



027 491 3868 Clive Wilson (Tutor)
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Timberly Woodturning. HC2017

This week I received a “goodies” parcel from our generous supporter, Terry Scott (Timberly Woodturning). Inside the box was a variety of finishes suitable for turning projects. Many thanks Terry. Much appreciated from the Hamilton Club members.

I am often asked about what finish should be used. The answer is never straight forward and invariably depends on what the intended use of the finished item will be. So now we have several sample tins of finishing waxes and oils with which we might experiment on our turning projects. OK it’s Have-A-Go time. But wait! First we need to understand quite a bit about waxes and oils as finishing products. What follows is a repeat of a brief explanation that I wrote and included in the Tutor’s Tidings early in 2016.

OIL or WAX finishes

The best aspect about finishing oils and waxes is that they are easy to apply to an almost completed turning project while the wood is still spinning on the lathe. In all probability only a soft, clean rag or 0000 grade steel wool is all that is necessary to apply the finish of the turner’s choice. However, making a choice can be a nightmare as there are so many to choose from.

Why oils or a wax you might ask? Well the oil or wax finish penetrates or thin films (sits on) the wood and enhances the grain patterns to give a rich and lustrous appearance.

So good so far.....but wait there’s more!

Because of the lack of durability, oil and wax finishes are not always suitable for use on wood where the surface will be subjected to hot or cold water spills.

“Busy” surfaces will need a much different finish.

There are some woods that do not take an oil finish very well at all because of the antioxidants in the wood. Timbers from the Rosewood family are in this category.

If you have turned a large bowl and it is destined for the kitchen to act as a salad bowl, then a wax may not be the best finish. Maybe you will need to apply a food grade oil (walnut) finish instead. Then as the oil wears away from ongoing use you will need to reapply a thin coat of oil.



Applying the correct finish to your turning.

Rule No 1: *The finish should match the appropriateness of the intended use of the completed turning item.* e.g. if you have made a salad bowl then a wax finish would not be the best option. (OK what is?) - read on.....

Rule No 2: *See rule No 1*

Waxes and Oils

One of the first things wood turners learn to do with turning is to apply a 'finish' to wood projects and it's highly likely that the 'finish' would be either a wax or an oil product.

Why?

Well usually because someone recommends their favourite wax or oil of some kind. Another good reason for finishing a project with wax or oil is that these goodies come in small containers, are relatively easy to apply with a rag and either product will look good on the wood. Also both apply well while spinning on the lathe ensuring a complete and even coverage, then when dry the finish can be buffed under power.

Waxes and oils are excellent finishes for turnings. I've been using waxes and oils for years with great success. The club has a Beale buffing system to apply a coat a carnauba wax which, on some woods, looks decidedly spectacular. (but is wax the right finish for your turning project?)



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A WAX AND AN OIL PRODUCT?

WAX comes in various forms: liquids, pastes, and solid bars. Some waxes are soft and some quite hard. It should be remembered that soft wax finishes can be prone to scratches and to leaving visible finger prints caused by sweaty hands. Carnauba wax is an extract from the carnauba palm of South America and is about the hardest of wax finishes for wood turnings. Waxes will not penetrate the wood surface fibres but actually sit on top. That's why it is possible to get a highly polished finish to the wood.

Some liquid waxes are applied "wet" and allowed to dry then buffed with a soft clean rag. These products are usually referred to as FRICTION waxes and they look great too.

NOTE: Waxes can be applied over any other **dry** finish but putting another finish over the wax finish will not work out well for you.

OIL will penetrate the wood fibres so oil is much more effective in highlighting the grains and patterns and gives a more translucent appearance. You will get a sense of 'depth' to the finish.

DRYING oils actually change from a liquid to a solid when exposed to air. (it's the oxygen that causes the chemical/physical change). Drying oils are derived from nut seeds. A good example of a drying is **LINSEED oil** which is derived from the seeds of flax plants. After application the turning must be set aside for one or two days to dry or 'cure'. The surface grain will be raised by the oil so a light sanding will be required then another coat of oil should be applied. Do this for at least one more coating of oil.

DANGER: Chemical changes occur during the oil 'curing' process so all oil soaked rags should be spread out to dry away from combustible materials. When dry the 'cured' rag can be considered safe. A scrunched up rag ball of wet linseed or tung oil can spontaneously combust and has been attributed to a number of workshop fires in recent times.

TUNG OIL: is a tree-nut oil which cures to a tough, water resistant, beautiful finish. Tung oil is safe for wooden toys and kitchen ware which might come into contact with food. Tung is applied just like linseed oil but you must remember to sand after every coat using wet and dry sandpaper. This creates a very fine slurry of wood particles (dust) and oil that fill the tiny pores leaving the surface smoother each time.

NON-DRYING vegetable oils such as peanut or olive are OK to use on chopping boards but, as they stay wet indefinitely, they will wash off when the board is scrubbed. It's best to view non-drying oils as wood treatment oils rather than 'finishes'.

*Please note that in this article I have not referred to **Danish Oil** as this is a special 'finish' and will be the subject of a separate writing.*

Cheers

Clive

TUESDAY'S TURNERS



SHAUN O'REGAN



JAN



MICHAEL

The Wonders of Wednesday



Our Wednesday session **STAGE ONE** achievers. **MALCOLM, STEPHEN, RIC** and **ED**. This group are all smiles as they complete their stage one projects and the club's introductory course. Basic skills have been covered and all members have experienced a range of turning tools. OK it's time to move on to new turning tasks and extend your knowledge and abilities. Well done fellas. Goodonya!

HELLO and WELCOME



The WEDNESDAY session welcomed another new turner **OSCAR AARSEN**. Oscar is seen holding his second project – a garden dibber. His advanced skill-work and flowing lines of the shape suggest that Oscar won't be long on Stage One. An excellent start.

WRITE this DATE in your diaries. Reserve the day.

TERRY SCOTT of Timberly Woodturning has offered to visit our club and demonstrate wood turning techniques.

SATURDAY 7th OCTOBER 2017

Demonstration at our club workshop.

Don't miss this event!

THURSDAY's SPECIALS



CHRIS KAAN took great care in producing this excellent turning from a large piece of beautifully coloured, honey-gold kauri wood.

DYLAN's totara fence-post turning is a real eye catcher.

The ancient weathered sections have been wire brushed and oiled while the smooth sections have had an application of EEE.

A great job Dylan.

Your perseverance paid dividends here.



(1) Next week's Wednesday and Thursday evening sessions will be celebrating course achievements with a shared supper. **(2)** The whole-club fence-post project was very successful with creative outcomes. **(3)** We now have sufficient materials to hold another whole-club initiative and the planning for this has already started. {The theme will be **EMBELLISHMENTS**}

Go WAIKATO! (Win the Mitre 10 Cup)

Go the ALL BLACKS ! (The Bledisloe Cup is yours)

Go the BLACK FERNS! (Bring home the World Cup)

Go Lisa Carrington (Add more Gold to your vast collection)