



Dublin Chapter Newsletter

Irish Woodturners Guild

September 2026



Editor John O'Neill

Please check both your email and the Chapter website (<http://www.dublinwoodturners.com>) regularly for updates. Videos of our demonstrations can be found on our youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@DublinWoodTurners>.

Contents

August competitions	P.2
Whats on	P.4
Competition table	P.5
Demo article	P.6

Ash Dieback & Recovery

Thanks to Charlie Byrne for sending me the link to this work on the ash trees.

Ten years ago we were looking at losing most of our ash trees, Ash dieback appeared in 2012 and looked like it was affecting all our ash trees. The AshforFuture Research Project launched in 2024 looks to identify disease resistant ash trees, led by Teagasc with the aim to build a bank of disease resistant ash trees. 1000 apparent disease resistant ash trees were identified across the country and cuttings were sent to Lithuania for analysis. 3.5% showed a high level of tolerance and cuttings from these trees were grafted onto ash rootstock which were planted at Oak Park Teagasc centre in Carlow. Disease resistant trees from across Europe were selected and planted in Claremorris research centre in Kilkenny, research ongoing but results are promising.

This work is very expensive and the public are asked to get involved, but I can't find where that is done.



Every tree is going to be affected by the disease but it appears that some trees have a tolerance and can recover, these will make the hurleys of the future.

Een if only 5% of ash trees are disease tolerant that represents thousands of trees from which to build our future ash stock.

This work will take at least 10 years before we know that the worst is behind us and the ash tree recovers.

Picture above is of an ash tree in my front garden that was in a sorry state 5 years ago but now appears to have fully recovered, two other ash trees nearby also back to full leaf.



1st beginners John Deaton



2nd beginners Liam Slattery



1st advanced Barry Dunne



2nd advanced Charlie Byrne



3rd advanced Michael Stephens



4th advanced Paul Murtagh



5th advanced Claire Godkin



6th advanced Liam Slattery



7th advanced Declan Corrigan



1st artistic Claire Godkin



2nd artistic Paul Murtagh

Events of interest.

Made in Kilkenny/Made Local Exhibition: Throughout September – 28 October

A celebration of excellence in craft, this exhibition takes place in DCCI National Design and Craft Gallery in Castle Yard, Co Kilkenny and showcases the work of 28 makers who are involved in the MADE in Kilkenny collective.

See dcci.ie for more information.

Competition Table

	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Totals
Beginners													
John Deaton			15	15	15	15	15	13	15				103
Liam Slattery					13				13				26
Michael Hart								15					15
Peter Consalvez						13							13
Experienced													
Brendan O'Looney		15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15				120
Maria Jennings						13							13
Ray Ivers					13								13
John Foley									13				13
Advanced													
Claire Godkin		15	13	15	11	7	9	11	7				88
Brian Kelly		13	11	13	13	6	6						62
Michael Stephens		11		9	6		11	7	11				55
Charlie Byrne			13			13	15		13				54
Barry Dunne				11		9	7	9	15				51
Colum Murphy						15		15					30
Michael Fay					15		13						28
Paul Murtagh								13	9				22
Tony Hartney			15										15
Brendan Phelan						11							11
Seán Ryan					9								9
Declan Corrigan					7								7
Artistic													
Claire Godkin		7	9	5	11	13	15	15	15				90
Charlie Byrne		13	15	13	13	15	7						76
Michael Stephens	15	5	6	11	7		9						53
Hugh Nolan		15	13	7	9	7							51
Barry Dunne	15					9							24
Liam Slattery			11						11				22
Tony Hartney		11		6									17
John Deaton			7	9									16
Michael Fay				15									15
Declan Corrigan					15								15
Maria Jennings							13						13
Paul Murtagh									13				13
Colum Murphy						11							11
Brendan O'Looney							11						11
Pat McCarthy		9											9
Brian Kelly		6											6

Competition subjects for remainder of 2026

September bowl of fruit
 October a halloween item
 November AGM no competition
 December a christmas item

August

Demonstrator: Tom Windross

Notes by John O'Neill

Pictures sourced from video by Michael Hart

Tom is a young woodturner from Waterford who started turning 4 years ago. He is particularly interested in turning green wood. His projects today would include fuming with ammonia and ebonising wood using various different methods. He introduced a selection of his pieces and explained how he treated each one to get his desired finish, picture right. His techniques produce a deep dark finish on the wood.



Tom is one of our bursary winners and he used his winnings to attend the woodturning symposium in North Carolina which was an eye opening experience for him, the term he used was that it was an amazing experience.

