

# HORNSBY DISTRICT WOODTURNERS INC.

Established 1983.

## eNEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2020.

Another Zoom demonstration was conducted from Elwyn's workshop with a good 'attendance' to finish our year.

The most recent information from Lindsay (in December) is that the tests and medications he is taking will be reviewed early next year. Keith Day's operation went very well and he will be in Mt Wilga recuperating for Christmas. Bert Gude is now at home taking things easily leading up to Christmas and waiting for his doctors to finalise his ongoing treatment. We wish all three members a speedy recovery. RUOK? if not let another member know.

Regarding housekeeping the AGM was held on Saturday 21 November (and our last official annual event) with the committee being returned and Ian McKay as our new representative appointed to



The Shed board. The AGM business was followed by Show & Tell then coffee and chocolate biscuits to complete the meeting: see the photos attached. The sale of 576 honey dippers was



completed during December and yet again thanks to all the members who turned dippers during 2020. The final 76 dippers were recently made by Colin, Bert and John Edwards. A supply of dipper blanks is available at The Shed for members who would like to start turning early for stock. The relaxation of Covid 19 requirements allowed our Informal Christmas Lunch to be hastily arranged at the Magpies RL Club at Waitara in mid December. Again a stall at the Berowra Mall

Christmas Fair was organised where Colin and Elwyn showed and sold a wide variety of turned items.

Regarding Elwyn, Colin and John: now is a good time for us all to acknowledge them for their complete involvement in all 7 Zoom demonstrations run during the year and keeping us all in touch during the 'lock down.'



The November demonstration was via ZOOM and by Greg Croker on the subject *Turning a Christmas Decoration*. The proposed decoration was to be basically a combination of a platter, some candles and a small Christmas tree.



The proposed decoration was to be basically a combination of a platter, some candles and a small Christmas tree. For safety the candles will be fitted with electric tea lights, and finally the turnings air brushed with festive colours.

Organising the platter commenced with the gluing up of three 310 x 100 x 22 mm edge jointed, recycled Kauri or Baltic pine planks. As 22 mm is not quite thick enough for the design, a frame of similar wood was glued around the edges to allow sufficient turn-up at the rim of the platter.



Spigots were hot melt glued to the centres on each side, the base using an threaded aluminium face plate and, on the top a cylinder of wood suitable in diameter for the VM100 chuck jaws.



The metal spigot allowed the 305 mm (12 inch) diameter and the face of the platter to be roughed out to leave only enough frame width and height to finalise the rim. As the wood was to be painted the crevices in the frame joints were filled using quick setting Traders Bog. This bog is a two part styrene filler that is very easily sanded, cheap and 'paints well.' Also turned was the (wooden) spigot to be concentric with the metal spigot.

At this stage the turning was reversed and the platter base turned to give the desired features of a wide foot to stand upon, about 165 mm in diameter, and a 15 mm rise above the base at the rim. The thickness at the rim was planned to be 10 mm, and at the centre about 15 mm to be heavy enough to stabilise the platter and to allow for the candles' inset spigots.

During the turning of the base the hot glue chucking spigot parted from the platter due to a combination of poor sanding of both wood surfaces, insufficient glue application and 'perhaps' spirited turning of the base. Fortunately no real damage, but the resetting of the hot melt chuck was slightly off centre, see photo.

The base was part sanded to 320 grit while on the lathe and the remainder later similarly using a power sander once the platter's face had been turned and the metal spigot removed.



Reversing the turning allowed the face of the platter to be turned. The rim frames were reduced in height to give the 10 mm planned thickness and blended with an initially step curve into the planking such that the vast majority of the platter's face was (virtually) horizontal. Gouge turning of the joined planking was not as straight forward as the underside and some advice was required from the assembled Zoom audience; the advice (that worked) was to turn carefully on the point with a horizontal, flute-up gouge followed by some gentle negative scraping to complete the flat profile. Again the sanding was to 320 grit to finish the face of the platter.

Remove the metal spigot/faceplate from the platter's base using a heat gun and again reverse the platter. Using a 250 mm diameter flat block of scrap wood attached to the chuck bring up the face of the platter and the tail stock and jam the platter between the wood and the tail piece such that the platter revolves centrally. Carefully turn away the area between the foot of the base and the centre to about one millimetre below the foot's rim and as close to the tailstock as possible.



