

YOUR TURN

Hampshire Woodturners Association Newsletter



Alan Sturgess, He may be standing down as treasurer, but he remains sharp as ever

Spring Issue March 2019



Your Turn Spring Issue March 2019



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Coming Events:-

- **Mon 4th March Stuart King**
- **Mon 1st April - AGM Club Challenge**
- **Wed 8th May — Turn in Club Members**
- **Mon 3rd June - Paul Hannaby**

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Welcome to our Spring issue:-

As we approach a new membership year, the club continues to go from strength to strength, we enjoy great demonstrations at our monthly meetings, several by our own members. The Gallery continues to reach amazing heights of quality and ingenuity from novice to the very experienced turner.

This is also a time to show our gratitude to several club stalwarts stepping down from their positions. Alan Sturgess, our Treasurer for a very long time who has threatened to stand down for several years now, has finally been rewarded with a volunteer to replace him. Step forward Mike Dutton.

At the time of writing, I believe that Tony Mercer has volunteered to replace Bryan Matcham on the raffle. Bryan is standing down along with Horace Baker after many years of running our monthly raffle. However, Tony can't do it alone and his offer is conditional on getting another volunteer.

With those positions now filled, we still need additional bodies on the tea team as Chris Davey is standing down. You still get a great seat for the demonstrations so don't really miss anything on the night.

Are there any budding journalists out there? I would really like one or more people to write up the reports of the monthly meetings, as I am not going to be able to attend every meeting this year. You can just do one report or as many as you like. Also if anyone would like to submit a one-off article for "Your Turn" please contact me, my details are on the left of this page.

Andi Saunders Editor



Christmas Social 3rd December

People were flocking in from before 7 o'clock clutching their whistles for the challenge. The head count eventually reached 63 including 14 guests which we believe is a record for a December meeting. And there were a remarkable 24 whistles of bewildering variety on the table.

After a few welcoming remarks from the Chair, the evening kicked off with the quiz. We had to bring up another table to make 7 teams who styled themselves Gosporters, Tuneless Wonders, Speak up, Bodgers, Young Ones, We're Only Here for the Food and Not Yet.

After first half questions on Christmas (set by John Holden), Local Knowledge (Alan Sturgess), Collective Nouns (Bob Hope) and the picture round of Trees (Alan Baker) things were pretty close with the Young Ones just ahead. Is this a hopeful sign for the future?

Bob's round prompted a belated dispute about the name for a group of chickens. The answer was given as a clutch. Les came brandishing his phone showing that clutch is the collective name for eggs. Well, eggs are just immature chickens aren't they? Anyway I threatened to disqualify him for Googling the answers!

At the break we refreshed ourselves from the food provided by Lynda and Susan (Barnes). Thank you both for a very nice spread.

And then it was whistle time. The independent panel of 4 visitors chose the Howell owl as the best looking whistle though it was mighty close. Then the turners were invited to demonstrate their whistles. I was a bit worried that we were quite close to the police station but none came running and the winner was judged by audience reaction.

3 went through to the blow off and the winning whistle was a Swanee type from young Thomas Pine. I hope he shares the prize of whisky with his granddad! With the encouraging emergence of junior members we may have to rethink our prize strategy.

Then it was the second half of the quiz starting with Tom James's Movie Tunes which he played over the p.a. from his iPod.

We then had History (John Holden), Sports (Alan Baker) and Geography (Bob Hope). In the end the winning team by just 1 point was We're only here for the Food from the Young Ones and Not Yet. The closest ever result I believe.

It was just left to stand-in rafflers Keith, Susan and Andi to draw the raffle before the end of a most enjoyable evening.

Dave Gibbard

January 7th Club night members turn in

We kicked off our 2019 programme of club evenings with a “Turn-in”

This ever popular event was attended by a total of 60 members, including two new members Graham Hill and Stephen Jones. This was an excellent turnout for a January evening

Chairman Dave got things rolling with the usual welcome and notices, there was another request for volunteers on club nights with particular vacancies on the raffle table and the tea and coffee team, The raffle in particular is in danger of stopping if nobody comes forward to run it.

These positions are for just a few hours one evening each month, and you'll normally get a bottle of wine as a thank you from the committee at the AGM.

