



# Woody's World



**5th June 2025**

## **Turning Whistles**

A warm welcome to the new members and visitors who joined us in June, we hope you all enjoyed the meeting and Nick's demonstration, we look forward to seeing you soon. Meeting dates, planned sessions and committee contact details at the end of this newsletter so please ask if you have any questions.

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A little-known local playwright once wrote 'If music be the food of love, play on'. Well, it seemed that everyone loved the whistles that Nick demonstrated this month so we have a challenge for you...with prizes.

## **Your Challenge**

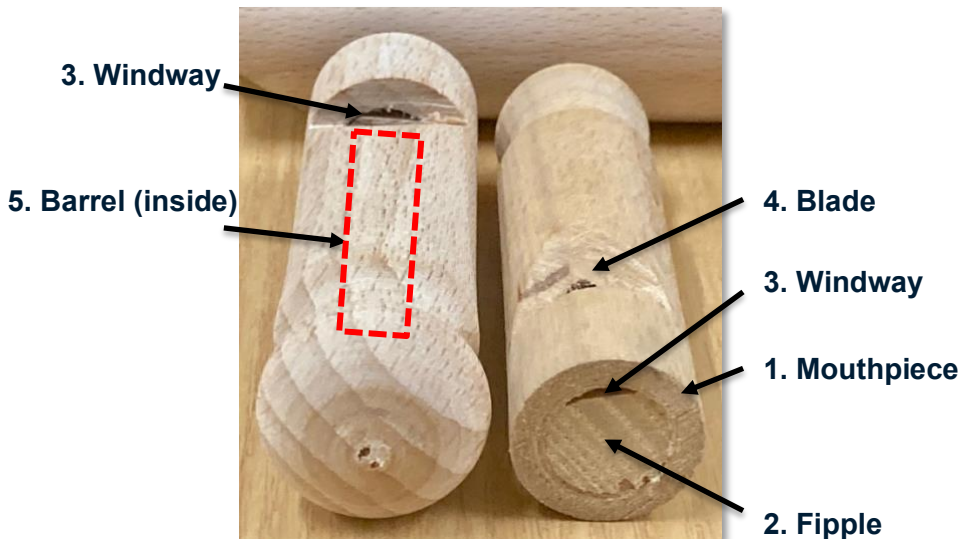
**Have a go at making a whistle & bring it along to our July meeting where we'll have a whistle off – best looking & best sounding. There'll be a bottle of wine or two up for grabs so get turning and tuning.**



Thanks to Nick for demonstrating whistle making. They certainly look like fun pieces to make and it sounds like they sell well at craft fairs.

In this narrative I have used the following list of names for the parts of a whistle (sourced from 'official' whistling pages) just so there is some consistency. However, be warned, saying 'Fipple' repeatedly eventually makes you sound like Captain Blackadder.

- 1. Mouthpiece:** This is the part of the whistle that the player blows into.
- 2. Fipple:** A block of wood that sits inside the mouthpiece, guiding the airflow and creating a narrow passage for the air to escape.
- 3. Windway:** The passage created by the fipple that allows the air to flow over the blade.
- 4. Blade:** The wedge-shaped hole in the whistle through which air flows.
- 5. Barrel:** The main body inside the whistle, where the air circulates.



At the end of the newsletter is an AI summary of what criteria impact the sound of a whistle in terms of size etc, something to ponder!

## The Method

Start with a blank c.50mm square x c.140-180mm long. Nick used beech, an ideal wood for toys – suggest it might be best to avoid Yew and Laburnum in case of toxicity and/or reaction.

Mount between centres, use a spindle roughing gouge to create a spigot and mount in the chuck. Use the same tool to take the blank down to your desired diameter. Use the wings of the gouge to shear cut. Alternatively, raise the tool rest and use a skew – both approaches



should give a nice flat surface on beech that will require little sanding. At this stage add any external decoration you desire.



