

# Christchurch Society of Woodturners

## E- Newsletter

## June 2021

### **Covid update**

There has been no change in the club's plans to wait until September to restart meetings. In the meantime, enjoy the better weather and your family and friends. Here's to the time when such a comment need not followed by 'Stay safe!'

### **Bowl within a bowl challenge update**

A number of members have risen to the challenge of putting a bowl in a larger, hollowed bowl with the design brief being to produce something which is much lighter than its apparent volume suggests. Experimentation with different woods, textures and embellishments welcome. Full details and further photos of the submissions can be found on the club website where you can still send in your effort.

Paul Reeves'  
exemplar



Bill Gibson - Cherry in Cedar



Trevor Elliott – Padauk in Yew



Alan Brooks – Oak in Cedar



Ian McClure – Sapele in Maple



Rick Patrick – Black Walnut and spalted Beech



Andy Ogilvie – Yew in Ash

### Food safe woods and finishes

Paul Reeves - I would never recommend that anyone eats a piece of turned wood, but some timbers are labelled 'food safe'. This is generally because when they are seasoned (that is dry, and not covered in salt and pepper!!) there is no taste or taint transferred to any food that comes onto contact with them. The most common are:

Beech for bowls, kitchen utensils, spoons, cutting boards

Sycamore/ Maple for bowls, rolling pins, etc. Traditionally, bakers' tables had a Sycamore top which is non-tainting for bread and pastry and could even be used for dairy bowls.

American Plane, Alder, and Silver Birch are similarly non-ring porous. (The application of any finish is primarily to stop the food staining them).

There is a good reason why these woods are more suitable, and it is all down to the way that the wood is formed. On the end of a log, the annual rings form a solid surface with no open holes or pores. This means that they can retain a liquid for longer as there are no large holes for it to escape, and nowhere for food particles to get stuck and turn nasty. That said, Ash is probably one of the commonly used woods for salad bowls even though it is ring porous and leaks like a sieve! For some time, Elm was the favourite for mixing and

bread making bowls. Walnut also makes a beautiful salad bowl and there are many more if you look them up.

The reason for their use is economic. The trees grow quite quickly and produce timber that is easily cut and can be obtained in dimensions large enough to make decent size bowl blanks. The downside is that you need to smother the wood with some sort of finish to block up all those nasty holes.

In this situation most people would go for an oil finish of some sort and this opens a whole new can of worms. For instance, corn oil is ok if you use the item regularly and re-oil once in a while. If you leave it for a long period though, maybe over the winter months, the oil turns rancid and smells rather unpleasant. When I started turning, Danish oil was considered food safe as the waterproofing element in it is Tung oil which comes from a nut. Now though, because of the other ingredients, dryers etc which speed up the setting time, it has fallen out of favour.

There are two commonly available oils that set naturally (polymerise), and they are Linseed oil and Walnut oil. The linseed oil must be food grade and not the boiled stuff that you slap on your cricket bat - health food shop material. Walnut oil can be found in most supermarkets (I get Tesco's finest, of course) but comes with the issue that there may be an allergy problem with the end user. Walnut oil on a Walnut bowl looks amazing! Wet sanding with these oils will produce a slurry that blocks the pores and gives a beautifully smooth and wipeable surface.

The easy way to get around all of this is to use a mineral oil. This is sold as Food Safe finish from Chestnut Products, Skydd from Ikea and Liquid Paraffin from the chemist or vet or Rick in the club shop. There are no allergy problems I am aware of, but it never sets in the wood and so gets eaten and washed off every time that the item is used. Re-oiling is the only answer. There are lots of recipes for producing a durable food-safe finish for bowls based on mineral oil - one involves mixing it with Linseed to produce a degree of solidification. Something for you to research on the internet.

Don't forget.....One good turn deserves another.....Paul.

### **Internet suggestions**

From Vic Russell

A gallery of inspirational segmented works.

<https://tahoeturner.com/vessels/>

Mounting wood on a lathe. Interesting site.

<https://vanduynwoodwork.com/2019/09/09/mounting-wood-on-a-lathe/>

Quaich. Something perhaps for the Whiskey drinkers!?

<https://www.robin-wood.co.uk/wood-craft-blog/2011/01/25/quaichs-the-real-history-of-the-wooden-quaich/>



How to make a Ball Sander.

<http://www.davidreedsmith.com/articles/foamballsander/foamballsander.htm>

### Taking the biscuit

Woodturning, tea and biscuits have a long and well-established association. Andy Ogilvie has been experimenting with some simple turning but with very agreeable results! For this recipe you'll need a piece of food-safe wood for the mould (in this case Ash) which you can shape as you wish but it's a good idea to have a thought for angles that will help the release of the dough from the mould. Make up your favourite shortbread mix and cool in the fridge for 30 mins before pressing into the mould which should have been liberally sprinkled with some rice flour or cornflour – both of which help with the release of the dough when you invert it and tap out the biscuit onto a tray. Dust with a little sugar and don't forget to add the proverbial cherry on top before baking! Enjoy!



## Introducing – Vic Russell.

Firstly, the editor would like to thank committee member Vic for his support in producing this newsletter and for his many valuable contributions. Peering into Vic's pristine workshop immediately reveals a man who has significant technical and mechanical skill to enable him to realise his designs in a variety of materials. Much of his working life was spent in reprographics, operating many different types of print and print finishing equipment over the years. He has been turning for 20 years, but by his own admission is not a prolific woodturner as he enjoys a range of other interests. Vic uses an Axminster AT1416VS to which he recently added a 280mm bed extension. As well as turning wood he also likes making wood turning tools and equipment as evidenced by the sphere turning attachment he designed and built. Other hobbies include Photography and Ten Pin Bowling. First car - Vauxhall Victor. Favourite food - pizza, with a Peroni of course!

Here are some examples of Vic's clever design, manufacture and turning.







**Any idea?**

What is the curved yellow tool for?



**Just a thought** – If everyone in the world threw their troubles in the air, you would very probably be glad to catch your own.

**Contributions** to this e-newsletter are very welcome as are suggestions and feedback on style and content. I am particularly interested in the stories of projects which members have taken on.

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