Dave also announced an upcoming “Hands on” day at Old Alresford Village Hall on Saturday 23rd March, where you can do what it says on the label, get your hands on one of the selection of lathes and receive one to one tuition from one of our many experienced turners, there will also be a sharpening station, where you can learn the basics of sharpening, the use of jigs and get your own tools nice and sharp. The day runs from 10 until 4 tea and coffee is provided just help yourself throughout the day, bring your own lunch and snacks. To cover the cost of the hall there will be a charge of £10, to book your space contact either Bob Hope or Harry Woolhead

On to the “Turn in” on offer we had three lathes and a sharpening station, these were spread around the floor area.



**The lathes were manned by Alan Baker
who was running a turn and learn mainly for the novices and improvers.**



John Holden was demonstrating Off Centre turning producing little ducks, one of them of flying off (literally).



At the third lathe was Dave Gibbard turning natural edge bowls.

And at the sharpening station we had Alan Sturgess with a comprehensive range of equipment including wet and dry grinders a selection of jigs and numerous accessories.



All four stations were kept very busy throughout the evening with small crowds gathering around them and rotating from one to the other.



The usual tea break in the middle of proceedings was then followed by a gallery critique given by Bob Hope, as is becoming the norm the table was full of very well turned items from the full spectrum of members novice to experienced, teenagers to octogenarians.

Monday 4th February – Gregory Moreton -Endless Excitement

A very good attendance on a damp February evening of 64 members and 3 guests, came along to see our first visiting demonstrator of the year, Gregory Moreton who was going to show us some tube hollowing or as explained was called “Endless Excitement” by Mark Baker.

Having practiced as a turner since 1991, Gregory was invited to join the Register of

Professional Turners, held by the Worshipful Company of Turners, in 1996, and now acts as membership secretary.

Gregory was featured in the first ‘Diary of a Craft Worker’ series published by the “Craftsman Magazine” in 1997-8 and has been profiled in “Woodturning” magazine. He has also been invited to act on a consultative committee by Channel 4, for a documentary about woodturning. He specializes in the unique and welcomes a challenge. His more unusual work has included making replacement pieces for antique instruments; willow-workers’ tools; bespoke instruments for reflexology crafted to each individual practitioner; tables made from tree slices and forms for potters and designers. He has even fulfilled a commission to make a bedroom sink. He has collaborated with an unconventional silversmith to create spectacular silvered forms in petrified wood. He also turns unique bowls, platters, vases and display pieces.

Gregory draws inspiration from the individuality of wood, and it is very important to him that each piece grows from the grain and inclusions unique to each piece of timber. As a result, no two pieces are identical. Furthermore, he holds to a strict ecological policy. No timber where the provenance cannot be guaranteed will be used. Most timbers come from the UK or Australia and are often reclaimed or recycled.



Gregory ready to start

For his first demonstration piece Gregory promised us what Mark Baker has called “Endless Excitement” or in layman’s terms a piece of tunnel hollowing to create a decorative item. He imparted some advice for those who sell their work “functionality brings down the price”

He started with an un-named blank between the centre in the tailstock and a 25mm drill bit in the chuck. With the intention of drilling a hole completely through the blank. To achieve this he used a method that should not be tried at home, wrapping a strap around the blank to support it while drilling, on one occasion he lost hold of the strap and it wildly span around with the lathe, as the drill bit gripped, after several attempts he did manage to drill right through the wood.



***Drilling the hole,
with that strap in situ***

He then shaped and placed a pine “Dolly” into the chuck and secured the item between this and the tail stock centre. Gregory then used a spindle gouge to make both ends flush. He then switched to a bowl gouge and reduced the outer edge into a “diablo” shape taking care to leave the natural edge at both ends, also using his Vernier gauge to make sure he only cut down to around 29mm so as not to hit the internal bore.



Rounding the blank



Creating the diablo shape

Working left handed he started to hollow out the head stock end working to a thickness of around 4 mm, and working up close to the Dolly. He then changed to the opposite end and repeated the same process right handed, this time cutting a spigot for reversing.

Once reversed he reduced the inside wall again to around 4mm, matched the shape to the outside and then removed the spigot. Gregory then again reversed the piece this time taping it to another dolly with several lengths of gaffer tape.

Removing the final bits of the core, to produce the finished item.



Hollowing out the end



***Cutting the spigot
Before reversing***



***Taping the piece
To the dolly***



We then took the usual tea break before turning our attention to Gregory's critique of a few selected items on the gallery table. As is fast becoming the norm at our meetings now the content of the gallery is of a very high standard. Gregory started with a few of the novice items passing on a few of his pearls of wisdom moved along the table picking out a few items from the more experienced turners in the room.

