

Snainton Woodturners' Club Newsletter

Issue

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Meeting held at Snainton Woodturning Supplies, Barkers Lane ,
Snainton, North Yorkshire YO13 9BG

Off-centre Bowl with Colour-decorated Rim

by Michael (Mick) Hanbury RPT



Snainton Woodturners' Club

Meeting at Snainton
Woodworking Supplies
on Thursday

3 March 2011

Snainton Woodturners' Club

Meets at 1930 hr at Snainton
Woodworking Supplies on the
first Thursday of each Month:

--- *Next Meeting* ---

**7 April 2011. Keith Bevitt* -
Pedestal Dish, and 'Fruit,
my-way' or finial trinket box**

5 May 2011. Bob Chapman -
Singapore Ball

2 June 2011. Ian Clarkson -
From Log to Bowl

7 July 2011. Sue Harker -
Something Different

4 August 2011. Club AGM &
Bring-and-Tell

1 September 2011.
Joey Richardson - Colouring,
Texturing, Air Brushing, Piercing
& Design

6 October 2011.
Margaret Garrard - Off-centre
Textured Bowl with Involved
Flowers

* Note: Bevitt, not Brevitt

Introduction

Mick, from Newark, is a regular demonstrator to the Club. He loves wood and appreciates the visual qualities of timber. He learned from his Grandfather, a Master Cabinetmaker, and he took up this trade. Despite reservations of some about colouring wood, he planned to show how colour and texturing can be used to enhance the appearance of a turned product.

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Mick, like most wood turners, doesn't like to spend too much money on the wood. Mick says he is 'an adopted Yorkshire man, which, as everyone knows, is a Scotsman with all the generosity squeezed out of him!' Because good quality, coloured woods are now quite expensive, Mick uses colours.

Strictly, **black** cannot be termed a 'colour', but can be used as an enhancement when colour is applied to the turned piece. He planned to use iridescent colours (see Supplies & Tools, col.1, p. 5, below) to create a shimmer effect, and will mix two colours that will yield a colour-flip, depending on the lighting angle.

Off-centre Set-up

Mick's off-centre bowls are turned on Cole jaws mounted on a scroll-chuck (see left, below). The holding points are rubber door-stops (or plastic or nylon, turned to suitably shaped buttons). They are mounted on long screws with rubber buttons or washers as spacers to adjust the height of the holding points to the rim of the bowl to be turned.



The diameter of the Cole jaws needs to be such that the device will sit on the lathe (a Nova DVR) without touching the lathe's bed-bars. Thus, 405 mm (16 in) is the maximum diameter if a 356 mm (14 in) bowl is to be turned: this is to allow for an offset of 25 mm (1 in) from the centre and for the holding posts.

A vacuum chuck can also be used. Alternatively, Mick showed us a piece of ply wood (7-ply, 25 mm or 1 in thick) mounted on a faceplate that fits onto chuck-jaws in expansion mode (disc on right, above). An MDF mount should **not** be used, as the faceplate screws do not grip after they are moved. Two sets of concentric circles are marked, one (blue) from the centre of the board and one (red) off-centre by 25 mm (1 in).

Balancing

Whichever method of mounting is chosen, it is important to have the work well balanced, if higher turning speeds are to be used. The greater the imbalance, the slower is the safe turning speed. Mick has prepared a set of *lignum vitae* and aluminium counter-weights of different thicknesses and diameters. (See at centre of previous picture; lead weights can also be used.) An appropriate counter weight is screwed securely to the back-plate opposite the off-centred bowl to ensure that the piece of timber will rotate without vibration when the lathe is turning.

Setting up

A large bowl blank, 330 x 60 mm (13 x 2 3/8 in) is selected (sycamore was used, but ash, elm, yew or spalted beech are all suitable) and mounted on a screw chuck. This will end up with a diameter of 29.8 mm (1 1/4 in) to fit into the Cole jaws.

