

AWGB Online Seminar November 2021

By Robin Goodman

The AWGB seminar is usually a 3 day event taking place near Stafford, but it had to be postponed last year. With Covid still around, the AWGB decided to go online this year. Over a weekend, they lined up 12 demonstrators, 8 of whom were from abroad. All the 1½ hour demos were pre-recorded, but the 1/2 hour Q&A session immediately afterwards was live. There were also a few separate sessions for participants to discuss certain subjects.

For most club members who did not attend, I give a summary of some of what you missed.

Jay Heryet, photo 1a, life member of the club, was the first and her subject was **thread chasing**, a skill in which and has given many demonstrations and subject, **Photo 2b**.

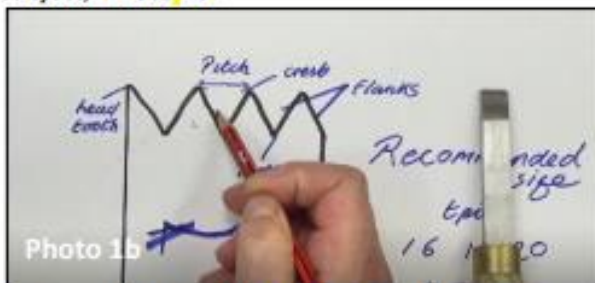


Photo 1a

She explained uses for threads in turned work, especially for boxes, **photo 2c**, and the special tools required – external and internal chasers plus a special ‘arm’ rest. Threads work best on hard woods with fine grain – box being one of the best. 18 tpi was recommended as the best starting size for turners. an external thread on a spigot needs to start with a small chamfer on the outer end and a groove



Photo 1c

at inner end. Then she demonstrated how to form the thread, initially just a scratch then deepening it until not quite cutting the crests of the thread. Then the matching thread is cut on the internal surface of the other piece using a different tool and supported on a special tool ‘arm’ rest. Matching of the grain when screwed tight is achieved by carefully removing material from one of the main shoulders or contact surfaces.

This was a very well-presented demo and a good introduction for those who have not tried thread chasing or have not succeeded. Practice is needed and if a tutor is available then so much the better.

Mary Ashton, photo 2a, is also a club member as well as being a local woodturning teacher and demonstrator. She demonstrated how to make a **pierced square platter, photo 2b**. The platter had a black coloured bead on the inside of the rim, which sloped away markedly. This made turning the underside of the rim more awkward, especially with the square corners. The ‘piercing’ comprised a number of drilled holes as decoration rather than more normal use of the description for lots of closely spaced irregular shaped holes using high speed small bits or burrs.



Photo 2a



Photo 2b



Photo 2c

The final operation of reversing the bowl to complete the base can be achieved in several ways, but the square corners do present a safety risk. To minimise this risk, Mary showed her version of a special 2-piece home-made doughnut chuck as shown in **photo 2c**. Being the teacher that she is, she explained well the whole process of making the square platter.

Emmet Kane, from Ireland, demonstrated some **Decorative Techniques**, especially on one of his 'Tulips of Gold hollow forms, **photo 3a**. The creation of the hollow form was straightforward; he then showed some of his texturing techniques using different burrs and speeds. For ebonising he



Photo 3a

the old-fashioned method of vinegar and steel wool. Placing the gold leaf inside the form is tricky, but he has developed his own effective method. Another of his heavily textured forms is shown in **photo 3b**.



Photo 3b

Keith Gotschall, from Colorado, showed how to make one of his 'Hollywood' bowls, using holly together with discs of African Blackwood glued below the rim and just above the base, **photo 4**.



Photo 4

Jacques Vesery, from the USA, titled his demo 'Creating the Illusion of Reality.' He showed how he textures and colours his sculptural turnings. He uses pyrography tools or wood burners to mark out the patterns, which are then burned further or coloured. **Photos 5a-b**.



Photo 5a



Photo 5b

Michael Kehs lives amongst trees in Pennsylvania, where he teaches carving and woodturning. He showed some of the methods he used for decorating his pieces including torching/burning, texturing, dry brushing and wet acrylics. **Photos 6a-b.**



Yann Marot turns and teaches in the south of France. He likes curves and simple shapes. The **Figtree**, which he showed in the demo includes a small square cut out, is thin walled and allowed to distort, because he uses wet wood. **Photos 7a-b.**



Joss Naigeon also lives in the south of France. He has made a series of **'Guardian Angels'** pieces and showed us how he makes them. The body is turned on 3 axes and the wings are made from a very thin flange, which is allowed to warp before cutting to shape. **Photo 8.**

Chris Fisher, photo 9a, is the only completely blind professional and accredited woodturner in the UK. He demonstrated how to turn the outside of the bowl and colour it. It was thought-provoking to see him in action,

using all his senses except sight. He relies on the nuance of different sounds coming from the wood and tools together with astute feedback direct from the tools and fingers. He was even able to decorate with an airbrush, using some of Nick Agar's Chromacraft stencils, **photo 9b.** Sharpening tools using a slow revving water-cooled Tomek is his safest option.





The American **Tim Yoder**, **photo 10a**, has made over 200 woodturning videos, building on his 25 years previous experience behind the camera. He is an amusing and fun demonstrator to watch and, on this occasion, showed how to make one of his branch wood vases, **photo 10b**. For texturing he used a Proxxon carver and burning,



Some of us met **Margaret Garrard**, **photo 11a**, from Yorkshire, at her Wizardry in Wood stand, where many of her artistic and delicate pieces were on view. She demonstrated a piece, using **involved turning**. 4 planed pieces of wood were first glued them together with newspaper in the joints. After turning between steb centres, she pulled the joints apart and re glued for further turning, **photo 11b**. A small finial or decoration could be glued inside in advance of this if required.



Pat Carroll from Ireland gave the club 2 zoom demos in 2021. This time his demo was for making a **square platter**, **photo 12a**, with rim textured using an Arbortech disc cutter, after he had pencilled in some radial lines. **Photo 12b**.



This was the first AWGB online seminar and overall, it worked out well. Having the demos pre-recorded meant that some editing could be done in advance, if necessary, especially to keep to the 1½ hour time allocated in the schedule. There was the occasional hitch with getting the demonstrator online for the live Q&A sessions, but as far as I know no major glitches. In America, the AAW has successfully run their equivalent symposium on-line for the last 2 years, this included several features not adopted this year by AWGB, such as panel discussions and an Instant online Gallery for participants – a critique session was included.

All demos and Q&A sessions were conveniently available on line for 30 days, I watched them all later, because I did not have all the weekend to spend on line and I could fast forward through the demos at will. The only slight disadvantage of this was that I could not personally ask any questions. I did however join in live the separate participants discussions in the chatroom on subjects such as piercing and texturing. These were poorly attended; for one of them there were only 4 of us. AWGB have said that numbers attending were less than expected. Hopefully the next seminar, in 2 or 3 years time, will be face to face.