Now with time moving on he returned to the lathe and started on his second item which was to be a natural edge bowl from Robinia Pseudoacacia often incorrectly called "Acacia", the blank was of a tapered octagonal shape which he set slightly off centre between the chuck and centre, because of this he carefully started at a very slow speed, increasing as it as the shape rounded.



***The Robinia Pseudoacacia
Blank on the lathe***



Bowl taking shape



Shaping the outside

Gregory uses his little finger at the tip of his gouges and runs this along the tool post, again something not really advised for novice turners, although it works well for him. When turning natural edge, he recommends to always have your sharpest edge for the final cut. This was just a normal bowl turn, so I won't bother you with all the actions, there was nothing unusual about this, he turned the outside reversed it and hollowed out.



Hollowing out the bowl



Finishing the base



The Finished Bowl

One thing to mention is Gregory demonstrated how he wraps abrasive around his finger when sanding the inside of the bowl, again this is not a practice that your committee would recommend.

Chairman's Reflections

Membership of a club like ours tends to be on the elderly side. Many of us have come to the craft as a hobby fairly late in life. Here's how I took up woodturning.

About 25 years ago with the prospect of retirement on the distant horizon my wife apparently became alarmed at the thought of having me under her feet.

At that time we lived in Cambridgeshire and she worked at a school. One of the teachers was the fiancée of Roy Child, the son of craftsman woodturner of repute, Peter Child, and he ran a woodturning business with his brother Chris. She bought me a 2 day course with Chris for my birthday and I was rather taken with it. In fact I've still got a bowl, a goblet and a box that I made on the course.

It all got put on hold as we moved to Hampshire where I stumbled across Hampshire Woodturners Association (no internet in those days) which had been formed not long before and had a stand at a fair at the old leisure centre in Winchester.

It soon became apparent that if I was going to pursue the craft I needed a workshop and some equipment, especially a lathe so rather than joining up as I should have done,

I went away by myself and made all the classic mistakes. I bought an unsuitable new lathe which was very solid but far too small and with a fiddly toolrest. And hand tools, some of which I have hardly used to this day.

But at least I was in business and started to go along to HWA meetings at the scout hut in Winchester where I honed my skills under the stern guidance of novice master Syd Jenman.

Syd didn't have what you would call a sympathetic approach. He could reduce a novice to tears by a shake of the head or an intake of breath and there was silence as he slowly turned each item over to look at the base before awarding a score. Brutal stuff, but if you could take it you learned quickly.

I like to think that we have a gentler regime now under Harry and Alan and I am most encouraged by the number of new members and their willingness to put their work on the gallery table.

It is refreshing to see some younger people among their number joining us oldies, including some juniors.

Now all we have to do, Keith, is recruit a few more women....

Dave Gibbard

Notice of 2019 AGM of Hampshire Woodturners Association

Your Committee hereby give notice of the Association's Annual General Meeting to be held at the Railway Institute, Eastleigh on Monday 1st April 2019 starting at 7.30 pm

Current Officers and Committee:

Chairman	Dave Gibbard	Available for re-election
Treasurer	Alan Sturgess	Standing down
Secretary	Bob Hope	Available for re-election
Committee Member	Mike Dutton	Standing for Treasurer
Committee Member	Andi Saunders	Standing down
Committee Member	Alan Baker	Available for re election
Committee Member	Keith Barnes	Available for re election
Committee Member	John Holden	Available for re election
Committee Member	Dave Simpson	Available for re-election
Committee Member	Tom James	Available for re-election

Agenda for HWA AGM,

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 2018 AGM
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Changes to Constitution
7. Election of Officers
8. Election of Committee
9. Any Other Business

Agenda Item 2

Minutes of the AGM of Hampshire Woodturners Association, Wednesday 4th April 2018

Apologies for absence:

These were received from Chris West, Roy Nailor, Chris Davey, Mike Bunce, Peter Skidmore, Graham Barnard, Ron Caddy.

Minutes of the last meeting:

These were agreed as a true record. Proposed by Alan Truslove, Seconded by Ian Woodford.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report:

Chairman Dave thanked those who had helped the club to function over the preceding year, both on and off the committee. He also thanked Lynda and Derek Barkaway who were standing down from the committee for their work over the past years.

