



Cheam Woodturners Association

Associated with the Association of Woodturners of Great Britain

Twinned with Central Oklahoma Woodturners Association

By Gordon Cookson



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Alex puts on a good show

Richard Hoodless reports on December's pen-making demonstration by Alex Bellringer



After a brief introduction about types of materials (wood, plastics) that can be used for pen/pencil making, Alex used an Omega pen kit for his demonstration.

He started by cutting a pen blank into two pieces and marking the ends so that the grain matched. In true Blue Peter style he then produced two pieces of burr elm he had already drilled to accept the brass tubes which fit inside the pen body.

The tubes, while being clean, need to be roughened with glasspaper to provide a good fixing. They were then glued into the burr elm with super glue. The ends were trimmed with a special cutter mounted in a battery drill and both pieces were mounted on a pen mandrel with appropriate bushes.

Next, Alex used a spindle gouge to remove the corners and make them into cylinders. They were then turned to the final shape.

When the pen is finished, the timber/plastic covering on the brass tube is very thin and fragile, so it often chips during turning. Never fear, Alex showed how to fill the gap with sawdust and treat it with thin super glue.

Next came sanding the two pieces using abrasive from 120 to 320 grit. Sanding sealer followed with more sanding down to 800 grit.

This latter treatment was repeated, friction polish applied and buffed. Finally wax polish was applied and buffed.

A very useful piece of equipment — a pen press — was used to assemble the parts as Alex has found this much easier than any other way, such as using a vice.



Chips fly during the initial shaping



Applying super glue to sawdust to fill a gap



Getting close: sanding the pen



Answering a question from the audience

If you have any comments, corrections, or items to add, please contact e-news editor: ron_grace@btinternet.com

We look forward to seeing you all on January 21

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