Bowl's base

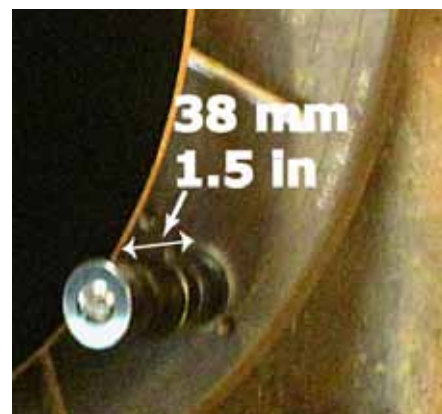
Increase the speed of the blank on a screw chuck until vibration is detected, then slow the speed until the timber is rotating smoothly – about 800 rpm in this case. Turn it to round. Mick held the gouge down onto the tool rest with the edge of the palm of his left hand; the back of his hand directed the shavings into a neat pie (or bin) by his feet.

Holding the gouge: If the gouge handle is 'in your pocket' (ie low down on your thigh), this prevents a 'dig in'. Raising the handle towards the horizontal (to the hip or elbow-line) moves the gouge away from a controlled bevel-rubbing cut (or a sheer scraping cut) and can catch on the wood.

When turned to a diameter of about 300 mm (12 in) stop and examine the wood for weak spots. Decide from which face more wood is to be removed: Mick chose the surface facing the tailstock. The face is flattened using pull-cuts, so that the tip in contact with the wood is bevel rubbing, then smoothed with gentler pull-cuts.

Dimension checks

Measure the width and diameter of the blank: 54 mm (2 1/8 in) by 298.5 mm (11 3/4 in) in this case. An important dimension is the thickness of the blank. The rim of the bowl has to fit into the recess between the upper two rubber rings on the Cole jaw posts, ie 38 mm (1 1/2 in). Mark this position on the side of the blank.



Check that the blank will fit inside the Cole-jaw posts, and that the Cole jaws will rotate freely over the lathe bed.

Shaping the underside

The design of the bowl's underside – a simple convex curve – depends on the base, which will be about 6 mm (1/4 in) high and the width will be about one-third of the diameter of the bowl, or around 100 mm (4 in). The bowl's underside will curve up to the mark at 38 mm (1 1/2 in) on

the side of the blank, and the top will curve down to this mark to form the rim, ie a discus shape.



Using callipers, scribe a circle about 50 mm (2 in) in diameter on the face of the blank in which to create a recess to grip the piece in chuck jaws in expansion mode. Mark, about 10 mm (3/8 in) outside the first ring, the position of the bead that will form the foot. Remove wood from the edge of the blank (pull-cuts) and work towards the chucking point near centre.

Shape the underside curve of the bowl then hollow inside the foot ring, making decorative rings if required. Use a skew chisel to undercut the wood to give a dovetail chucking (expansion) ring on the inside of the foot. It needs to be a minimum of 2 mm deep for the jaws to grip. Scrape the surface inside the base to flat.

With a fingernail spindle gouge, turn the ring surrounding the chucking recess into a bead to form the bowl's foot. Don't roll the bead too far into the dovetail chucking point, though. Finish the centre region and any decorative rings. Texturing inside the bead at the foot can add value to the piece, and a spiralling/texturing tool can be used, which will obscure small amounts of tear-out.

Finishing the underside

Complete the bowl underside using a sharp, short, narrow, standard-grind, bowl gouge in a single, uninterrupted, sweeping curve across the surface to give a good finish to the timber. With a reasonable surface-finish, a quick sand with 320 grit on a rotary

sanding pad is sufficient if the base is to be carved.

Arbortec® carving

Mick used an Arbortec® Mini Carver (currently £187.50, on limited special offer from Snainton Woodworking Supplies). He recommended that those new to the tool should familiarise themselves with it before carving a bowl. Make sure it is switched off before powering up, and always wear safety glasses or a visor.

To avoid a dangerous kickback, one can take strokes on the operator-side of the bowl from centre outwards *with the blade facing upwards*, but this can be 'scary'. Or, *with the blade facing down*, by moving the tool away from operator on the side of the bowl on the far side of the lathe bed. Alternatively, a power or hand-carving tool can be used.

