NORTH WARWICKSHIRE & HINCKLEY WOODTURNING CLUB

Newsletter
January 2026

LOTTERY FUNDED

Find us on

www.hinckleywoodturners.org.uk

Notes From The Editor

Happy New Year to all members who I haven't met in person so far this year.

In this issue, you will find a description of my offcentre candlestick demo. This is advanced turning so don't try it until you are confident with the tools. And always wear a full face mask. This is not a project where risks can be taken.

Those of you who came to the Christmas party, will have seem Giles' Puffin Automaton. Giles has provided a detailed description, diagrams and pictures of how he made it. See page 11.

Our next meeting on Tuesday 3rd February is a Hands-on evening. A demo by John Evans (club chairman) will be on the following meeting on Tuesday 17th February.

I have booked myself a place at Chestnut's Woodturning Weekender at the end of August. It's a bit of a drive to Doncaster so I have booked a hotel for the Friday and Saturday nights. I plan to drive there early on the Friday, look around Doncaster and be refreshed ready for the turning demos on the Saturday and Sunday.

I have also booked a place at the AWGB Festival in October. That is being held in Stratford-on-Avon, so I plan to drive there each day.

Rob Sheehan
Secretary, Newsletter Editor & Web Site Manager

Off-Centre Candlestick 20/1/2026

by Rob Sheehan

Two years ago, I demonstrated an off-centre candlestick consisting of two ovals with opposing cut-outs. Last year, I saw Simon Hope turning an off-centre candlestick at Chestnut's Woodturning Weekender. My plan was to copy that. I didn't get a close up view of his candlestick but it appeared to have an off-centre ball in the middle. When I tried that, I discovered an off-centre ball looks just like a normal ball with off-centre connecting spigots. So I searched the internet and came up with a different design. Using Fusion 360, I modelled the design until I was happy. This is the result...

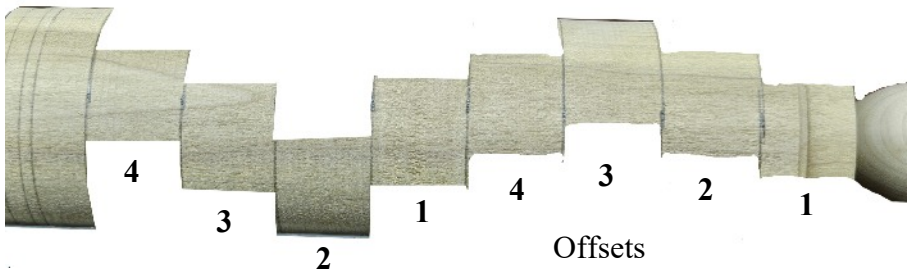
Starting with a 3" x 3" x 11" Tulipwood blank, I marked the centres and turned it to round. I then turned a chucking spigot on one end.

Mounting it in the chuck, I used a modified spade bit to drill out the recess for the candle cup.

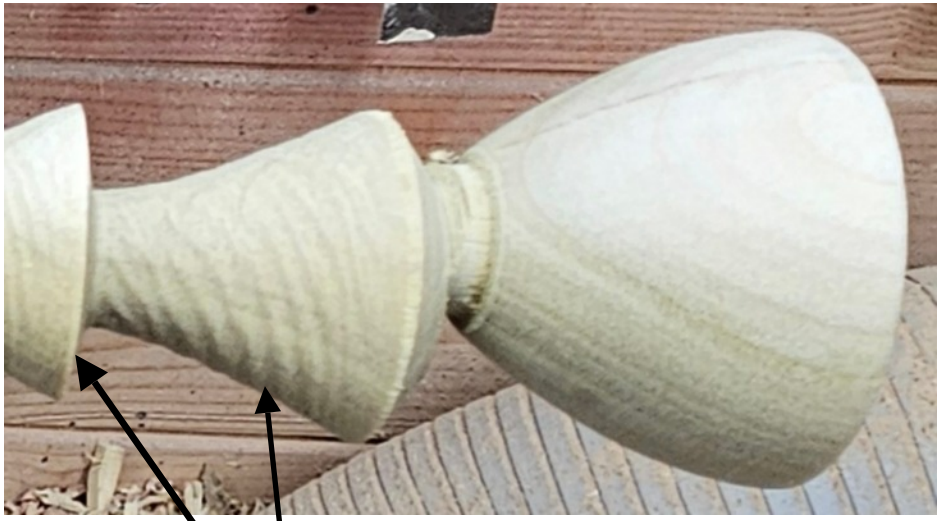
I then shaped the outside of the top to form the candle holder.