The full text of his report was published in the Summer issue of Your Turn 2018.

Treasurers Report:

Alan reported that it had been a stable year for the club finances thanks to those who contributed to the club income and highlighted the following:

Cash in hand and to be cleared	£5149.79
Shop stock and current valuation	£1426.55
Library Float	£49.80
Raffle, prizes stock and cash float	£97.04
HWA Assets at 31/03/2018	£6723.18

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Alan Baker and seconded by Ian Woodford. The acceptance vote was unanimous.

Election of officers and committee:

In the usual style the officers and committee stood down and John Davies conducted the election.

The nominations were as follows:

Position	Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairman	Dave Gibbard	Lynda Barkaway	R.Hope
Treasurer	Alan Sturgess	D Gibbard	D.Barkaway
Secretary	Bob Hope	K.Barnes	L.Barkaway
Committee	Keith Barnes	R.Hope	L Barkaway
Committee	John Holden	A.Saunders	D.Barkaway
Committee	Alan Baker	D.Gibbard	A.Saunders
Committee	Andi Saunders	D.Gibbard	D.Barkaway
Committee	Dave Simpson	D.Gibbard	J.Holden
Committee	Tom James	D.Gibbard	R.Hope

These nominations filled the available spaces on the committee and John proposed that the nominations were accepted en bloc. There was a unanimous vote to accept this and all the nominees were duly elected.

Presentations and awards:

Dave resumed his seat and passed out bottles of wine to non committee helpers as follows:

Phil Hill, Roy Nailor, Chris Davey, Les Barrow, Peter Willcocks, Peter House, Dave Simpson, Martin Stallard, Phil Bristow, Harry Woolhead, Steve Paige, Alan Truslove, Brian Matcham, Horace Baker.

Clubman of the Year.

The trophy has been remodelled by Keith Barnes to show all previous winners and was presented this year to Mike Haselden.

The Novice Trophy was awarded by Harry Woolhead to Stephen Howell.

The Len Osborne Trophy has been manufactured by Keith Barnes from an engraved wooden disc given to us by Surrey Woodturners. Jan Osborne, the widow of Len kindly attended to present the trophy to Tom James.

Any Other Business.

Phil Bristow spoke to encourage members to post interesting articles about projects or production methods to try to increase a falling visit rate to the website. The site is a good medium to gather new members and this opportunity should not be missed.

Agenda Item 6 Changes to Constitution

Membership Clause C

Present wording

All paid-up members and their guests shall have the opportunity of entering the activities of the HWA. Only paid up members may attend Annual General Meetings, vote at such meetings and serve on the committee of the HWA.

Proposed Change

All paid-up members and their guests shall have the opportunity of entering the activities of the HWA. Only paid up members may take part in Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings, vote at such meetings and serve on the committee of the HWA.

Reasons

It has been normal practice to allow visitors at the AGM to stay provided they take no part rather than asking them to leave. The same rule should also apply to an EGM.

Membership Clause D

Present Wording

Visitors and guests may attend two meetings for a charge of £2.50 per visit after which they must apply and pay for membership or pay a sum approved by the committee for each meeting. They must fill in the visitor's book at each meeting.

Proposed Change

Visitors and guests may attend meetings provided they fill in the visitor's book and pay the stipulated fee. Visitors attending more than twice may be asked to desist, invited to join or pay a different fee at the discretion of the committee.

Reasons

This really isn't a matter for the constitution and the committee should be able to vary the arrangements without having to change the constitution (as they can for membership fees).

Agenda items 7 and 8 Nominations for Officers and Committee

Nominations must be registered with the Secretary on or before 18th March 2019. These must be in writing with the signatures of the Proposer, Secunder and Nominee, stating clearly for which position the nominee is being proposed.

Send completed form to the Secretary:

Bob Hope, Thornton House, Brimpton Common, Reading, RG7 4RF

Post being proposed for:			
	Print Name	Signature	Date
Nominee			
Proposed by			
Seconded by			

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome 2 new members.

Graham Hill from Colden Common & Stephen Jones from Southampton.

Members attending monthly meetings.

I thought you would like to see how the club numbers compare to last years.

Attendance numbers are up but our membership is down.

Membership numbers are now at 84 + 6 honorary members.

We still have a long way to go to match the membership numbers of 2016/17

2017/18 December 45, January 41 February 58.

