

Shavings



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Chairman's Welcome

By Eugene Grimley

Welcome to the latest "Shavings". Those who were there in March for Robert O'Connor had a great day of demos but unfortunately, due to owing to Covid 19 restrictions, it will be some time before we meet again.



I know this will be hard, but the health and wellbeing of us all is of prime importance. We don't know when we will be free from the restrictions imposed but it is likely that it will be September at the earliest.

This gives us all a chance to do those jobs we are always putting off and I know quite a few members are undertaking workshop renovations. My lathe looks like new after a major clean and I have just tidied my store

of timber. The firewood bag did well out of that but I can now see clearly what exactly I have got.

In order to keep things going the Committee have established a new Ulster Woodturning website and a Facebook group page which you can join and update everyone about what's happening in your workshop, post short videos and member profiles.

March Competition Results

By Jim Neil

The March competition, which is sponsored by The Wood Shed, attracted a total of 16 entries. The judge, our visiting demonstrator Robert O'Connor, congratulated all those who took part and awarded the prizes, as follows

Category 1	Category 2
1. Aaron Kincaid	1. Jim Stevens
2. David Stewart	2. Jim Neil
3. Mark McGranaghan	3. Billy Ferris





Royal Hospital

Once again everyone excelled at producing bowls, eggs and chickens for Easter activities at the hospital. Thank you to everyone who contributed.



Jenne (from the Children's Hospital) left us with three ideas for the summer but as things have changed it has been agreed that, if possible, members should concentrate on the "family figures".

Jenne has suggested about 7 inches (180mm) tall for the biggest figure which works out about 1¹/₄" (30mm) per foot of height. These are for painting so any wood can be used. If you prefer you can work on the small items for the babies but these MUST be made from safe woods, for example Beech or Maple.

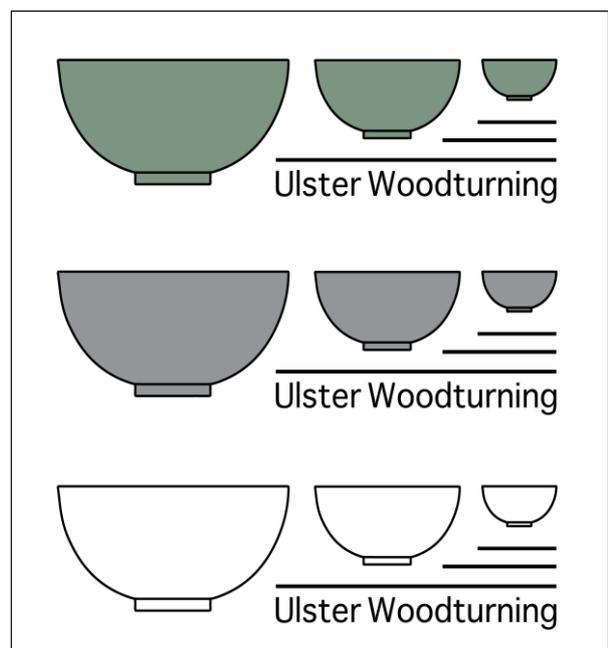
Wood Shed -getting stuff

Please note the Wood Shed is still able to provide a collection service at the gate for those who live locally or a mail order/courier service to anywhere in Ireland.

Contact Sam or Lynda for details.
Telephone 028 9443 3833
Email - enquiries@wood-shed.com

Logo

The New Logo is now ready and is available for use in one of three forms, coloured, line drawing in grey-scale and line drawing.



Facebook

Members can now join a new group Facebook page ULSTER WOODTURNING. This is now live for day to day posts. Posts can be anything of interest to members for example, this could be videos, items you have made, turning demos or member profiles. Unlike the Web Site it will be current and can be contributed to by

everyone. The contact person for matters regarding the Facebook page is Stephen Dowie. The old Ulster Chapter Facebook page will now be deleted.

Website

The new website is now live

www.ulsterwoodturning.co.uk



This will be the public face of Ulster Woodturning with promotional photographs, details and information about our Chapter, public notices, Shavings, competition photos and a For Sale section. The contact person for the website is Mark McGranaghan

Competitions during Covid19

We have been doing well with the numbers entering the competitions this year so, to keep that going, we would ask that you continue to prepare competition pieces as normal and the judging of them will be arranged. We will come up with a new theme for June and will inform you in a future Shavings. The themes already in place for April and May are listed below.

	Category 1	Category 2
April	Solid Easter Egg	Hollow Easter Egg
May	Bud Vase	Vase

Entries should be photographed and then posted on the Group Facebook page - Ulster Woodworking. Items entered should be turned according to the theme and posted in the same month. When posting entries please entitle it "Competition Entry (month)" and add text describing your work i.e. wood/finish, etc.

