

ALL-DAY EVENT 2016

with MARK BAKER

Mark is well known as the Editor of Woodturning magazine and is also a professional woodturner and an excellent demonstrator.

He started his demonstration by talking about the 3 Fs. **F**unction dictates **F**orm and the third is **F**inish which also relates back to Function as the Finish must be appropriate to the end use.

Bowl—Field Maple



A blank of “wet” Field Maple was mounted between a steb centre in the headstock and a ring centre in the tailstock. Mark uses this way of holding the blank because he can more easily adjust the position of the blank. Using a pull cut he started to rough shape the outside and check to see how the wood would cut. He discovered that the piece had some nice figuring and so decided that he would save the centre of the blank by coring it out. He therefore formed a spigot on the base of the blank and continued to shape the outside. He reversed the blank in the chuck and checked the bowl for any faults. There was an obvious crack near the rim of the bowl so he reduced the thickness of the blank to remove it.

To start the coring he first turned a spigot to fit the chuck in the centre of the surface and then formed a recess at the edge of the blank to aid support for the start of coring. Mark used a straight McNaughton coring tool in a long metal handle. The handle needs to be both long and metallic to withstand the stresses that are involved in the coring process. Mark cored out the centre being careful to enter at the correct angle and to stop leaving about 1 inch at the centre. With the tailstock removed the core was easily broken out. Mark quickly turned the inside of the bowl so that an even wall thickness of about 1 inch was achieved, this blank was now to be left to dry.

The core was mounted in the chuck on the spigot previously formed in the coring process and a pleasing shape turned. Along with a small foot/spigot. Mark then talked about use of scrapers to refine the shape. It was noticeable that all his scrapers were very solid heavy ones to avoid the possibility of vibration. He showed how quickly the edge can dull and how a quick “touch up” with a diamond hone restored the edge.

The small bowl was reversed in the chuck and hollowed out. Mark studies ceramics and visits museums, etc. in his quest to learn more about shapes and techniques. He stated that ceramics never have sharp edges they are always rounded so he always gives his bowls soft edges. Because the wood was wet it was prone to movement so to get the wall thin enough he had to support near the top and he uses some paper towel folded over to stop his fingers from getting too warm.

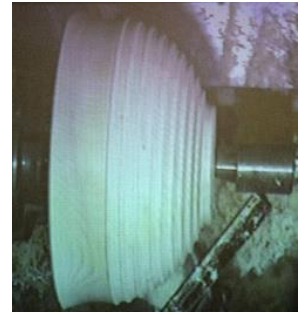
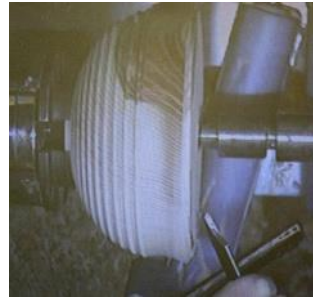
The result was a pleasingly shaped small dish with nice figuring. Mark commented that often small items sell better than large ones.

Classical shaped lidded bowl—Ash

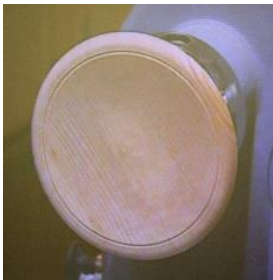
Mark talked about various classical shapes and forms of bowls relating them to different regions of the world and mounted a piece of Ash on the lathe between centres. He started to shape the outside of the bowl and formed a spigot. Having got the curve of the bowl to flow satisfactorily to the rim he formed a large cove below the rim. He used a scraper to get a good finish. Next he used a beading tool to cut beads all the way from the edge of the cove to the spigot. Mark explained that this would be perfectly acceptable as a design feature but he had seen on various objects in museums the use of interrupted bead patterns.



He used a parting tool to eliminate alternate beads, moving the tool carefully from side to side to maintain a continuous curve through the beads.



The bowl was reversed in the chuck and Mark cored the centre out for use as the lid. With the core removed the inside was tidied up with a ridge left to support the lid. The inside of the walls of the bowl were undercut slightly and curving nicely to the base of the bowl. He explained that the curving undercut is important so that it is easier to remove any contents that may be placed in the bowl.