Where possible it is best to include non slip plastic between the turning and the scrap wood to prevent damage and the platter moving during this final turning.

Remove the platter and power sand this area of the base flat to 320 grit and the turning is completed.

On the face side of the platter then Forstner drill four 38 mm diameter holes 3 mm deep to accommodate fitting the candles and the tree. The plan was to have 3 candles and a Christmas tree turned to suit the platter with 2.5 mm spigots at their bases to slot into the 38 mm dia. holes.

Turning of the candles was relatively simple. Jacaranda branch wood was used and cylinders made to copy the approximate the dimensions of real candles. Turned between centres to the diameters and length of real candles with the spigots in the base, the top of the candles were turned out to fit the purchased tea candle lamps, and 'authenticated' by grinding the tops to give an uneven scalloped rim using a Dremel or a Rats Tail file. It was hoped to achieve 'flame' translucence at the top of the candles by turning the wood very thinly, as per Norfolk Is. Pine wood, but the jacaranda wood did not oblige.



Sand to 320 grit in preparation for painting and place aside.

The turned Christmas tree can be 'as you like it.' To suit the platter the tree needed to be less than 100 mm high, and as wide as possible to fill the platter area but still look natural so not more that 90 mm in diameter. To keep the tree low and away from the candles the base-pot was reduced to 10 mm in height.

Turning the tree is started with a jacaranda wood cylinder 100 x 120 mm held in a chuck. Allow 60 mm for the tree branches plus 15 mm for the length of the trunk, 10 mm for the pot and 3 mm for the spigot. The pot diameter is 55 mm and the trunk about 20 mm.

Measure out the dimensions and turn the branches first. With the 60 mm available turn down a cone from the 90 mm diameter to give a pointed top. Each branch is 9 mm wide so mark out on the cone and with a skew cut into the wood a millimetre deep. Starting at the bottom 'branch' cut into the wood with a sharp skew to undercut the branch above using a more acute angle. Cut straight down into the wood on the branch above with the skew horizontally such that both turning cuts meet at about 3 or 4 mm depth thus giving the appearance of pine tree branches. Repeat until all branches are finished with the top most branch coming to a point.

Turn the trunk by parting down from the bottom branch to 20 mm diameter and continue with the parting tool towards the base to make the trunk 15 mm long. Continue, parting down the pot to 55 mm diameter and 10 mm long. Finally part the spigot to 38 mm diameter by 3 mm long and sand all the tree to 320 grit ensuring that the sharp edges of the branches are maintained. Part off the turning from the chuck.



Check all the candles and the tree for a level fit in the platter and adjust if necessary and then prepare for painting using an air brush.

It seems that air brushing is like simplified spray painting using smaller equipment. The air



brushing unit used in the demonstration is from Aldi and not at all complicated and is easy to use. Rather than describe how to spray by air brushing I suggest that a good You Tube would be far more productive than an explanation here!

Acrylic paints supplied with the 'air brush' were used but found to be too viscous/thick to spray and needed to be diluted before application. Flow Medium is the usual choice as a thinner but for this application water was used with satisfactory results. Problems with water as the dilutant appear to be that the wood swells slightly (possibly raising grain/fibres) however a quick de-nibbing with steel wool between coats overcame this problem except for the silver coloured paint.

For painting and the colour choices were. The platter, candles and tree were painted with 2 undercoats and about 3 coats of the final colour of buff for the platter; one candle each of red,

green and gold and the tree in Brunswick green with a red pot. A second attempt was made to use the supplied silver acrylic paint but again without success probably due to water as the dilutant. Flow Medium may well overcome the silver problem.



To set up the decoration, turn on and place the electric candle flames in the candle sticks and arrange the candles placing one in each hole in the platter with the taller candles at the rear. Fit the Christmas tree in the remaining slot and rotate the platter so that the tree is near to the front and more easily seen.

The turned decoration can be embellish with other Christmas items such as tinsel, small pine cones, figurines, bows around the candles or even fake snow etc for increased effect.

Again thanks to Elwyn Colin and John for making this Zoom demonstration possible.

This was our last demonstration for 2020. Let's hope that we can all get back together again in person early in 2021. The first demonstration for 2021 will be on Saturday 13 February.

Meanwhile.....A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

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For further interest or to join-in woodturning go to [www.hornsbymentshed.org.au](http://www.hornsbymentshed.org.au)