



Editor John O'Neill

Please check both your email and the Chapter website (<http://www.dublinwoodturners.com>) regularly for updates.

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pics left Danny McGeever and MDF flower by Danny.



Our demonstrator this month is Cathal Ryan from the east central chapter.

Summer is here and wood has higher moisture content than it had a couple of months ago! All that rain is going to leave its mark with a large summer growth ring in our trees, might make for interesting grain in the woodturnings of the future.

Our competitions are going well with many entries each month, standard very high and great to see whats being turned by the chapter members, keep it up.

The chapter challenge group is working well together and getting on with the job. I still need help with a few articles, pictures, stories or bits of interest for the newsletter, not looking for advanced journalism so if you're doing anything of interest take a few pics and jot down a few notes and send them to me for inclusion in this newsletter.

The IWG TT40 ash project closing date is September 9th. As dieback disease is expected to wipeout most of our ash trees over the next 20 years, irish ash may not exist for much longer unless of course a viable remedy is found, none available yet.



The rules and entry forms are available at <https://www.iwg.ie/ash>. If you haven't started yet its time to put the thinking caps on, sharpen up the tools and get out into the shed.





Frank Gallagher

1st advanced Frank Gallagher



Tony Hartney

2nd advanced Tony Hartney



Cecil Barron

3rd advanced Cecil Barron



Brendan Phelan

4th advanced Brendan Phelan



David Sweeney

5th advanced David Sweeney



Charlie Byrne

1st experienced Charlie Byrne



Mark Daly

2nd experienced Mark Daly



Ray Ivers

3rd experienced Ray Ivers



John O'Neill

4th experienced John O'Neill



Declan Corrigan

1st beginners Declan Corrigan



Claire Godkin

2nd beginners Claire Godkin

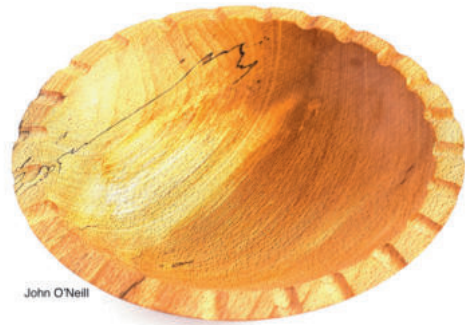


Michael Stephens

3rd beginners Michael Stephens



1st artistic Cecil Barron



2nd artistic John O'Neill



3rd artistic Charlie Byrne



Frank Gallagher

4th artistic Frank Gallagher

Wednesday demo by Tommy Hartnett Subject Tealight holder

Tommy stepped in at short notice and presented the demo. His subject was a square edged tealight holder. He brought a selection of his tealight holders and a few blanks, pictured on right.

The blank he used was a laminated table leg, believed to be rubber wood, a lightly coloured medium density from the Para rubber tree, cut down when it no longer yields rubber. Blank was mounted between chuck jaws and tailstock, tailstock tightened to fairly high pressure as the blank was being 'pressure' held in place.

Tommy proceeded to turn a chucking point on both ends. Blank was mounted in the chuck and the piece was curved from base up towards the 4 edges of the blank. He shaped the outside of the piece and then sanded to 240 grit, being careful of the fingers.

Sanding sealer (cellulose based) was applied and buffed with a piece of tissue.





Then finished with yorkshire grit, finally buffed with tissue. The piece was reversed in the chuck and held from the base. Next task was to make the recess for the glass insert. A slight bevel turned on base of hole to accomodate the tealight holder. Tommy used a 'shed' build round bar scraper for the job, see picture below right.

The glass insert should be 4/5s of its height proud of the wood recess to allow for light emission, if the candle is too deep in the wood recess it won't sparkle when candle is burning.

The top of the 'bowl' was then shaped with a slight curve from centre down towards the edge, picture below left. Light cuts are taken at the end of the process. Finished top pictured below right.

