

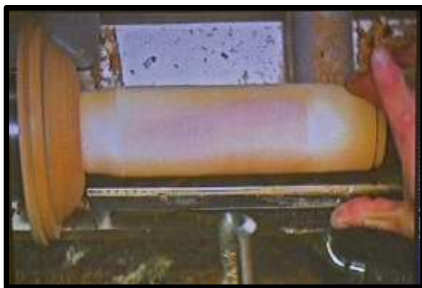
All-Day Event –Steve Heeley

Steve Heeley is based in Cannock in Staffordshire and started out as a carpenter but converted to woodturning about 18 years ago and has been turning professionally ever since. Spindle work is the mainstay of his business.

I am going to use photos taken of the projection screen so I apologise for the quality but I wanted to get images of various stages in the work.

For his first demonstration Steve stated that he was going to make a Plant Stand. For the base, he started by mounting an oak blank on a screw chuck, trued up the edge with a bowl gouge then cleaned up the face. He cut a recess for chucking and as he was going to leave the recess he formed a button in the centre. The rest of the base was slightly dished to allow the item to stand well. He used shear scraping to get a good a finish from the tool and then sanded through the grits. An application of diluted sanding sealer followed which, when dry, was de-nibbed and then paste wax applied and buffed.

With the base reversed on the chuck, the face was cleaned up, the fillets were marked then roughed out and an ogee shape formed with a flat being left in the centre. A hole to accommodate a spigot on the stem was drilled in the centre. This was left in the chuck and the chuck taken off the lathe.



For the stem a length of Yew branch was mounted between centres and roughed to round, a parting tool was used to form a spigot to fit into the hole in the base. The chuck and base were refitted onto the lathe and the column inserted. A small tenon was formed at the end nearest the tailstock and then the basic shape was roughed out with a spindle gouge. Once the rough shape was to satisfaction it was refined with a sharp spindle gouge. (Steve recommends “Classic Forms” by Stuart E Dyas as a good reference for shapes of columns, etc. When the shaping of the column was done Steve worked on the base section. He turned a bead on the edge and refined the main shape and made sure there was a clean transition from base to stem. This was then finished as before and waxed.



The top piece of oak was mounted on a screw chuck, the edge trued up and the face. A recess was cut to fit the tenon on the column and the underside shaped and finished as before. The top was reversed onto the chuck and the surface cleaned up and the edge roughly shaped. The size of the recess for the plant pot was defined and the waste removed to get as flat a surface as possible. A scraper was employed to ensure the surface was flat. The bead and ogee on the edge were refined and finished as before.





The completed piece can be seen in the photo.

The next project was a Hollow Form.



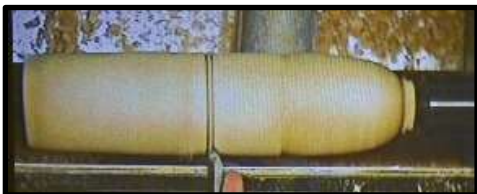
A piece of Ash log was mounted between centres and a roughing out gouge used to remove the bark and rough shape the form. The roughing of the shape was continued and a spigot to fit the chuck formed. This was then mounted in the chuck and the external shape refined. Steve used a very fine, continuous “push” cut from the top to the bottom to get a good finish. This was given a quick sand. The centre was bored out to depth with a drill bit in the tail stock and a Woodcut hollowing tool used to remove the waste. The photo shows our Chairman receiving instruction in the use of this tool.



With the hollowing done and the inside sanded Steve used a Proxxon grinder with an Arbortech blade to add texture to the external surface using a few light passes from the top to the bottom, stopping short of the base. He then added colour to the surface by dabbing on red acrylic paint, leaving some unpainted surface. This was followed by spraying some clear satin acrylic lacquer on the end of the vessel to stop penetration of the next colour. A black acrylic lacquer was sprayed over the outside of the vessel, covering the previous red acrylic.



When the lacquer was dry it was lightly sanded back to reveal some bare wood and also some of the red. The piece was finished with a coat of clear acrylic lacquer.



The final project Steve demonstrated was a decorative Acorn. A length of square sectioned Sycamore was mounted between centres and reduced to the round with a roughing out gouge. A skew chisel was used to block out the shape.



This was further refined in stages using a spindle gouge until Steve was happy with the proportions of the cup section and the nut section. He then used a Robert Sorby texturing tool to add texture to the cup portion only. If the pattern looks too regular then Steve says that a “stabbing” motion with the texturing tool will give a more random pattern.



When this was complete the stem was narrowed, the nut sanded and finished and the stub on the end removed. Finally the stem end was parted of and pared to shape with a carving knife.

Steve gave a very professional demonstration and it was clear that his attention to detail makes his work very crisp in appearance. I heard many favourable comments about the demonstration and the way Steve put across what he was doing. This was all helped by the excellent arrangements made by John Woods and Mike Charnley and their wives who provided us with excellent refreshments and lunch.

Steve had brought along a number items to display and a small gallery of these is shown below.

