

Chris Barker - Something different from this talented youngster - June 15th 2005

Reviewed by David Buskell

At short notice, Chris Barker, probably the UK's youngest professional woodturner, came along to Cheam in June. He brought with him a stock of timber for sale to members.

For his demonstration, he made two pieces. First was a bowl from masur birch, a timber from Finland about which he enthused for its fine turning qualities.

He started by turning a spigot then reverse chucked. This enabled him to shape the outside of the bowl and foot. Again the piece was reversed and finished with 240, 320, 400 and 600 grits. Finally the piece was reversed again and bowl interior cut out, leaving the walls slightly thicker than normal. More sanding followed and polish applied; Chris uses melamine polish diluted 70/30 with anti-bloom thinners. For clearing out natural edges, Chris uses a Dremel together with a paintbrush for applying the polish.

A final polish with Briwax which despite the fact it is one of the most unfriendly (health wise) polishes with the highest toluene content, it is also the most popular amongst pros. It is worth noting that Briwax have just launched a friendlier version with healthier solvents. The finished bowl was kindly donated to the club raffle. It was won by Henk Schouten.



The second item was a box with lid made from island walnut grown off the coast of Tasmania. A piece 10 x 2 x 2in was rounded off and spigots made on both ends.

Chris was careful in marking out the lid and base to make sure of a good grain match. After parting off, the lid was first to be dealt with, shaping, sanding and finishing, again with melamine, buffing and Briwax.



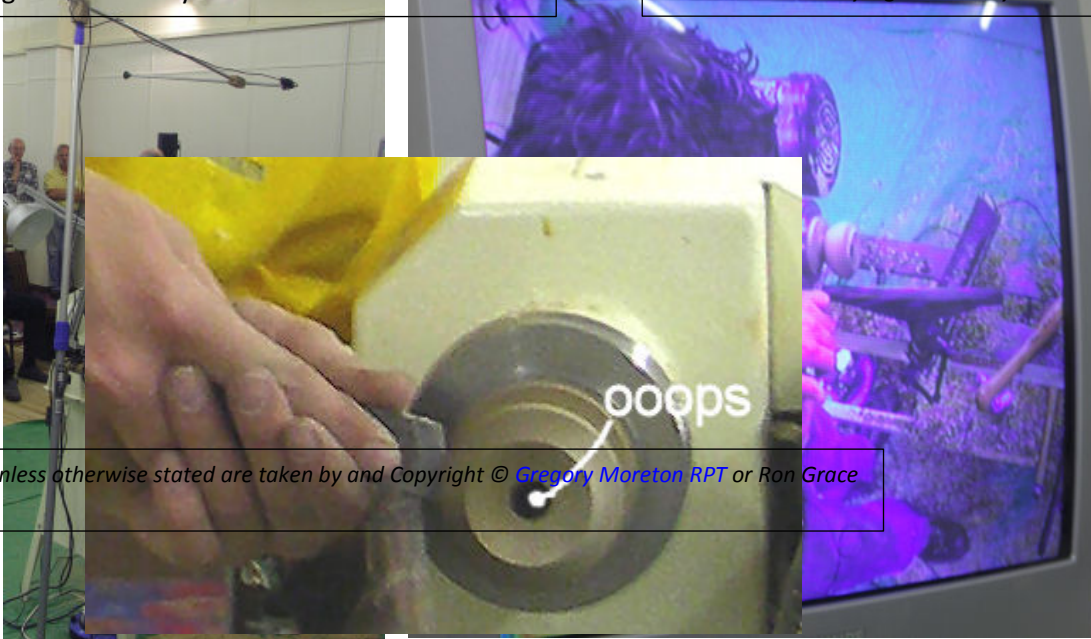
The tricky part is preparing the base to make sure of a really snug (tight!) fit. As Chris doesn't use callipers, it was a case of trim, test, trim, test a number of times to make sure.

Final job was to fit the lid to the base, shape the lid and finish off as usual.

An interesting evening thanks for coming to Cheam at short notice.

* Note how are new camera set up gives a great turners eye view to the audience

It does not always go the way we want !?!?!?!?!?



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