



Irish Woodturners' Guild Dublin Chapter

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April - May 2003

Editorial

On the right are some of the hardworking members of our Chapter who spent valuable hours recently looking after the newly planted trees in Larch Hill scout camp. The photo by email from Barry Dunne, looks wonderful in colour, but sadly, we don't run to colour printing of the newsletter - yet.

L to R: M.Kenny, J.Holmes, organiser B.Dunne, and veteran treeman M.Healy.

To turn to other subjects I must say that the competitions are enjoying better support at last. Perhaps its because of the choice of subjects but whatever the reason John Holmes entreats you all to have a go every month and help to raise standards.

The Guild AGM held last month in the Ashling hotel resulted in strong representation on the new committee by our Chapter. Owen Furniss is the new secretary and Sean O'Neill will be the new treasurer. Both have onerous responsibilities but we are confident that they will bring a wealth of professionalism to the Guild as it struggles in changing to meet new standards and requirements. Felix McCoy remains as chairman for the present but it is the feeling of many in the Guild that Peter Mulvaney should repeat his bid for that position at the next election. One plea from the membership secretary, Brian McAdoo, always quote your membership number when renewing as it helps tracking.

Chris Hayes



WEB SITES YOU SHOULD TRY

Dublin Chapter

[Http://homepage.eircom.net/~dciwg](http://homepage.eircom.net/~dciwg)

Irish Woodturners' Guild

www.irishwoodturnersguild.com

Owen Furniss

[Http://homepage.eircom.net/~furniss](http://homepage.eircom.net/~furniss)

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Demos

June Jim Johnston (Ulster)

July Peter Mulvaney

August Owen Furniss

THE GUILD COUNCIL

An innovation introduced last year was the Guild Council, which required representatives from each Chapter to meet to discuss issues requiring attention and action by the Executive Committee.

The first such meeting took place on the 6th April 2003. The following are some items to emerge and are reported by Tom McKeon:

1. To get professionals within the guild to draw up a working document before June 2003 that might suggest how the Council could best look after their needs.
2. Continue to collect and collate articles for the Guild history for the attention of Ambrose O'Halloran.
3. Draw up a syllabus, a policy on woodturning education and workshops for juniors.
4. Submissions for the National Seminar 2004 including demonstrators, venues and accommodation servicing the area.
5. Membership - by changing computer software it would be possible to download from Guild to Chapter, e.g. woodturning tutors in chapter areas, state of paid-up membership, local demonstrators, etc, etc.

assembled Wrench for opening
Jim Malloy. nuts - set of Ratchets

HARBOR FREIGHT
A

COM
TOOLS

April Demonstration

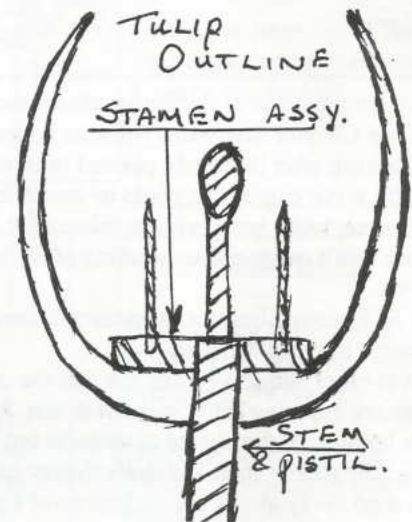
TULIPS----By Tom McDonagh

With many gardens adorned with tulips in bloom at this time (they came to Europe about 400 years ago from Turkey) turning tulips was a most appropriate demonstration for April. Tom, who took on this demonstration at short notice produces his turned tulips in 4 parts before gluing for final assembly, the tulip head, the stamen, the pistil and stem combined, and the external leaves.

With the finished flower head section a little less than 2 ins. at widest section and 2 in. to 2 ½ in. long, Tom started with a block of sycamore approx. 2ins. square and 4 ins. long, with a ¼ in. hole drilled through the centre, which assists in accurate lining up and is used finally for mounting the flower on the stem. Four saw cuts approx. 1 in. long, 90 degrees apart, meeting at the centre, were made in one end for the petals, the other end had a spigot cut to suit the lathe chuck. With this end secured in chuck the tulip head was roughly shaped with spindle gouge on the outside and hollowed out on inside to a depth of approx. 1 ½ ins.; finishing the bottom flat for stamen mounting later. Final shaping of the outside next, and when happy with the shape and thickness of the petals, Tom shaped the tips using stiff sandpaper. Other methods were discussed for doing this petal shaping, - sharp knife, scissors- but the stiff sandpaper worked splendidly as used by Tom.

