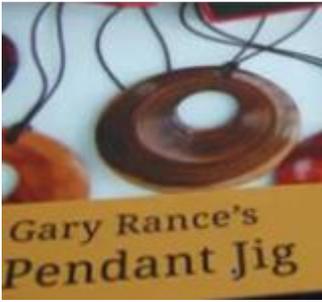


At our July meeting we had the pleasure of a demonstration by Gary Rance. His speedy demonstrations mean that this review is somewhat sketchy on detail – a good reason to buy his DVDs.

He started by outlining some of his background – starting turning at the age of 16 in 1975, working on production turning shaving bowls (in those days there was no such thing as a 'hobby' turner). We were then given an excellent brief demonstration of basic spindle turning using a ½ inch round bar skew. He reminded us to always stand to one side when roughing out. Using the skew he showed us how he starts resting the heel of the skew onto the wood, move onto the bevel, lean forward to raise a bit of dust and keep the bevel floating on the wood. When you put too much pressure on the tool it starts bouncing, which is when you get the spiral effect – very difficult to remove.

His skew is ground with a concave bevel as Gary feels this gives more of the bevel resting on the wood. Always start with the tool on the tool rest, then keep the bevel on the wood, only cutting on the tip of the skew. A dig in occurs if you lift the handle too high and also if you hesitate – you should always move in and out quickly. Keep your hand on the top of the skew – a dig in can also occur if you don't maintain enough pressure as the tool will jump back - Gary gave us excellent demonstrations of how this dig in can occur.





This was followed by a demonstration of making an off-centre pendant. Gary has developed his own jig for holding the pendant – details of which can be found on his DVD. He demonstrated making both cross grain and end grain pendants. The basic shape was turned between centres (using a steb-centre and a live revolving centre).

The pieces were sanded – Gary folds his sandpaper 3 times and has his own sandpaper holder – a block of wood with slots cut out, one for each grit. The disk was removed and mounted in the off-centre jig.

A drill bit was held in a key chuck and a hole was drilled through the disk on a slow speed. Remembering to remove the key chuck so you don't damage yourself, finish the first side of the pendant with a 3/8 spindle gouge and sand through grits 180 – 600. The piece was turned round and



finished similarly on the other side.

Gary finishes his pendants with an acrylic gloss sanding sealer followed by lacquer. The pendant was hung on a leather thong and if you are planning to sell these pendants Gary recommended putting them in decorative boxes (around 35p each). Gary's pendants sell for around £35.



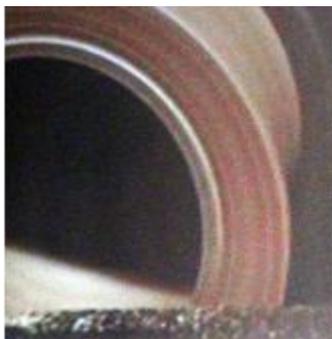
The 2nd half of Gary's demonstration was an unusual hollow bell which is used as a salt shaker (or pre-ground pepper). This is effectively a box with a small funnel inserted upside down inside it so the salt comes out when it is shaken. The ebony handle was turned with a screw end so that it can be removed and the salt can be poured in and also in case any dampness needs to be dried out.



A cylinder was rouged down to 58mm and Gary used a skew chisel to make the funnel shape.

The outside of the bell was turned and a 3mm hole drilled in to the full depth of the funnel.

The funnel was sanded and parted off.



The inside of the bell was then turned so that the funnel fitted exactly in place and a 12mm hole was drilled through and then tapped to create the thread for the handle. The fit of the funnel into the bell was checked, lining up the grain and using superglue the funnel was fitted into place.

The inside of the funnel was turned – cutting into the middle with a gouge and dragging it out - care is needed not to cut through the wall of the funnel. A groove was cut to disguise the join.

The bell was mounted and shaped on a tapered jam chuck and held in place with with the tail stock (no pressure).



The handle was turned in ebony - an ideal wood for thread chasing. Gary showed us his 'scratcher' which is a piece of wood with metal points to check the length and with all the dimensions of the handle drawn on - useful for repeating pieces.



The ebony blank was mounted between centres using a step centre – Gary commented that a 4 prong drive is better.

The tool rest should be below centre for a narrow piece of wood.

Once the handle was turned with the spigot the same size as the thread that was tapped in the bell a v-cut was made at the back of the spigot and the end shaped to 45° to help the start of the chasing. Gary grinds off the half tooth on one side of the thread chasing tool. The tool rest should be smoothed and waxed so the chasing tool moves easily along it. Thread chasing was done at slow speed (230 to 400). The handle was held higher than the cutting tip, starting at an angle, cutting with the 1st 2 teeth and then moving the tool along. The ebony is sanded - Gary prefers using Abranet on ebony as the close grained wood can clog ordinary sandpaper.

These demonstrations were done at lightning speed - Gary took 40 minutes to make the entire bell, including chasing. There were lots of hints and tips included - if you want more information about Gary's techniques he also sells a DVD on this topic - www.garyrance.co.uk.