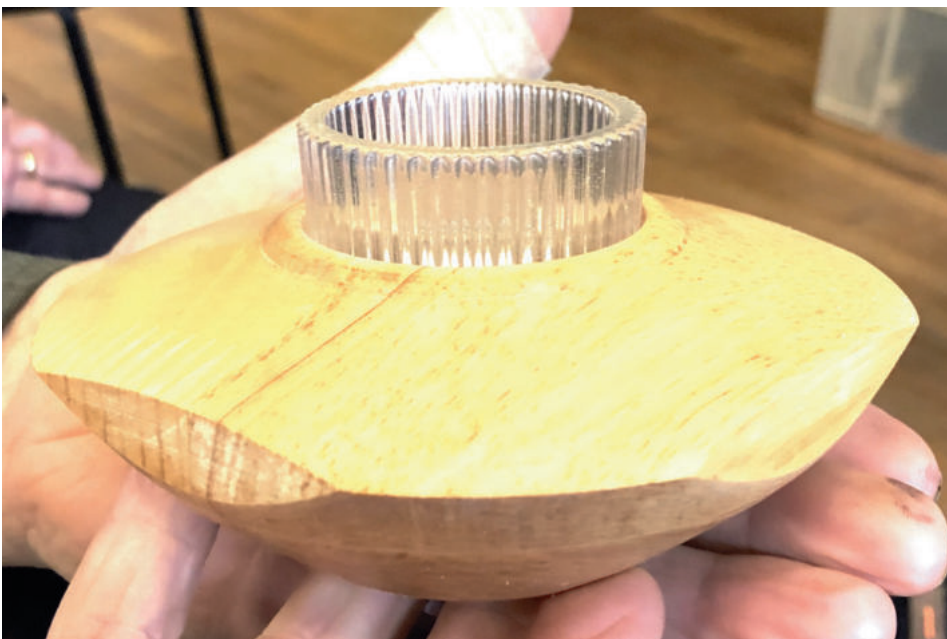


Cellulose sanding sealer applied and then buffed with tissue.

Yorkshire grit then applied with lathe turned off, then buffed with piece of tissue.

Finished with microcrystalline wax and then buffed to high shine with tissue.

Great demo Tommy.



Finished tealight holder



Another tealight holder by Tommy

Saturday Demo
Demonstrator Danny McGeever
Notes by John O'Neill
Pictures by John O'Neill
Subject Ash oval bowl



Danny started by showing us some of his pieces and explaining some background on them. First piece was his 'Olaf' character. He tried this three times before he hit on the right form and shape.

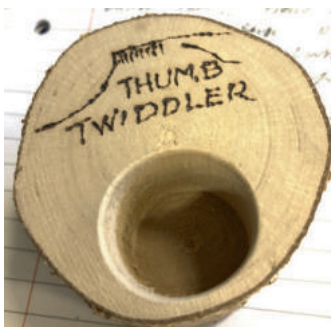


Olaf standing proudly in picture on left. His next piece was a towel hanger which raised a lot of interest amongst the audience. It looked simple but had a little 'edge' to it. A groove was chiseled out to fit a large marble which locks onto the towel and holds it in place, pictured on right. He then showed us some examples of his



butter prints, This is a 2 part device which was used to place butter on a dish with a 'print' on the butter, pictured on the right. The print he showed the audience had a thistle on it which shows the link between the north west of Ireland and Glasgow, a lot of people emigrated to Scotland from the area.

Another novelty item he had was thumb twiddler, apparently popular with older folks in America, shown below left.



Then to the main event, A large Ash log, about 200 x 400mm was mounted between centres on the lathe. Once speed has been confirmed as set to the lowest, lathe is turned on and blank turned to round with a spindle roughing gouge, picture below right. Then a parting tool was used to square off the ends with a spigot created on the tailstock end. Danny advised that when using the parting tool it should be like peeling paper off a roll, engage tool and bring up



handle until cutting starts. To 'chuck' the piece he used a chuck with wide jaws, jaws have to be well tightened as we have a fairly large piece of wood. Blank then further shaped with the spindle roughing gouge. Next was to remove a 'locking ring' piece from the end of the blank, using a self made pointed & thin parting tool, the ring was about 10mm long and approx 3mm thick. The tool has a to have a point in order to get in under the curve of the circular ring. Danny was running into problems because the ash piece was very dry, much drier that he would have preferred for this job, it was a piece of ash he cut down 4-5 years ago. The problem became apparent when he started hollowing. Various tools were tried, a hook tool which is intended for end grain only but best for wet timber, it was very ineffective on this piece of wood as resistance



was a problem. also tried bowl gouge with swept back grind, end grain too dry for this also. Never a man to give up easily, a few more hollowing tools were tried before hitting on the best option, a carbide tipped tool as seen below, used in a sweeping action.



. An magnetic led light was used to highlight the inside of the vessel while hollowing, pictured on right.

A parting tool was then used to make the recess for the connecting ring, breaking off a bit of the ring to be used for sizing the recess. The depth of the recess to be half the width of the ring. The fitting of the connecting ring shown on left.

Danny switched to a swan neck hollowing tool to finish off the hollowing and it was cutting better at this stage.



He then bored out the core of next section with the forstener bit and continued with the hollowing with the swan neck tool.

Next job was to shape the bottom (headstock end) of the piece with a combination of roughing gouge and bowl gouge.

To finalise the hollowing he used a workshop made calipers made from some aluminum, design based on one he saw at a demo in UK.

A round nose negative rake scraper (picture on right) was used to fine tune the inside of the vessel, checking regularly with the calipers.

Removal of inside wood was still difficult as it was too dry so he switched to removing a few mm off the outside using a bowl gouge, checking with calipers all the way.