Coping with Covid 19

There are those who say woodturners are well placed to cope with isolation since they spend a lot of time alone in their sheds. However, this is a myth and we need contact with others like anyone else. A number of members are keeping in contact with Video Conferencing using an App called "Zoom". This can be installed on a smartphone, Ipad or computer. Give it a try.

Notes from the March Meeting

By Brendan McAreavy

Robert O'Connor made the long trip from Wexford to present an all-day demonstration for the Ulster Woodturners at The Wood Shed, Templepatrick, on Saturday 14th March 2020. There were about half as many people there as usual but that was because of the impact the Coronavirus situation is having on our lives and certainly not a reflection of our interest in Robert's work. This was the last Ulster demo for some time and it is worth noting also that the usual

Tuesday evening demos in The Wood Shed have also been suspended until further notice.

The Stone Wall Bowl



The first demo was a Stone Wall Bowl, the inspiration for which came from the traditional Irish stone wall we see everywhere. Robert mounted a piece of Ash that he had roughed out and let dry by using a locating point in the base to centre the blank as well as possible on the lathe while holding it with pressure from a revolving centre in the tailstock. He then trued the original spigot and the outside of the bowl, cutting from the base to the rim with a standard grind bowl gouge. Before completing the exterior profile Robert cut the face of the rim to true it and flatten it, thus finding the bowl's final height before finishing the outside. He suggested that the base should never be more than one third the diameter of the bowl.

In order to finish the outside Robert shear scraped it with a Hamlet 1" square scraper ([Here, £39.56](#)) similar to the Crown 1" square scraper ([Wood Shed for less](#)). He leaves the burr on the tool because it gives a much better cutting action than removing it.

When satisfied with the outside, Robert reversed the bowl into a chuck and trued up a slight variation in the rim before cutting the inside to shape and leaving a step below what would become the first course of stones that would be defined with a cutter when adding texture. The inside was shear scraped with a spindle gouge. A straight scraper cannot work properly on a concave surface. With the outside and inside true Robert began laying out the design for the texture by drawing four panels (like tongues) extending from the rim to near the bottom of the bowl. They were set 90 degrees apart but Robert said he has made bowls with three and six panels. The next step was to scribe lines horizontally around the bowl between the panels to make the courses for the stones and then to draw vertical lines to outline the stones.

To cut the pattern Robert used a Proxxon long-neck grinder with a 2" Arbortech cutting disk ([Proxxon](#), available Wood Shed and [2" Arbortech](#), also Wood Shed) and cut along the panels and outlined the stones. The rim was cut in steps to resemble the top of a wall and some texture was added to the top of each stone before a line was cut around the bowl to represent the bottom of the wall below the stones. A line was cut below the stones on the inside to carry the design into the bowl.

The next step was to scorch the bowl to add texture, soften the lines, and save sanding. Robert used a torch and Mapp gas to burn small sections at a time while spraying water to stop the burning before it became too intense.

He burned the outside and the top of the inside down to the bottom of the first course of stones. Accuracy wasn't critical because the inside would be cut later to remove over-burn.

With the burning complete Robert used a plastic brush ([e.g.](#)) in a Jacob's chuck to remove the charcoal and soften the edges of the stones by running the lathe slowly and gently sanding the surface of the bowl. When satisfied he changed to a regular bristle brush, like a shoe brush, to finish off and clear out any remaining grit. After brushing, 2 to 3 coats of ebonising lacquer ([Chestnut, Wood Shed](#)) were added to the burned surface. When the surface is dry colour can be added using paste colours because the paste colours are easiest to control. In this case, Ruby by Treasure Gold from Connoisseur Studio ([Ruby, Treasure Gold](#)). Robert used Ruby to highlight the high points of the texture, outside and inside, by rubbing small amounts of wax on with his finger. The scorching gives a secondary texture. When the highlights were added the excess wax was rubbed off with a tissue.

When the colouring was finished Robert remounted the bowl and cut the inside to clean up the wood. He sanded the bowl to finish and added some oil on the inside. The outside was left as it was. The bowl was reversed on a jam chuck using a roll of tape held in expansion mode in the chuck and the tenon removed. The base was sanded and finished with oil to leave the wood colour.

A Small Lidded Bowl



Robert mounted a piece of Horse Chestnut on a faceplate and removed about 25mm from the base as the bowl would have looked too heavy if he had left it on. He trued the blank, shaped the bottom of the bowl, and cut a spigot for mounting in a chuck. He left a reference mark on the spigot for mounting the bowl to remove it later. At this stage Robert said he just wanted a rough shape because it could be fine-tuned later but still finished the surface with the 1" square scraper in shearing mode to leave the surface as good as possible. This scraper has a 45degree bevel, the same as all of Robert's other cutting tools. When the rim was being cut Robert made a bead just below the rim and then cut a line on either side that he burned with a wire guitar string.