Mounting the piece on centre in the chuck jaws, I marked the segments of the candlestick with a skew chisel. Each segment is 30mm long to match the maximum diameter of the segment when turned.

I then roughed out the segments. Off-setting two jaws of my chuck gave a 10mm offset. Marking a line halfway between a set of jaws, I used that as my index, rotating the piece 1/4 turn before turning the next segment. I forgot to take a picture at this stage, so the picture below is a simulation. Segments 1 and 5 can be rough turned at the same time.



The rough turning still leaves plenty of strength between the segments, so for speed, I rough turned two segments at a time. Just be careful at the edges of each segment. Do not cut into the adjoining segment. At best, you will spoil the shape. At worst, you will get a massive catch.



Turn the top of segment 2 on the same offset as turning the trumpet shape of segment 1.

Having roughed out all of the segments, I started at the end nearest the candle cup and turned a trumpet shape in the first segment. The top of the second segment needs to be turned as part of the first segment.

When turning the second segment, the curve comes up to meet the top curve. Keep cutting the curve until a crisp edge is achieved. Repeat for the other segments, rotating the piece 1/4 turn between segments.

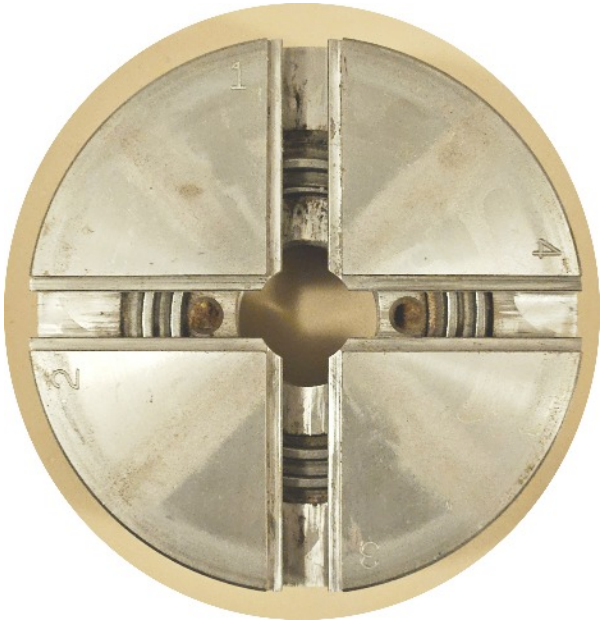
As there are four index positions, segment 1 and segment 5 are turned on the same offset. For the earlier roughing out stage, it is safe to rough turn segments 1 and 5 at the same time (& 2 and 6 etc.). However, when turning the trumpet shapes, the narrow 10mm neck between segments is too weak to risk turning a trumpet lower down the candlestick while there is still a considerable mass of waste timber further up.

The finished candlestick.

Unfortunately, it failed the safety test (see page 10) so I had to add a heavy metal washer in the base to make it more stable.