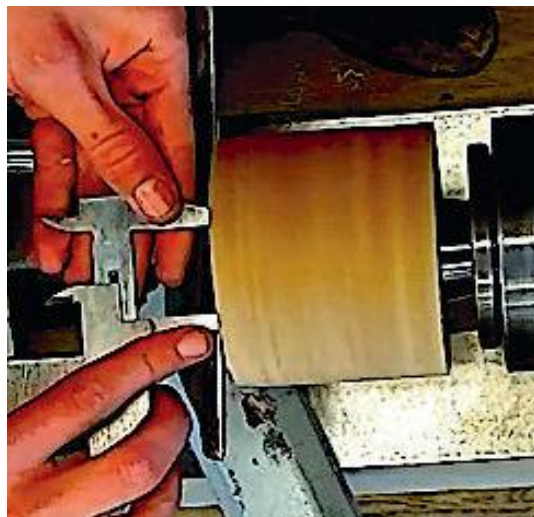
His first project was to turn a chestnut bowl, pictured on the left, ebonised and fumed with ammonia. He talked about the most desired properties of a bowl, it has to fit nicely in your hands.

He has a good supply of timber as his father works in a local country house estate with a variety of forests.

The example piece was turned out of dry wood but the piece being turned on the day would be using green chestnut.

Chestnut reacts well with chemicals as its high in tannins, oak also. As the wood is green dust will be less of a problem, but issues related to the tannins may occur, dermatitis or respiratory problems, safety glasses and face mask advised, but a new one is the need to protect your skin, barrier cream on the hands guards against dermatitis.

Screw chuck to mount the blank, pictured on the right. Tenon to be turned on tailstock side and then the bowl shaped. Simon hope chisels used as they're his favourite tools. The double ended bowl gouge



has a finger nail grind on one end with a straight grind on the other, pictured above right, the whole job can be done with one tool. Speed increased to 1200rpm and blank trued up, one pass is all it took!

Then the tenon turned, calipers used to mark for 35mm gripper jaws, 37mm tenon will allow the jaws to close completely round, pictured left.

Bowl gouge used to quickly remove the waste and skew then to finish the tenon, a straight tenon required to suit the gripper jaws, skew laid





flat on the tool rest and straight in, pictured right.

The base will be 1/3 the diameter of the bowl for stability, if used as a sugar bowl you don't want it spilling over. The tannins will turn everything black!

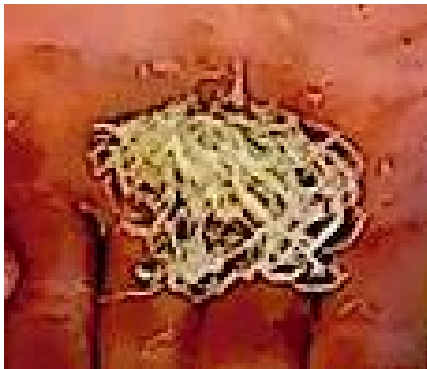
Outside of the bowl then shaped, it will be a slightly closed form.

The curve will centre about 1/3 the way from the top. A bowl gouge to shape the lower 2/3s of the bowl. A push cut to finish off the surface with a clean finish, pictured left.

A pull cut used to waste away the top of the bowl with the finger nail bowl gouge grind, the tool is pulled through the

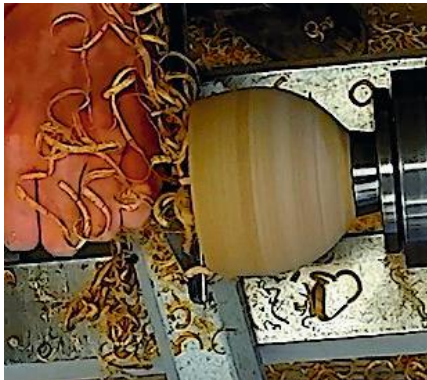
work piece from top to curve centre, pull cut. All his tools are ground at 55 degrees, his angle of choice. The final cut that he uses on the surface is the sheer scrape, to be taken slowly and gently to remove any torn grain, tool rest lowered as he wants to have a 45 degree cutting angle. Cutting done with the wing of the tool so a larger gouge preferable, longer wing. The tool held as low as possible and smooth movement, fine shaving curls produced, picture on right.

Change direction of the tool to finish the top curve. The shavings produced by this shear scraping action shown below left. Sanding is



not to be done today and the piece now ready to flip around for hollowing. The tannins in the wood are evident as they reacted with the chuck jaws to produce black rings.

Toolrest is adjusted so that the tool will be cutting on centre height using the straight grind of the double ended gouge. He is aiming for a wall thickness of 4-5mm, to allow the item to warp without cracking. Hollowing was a fairly speedy event with shavings flying out of the core, picture below left.