Mick prefers an industrial Arbortech cutter, rather than the pressed steel cutter supplied. It should only be used in one direction (similar to a router). Make short, curved cuts from the centre outwards, to give leaf-like shapes all the way round the bowl's underside.



If the bead round the foot is inadvertently nicked, this can be obscured by texturing with a spiralling wheel.

When complete, sand the surface with 320 grit to give a smooth surface, then finish with Hermes Webrax® pads of red (500 grit) and yellow (1,200 grit, which used to be coloured grey). Finally, polish with a pad of kitchen towel.

Checks

With the bowl still held on the screw chuck, make sure the Cole-jaw posts fit over the bowl rim. Tighten the 100 mm chuck to which the Cole jaws are attached to grip the bowl rim. Check that the Cole jaws rotate freely over the lathe bed.

Remove the bowl from the screw chuck, turn and remount it on the scroll-chuck jaws in expansion mode. With the diameter of 100 mm for both the chuck jaws and the chucking point on the bowl, there is 360° contact between the jaws and the dovetail recess, which gives strong support. Ensure that the piece is rotating without any wobble.

Shape the bowl top

Face-off the wood with pull-cuts, then shape the curve from centre to edge using stepped pull-cuts, smoothing them as the wood is removed to yield a convex top to the bowl. Sheer scrape with a fingernail bowl gouge, then a sheer scraper. Finish with 150 grit sandpaper on the top surface and round the curve of the rim, then smooth with the red Webrax pad.

Ebonising

The top surface is coated with black acrylic paint, using a felt-pad applicator. Pull the paint radially from the centre to outer rim of the bowl. When coated and dried, the centre will be hollowed to give a nice, crisp edge between the rim and the bowl. (The applicator pad will keep for about two months if stored in a sealed plastic bag between uses.)



An alternative is to dab the surface with a sponge (rather than using smooth strokes). This gives a finely patterned surface upon which a coating of acrylic paint yields an interesting and attractive surface texture.

Off-centre set-up

When the paint is dry, lightly de-nib with the two Webrax pads. Remove from the chuck, and mount the Cole jaws on the lathe. The holding posts on the jaws are arranged to give a 25 mm (1 in) off-centre mounting. Check for wobble of the mounted bowl and that the rotation is approximately in balance when rotated.

Mark the new centre of rotation, 25 mm (1 in) from the previous screw-chuck hole. This hole had been drilled only as deep as the screw thread (19 mm, $\frac{3}{4}$ in). This hole will now be off-centre, so, when hollowing, do not go too deep beyond this, otherwise you will go through the bottom of the bowl!

Decide on the diameter of the bowl required and, rotating the piece by hand, mark with a pencil the circumference to be cut. Judge the width of the off-centre rim that gives the most pleasing proportions: ie 38 mm (1.5 in) on one side and just over 50.5 mm (3 in) on the other. (Alternatively use 38 and 114 mm (1.5 in and 4.5 in) or calculate a pleasing *Golden Ratio* proportion).



For ease of visualisation, mark the outer circumference of the bowl onto the ebonised surface with a 2 mm parting tool. Start the piece rotating at around 450 rpm and scribe a sighting circle inside the pencil mark first.

Page 4

Then judge where the bowl should be hollowed and mark this position on, or outside, the first sighting circle.

Off-centre bowl

Increase the speed until just below that at which vibration starts (shown by the lamp attached to the lathe housing – 670 rpm, here). Hollow the bowl with a standard-grind bowl gouge, working towards the centre. Leave a central island as the hollowing progresses, to give the bowl stability.

When the hollowing has reached the marked outer edge, hollow the island in the centre and smooth the bowl's inner surface. The objective is to hollow beyond the screw-chucking hole. At the centre, the rotation speed is lower than at greater radii, so ensure the tool is sharp and let it cut under gentle pressure, otherwise tear-out occurs.