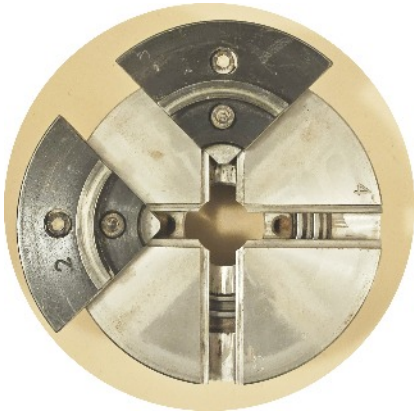
Off-setting Using Chuck Jaws

Chuck body showing the scroll that moves the jaws in and out when the key is turned.

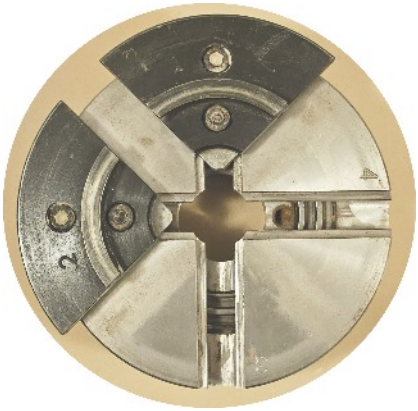


When the jaws are inserted normally, they will form a perfect circle and hold the piece on centre.

Jaws 1 & 2 inserted normally.
Scroll turned for jaw 3 but jaw not inserted.



Scroll turned one revolution before jaws 3 & 4 are inserted.
Compare the position of jaws 1 & 2 in the previous picture with their position in this picture. They have moved in approx 10mm.



All jaws inserted. They no longer form a circle and the piece will be held off-centre by approx 10mm. The hold on the spigot will not be as secure but it is sufficient to turn the piece if cuts are light and good technique is used.

Offcentre Turning Safety

Whether using an off-centre drive & live centre, an eccentric chuck or just off-setting the jaws, safety must be a priority.

1. Do not do off-centre turning until you are confident and proficient with the tools.
2. Always use a full face shield.
3. Adjust the lathe speed to minimise vibration.
4. Use sharp tools.
5. Keep chacking cam levers and locking knobs as off-centre vibration can shake them loose.
6. Take small cuts.
7. **If in doubt, don't do it!**

Is my method of off-setting two chuck jaws safe? I'm using an Axminster 114 Evolution chuck which is a large, quality chuck, with long jaw carriers. When offset, the jaws are still held securely by the chuck. The picture shows the 114 jaw carriers vs the normal 100 jaw carriers. In some chucks, the carriers are smaller still.

Not all chucks allow you to remove the jaws and offset them. Not all chucks have the long jaw carriers that still give a secure hold when offset. If you are in any doubt, don't use my method. Axminster & Robert Sorby produce eccentric chucks. Use these instead.