Head was then dyed using Goodalls food colouring painted on with a small brush after sanding; and when the dye was dry, a coat of sanding sealer followed by a polish completed the head before parting it off. Advice from an experienced

(Continued on page 5)

**Tree week in Larch Hill**

Tree week this year was a washout, non-stop rain for the two days we were in Larch Hill. However on the Saturday John Holmes and me planted about two dozen of our own trees raised from seed, including Spanish chestnut, ash, birch and some beech.

Sunday 9th March was the official day in the scout HQ. Scout troops and Tree Council were represented at the planting ceremonies.

Despite the inclement weather we managed to plant out some 100 trees and this little group is to be called the Special Olympic plot, to commemorate the holding of this sports event in Ireland in June. Joe O'Neill has recorded it all on video.

The scouts are hoping to renovate a short walk known as the Holly Walk, so anybody with young holly trees who would like to see them flourish there let me know.

Finally, why not sow a few holly seeds now and grow them on for planting out in the next few years?

Barry Dunne

Seminars in 2003

Limerick Chapter — June 7th
Contact-James Ryan -0504 22228

Ulster Chapter — June 14th
Contact -Shaw Campbell-048 86763820

Gorey Chapter — June 28th
Contact-Dorothy Stedmond-055 21503

Cork Chapter — August 23rd
Contact -Kieran Murphy—021 4899180

Guild seminar—October 10th -12th
Contact-Tom Dunlop-051 421032

Early warning -for 2004

Galway Chapter- May 9th 2004

Dublin Chapter-????????????

The March Demo –carving by Christy Glynn

Working with wood has been a tradition in Christy's family for generations, with his speciality been woodcarving. He began his demonstration by sketching roughly on the black-board Queen Ann and Cup toe legs such as would be used on a small table, and pointing out that in practice all such legs began with a square section. Next he mounted a short Queen Ann style leg (which had been roughly shaped on the bandsaw) between centres on the lathe, after first marking the two centres which would be used at the foot end, or the end that would be mounted in the tail stock (the centre of the square for the foot centre and the off-centre for the tapered leg). The foot was first shaped from its centre and then its off-centre leg from its centre; all expertly and rapidly done by gouge. The same exercise was repeated for the Cup toe style type, again at amazing speed.

Telling us that "when you earn your living at woodcarving, you must keep your eye on the spot you are actually working on and your mind on the job you are doing", he mounted another square section approx. 20 ins. long between centres to be fashioned into a straight leg. The turning of this included rounding, planing, concave and convex curves, beads and grooves; using gouge and skew chisel to fashion a stylishly decorated well proportioned leg, all done by eye. This leg was then taken from the lathe and mounted for some spirals or twists to be carved on an approx. 75mm. ball section mid way on the leg. After some positioning pencil marks 8 spiral grooves were formed with carving gouges helped along with thumps from the heel of his hand; - no rasps used and the work was held in a very sturdy sash cramp secured to a bench top. Working away continuously Christy then mounted an approx. 6in. square block 1in. thick in the sash cramp via a block of timber glued centrally to one side using the brown paper method (for ease of removal afterwards) and with gouge,

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Failte

We welcome the following new members to the Chapter and hope they will enjoy the activities:

Jonathan Ruttle
Lorraine Kelly

The Firewood Verse

Beechwood fires are bright and clear
If the logs are kept a year
Chestnut's only good they say,
If for long its laid away.
Make a fire of Elder tree,
Death within your house shall be.
But Ash new or old
Is fit for a Queen with crown of gold.

Birch and Fir logs burn too fast.
It is by the Irish said
Hawthorn bakes the sweetest bread.
Elmwood burns like churchyard mould
Even the very flames are cold.
But Ash green or Ash brown
Is fit for a Queen with golden crown.

Poplar gives a bitter smoke,
Fills your eyes and makes you choke.
Applewood will scent your room
With an incense like perfume.
Oak logs if dry and cold,
Keep away the winter cold.
But Ash wet or Ash dry
A king shall warm his slippers by.

(Source—*The Times of March 1 1929*
with a corrected version by Celia, Lady
Congreve, in the *Daily Telegraph*, March
2 1930)

Supplied by Billy Kellaghan





THE NORTH-EAST CHAPTER

This rapidly growing chapter continues to meet in Seamus Cassidy's workshop near Newgrange, Co. Meath, every third Saturday of the month, in the afternoon.

Their secretary, Francis Morrin, on 01-8257654 will give you further information about the venue.

The March demo –continued from page 3

and occasionally a mallet, carved a traditional shell such as would be found on a mantelpiece or front apron of a table.