With the outside finished Robert removed the blank, took off the faceplate, and remounted it in a chuck to work on the inside. He trued the top of the rim and removed the wood on the inside of the bowl leaving a step, or gallery, for a lid to sit on near the top. The bowl was then sanded and finished with Danish Oil or hard wax oil. Robert uses an Ashley Iles bowl gouge ([like this](#)).

The lid blank was mounted on a faceplate and Robert measured the bowl to determine the diameter of the lid. When he had decided the rim width he proceeded to make a concave interior in the lid and cut a tiny spigot so that it could be reversed into a chuck.

The inside and rim of the lid were cleaned up and the blank removed from the lathe. After the faceplate was removed the lid was mounted in a chuck using the tiny spigot that was cut in the inside. Robert removed the bulk of the wood... there's a lot of waste as he was cutting towards a finial but he shaped as he went to keep the lid in profile finally making a pleasing finial and profile for the lid.

When it was complete the lid was reversed onto the roll of tape which allowed the finial to go inside it while the revolving centre in the tailstock located on the mark Robert left for that purpose when cutting the inside.

A Beech Box... straight-sided

Robert mounted a Beech blank on a faceplate on the lathe and, using a roughing gouge, trued it up, and cut a spigot with a beading and parting tool. He removed the faceplate and mounted the blank in a chuck before truing the face and hollowing the inside by cutting from the centre of the blank to the outside. The inside of the box was cleaned up with a Hope 8mm carbide scraper ([Hope 8mm Heavy Duty Carbide Scraper](#) available from [The Wood Shed](#)) which Robert told us was superb for cutting end grain.



After scraping the inside a recess was cut for the lid and the top and bottom of the blank were gently rounded over. At this stage Robert used 'Holiday Red' milk paint by General Finishes ([Here](#)) to cover the outside of the box. It was applied with a sponge brush in two or three layers but it still allows the grain to show through. No sealer is necessary and the paint can be covered with acrylic lacquer ([Gloss Lacquer](#)) to finish.

The lid blank was prepared by finding centres on the square blank and mounting it on the lathe by holding it against a chuck with the revolving centre in the tailstock. Robert reduced it to a cylinder with a roughing gouge and cut a spigot for mounting it in the chuck. After the blank was mounted in the chuck Robert measured the diameter of the recess in the box and set the lid diameter. The lid was then cut to shape leaving enough wood for a finial which was cut using slow, gentle cuts. Robert formed a tall, elegant knob that he then cut at an angle by locking the lathe and using a Japanese-type saw. He tried the lid on the box and remounted it to adjust the fit.

Now that the paint on the box section was dry Robert mounted the box again and cut two fine lines with a point tool ([Like this](#) from Wood Shed) about two-thirds of the way up the side of the box to decorate it. To finish the box it was sprayed with satin acrylic lacquer ([Chestnut, here](#)).

The lid was remounted using the tape chuck again which allowed the finial to go inside and the lid to be pressed against the roll of tape with the tailstock locating it in the hole set during preparation. The spigot was removed by using a skew to undercut it as far as possible and the lid finished by hand using a flexible saw to cut the nub off.

Spiral Bowl/Platter with Texture and Colour



An Ash bowl blank was mounted on a faceplate and trued up on the lathe working from the centre of the blank towards the rim, so, cutting with the grain to prevent tear-out. A spigot was prepared for mounting the blank in a chuck later and the centre was marked for relocating on a jam chuck when the bowl was turned again after hollowing. The outside of the blank was then shaped to get a pleasing shape.



After working on the outside of the bowl, Robert turned the tool rest towards the front of the blank and cut to the point where the rim was established and, thereby, the height of the bowl. The tool rest was then returned to work on the outside and a series of beads cut from the base to the rim with a spindle gouge, each bead being slightly larger than the previous one. Robert made this look easy but the concentration on his face indicated that there was a whole lot of skill being deployed. When the series of beads was formed Robert went back over them to tidy up any tear out and discrepancies.

The bowl was then removed from the lathe and Robert laid out a series of six spirals extending from the rim and decreasing in width as they went towards the base of the bowl. The bowl was then remounted on the lathe, the spindle locked, and an angle grinder was used to cut spirals in the exterior of the bowl blending each into the beads. Robert used a Arbortech cutter ([Arbortech 4" cutter](#), available in The Wood Shed) to do the carving.

After the outside was finished the blank was removed from the lathe, the

faceplate removed from it, and the blank was remounted in a chuck using the spigot that was cut earlier. The wood was removed from the middle before Robert cut spirals on the inside of the rim to match up with those outside.