The cored out section was mounted in the chuck and a spigot formed and the top shaped. This was then reversed and the underside shaped. Mark likes to keep the underside of lids clear of excessive decoration.

The following photos show the bowl with lid and the inside of the bowl with the recess for the lid.



Square-edged Bowl—Steamed Pear

The square block of steamed pear was mounted between centres as before and a spigot formed. With a bowl gouge Mark started to form the underside of a small bowl. He cut a small amount off the corners of the square at a 45° angle so that he could undercut the rim without damaging the point of the corner. He gently undercut the rim and blended the bowl shape together.



When satisfied with the shape he reversed the bowl in the chuck on the spigot and proceeded to shape the rim of the bowl and to undercut the wing. Care was taken to ensure the bowl sides matched and followed either side of the wing. He then marked the wings (as seen in the photo) so that he could carve and abrade them so that they alternated up and down. The bowl would then be hollowed out, but Mark stopped there as he had already shown the process.

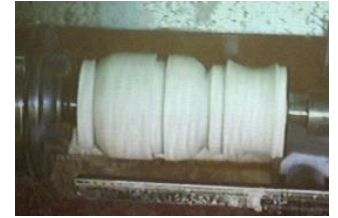


Simple Box—Rippled Ash

Mark roughed the square sectioned Ash to a cylinder and marked it out for two boxes. He then part shaped the boxes with a spigot at both ends of each box before separating them.



He mounted the bottom half of the box in the chuck and hollowed it out using a ring tool. He showed how the bevelled side was used to do the hollowing while the other side was used to start the cut in the centre. He cut a spigot and shoulder for the lid to fit onto.



He put the top piece in the chuck and hollowed it out and cut a recess to fit onto the bottom half. When he was happy with the fit he put the bottom half back in the chuck and fitted the lid, using paper towel in the joint and the tail stock brought up to hold the box firmly in place. He then refined the shape and blended the two halves together. Mark turned away the spigot on the top and carefully cleaned it up before separating the two halves.



The base was fitted to a jam chuck and the spigot turned away and the base slightly dished so that the box would stand.



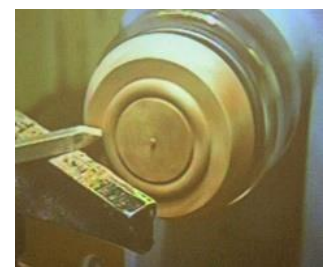
Mark stressed that, for boxes, the wood should be very dry or else the movement that would occur would possibly lock the lid on.

Calabash style box - London Plane



A piece of square section Plane was roughed to a cylinder between centres and a spigot formed on one end. Mark then mounted the piece in the chuck on the spigot and turned a small recess in the tailstock end to fit jaws in the expansion mode.

He started to rough out the shape and determined the proportion of base to top and parted the top off. With the top part removed he further shaped the outside of the base attempting to form a gourd shape. He then proceeded to hollow the base and tapered the inside of the neck of the base.



The top was mounted in the chuck using the recess and a spigot was turned such that it fitted in the neck of the base. A bead was then turned at the edge of the spigot and the inside of the bead turned away. Mark explained that often loose fitting lids on jars were seated in this way.

The lid was reversed in the chuck and held in the jaws on the bead. The top was cleaned up and a small decorative bead turned.

With the base back in the chuck the top was fitted and held in place by the tailstock. To protect the surface of the top Mark had fitted a plastic bottle cap, stuffed with paper towel, over the ring centre. He blended the shape of the top and base and refined the shape of the base to make it more gourd shaped. To finish the base of the box he mounted it on a jam chuck and turned the spigot away.



Decoration was added and Mark used a 10tpi male threading tool to produce regular, evenly spaced grooves on the lower two thirds of the base. To finish the bottom of the base was slightly dished.

The photos show the finished box.



This was a very informative and interesting demonstration which showed a number of different techniques and tools. Mark also showed how to overcome some of the problems that can be encountered when turning,

Thank you very much Mark for an enjoyable day.