Visitors December 13, January 4 February 1.

2018/19 December 48, January 58, February 64.

Visitors December 14, January 2, February 3.

Honorary members have doubled from the previous year as we now have 3 young members.

It was the committee decision back in 2018 to give free membership to boys and girls under the age of 16 years.

16 members did not renew their membership last April, at the time this was of great concern to the committee.

Many members left due to age constraints. Sadly we lost a numbers of members who passed away during the year.

On a more positive note our membership numbers are now increasing.

The club gets lots of praise from visiting demonstrators on the contents of our gallery table.

This is down to all of you who display your turned work for other members to see.

Thanks for all your efforts, please keep it up.

Keith Barnes.
Membership Secretary.

LEN OSBORNE TROPHY LEADERBOARD — 2018/19

Position	Name	Number of Items	Total Points	Bonus Points	This TOTAL used only in tie break
1	Mike Haselden	18	22	6	28
2	Steve Howell	22	18	9	27
3	Mario Demontis	9	16	1	17
4	Dave Gibbard	10	14	3	17
5	Adrian Smith	17	14	2	16
6	Alan Baker	8	14	1	15
7	Tom James	11	12	4	16
8	Tomas Pine	6	12	0	12
9	Paul Patterson	11	10	5	15
10	Brian Eyley	7	10	1	11
11	Tony Lidington	17	10	5	15
12	Harry Woolhead	9	10	2	12
13	Harry Butler	8	10	3	13
14	John Holden	5	8	1	9
15	Roger Charlesworth	7	8	3	11
17	Greg Long	4	6	1	7
18	Peter Osborne	4	6	1	7
19	Peter Draper	3	6	0	6
20	Jason Wilkins	4	6	1	7
21	Keith Barnes	3	5	0	5
22	Ian Woodford	3	4	1	5
23	Mike Dutton	3	4	1	5

Normal meeting. 2 Point for an entry plus 1 bonus point for second entry

Challenge night. 2 Points for an entry plus 1 bonus point for second entry

Christmas Social 2 Points for an entry plus 1 bonus point for second entry

Bonus Points only to be used in a Tie Break.

NOVICE CORNER

At the last meeting I was asked to comment on a rather nice bowl that a novice had produced but it had a highly polished finish on the inside and a poorer finish on the outside. The owner confessed he had tried to replicate the inside finish and proceeded to tell me he had mixed polishes and lacquers but had buffed it vigorously only to acquire a poor result.

I think this is an area where sometimes a little is better than a lot of different products. But having said that I decided to investigate further.

I first looked at buffing which should be considered a sanding process when using a compound. So as we all know that you should sand gently and slowly as speed and too much force will not necessarily give the desired result.

This then is different when using a wax for the final finish as the buff is required to melt the wax.

When buffing a wax it is easy to over load the wheel and err on the side of too little at first, rather than too much. Over loading the buff with too much wax will produce a poor result. The wax can build up and form stripes on the work. Buffing too hard will over heat the wax and it will not leave a smooth finish. Slower buffing which allows the wax to coat fully is preferable.

As with all wood turning the application of the correct techniques are important. So with buffing have the wheel rotating towards you and make sure you have a firm grip

The work gets slippery, when smooth, and can easily be pulled out of your hands to hit the lathe bed. I know to my cost, this is very frustrating. So put a folded towel on your bed to protect your work should it slip.

Hold the work below the wheel centre line and present the work away from any edge. The work should be facing downwards and keep the work moving.

I have found the Beal system a good starting point as it uses 2 compounds and a wax. The first is the brown Tripoli which is the courser compound. The second is a white diamond which tends to fill and give a hard over lay. The third is a pure carnauba wax which gives the final finish coat. The system has 3 buffing wheels so you keep the compounds separate.

Finishing with different compounds is a large subject that cannot be covered easily. So you will have to investigate further if you are new to the subject. You should follow the makers instructions on any system you may have purchased. But it is fair to say that the same safety rules that apply to turning wood apply to finishing.

I have found that if I have any doubt about how the finish may turn out I get piece of the same wood my turning is made of prepare it for finishing the same way. Then section it off to the number different ideas I have on how I may finish my work and then try each process out. It is surprising how quickly you come to a conclusion on the way forward.

Alan Sturgess our treasurer has given several excellent sessions on finishing and has infinite knowledge on the subject.