Robert used a Hope carvers jig ([M33 x 3.5 version](#) available through The Wood Shed) to mount the chuck with the bowl in place to carve the inside of the rim. He matched the spiral to the bottom, cut deep and blended the cut to the top of the next spiral. He worked his way around the bowl adjusting the width and depth of cuts as necessary to match up the spirals. When finished Robert scorched the bowl and cooled it with water as he went, as before. He burned the bottom and top of the rim but not the whole interior of the bowl. After burning, Robert again used the plastic bristle brush to clean off the charcoal running the lathe slowly and, again, finished with a bristle brush.

Satisfied with the result, Robert sprayed the piece with two or three coats of ebonising lacquer before applying Liberon Verdigris Wax ([Available In The Wood Shed](#)) with his finger and rubbing it into the grain. He stressed that it was important to ensure that the wax was not just sitting on top of the grain but was rubbed well into it. We were advised to do a small section at a time as the Verdigris dries quickly and to rub off the excess with a cloth. Liming wax would look well also and would be easier to apply. 'Goldfinger' wax by Daler Rowney ([Goldfinger Wax](#)) was also suggested as an alternative to Verdigris.

When the wax was applied the bowl was remounted and the inside cleaned up with a gouge, cutting the inside to leave clean wood and a well-defined margin between the scorched wood and the clean wood. The bowl was reversed and the spigot removed before oil was applied to the bare wood.

Sycamore Bowl with Bead & Cove Finish



Robert mounted a previously roughed-out and dried Sycamore bowl blank on a jam chuck using a previously prepared centre mark and trued the spigot before truing the outside of the bowl as well. He turned the tool rest towards the top of the bowl and trued the rim before going back to the outside and shear scraping with the 1" square scraper. When the surface was satisfactory, Robert marked out a series of rings and drew circles on the outside of the bowl to lay out the position of a series of small beads and large, shallow coves. The beads were formed first, cutting up one side and then down the other keeping the bevel of the gouge in contact with the wood for as long as possible. The pattern was started and finished with a bead and the top bead was turned over the

rim. When the beads were finished Robert cut the coves between them and shear scraped them for a better finish. The junctions between the beads and coves were tidied up as required before sanding them. At this stage the bowl was turned around onto a chuck and the rim adjusted. Then the inside was finished checking for thickness as progress was made down the inside of the bowl. The inside was sanded and 3 coats of Danish Oil ([Mylands](#) or [Organoil](#) or [Rustins](#), all in The Wood Shed) or Hard Wax Oil ([Chestnut Hard Wax Oil](#), The Wood Shed) applied.

The Therapy Bowl



The Therapy Bowl is a bowl with one continuous curve through the centre, over the rim and around the bottom of the bowl with no start or finish. It is a tactile bowl that can help ease stress and compliment meditation.

Robert mounted an Ash blank (Sycamore would feel softer) on a faceplate and reduced the size to about 8" to 9" wide and about 2.5" thick. He has found this to be the optimum size for handling. He cut a small spigot and made the outside curve run through the spigot so that,

when it was removed, there would be one, continuous curve. After cutting the outside and spigot the blank was taken off the lathe, the faceplate removed, and the bowl was mounted in a chuck. The middle was hollowed a little before shaping to final dimension and the tool rest positioned at the back of the bowl to cut the rim from the back into the bowl and achieve a pleasing curve at that point. When satisfied with the rim, Robert moved the tool rest back to the front of the bowl and cut the rim towards the back to ensure the best profile was achieved. He then cut into the centre of the bowl to bring the curve through it too. The external curve was shear scraped with a square scraper and the internal curve with a spindle gouge.

At this stage the bowl was sanded and taken out of the chuck to be jam chucked against the roll of tape, as before, so that the spigot could be removed. The external curve was cut as far as possible towards the centre of the spigot and shear scraped with a square scraper. Robert finished by cutting in with a spindle gouge as far as he could before finishing by hand and sanding the remaining nub off. It is important to consider the depth of the centre mark used for repositioning when taking the tenon off because we don't want it to be so deep as to enter the line of the curve on the bottom.

The bowl should be sanded really well because no finish is used in order to let the feeling of the timber through.

We thank Robert for wonderful, packed, educational, and entertaining day of demos.



Photographs

The photographs in shavings have been provided by James Ferran – Many thanks James. You can see all of the many photos taken by James throughout Robert O’Connors demo on the group Facebook page.

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Data Protection

Some of your personal details, i.e. email address, and telephone numbers, are held in our records. We only use this data to coordinate Ulster Woodturning. If you would like to know what information we hold and how we use it, or if you wish us to remove it from our records, please contact the Secretary, Mark McGranahan. If your information is removed, you will no longer receive any official communication (emails, telephone calls or correspondence) from Ulster Woodturning or the Irish Woodturners Guild.

Remember!
Isolate & Keep Safe