

## June 2012 Meeting - Terry Smart (Chestnut Products)



Terry kindly agreed to stand in for Mark Baker who was away in America. Terry said he was not doing any turning but was going to show how to use and get the best out of the finishes that Chestnut produce.

Ambient temperature can have a dramatic effect on your finish, for example if it is too hot then they dry too quickly. Finishing, by definition, is the last thing you do so getting the finish right is important. “A good piece can be ruined by a poor finish”.

Preparation before application of the finish is important. Terry recommends abrading through the grits, going from 80 through to 320 and then use Nyweb pads for the final abrading. Nyweb pads are synthetic fibre pads impregnated with either silicon carbide or aluminium oxide abrasive. The acronym to remember the order to use them is “GROW” - Green, Red, Orange, White. The orange one equates roughly to 1000 grit. After following the procedure the surface of the wood should have a sheen after the white Nyweb. He then removes any surface dust with a “tack” cloth which he stores in an air-tight container to prolong its life.

The majority of Chestnut finishes have been tested to EN 71 standard and are safe for use on toys. The products carry a label showing this.

*Sanding sealers*—Apply cellulose sanding sealer with a safety cloth (non-woven paper). Rub into the wood with the grain and wipe off any excess. When dry, denib with burnishing cream—apply the cream sparingly, allow to dry and then with the lathe running, buff to a sheen with a safety cloth, hard pressure is not necessary. Alternatively the white Nyweb can be used to denib.

Shellac based sanding sealer is applied in the same way but is better for open grained woods as it fills the grain more. Oil finishes can be applied over shellac sealers.

Acrylic sanding sealer is water based with low odour and needs about 20 minutes to dry.

*Waxes*—Woodwax 22 (so named because it was formulation number 22) can be applied directly to bare wood but a better result is obtained if the wood has been sealed and denibbed first. With the lathe stationary apply the wax with a cloth and when the wax starts to “drag” i.e. dries and it feels harder to move the cloth over the surface then it is ready for buffing with the lathe running.

Microcrystalline wax is a synthetic wax mixture that gives a tougher, water resistant finish. It takes longer to harden/dry. It is also more expensive and you get a lot less for your money.

*Melamine lacquer*—this is a pre-catalysed lacquer and can be applied over cellulose sanding sealer. The can does not require shaking, shaking can introduce bubbles which could affect the surface finish. A maximum of three coats can be applied and burnishing cream used to enhance the shine. Melamine lacquer takes about 7 days to attain full hardness.

*Ebonising lacquer*—Terry had a piece of Ash mounted on the lathe and went through the sanding process then attacked it with a wire brush to open the softer areas of the grain. He then applied black ebonising lacquer with a spray can and when that was dry he sparingly applied copper gilt cream with a safety cloth, rubbing it into the grain. He used Woodwax 22 to remove the surplus gilt cream and buffed it to a shine. Finishing oil or hard wax oil can also be used to remove the excess gilt cream.



The final part of his demo was to show the Chestnut Buffing System which consists of three cotton buffing wheels, a large mandrel to fit most lathes, red Tripoli cutting compound, white diamond cutting compound and carnauba wax.