

Reg Slack - Master Class & Off the Cuff Problem Solving - 26th May 2004

Reviewed by Graham Wood (photos Gregory Moreton)

It turned out to be a double booking which I am sure will be sorted out. So off to the car park I went to meet other club members as they arrived, and one by one members turned up and were told the story. After a number of phone calls (what would we do without Mobiles) and head scratching Brian Ash came to our rescue by generously offering to hold the meeting in his large garage, so taking Reg Slack with us, off we went to Brian's, for what turned out to be a very enjoyable evening. Although a little late the meeting got under way.



Problem solving and off the cuff turned out

After introducing himself and saying the demonstration would be some what off the cuff owing to the change in circumstances and the lathe available, he went ahead to explain he only ever used six tools in his work, these being a Roughing Gouge, Skew Chisel, Two Spindle Gouges, Bowl Gouge and Parting Tool. Before commencing any turning Reg explained his method of grinding his tools using a simple jig made out of hardboard or MDF, it consists of a semi-circle (horse shoe shape) with an outside diameter of 6" to match the diameter of the grind wheel, this is fixed on to the side of the grinder with sticky tabs or double sided tape. The tool to be ground is placed on the grinding rest and is eyed up to its original bevel angle or an angle to suit ones self and moved sideways without changing the angle and a mark made on the jig at the height of the cutting edge. This mark is a constant reference so each time the tool is ground and the cutting edge is lined up with the mark the angle will stay constant.



Reg then went on to do some turning, saying for most of his work he used a screw chuck and advised it was good practise to mount the work piece twice. Once a pilot hole had been drilled and the work piece had been screwed on firmly the other end is skimmed square with a slight concave so that when this end is screwed on to the chuck it has flat and true surface to sit on and is less likely to wobble or vibrates Once this was done he went ahead to demonstrate the use of the various tools spending a good deal of time on the skew chisel which most of us have big troubles with. Although a simple egg was the final outcome of the demonstration Reg has the skill and experience to show all the different techniques needed in good basic woodturning.

After parting off the egg, Reg went ahead and using only a spindle gouge to make a hole in the remaining waste, then with his 1 1/4" skew he produced a very small eggcup just to prove you do not need a wide range of tools to produce a wide range of turned items. When this was parted off he placed it on a flat surface and placed the egg that he had produced on top which brought a sounding round of applause. Apart from giving us all, I am sure, more confidence with our turning and in particular in the use of the dreaded skew Reg gave us a very entertaining evening. Andrew our Chairman closed the evening by thanking Reg for his demonstration and Brain for his hospitality.

