

May 2016 Meeting – Ryan Barker

Our demonstrator this evening was Ryan Barker, a young man who is a qualified joiner and has been turning for five or six years. This is his first club demonstration. He is a product of AWGB training days. Whilst working he does some production turning in his own time. He hopes eventually to go self-employed as a turner. His promise to us at the start was to show something we had not seen before and as far as I am concerned he achieved that.

The project was stair spindles with four curves each meeting to form a rounded square. Two spindles are turned in one go. The process can be applied to other items. It is necessary to make two identical jigs, one for each end. Both consist of two rounds of mdf with one having a square of appropriate size cut centrally into it. The two are glued together and affixed to a faceplate. Ryan has an Axminster faceplate for the tailstock as well.



The material (in this case walnut) is turned with two pieces of waste (in this case maple). It is best to use timber of similar hardness, although not essential. The spindles are accurately cut to square and the waste into rectangular section. The dimensions of the rectangle are double that of the spindle size by half that of the spindle. All four pieces are put together with the spindles on the inside flanked by the two pieces of waste so as to form a square. The square thus formed is placed between the two jigs on the lathe. As these are stair spindles and will be duplicated he makes up a rod with the dimensions so as to make accurate copies later on. The first cut is to form a shoulder so that each end will be square. Start a few millimetres away from the desired point and work back to an exact square. Use a skew and do both ends before forming the desired shape between the two haunches. The shape is transferred from the prepared rod. He just uses skew, spindle gouge and parting tool (used as a skew). He sands from 120 down as far as the customer wants. If doing an artistic piece, he will go as far as 1200.



The piece is then removed from the lathe. Each square is then rotated one quarter of a turn anti clockwise, replaced in the jig and on the lathe. The square has been turned on one quarter of its surface. The waste has the profile turned on it. The next quarter of the squares is now turned to match the profile on the waste being careful to turn exactly to the profile on the waste and no further. It helps having different coloured woods so that they show up as a shadow when turning. This is repeated for all sides. The last one needs to be very gently turned, as there is no choice but to turn without the support of the waste. However, there is very little wood to remove.

When designing remember that a deep profile can result in a thin point, which may snap.

The result is two spindles that are identical as well as waste profiles which may be used for the rest of the set.

General tips.

- If using the skew be careful to keep the wings clear when working close in.
- The skew is a good tool for working on a long spindle
- When using the skew be confident. If you think you might have a catch, then you probably will
- Sharpen the tool before the last pass.



This was an enjoyable demonstration from someone who has a good future in woodturning.

Some examples of Ryan's work on the next page:



Sample of his production baluster turning

AWGB Competition piece



Ryan's Lord Mayor's Competition piece -
representing Square Mile of London