Danny gave a bit advise regarding the difference between softwood and hardwood.

Hardwood, weak in tension & strong in compression.

Softwood, strong in tension and weak in compression.



Next task was to sand the piece using a piece of wood with velcro attached for attaching cloth backed sandpaper, keeping the fingers safely out of danger, pictured on the left.

A forstener bit was used to finish the funnel of the vessel and then the piece was parted off from the blank, last bit of parting done with a saw as it may be difficult to hold the piece for final parting.



Thanks for a great demo Danny

The booming popularity of pottery by John O'Neill
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The craft of pottery making is going through a rise in popularity over the last few years,. It is seen by people as an antidote to the digital and internet world, no app for this! People put their phones, tablets or laptops aside and appear to relish the opportunity to get their hands messy with wet clay and in the process allow their creative selves a chance to flourish.



It is seen as a chance to slow down the pace of life by getting absorbed in the creative process, if you look at your smart phone while 'throwing' a piece it will result in a dirty phone and a ruined piece! This upsurge in interest is occurring right across the developed world.



The TV show 'the great pottery throwdown' which features amateur potters competing to produce the best ceramic pieces has been very popular. Shows like this grab the interest of the public resulting in more would be potters taking it up, ending up with a bit of a snowball effect, interest cultivates more interest.

These would be potters are signing up for classes in schools and workshops in potters studios. The website courses.ie shows many pottery courses available but in contrast only 3 woodturning courses on the site. There are also many course opportunities given by potters in their own studios available. Many studios offer classes for children, getting their attention early! While pottery is seen as an antidote to the modern internet connected world by getting back to the process of producing something worthwhile from a blob of clay it is actually social media which is fuelling



the upsurge in its popularity. Younger people are taking it up in large numbers, 20 and 30 year olds now getting involved in the creative pottery process.

It appears that both men and women are getting involved in equal numbers. In the USA pottery has been described as the new 'yoga' due to its popularity with younger middle class people.

It is seen as a creative process, good for the mind and body.

It remains to be seen how many people who take up courses go onto continue the craft at home. There are some initial purchases such as pottery wheel, home kiln and some tools but not very expensive and can be done in a spare room or out in the workshop.

There's probably a lesson there for woodturners!

A week of woodturning in Lignières-de-Touraine

by John O'Neill

This year I decided to try out Diarmuid Dooleys week long woodturning course. He is based in Lingeires de Touraine just west of Tours. Ryanair fly into Tours airport on Wednesdays and Sundays, Sunday it was!

Simple enough to get there, arrive in Tours airport, get 'Tram A' to centre ville and get off at Gare de Tours (train station), train then to Langeais and Diarmuid picked me up for short hop to the digs (airbnb) in Lignieres de Touraine. A quiet little town with the church in



centre. Note, not much open on a Sunday in France, its not like in Ireland. Local restuarants appear to shut at 3 pm on Sunday, get your lunch in before them!.

Diramuids workshop is right in the heart of the village (picture on left) just hidden behind the village hall. Woodturning started on the Sunday night followed by a barbie and few scoops.

One thing to be pointed out.

Wood is everywhere in this part of France. There are plenty of forests, you come across wood piled

up near the roadside, oak logs, poplar, walnut and ash among the most common woods to be seen. Most appears to be destined for firewood, the log burner is common in houses of the area, Take a trip out any local road and you will come across stacks of timber, as in picture on right.

One night I went on a trip with Diarmuid to check out some wood for sale. Yer man had seasoned ash in a shed, about 1 metre wide, 90mm deep and about 3 metres long, and was looking for 12 euro each.

Needless to say the van was well loaded on the way home!



Monday morning was the real start of the weeks course.

There were four of us doing the course, myself and three people from France. Their english was as good as my french so Diarmuid was the translator for the week. The group consisted of two novice turners and two improvers. The turning day was 08:30 to around 18:30. I have been turning for a few years, learned mainly by watching youtube videos but this was my first real woodturning course.

We started off with a lesson in free hand sharpening. Working with a steel bar to learn the knack of moving the tool to get the required shape/bevel. We were all newcomers to this, everyone starting at point zero.

Diarmuid started us, describing how to stand and move the tool

over the surface of the sander, pictured on right. Then we each spend some time trying it out ourselves. This was repeated every day and by the end of the week you could see a big improvement, as with everything else practise is the key.



We started off with some sacrificial wood blanks to ease us in and get used to the tools and lathes.

I was working on a 'Far Tools' lathe, a company based in Tours not far from our location. It was a sturdy well built machine with movable control panel, similar lathe pictured on the right. Link to the companies website here www.fartools.com/en. The tool rest



was a bit different to my own so took a bit of getting used to. The weather was hot outside but temperature in the shed was consistently in low twenties, well build walls acting as a regulator, picture of temperature on wall of pharmacy in Tours below left.