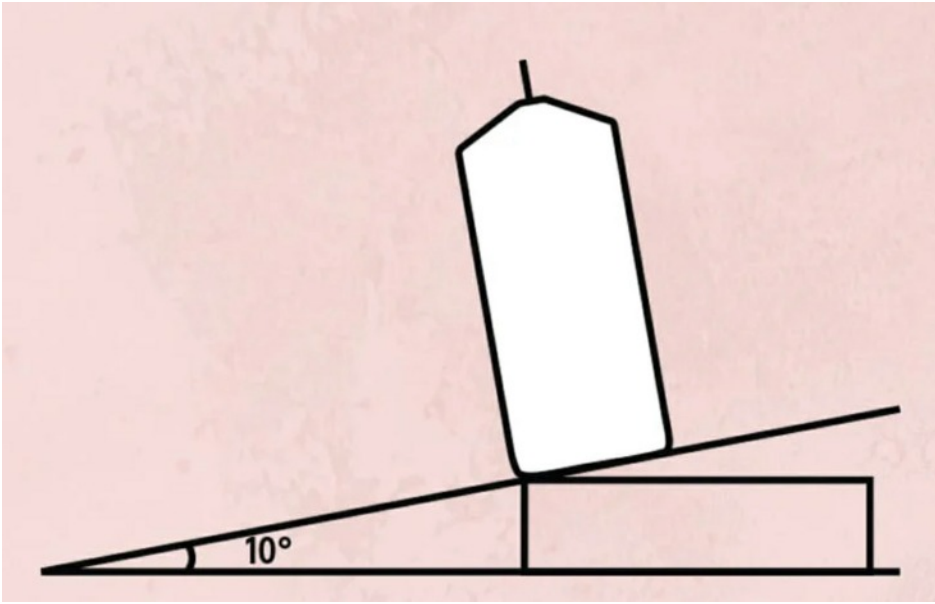
Candle Safety Regulations

BS EN 17885:2023+A1:2025
Candle accessories. Specification for fire safety and product safety labels
Published: 31 May 2025

This document specifies requirements and test methods for the fire safety of candle accessories, as well as safety information and requirements on how safety information will be displayed.
The safety requirements and test methods specified in this document are intended to cover the most common risks.

It is suggested that you keep a record of your test results & take photos or videos of the tests.

The “Tilt Test” shown below was the reason I had to modify my candlestick. With a “standard” candle (whatever that is) in my candlestick, it tipped over at about 6^0. Nowhere near the required 10^0. I drilled out the base and inserted a large metal washer. You could also shorten the candlestick or use a wider base.



Giles Headley Puffin Automaton

This year, as a Secret Santa Christmas present for a family member, I decided to make a seemingly simple automaton, having three puffins sitting atop an open-fronted cabinet, with their heads made to move from side to side by turning an external wheel. The basic idea for the form and mechanics came from an Instagram account (@karakurikirarin).
The piece comprises

(i) an open-fronted 220l x 120h x100d oak frame with a plywood back;

(ii) a horizontal shaft extending through the cabinet, with 6 discs mounted inside the cabinet, each having a dowel pin extending from the edge. The shaft is retained externally by a decorative end stop and a wheel at the other end, with a knob added to operate the automaton;

(iii) three vertical shafts (one per puffin), each having a disc fitted on one end (inside the cabinet), with two dowel pins at 120° to each other in the edge. The shafts pass through drilled clearance holes in the cabinet and puffin bodies and are glued into drilled holes in the heads;

(iv) three puffins. The puffins were made by joining split turned bodies and heads to scrollsaw-cut flat sections (15mm thick for the body, 6mm thick for the heads). Once glued up, the assemblies were carved and sanded to shape the beak and tail, and blend the curves. They were then painted using acrylic paints.

The holes for the vertical shafts were drilled in the cabinet top at 80mm centres, those for the horizontal shaft at mid-height on the side pieces, all aligned 15mm forward of the longitudinal centre line.
The cabinet was assembled with corner lap joints between sides, top and bottom. The rear edges were recessed and the back fitted into the recess to finish flush.
An exploded view of the design is shown in Figure 1, without the back panel.

The frame was constructed and the back fitted, with all joints just glued. The vertical shafts had to be installed first before a disc with two dowels fitted was glued to the end of each (the shafts were longer than the height of the cabinet interior). Next, the horizontal shaft was slid into place, with the six discs being loosely positioned as the shaft passed through the box. A double thickness layer of paper was then placed against the outer faces of the sides, before affixing the operator's wheel and end stop to the shaft, thereby giving a small amount of longitudinal movement that would allow free rotation of the shaft. The design only works when the wheel is turned in a clockwise direction, at a modest rate of rotation, otherwise the heads spin so far that the dowel on the horizontal disc passes beyond the reach of the rotating dowels.