A request for a rope edge was quickly acted on, and while Christy did not have with him his usual rope edge tools, working with some of the few he had, a section of the requested rope edge of approx 18mm pitch rapidly took shape

Stripped down to his shirt and trousers, and bubbling along a roughly shaped Queen Ann style of leg was next held in the sash cramp, while a ball and claw was carved on the foot at an amazing speed.

After well deserved applause at this stage, our chairman announced time was up, and so ended a most entertaining and informative morning, that as well as the wide ranging demonstration from a skilful and experienced craftsman willing to help and explain in any way he could, also included viewing photographs he had brought along of some of his work; and the information that some well known public buildings, including Trinity College, Marsh's Library, Galway's and Mullingar's Cathedrals, are some of the places his work can be seen

Sincere thanks to Christy from all of us.

M Forde.

About yew, by Frank Foley

The Yew –taxus baccata

When we speak of yew we mean the common yew, *taxus baccata*, but there are several other varieties. These include the Irish yew, *taxus baccata fastigiata*, and a golden version of this.

There is also a ground cover yew which grows to about 18 inches high but spreads in time to about 10 feet. Another variety is *taxus baccata semperaurea*, a bright golden bush reaching about 3 feet high.

The common yew is a slow growing tree which can eventually reach about 40 feet in height. It will tolerate most growing conditions, even polluted air, but it does not like poorly drained soil. Unusually for a conifer it will produce new shoots however hard you cut it back.

This is not surprising perhaps because it is not a true conifer since it doesn't produce cones. Instead it develops small red fleshy fruits that hold a single seed. The needles and crushed seeds are poisonous though the red seed pod is not. Thus birds can eat the seed pods since they pass the seed unbroken. The needle are especially poisonous to horses but deer, on the other hand, appear to be unaffected by them. The prevalence of yews in graveyards is sometimes attributed to their symbolising life everlasting due to their enduring qualities. A more mundane explanation is to discourage browsing animals though this seems a rather extreme form of deterrent.

Irish mythology suggests that clan chieftains eliminated rivals by serving them drink in yew goblets- an unlikely story

since the wood when seasoned is not considered toxic.

The common yew is to be found throughout Europe and eastwards as far as the Himalayas. It grows to a great age and some are deemed to be over 1000 years old. Much older of course is our bog yew which has been buried in a bog for some 4000 years! With the oak, hazel, and pine it shares a long history in the ancient forests of this country.

I read recently that the county name Mayo is derived from the gaelic Maigh Eo, or the Plain of the Yews. More recently a Mayo man told me that there is very little bog yew in Mayo, only oak and pine.

The wood of the yew is dense and very hard even if it is described as a softwood. It is resistant to preservatives. However it doesn't need such treatment because of its long lasting quality in the ground, lasting longer than most native woods. It has, therefore, been used in the past for such menial functions as fence and gate posts and rustic furniture. English writers on yew will invariably mention that yew was used in bow staves and that that the English bowmen were formidable opponents. Only branchwood was considered suitable because the pale sapwood gave flexibility, while the heartwood provided the required strength.

Yew really comes into its own as a wood for turning, or at least, many turners think so. The creamy white sapwood contrasts favourably with the heartwood, usually a golden orange brown when freshly cut. It may contain purple streaks and often has clusters of tiny knots. In time however, it will lose much of this exotic colouring and become a dull brown.

The wood in branches or young trees is usually straight

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Workshop in May

Venue- Gerry Baker's shop in Trim, Co. Meath

Sat 17th May 2003
From 2 to 5 pm

If interested contact
Frank Gallagher on 01-4902879

About yew -continued from page 4

grained while the trunk of a mature tree is different. It is rarely if ever cylindrical so the grain is usually wavy due to ingrowing bark. A sawn plank will have wavy edges and possibly holes. John Boddy's wood catalogue stresses that they will only sell yew subject to inspection, and that knots, holes, heart shakes, ingrown bark and dead knots, should be accepted as decorative features. Some of your customers might not swallow that one!

With all these flaws it can be a difficult wood to season without it developing shakes. Larger wood should be sawn lengthwise through the centre. Branchwood is best left as long as possible and stored upright. It helps if you can cut just above and just below a knot.

When dried it is a kind wood to work. It is easy to get a good finish from sharp tools, requiring little sanding. No need here for 60 grit! It takes all finishes well and lends itself to fine detail. Sounds like the perfect turning material for all levels of skill.

One final tip; if you work a little sapwood into the finished article and maybe a trace of bark, you can always ask a little extra for your efforts. A special feature in other words.

Frank Foley

(Editors note: this article was first presented at a recent Terenure meeting).