Shavings build up in the closed form bowl so its necessary to stop regularly to remove them. He put a small groove in the inside of the bowl rim with the skew to prevent the bowl gouge running and ruining the piece when doing the final pass of the bowl gouge.

The grooves guide the gouge into the piece. Wall thickness regularly checked with the 'méara' as hollowing nears completion. He talked about inspiration for his pieces, the book 'Fluid Forms' by Liam Flynn is one of his main sources of inspiration. He also checks out form & shapes of pieces in the National Museum in

Dublin.

He switches to the fingernail grind of the bowl gouge to finish the piece, the wings are swept back and won't get in the way particularly when finishing the bottom. Hollowing stops when wall thickness is about 5mm. The thin piece will move more but is less likely to crack than a thicker piece.

The bowl is removed from the chuck (picture right) and clamped in a jam chuck for finishing.

He told the audience that he mainly turns oak and chestnut, not much softwood as he has easy access to a lot of



hardwoods, not a bad complaint to have. Spindle gouge used to remove the foot.

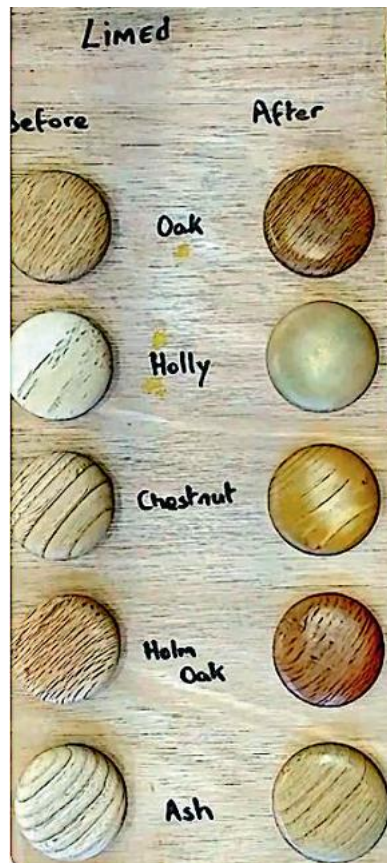
After the tea break it was time for discussion on enhancement techniques, fuming with ammonia, liming wood with alkaline substances and ebonising. Always wear protective clothes, gloves, mask and eye shield.

Fuming: fuming of wood originated when it was noticed that oak beams in stables darkened, caused by the ammonia in horses urine. The objective

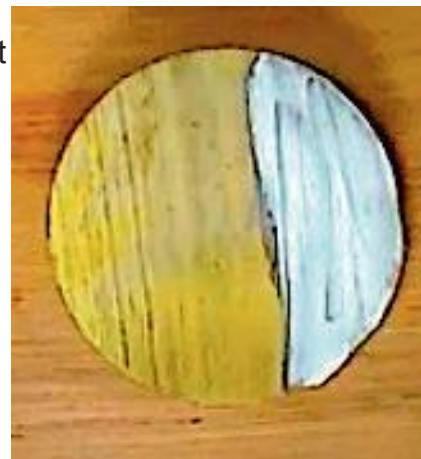


is to achieve an aged appearance in the wood, fumed oak bowl pictured right. Heartwood has the tannins so it darkens more than the sapwood. A plastic barrel is lined with kitchen towel. Ordinary household ammonia is used and 5-9% diluted mixture (50mm) is poured into a small jug, piece and jug put in the barrel and sealed with lid, ammonia does not touch the wood, pictured left. Vapours are released which react with the tannins in the chestnut. This is set

aside for a number of hours, the result of various durations shown on right. If you want to check how the fuming is progressing open the container away from your face.



Liming wood is the next technique. Before and after examples of liming of various woods are pictured on the left. Lime putty is used, not readily available in shops. The putty is applied using a foam brush and change happens quickly, pictured left. It is wiped off with a damp cloth and then a copper brush to clean the remaining lime. Wash the piece under warm water to neutralise the lime. Fine sandpaper to remove raised grain and then oil to finish.



Ebonising wood.

Pictured right are the results of various types of ebonising, from top to bottom, untreated, iron



sulphate, iron acetate, scorching, dyed and last indian ink. He then applied indian ink and a spirit based dye to a blank to show the difference, pictured left, ink x3 times, dye x3, ink & dye x1, ink x1. Ink doesn't bleed into the timber much whereas the dye does. Scorching wood was not demonstrated due to the fire risk as it uses a propane torch.

Last method was ebonising with iron based solutions,

iron sulphate and vinegar//iron filings, Thanks Tom for a great demo.