Avoid creating either a pimple or a dimple at the centre by using a freshly sharpened tool, take a fine, bevel-rubbing cut and keep going until the pimple is about 1 mm in diameter, when the flute should be opened (ie the gouge is horizontal) and the pimple will drop onto the gouge tip. Finish with a final, continuous but gentle, cut over the whole surface.

Texturing in the bowl

This is for demonstration purposes only, as it might be considered 'over design'. Slow the rotation speed and set the tool rest about 6.5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) below the centre. Angle the spiral texturing wheel at around 60° to horizontal and work from the centre to the edge of the bowl. Stop to check the texture pattern at the centre, before continuing. Sand with 400 grit paper, then the two Webrax pads.

Colouring the rim

Remove the bowl from the Cole jaws and replace it on the chucking dovetail on 100 mm jaws. Should the outer rim have been slightly damaged by the Cole jaws, then the outer rim can be lightly skimmed with sandpaper, moving gently from the front to the back surface (or a bit from the front to centre, then a bit from the back to centre).

Squeeze out two 25 to 50 mm (1 to 2 in) tracks side-by-side of blue and red iridescent paint on a flat surface covered with a piece of disposable plastic. Both these strips will appear to be cream-coloured, not the expected red or blue! A brush can be used, but Mick likes finger-painting! Select which finger you will use – a pinky is better than forefinger, if you have large digits – then dip the finger tip into the end of the two paint strips.

Make random curved or squiggle marks on the black rim of the bowl. Cover the black surface, but leave small chinks of the black background showing too. As the paint is pressed

against the rim, the iridescent colours appear and blend to give red, blue, purple and streaks of cream.

The paint is acrylic and takes about 10 minutes to dry. One can take more red than blue, or vice versa, by tilting one's finger to apply more of one colour than the other. If a matchstick is dragged in a zigzag down the two colour strips, a marbling effect is produced. Applying finger-print dots gives an alternative design. It is only when the whole surface is covered that the full effect can be appreciated.

Before the paint is dry, an interesting effect can be obtained by spinning the bowl (700 rpm in this case), to spread the thicker paint applications radially. When dry, the paint should be coated with a transparent melamine lacquer. The centre of the bowl can be oiled, and the rim only lac-



quered, if desired. Mick prefers to apply four or five coats of oil to the back surface of the bowl to 'feed the timber', and this is repeated annually.

Other Options

Note that acrylic paint sits on the surface of the wood, so if the colouring does not work, it can be turned or even sanded off with 120-grit paper. Mick recommends starting with one colour on a six-inch tile, before applying it to a finished article. With a hollow form, start with wide squiggles, and as one comes down the form, the squiggles get thinner and tighter to give a dramatic impression. On a bowl, one could apply colour then turn a bead into it.

Metallic paint is effective on a lattice or patch-work bowl. Cut horizontal and vertical hash-lines onto the sides of a bowl with an Arbortech grinder, then colour, ebonise and texture the latticed areas in groups of three or five around the surface to give an attractive design.

Supplies & Tools

Newly available from Snainton Woodworking Supplies are two colour packs:

Jo Sonja's Metallic Colour Pack of six tubes: pearl white, silver, pale gold, rich gold, burnishing copper and rose (£11.25); **Jo Sonja's Iridescent Colour Pack** of six colours: blue, gold, green, red, turquoise and violet (£12.25). Mick's view is that the iridescent colours are the more versatile.

Tools: Bowl gouges (i) with finger-nail grind at 45°; (ii) a shorter gouge ground at 60° with double bevel; (iii) a standard grind at 60°. Also, R Sorby's texturing tool, a Tracey Owen sheer-scraper, and rotating sanding-pad (*Pro Sander* from Simon Hope, tel: 01206 230 694; e-mail: simona-hope@googlemail.com). A ceramic slip-stone is useful to touch-up dulled tool blades.