THE APRIL DEMO -TULIPS

(Continued from page 2)

turner in the audience is worthy of recording; that if dye bleeding is a problem (which was not the case here) omit the sanding sealer from the finish, and apply a polish finish directly on to the dye.

From the wood left in the chuck, a flat circular piece approx. ¼ in. thick and ¾ in. in dia. was shaped, which had 6 holes drilled close to the edge to take the end sections of cocktail sticks, trimmed to length (¾ in. approx.) dyed dark colour, and glued in position before parting off; this was the stamen section. At this point Tom drew smiles from his audience as he remarked that many of the purists might be reluctant to use cocktail sticks and of course these could be turned also.

The stem was next to be worked on, a section of ¼ in. dowel, 10/12 in. long was mounted in the lathe, (again with the remark that some might wish to turn it); one end 1 in. to 1¼ in. long

was turned thinner to about 60% of its dia., with a slightly elongated bulbous head, this represents the pistil. Stem then removed from lathe and stamen section glued to it just below the thinned section where the ¼ in section begins. Then this glued section was pushed through the head from the top to the flat bottom and glued in position. With a Stanley knife three leaves were cut and shaped from veneer, with the bottom 2 in. tapered to ¼ in wide approx.. Using super glue these were bonded separately in position and carefully sanded to a taper to give a realistic stem growing from the leaves, which were coloured green. (to sound advice from one of our lady members to "wash the brush well when changing dye colours.")

Our thanks to Tom for a very informative enjoyable morning, where a well planned demonstration was delivered in a very relaxed unhurried fashion, it all testifying that Tom's skill and work methods give excellent results.

M. Forde.

Chapter notes from recent committee meetings

Terry Cruise offers a good deal for Woodturning magazine, his number is 01-2956363.

A recent survey revealed that the DML 24 was the most commonly used lathe in our Chapter. No surprise Cecil Barron is sponsoring the September competition, a homemade aid to turning, and offering an angle grinder to the winner. Up to 3 items may be entered, in any material, but must be for use in turning.

Lots of timber available in Larch Hill, small and large pieces. Best phone first to arrange a visit.

The Chapter has been asked to supply names of members willing to supply corporate gifts to the South Dublin County Council. Give your name to the committer if interested, together with some idea of your range and prices.

ASH (Fraxinus)

If you want to remember Ash you just have to think of a few key features common to nearly all. Its,

- often light or **pale brown**,
- generally **straight grained**,
- is tough and moderately **resistant to shock** loads
- so is excellent for **sports equipment** and, although it
- can have a **mild blunting effect**, it
- **works well** with all hand and machine tools.

There are a range of different Ash woods which generally are categorized by the regions they were found:

- **European** (known as English, French, Polish, Slavonian etc according to origin)
- **American** (at least 3 species, known sometimes by colour (white, green, red, black and brown or as Canadian Ash)
- **Japanese** (which is sometimes called Tamo) and
- **Australian White Ash**

In Ireland the Ash is said to grown best in counties Meath and WestMeath and considering it is sometimes referred to as the "Queen" of the woodland, I guess it's appropriate it likes the Royal County. The Mountain Ash or Rowan tree is small and is generally considered an ornamental tree rather than one that is grown commercially.

European Ash is a nice tree, with a trunk and branches that usually **grows straight** and its **deeply grooved bark is rough grey** in colour. In April or May some Ash can be in bloom before the growth of its leaves which split up into leaflets on a central stem. Usually Ash does not bear fruit until it is about 40 years old and older trees can reportedly reach heights of 100 feet.

Each type of Ash has slightly different qualities - for example the Japanese Ash can sometimes be found with a wavy and curly grain - but generally they fit the description I gave you already.

The feature that makes **Ash the favourite wood for sports equipment** - ranging from our own GAA hurley and other bat handles to gymnastic equipment, and on to boats, in particular canoes, deck beams and frames, oars and tillers - is that it is a **tough**, often hard wood combined **with strength and elasticity** which gives it some resistance to shock loads. By the way, it is estimated about 20,000 trees are used each year in the manufacture of Hurleys.

Of course our interest is primarily on working it and although all species of Ash have moderate **dulling effects on the cutting edge** of our tools its other qualities allow us

to use it in almost any article, large or small. It seasons fairly rapidly and doesn't degrade very much but care can be needed to avoid splitting. Those who have a mind to, will also find Ash generally has very good steam bending properties too. So considering that it is said that ash will take a greater strain than any other European wood, of course it is great for turned parts of furniture such as armchairs and tables.