I am sure he would not mind if you asked him a question on club night.

As I am a hobby turner I do not expect to produce perfect products every time, but if I were to start again, I would definitely set aside more time to my finishing.

Happy Chipping

Alan Baker



Seven Years On. Yes it really is 7 years since we were contacted by the Minstead Training Project now the Minstead Trust.

And HWA members have also completed over 5000 hours volunteering during that time.

What a challenge it seemed both with students and equipment. But what a change there has been in the facilities and our understanding of the students.

Our chairman at the time was John Holden, he was approached in June 2012 by the Volunteer Coordinator to see if a Woodturner could help as they had two lathes but no one with the expertise to teach the students.

Dave Gibbard and I had a couple of exploratory meetings with the workshop staff and in the October agreed to go to Minstead and do a demonstration for the students to see what interest there was.

We also asked HWA members if anyone would be willing to help.

We had 8 woodturners willing to help and at the demonstration 18 students said they wanted to have ago.

So in February 2013 we made a start. The two lathes were one Record and one New Tool both single round beds and not that versatile. No chucks and just a handful of chisels.

But we made progress and after a six months made contact with Axminster Tools and asked for help to upgrade. We raise over £1200 in donations towards the upgrade and Axminster Tools gave a very generous offer. So the new facility was planned.

On Friday 23rd January 2014 just 12 months after we started, the new Woodturning Facility was opened by Alan Styles Commercial Director of Axminster Power Tools and Colwyn Way their resident Woodturner. Colwyn even did a short demo for the students, after which MTT put on a Lunch prepared by other students.

At last we had variable speed lathes and chucks plus a grinder with white stones.

The visitor excitement increased with the visit HRH The Earl of Wessex who paid a Royal Visit to the Trust to plant a plum tree as a part of his 50th birthday celebrations and he also paid a visit to our woodturning workshop.

Two of the students were demonstrating for him and one presented him with a small bowl they had just finished. They had also made rounders bats for his children, which he accepted, and said,



“I hope they use them for the purpose which they are intended”.

Also in 2014 we had a woodturning stand at the summer fete. That year it was 10 pin skittles. All made by the students but we enlisted the help of HWA specialist ball turner Adrian Smith to get at least 2 good sets of wooden balls.

We have supported the summer fete ever since with a number of games and sold good quantities of turned items.

Keith and Susan Barnes have been very supportive of the summer fetes and normally man our display stand.

BBC South's Laura Trant enjoying a game of skittles

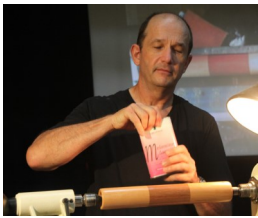


There have been a number of commissions some strange and some quite big. We've made candle holders for Wimborne Minster, pencil holders for the Bishop of Portsmouth, Bird of Prey stands for a Falconry. Fishing priest, spurtles, a quantity of mushrooms and a lots of seasonal items.

Five of the original students are still with us and still enjoying their sessions. In 2016 we changed from one full day a week to two half days 9:30 to 1pm this gave the opportunity to cover 16 students rather than the 12 we were teaching. It also made our day that much shorter.

For now we continue on, but we are 7 years older and won't go on forever.

We need new volunteers. Could that be YOU?



Terry's Top Tips



In this regular feature Terry Smart from Chestnut Products will be sharing some of the more interesting responses to questions to Chestnut's helpline

I was asked about decanting Cellulose Sanding Sealer into a jar to make it easier to use with a brush. We can't condone this as it would mean that the product would be stored in a container not displaying the appropriate warnings, so really the product would have to be poured back into the tin after each use. But if you do pour the sealer into a jar (temporarily) to make it easier to use one of the advantages is that if you use the same brush each time you won't need to clean it. It will go stiff as the sealer dries, but if you put it in the sealer a couple of minutes before you want to use it the sealer will redissolve and the brush will be usable again.

A question about our Iridescent Paints. The comment was that they are very thick and hard to mix if they've been standing for a long time, why isn't there an agitator of some kind in the bottle? Well the answer is that there is! We use a small steel ball bearing in both the 30ml and 100ml size. If the paint has been standing for a very long time it can be difficult to get it moving, the best suggestion is to store the bottle upside down for 24 hours and let gravity move the ball from its resting place. It should mix easier after that.

