Woody's World

2nd April 2026

Back to Basics

Many thanks to Nick for his 'Back to Basics' session making a Dibber & Apple to demonstrate a range of the basic techniques and approaches in Woodturning.

Seed Dibber: Nick took a spindle (ie grain running from end to end) and marked the mid points on each end by drawing lines from corner to corner and mounted between centres and began turning to round using a Spindle Roughing Gouge* (SRG) to take off the corners. As the diameter reduces, it's advisable to move the tool rest in towards the work piece – always turn off the lathe when doing this, adjust the tool rest, spin the spindle by hand to check for clearance from the tool rest before turning the lathe back on.



The best position to hold the SRG during this process is at 45° down from perpendicular to the spindle and at 45° to the right of centre.

When shaping the work piece, it feels natural to look at the point where the tool cuts the wood to see how the shape is forming. However, with experience you will find it better to look at the top of the piece to get a better overall view of progress. To test whether you are approaching roundness, rest the underside of the SRG on the top of the spinning piece – any clunking and you aren't yet round.

Once round, you can move on to using the Skew for a smooth finish. For the Skew you need to raise the tool rest just above centre of the spindle. Lay the bevel of the tool on the piece and lift your right hand to make the cut.



To shape the dibber, mark out with a pencil and use a Spindle gouge with

fingernail grind. Make cove, always cutting ‘downhill’, bevel rubbing and pivoting body rather than moving arms.



To taper the dibber, move the tool rest to be parallel to the desired taper and use finger as a guide for the tool.

Mark desired depth marks with a pencil and then cut in with a small skew using the toe of the tool.
Enhance the grooves using a Formica strip to burn in.
‘Sand’ – Nick uses Abranet which is an abrasive mesh rather than sandpaper. For a dibber just use 120 & 180 grit. Apply sanding sealer, allow to dry, use a scotch pad to denib. Apply wax eg Woodwax 22 – buff with kitchen paper in between 3 coats. Part off and refine pointy end with abrasive and wax. Then part off handle end cutting final nub with hacksaw and tidy up with abrasive.









Apple: Turn one end of a suitably sized spindle to fit your chuck using callipers to size. Rough down with SRG until round.





The tail stock end will be the stalk end of the apple. Use Spindle Gouge to shape the tail stock end using pivoting movement…cutting down hill to round the end of the apple. Remove tail stock and round into the stalk end. Bring back tail stock to support the piece and begin to shape the opposite end ie the calyx end of the apple.
Sand and finish (begin with 80G, 2 grits, sanding sealer, denib, 2 grits, repeat to 600G) the stalk/tail



stock end so it can be mounted onto a screw chuck allowing the piece to be turned around on the lathe. Use a Jacobs chuck to drill a suitable hole in the stalk end for the screw chuck.





Bring up tail stock for support and shape calyx end – pivoting will be key to get the shape of an apple. Finish in same way as stalk end.
Calyx can be added using a clove and a little CA glue. Stalk end finished similarly but with a suitable small twig.

(* note that the ‘Spindle Roughing Gouge’ (SRG) should only be used on Spindles and not when turning bowls. The SRG is made from pressed steel and has a short tang inserted into and connecting it to the tool handle. This would not stand up to the rigours of side grain wood and turning bowls and is liable to snap and seriously injure the woodturner. Do not use a SRG on bowls, instead use a bowl gouge)

Other news:

Next Competition Thurs 7th May

The next club competition will be judged at the club night on 7th May.
As suggested and agreed by members, the competition is to make a cup or trophy. The winning piece will become the award for each of our club competitions and held by the winner for a couple of months until handing on to the subsequent winner.

Summer BBQ

This is the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the Club. We agreed we should celebrate this with a barbecue for members and their families & friends at the Club in early July …precise date tbc but 11th July looks likely.

Smocks & Safety Glasses

Ray and his son have kindly donated smocks and safety glasses to the club for use during demonstrations, hands on sessions and open evenings. Thanks Ray.

Club Shirts etc

Ray brought along a range of shirts and jackets etc and also some logo designs in response to an idea raised at the AGM. There was some positive interest so we will put together a separate email with details once Ray has an idea of pricing etc.

A visiting demonstrator at our next meeting – May 7th

We will be welcoming a visiting demonstrator to our meeting in May. Steve Gordon will be coming up from the Evesham area to show us the ins and outs of Thread Chasing…the art of turning screw threads onto pieces. This will be a really interesting session so please come along and enjoy the evening.

Forthcoming Club Meetings

Meetings are normally on the first Thursday in the month except when there are elections. Meetings start at **7pm** in Offchurch Village Hall, CV33 9AL unless stated otherwise

2026		
Thu 7th May	7pm	External Demonstration by Steve Gordon – Thread Chasing
Thu 4th June	7pm	Hollow Forms - Nick
Thu 2nd July	7pm	Focus on Sharpening
Thu 6th Aug	7pm	tbc – poss. Back to Basic 2
Thu 3rd Sept	7pm	Autumn Open Evening
Thu 1st Oct	7pm	Pen Making - Paul
Thu 5th Nov	7pm	Inside Out - Ray
Thu 3rd Dec	7pm	tbc

As always. If you have any particular requests for demonstrations (or to do a demonstration), discussions, techniques, tools and their use, wood types etc, please ask at a meeting or have a word with a committee member and we will see what we can do. We are all on the same journey and every question is a good question.

Committee 2026/27

Chair & Demonstrations	Paul Liggins	pliggins445@gmail.com
Secretary	Alan Begg	alanrbegg@hotmail.com
Special Events	Ray Burden	rayburden1@btinternet.com
Treasurer	Mike Jones	cmike.jones@btinternet.com
Comms & Competitions	Mike Widmer	07484 270479 m.widmer@btinternet.com

Following the AGM in March 2026 the roles & responsibilities of the Committee (as above) and associated members are shown below.

If you would like to help run the club or become a committee member in the future, please have a chat with one of the team…all help welcomed.

Role		Responsibilities
Chair	Paul Liggins	Leader with overall responsibility for ensuring quality and efficiency of the club.
Demonstrations	Paul Liggins	Agree topics, arrange internal and external demonstrators for club nights.
Secretary	Alan Begg	Arrange committee meetings, write and circulate minutes, maintain membership list, output of AGM.
Treasurer	Mike Jones	Manage the finances and 'back office' operations (eg hall bookings, insurance, bank etc). Take subs and raffle money at meetings. Maintain attendance record. Create year-end report.
Communications	Mike Widmer	Newsletter, ongoing club email comms, ad hoc comms, Facebook, event promotion.
Competitions	Mike Widmer	Agree programme, comms, organise space, judging method, prize.
Special Events	Ray Burden	Christmas, Open Evenings, BBQ.
Refreshments & Raffle	Andy Smith	Provide the necessary for half time sustenance and entertainment.
"Kit man"	tbc	Ensure lathe and accessories etc are fit for purpose and identify need for spares or repairs.
Camera Operator	Dave Hyde	Set up camera for live view of demos. Ensure batteries charged, cables function and look after camera.