While generally Ash's pale colours – from pale cream to straw-biscuit - may not always excite, you may be lucky and get your hands on the dark brown to black Heartwood of some ash. For example the "Olive Ash" which is the heartwood of European Ash. And the Japanese Ash, with its wavy and curly grain, can produce what is described as a bizarre "peanut" figured wood.

Most Ash, in particular Australian White Ash is known to takes glue, stains and to polish to a good finish and an oiled finish on a piece of burr can result in a very decorative item.

While you and I would not consider the qualities of a wood for the fire I guess the woodcutter's song I came across finishes up with a simple statement about Ash – that it is "worth its weight"...

The Woodcutters Song

Oak logs will warm you well
 That are old and dry
 Logs of pine will sweetly smell
 But the sparks will fly
 Birch logs will burn too fast
 Chestnut scarce at all sir
 Hawthorn logs are good to last
 That are cut well in the fall sir
 Holly logs will burn like wax
 You could burn them green
 Elm logs burn like smouldering flax
 With no flame to be seen
 Beech logs for winter time
 Yew logs as well sir
 Green elder logs it is a crime
 For any man to sell sir

Pear logs and apple logs
 They will scent your room
 And cherry logs across the dogs
 They smell like flowers of broom
But ash logs smooth and grey
Buy them green or old, sir
And buy up all that come your way
They're worth their weight in gold sir

Competition results 2003

June
22
1-24
1-5
4

2003	0	14/16	15	13	11	13	15
Advanced	score	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	
Michael McGee	93	67	15	13	11	13	15
Cecil Barron	78	54	11	6	15	15	7
Pat Walsh	48	28		9	5	5	9
Albert Sloan	49	27		15	5	7	
Tony Lally		23		7	5	11	
Adrian Finlay		23			7	5	11
Frank Foley		20		11	9		
James Gallagher		13			13		
Des Mc Mahon		13	13				
Henry East		13					13
Philip Kerr		12		6	6		
Owen Furniss		9	9				
Albert Dooley		9					9
Michael Deegan		7	7				
Experienced							
Michael Fay	6	57		24	9	15	9
Sean Ryan	1	54	15	11	13		15
Chris Hayes	2	42		13	5	13	11
Tom McKeon		41		15	15	11	
John Holmes	4	27	13	9			5
Graham Brisbane		18			11		7
Pacelli		17	11	6			
O'Rourke							
James Nolan	3	13			7		6
Tom Gibson		13					13
Billy Kellaghan		10		5	5		
Niall Cahill		9	9				
Donal Browne		7	7				
Frank Gallagher		7		7			
Beginners	score						
Paddy Finn		40	9	11	9	6	5
Eugene Colgan		37	13		15	9	
Joe Laird		30			15	15	
Kevin Dowling		29			7	13	9
David Laing		20			13		7
Tom Delaney		18			5	13	
David Cox		16			11	5	
Irene Christie		16	11				5
Una Sheeran		13		13			
Des Doyle	x	11				11	
John Foley		11					11
Janet Mulhern		9		9			
Jimmy Rice		7		7			
Pat Lambert		7					7
Tom		6					6
Donoghue							6
Lorraine Kelly		5					5

CLOCK MOVEMENTS AND WATCH INSERTS AND ACCESSORIES

Philip J Dix and Co
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Tel 01-6717144/6710579
Hours- Mon-Fri only, 9-5
Closed 1-2 for lunch



WOOD TURNING LESSONS



available from Joe O'Neill at his workshop in Ballinteer. He can be reached on 087-6230162

The committee 2003

Chairman - Joe O'Neill -2989441/087-6230162
Secretary - Tom McKeon-8340185
Treasurer - James Gallagher -4505981
Workshops - Frank Gallagher -4902879
Videos and books - Terry Cruise-2956363
Competitions - John Holmes-2894193
Supported by - Pat Walsh and Albert Dooley
Auditors - Harry Kampff and Tom McDonagh

FOR SALE

Engineering lathe, metal cutting, approx 36 inches long, including two chucks.

Requires its motor (single phase) to be refitted following overhaul of lathe.

Worth checking out at

€350

Patrol Brown
Call 01-4908264

Microclean dust filters

A range of these to suit most workshops is available at very competitive prices from an agent in the North, who can arrange delivery.
Call Billy Davidson on 04897 562524

Wood blanks, all kinds

Bowl blanks and lamp stock

Lamp kits and cellulose sealer, ready mixed.

Call Tom Gibson on 01-8420634 or 086-8241470

Competitions coming up

June - Vase whose height is at least twice its diameter
July - Laminated turned item
August - Open, your choice or anything goes



Martin Gleeson
01-6287883

1 2 3 4 5 6
15 13 11 9 7 6 → 5

3 9 items

Kelcock