We spend the day turning with the muinteoir offering advice when required, he didn't have to see what we were doing but knew by the sound where each of us were going wrong, even when he was standing outside the workshop! Regular shouts of 'gentlement' were heard during the week.

During the week we did a bit of texturing work on sacrificial bit of wood.

A handheld rotary cutter (pic below right) was used to create cross stitch pattern on the wood, took a bit of practise to create a presentable pattern.

At other times we continued with turning our own pieces, each of us were interested in turning and upskilling on different aspects of the craft. Bowls, spheres, vessels and rolling pins amont the things which were created during the week.

Lessons were also given in hand and power sanding, the aim being to learn to use sanding to improve the pieces, The sand paper grit sizes



used were 80, 150 & 240, pictured below left.

I started turning a piece of 500+ years old oak to turn a vase shaped vessel, pictured below left. The wood was very dry, hard but turnable. Advise and mentoring given while turning the piece, I learned more while doing this piece than with any other piece of wood which I have ever turned including how to move the body to achieve the desired curve on the wood.



It wasn't all work and no play. On particularly enjoyable trip was to a local wine producer, Thierry Besard. Thierry produces eight different wines, each one better than anything I have ever tasted before (I tasted them all) and all reasonably priced, Thierry and yours truly pictured on right enjoying one of his wines.



Whats on and items of interest

<https://www.irishshows.org/> shows on around the country

<https://augustcraftmonth.org/> some craft events on in August

<https://www.corkcraftanddesign.com/> craft and design events on in Cork for August

<https://craftni.org/augustcraftmonth2023/> craft events on in the north for August

<https://oldfairday.ie/> Tobbercurry festival arts and crafts

<https://www.birrvinageweek.com/> Birr vintage week and arts festival

<https://moynaltysteamthreshing.ie/> Moynalty festival

Competition Pieces for 2023

August: Salt and pepper set

September: Goblet with captive rings for Experienced and Advanced

October: Egg cup with egg

November: AGM, competition 300 x 80 x 80

December: Christmas item

Demonstrators 2023

Aug Sat 5th Cathal Ryan

Sep Sat 2nd Tom Ronayne

Oct National Seminar

Nov Sat 4th Michael Fay

Dec Sat 2nd Joe O'Neill

Wed Frank Gallagher

Wed Willie Edwards

Wed Willie Reville

Wed Joe O'Neill

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Audio Visual	Tony	Hartney		
Wednesday	Demos	Brendan		
Newsletter/WebSite	John	O'Neill		webmaster@dublinwoodturners.com
Books & Video				

Competition Table

Beginners	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Totals
Claire Godkin	13	13	15	15	11	13	15	13					108
Graham Hunter		15	11	13		15							54
Michael Stephens	15		9	11				11					46
Declan Corrigan			6	9	13			15					43
Maria Jennings			13		15								28
Brian Houlahan		11	5	7									23
Pat McCartin			7										7
Experienced													
Charlie Byrne	15	11	13	15	11	11	13	15					104
Mark Daly			15	11	9	13	15	13					76
Hugh Nolan		15	7	13	15	15	6						71
Ray Ivers	13		11	7	13	7	7	11					69
John O'Neill		13	9	9	7	9	11	9					67
Kevin Milton							9						9
Sean Earls			6										6
Advanced													
Brendan Phelan	9	13	11	15	15	15	13	9					100
Frank Gallagher	5	6	13	5	5	9	11	15					69
David Sweeney		15	15	13	11			7					61
Tony Hartney	6	11	7	6				13					43
Sean Ryan	15	9		9	7								40
Vincent Whelan	5	5		5	5	6							26
John Duff	13				13								26
Cecil Barron							15	11					26
Paddy Finn	7	7			5	5							24
Tommy Hartnett	11		6		5								22
Willie Edwards			9	7									16
Pat Walsh						13							13
James Gallagher				11									11
Colum Murphy						11							11
Graham Brislane						7							7
Frank Maguire					6								6
Artistic													
John O'Neill		11	13	7	9	11	15	13					79
Frank Gallagher	11	9	11	9	11	5	5	9					70
Hugh Nolan			15	11	15	7	5						53
Michael Stephens	13		9	5	13		7						47
Diarmuid Dooley	15	13		15									43
Cecil Barron							13	15					28
Charlie Byrne						6	9	11					26
Rich Varney		15											15
Seamus O'Reilly						15							15
Tony Hartney				13									13
Colum Murphy						13							13
Claire Godkin						5	6						11
Tommy Hartnett							11						11
Michael Jordan	9												9
Pat Walsh						9							9
Ray Ivers					7								7
Willie Edwards				6									6
Graham Hunter						5							5
Adrian Finlay							5						5