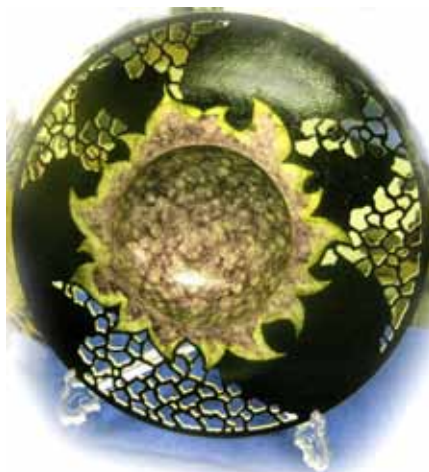
Mick's Finished Pieces

Mick presented some of his recently turned items for the audience to appreciate his skill and the breadth of his creative work.

Black, three-part bowl: Off-set on Cole jaws, rotating 120° for the three-centres, then mount centrally to take the middle out. The hollowing needs to be judged carefully; if the hollowing is too far apart, a post will be left at the centre (for a candle?).



Sun-burst, pierced, ebonised and coloured bowl:



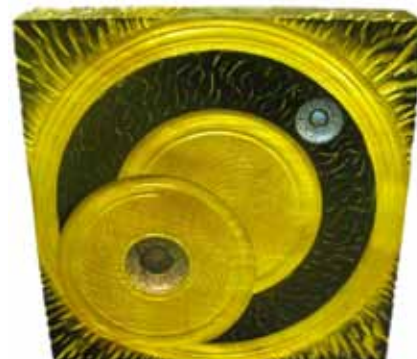
Square, carved, textured, and ebonised, with two off-centre hollows. (See next column.) One hollow was coloured with iridescent finger-painted swirls and the other with finger-print dabs.

Off-centre, green and gold coloured yew bowl with a polished interior and textured underside.

The base was carved freehand with an Arbortech. (Second image, below)



A gold, decorated and carved square ornament:



Use your senses: Mick advises that your *sight*, *touch* and *sound* are used when turning. *Sight* is obvious, and one can 'feel' the cut from the gouge handle and on the tool rest. Importantly, one can *hear* a different sound when the gouge is sharp and cutting cleanly (a satisfying swish) from when it is blunt and dragging on the wood fibres that leads to tear-out (a clunking vibration).

Record Power Spring Show

Snainton Woodworking Supplies (SWS) holds product and demonstration days approximately bimonthly between 1000 and 1600 hr.

The staff were very grateful for the excellent turnout on Saturday 26 March when SWS hosted the Record Power Spring Show, at which Craig Heffren demonstrated different Record Power products, including a planer-thicknesser and band saw.



Also demonstrating during this all-day event were Rob Thompson (bowls),



Terry Taylor (spindle-work, next column, with Marianne Scales) and Albert Kitchen (a hand-bell-shaped

tape measure, with a threaded base, second photograph, below).



There was a large, appreciative audience, which included Steve Etherington, Ron Rogers and Tony Wilson:



Snainton Woodworking Supplies (SWS), Tel 01723 859545

<http://snaintonwoodworking.com>

New Products:

Jo Sonja's Colours (see col.1, p. 5)

Mylands Spirit Stains Metallic Shades

Universal Hose Support: ideal for holding the dust-extraction hose to where you are working.

Scheppach DMS900 Lathe: now in stock and on display in the SWS showroom. Brilliant value and excellent quality.

Special Offers

Leigh Dovetail Super Jigs

Free VRS Vacuum & Router Support with all Leigh Super Jigs; three sizes available 12" 18" and 24". Offer ends 30th April or while stocks last.

Microclene MC400 Air Filter

Reduced to £135; only three left at this price.

Demonstration Day Saturday 16th April

Tony Wilson (RPT) Demonstrating Woodturning from 1000 to 1600 hr.

Tony demonstrates at many clubs and most major woodworking shows: his demonstrations are guaranteed to be informative and entertaining.

Photos, Copy & Newsletter Edited by Gordon Malan © 2011

Comments, copy, and suggestions or additions to the e-mail list to:

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Thanks to Brian Wrigglesworth (BW) for providing DVDs of the two events, Ron Rogers (RR) for still photos of the Record Power Show and Stephen Fearnley for kindly arranging the printing of this newsletter