Asked about Safety Cloth. The need for safety when turning can't be overstated (although I think some people try) and the choice of application media used when the lathe is running is quite important. Hopefully everyone knows better than to use a cotton cloth, but paper towel can sometimes be a bit flimsy. That's where Safety Cloth comes in. It's a thick, non-woven paper towel that retains its strength and texture when wet, doesn't leave bits behind during application and can, with care, be re-used a few times. At the same time it's still paper and if it gets caught in anything moving it tears very easily, removing the risk of catching fingers in something spinning very fast!

A caller asked about using Burnishing Cream, and whether to apply it with the lathe stopped or running. The answer is yes to both. Or more grammatically, either is fine.

My personal preference is to use it with the lathe running, I find it more controllable that way. But it can also be applied over the whole item with the lathe stopped, and then burnished up with the lathe running. The important factors are to not make the cloth too wet, otherwise it will glide over the surface rather than cut back, and not to have the lathe running too fast as it will dry the liquid too quickly and prevent it from working properly. It sounds like a bit of a fine line between the two, but it's pretty easy to get on with really.

An emailer asked what is Spirit Sanding Sealer and why we don't make one? Spirit Sanding Sealer is a cheap version of Shellac Sanding Sealer – same solvent base (meths) but without shellac, instead it uses a cheaper substitute.

This one came in by email, asking for a finish for a wooden soap dish. That's a real tough one, it's asking a lot of any coating to stand up to that sort of use. In the end we opted for Lemon Oil. It will soak into and protect the timber, there's nothing to flake off and spoil the appearance, and it won't change the colour. It's also water resistant so should last quite a while too.

I've said before that the Iridescent Paints are totally opaque and this isn't quite correct. They have a very slight translucency which means that when applied over different colours – and layering them over the Spirit Stains works fantastically well – subtle colour variations can be achieved, opening up a whole new palette of colours and possibilities. The important thing here is that they don't have to be used solely over a black background.

Terry's Top Tips

Continued

Another thing I've said, and stand by, is that you don't need a finish over an Acrylic Blank; nothing will be as hardwearing as the acrylic. Which is true. But a pen turner this week pointed out that whilst using a Microcrystalline Wax doesn't improve the look or toughen the surface, it DOES keep the pen free from fingerprints. Particularly useful if you're displaying them somewhere where they're likely to be picked up and inspected a lot.

Accidents happen however much we try to prevent them, we were asked how to remove Spirit Stain someone had managed to cover their hands in. It was the Green colour. Meths is normally good for cleaning up spills of stain but we don't recommend using that on skin, it's not flesh-friendly. Simple soap and water will do the job here, a beaded liquid soap is especially good. A good soak in a bath will do the job perfectly, the stain just takes a little time to lift out from the skin, so it's a great excuse for a relaxing wallow in the tub. Just don't overdo the bubbles.

A lot of turners use our Spirit Stains to decorate their work. Sometimes just something subtle, others very vibrant and 'in your face'. Both have their place and when done properly can look fantastic.

We were asked, when blending different colours, is it necessary to sand back after each colour?

The Spirit Stains don't raise the grain, so sanding back is by no means essential. But some like to do this, to remove some of the colour and give a slightly 'patchy' effect which can look stunning. So our best answer on this one was to experiment and play with the effects to see which works best for you.

Asked what should be used to thin Melamine Lacquer and Acrylic Lacquer. Cellulose Thinners is the (only) thinner for Melamine Lacquer, and just normal water for Acrylic Lacquer (and Acrylic Sanding Sealer). My correspondent queried this as the aerosol acrylics have a distinct smell, suggesting there's something more in them. Which is correct. The propellant plays a big part in this, but we also use slightly different resins in the aerosol finishes and these require a tiny amount of extra solvent to make sure they atomise properly when sprayed through an aerosol. The non-aerosol versions are designed to be multi-purpose; they can be applied by brush, cloth or spray and the only solvent they require is water.

(Because water is a solvent – oh how I laugh when I see water-based products described as 'solvent-free'.)

I've also been asked to clarify what I meant by thinning something 10%. As in, whether thinning by or thinning to. It's definitely 'thinning by', as in for example adding 50ml of Cellulose Thinners to 500ml of Melamine Lacquer for a 10% dilution.

Although importantly I wouldn't necessarily suggest thinning the whole can at once, just mix a little up as you need it, keeping the option to use it neat another time if you want.

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