Next you need to drill the hole down the core of the whistle for the Barrel. Nick used a 10mm Forstner bit but the same diameter drill bit will also work – remember to hold the Jacob's chuck, especially as you withdraw it from the blank. Drill the Barrel hole to about 10mm short of the final length of the whistle that you are

aiming for – this is where you can test length and bore to see what results you get but the 'standard' Barrel will be c.70-80mm deep.

If you have an extension for your Forstner or longer drill bits you can go further but you might need to start with a longer blank as you'll still need to allow for 10mm to the part off point.

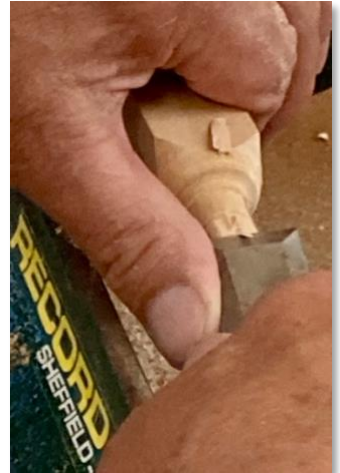
Mick also demonstrated how you can create the Barrel using a gouge instead of a drill.



Tidy up the hole and measure its diameter with callipers so you can turn a dowel for the Fipple that will fit snugly in the hole. Fitting and shaping the Fipple needs consideration so proceed as follows.

The dowel for the Fipple will need to fit into the hole just up to the notch that you will cut for the Blade. That notch will be about 15mm in from the Mouthpiece end of the whistle so make your dowel longer than 15mm so you can handle it and trim once fitted.

To shape the dowel into a Fipple, you will need to take off a thin slither to allow air to flow for the Windway to function correctly. This is easily done with a sharp chisel whilst the dowel is still in the chuck. Tidy with abrasive to leave a clean Fipple surface.



Part off the finished Fipple, test fit and use a little CA glue to secure ensuring that the Windway hole is kept completely clear of glue.

Once dry, you need to cut the notch for the Blade. Mark 15mm (or however long you have inserted the Fipple) in from the Mouthpiece end and use a saw to cut down at 90° and then at 45° as shown below to form the Blade notch. Use your chisel to modify and tidy up the Blade notch. Sand/finish as necessary and then part-off your finished whistle.



This is where you find out if your Fipple, Blade and Windway work in harmony and what Barrel diameter and length do for tone and pitch!

## Al's guide to what impacts the sound of a whistle.



### Size and Volume:

A larger whistle cavity holds more air, which affects the pressure and airflow. This allows for a more forceful and potentially louder sound. Conversely, a smaller cavity produces a weaker sound.

### Size and Pitch:

The length of the whistle's chamber, and consequently, the size of the overall whistle, directly relates to the pitch. A longer whistle (larger in size) will

produce a lower pitch, as the air takes longer to vibrate and travel through a larger cavity.

### Shape and Design:

Beyond just size, the shape and design of the mouthpiece and the whistle's cavity can also affect the sound. Elongating or flaring the mouthpiece can create a louder, higher-pitched sound, while tapering the mouthpiece can result in a deeper tone.

### Other Factors:

The material the whistle is made from, the thickness of its walls, and the size of the hole where the sound is emitted also play a role in the overall sound.

## 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

<b>2025</b>		
<b>Thu 3rd July</b>	7pm	Fishing Floats - Andy
<b>Thu 7th August</b>	7pm	Mastering the Skew - Roger
<b>Thu 4th September</b>	7pm	Open Evening
<b>Thu 2nd October</b>	7pm	Visiting demonstrator from Weedon Club
<b>Thu 6th November</b>	7pm	Exploring Resin - Ray
<b>Thu 4th December</b>	7pm	Christmas Trees Mick
<b>2026</b>		
<b>Sat 10th January</b>	7pm	Club Social
<b>Thu 5th February</b>	7pm	Captive rings - Nick
<b>Thu 5th March</b>	7pm	tbc

## Committee 2025/26

<b>Chairman</b>	Mick Jones	cmike.jones@btinternet.com
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