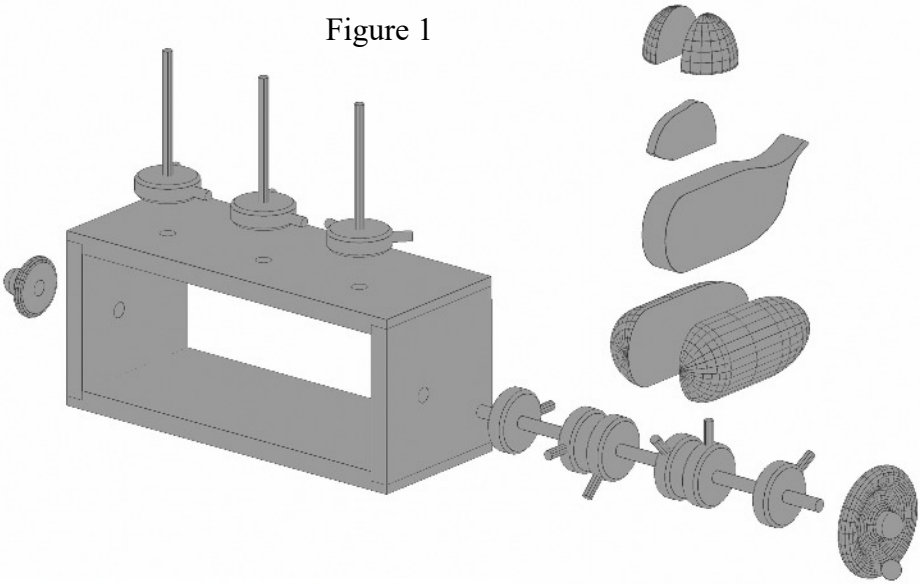
The desired order of movement in the puffins' heads had to be worked out, along with the starting position and relative dowel angles of all the discs. A small amount of glue was run onto the shaft in the correct position and the disc slid into place while spinning the shaft to distribute the glue. Care was required to ensure that each disc was correctly orientated before the glue set. The full sequence of movement was to take place within one revolution of the wheel. Figure 2 shows the starting positions and sequence of movement. The first dowel was fixed at 15° from vertical when the knob on the operating wheel was positioned at 12 o'clock. The heads have 60° rotation (180°-120°, not 120°), so they should have been set at 30° from facing front. I only realised that after glueing the left hand one, so it doesn't turn as far to its left as intended.

Prior to that, another unforeseen and undesirable issue, vertical movement of the shafts (and consequently the heads), became apparent. I cut a 30w x 10 thick oak restraining strip, which was then drilled, split and reassembled inside the cabinet top, such that the top faces of the discs were in contact with it when the heads were glued on the puffins. Reduction of the overall cabinet height or raising the vertical position of the horizontal shaft would remove the need for this part (Strip not shown in Figure 1).

Figures 3 and 4 show the finished automaton.

All the round items were turned, except for the dowels. The puffins are Beech; the discs and vertical shafts are Sapele; the end stop caps and turning knob are African Blackwood.

Figure 1



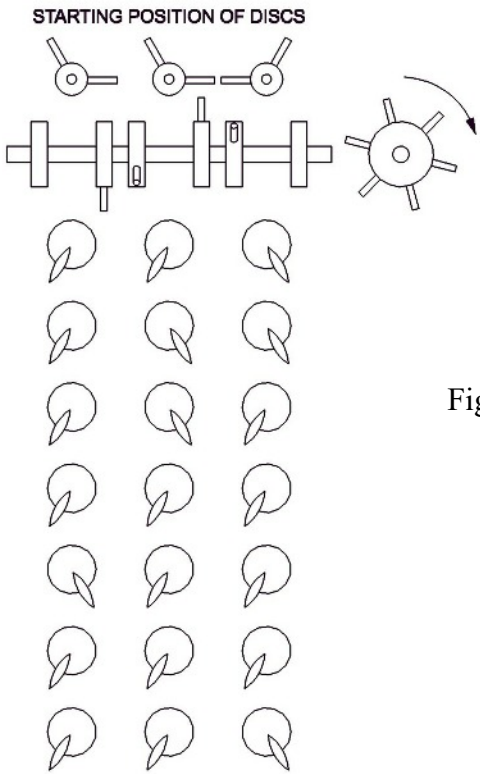


Figure 2

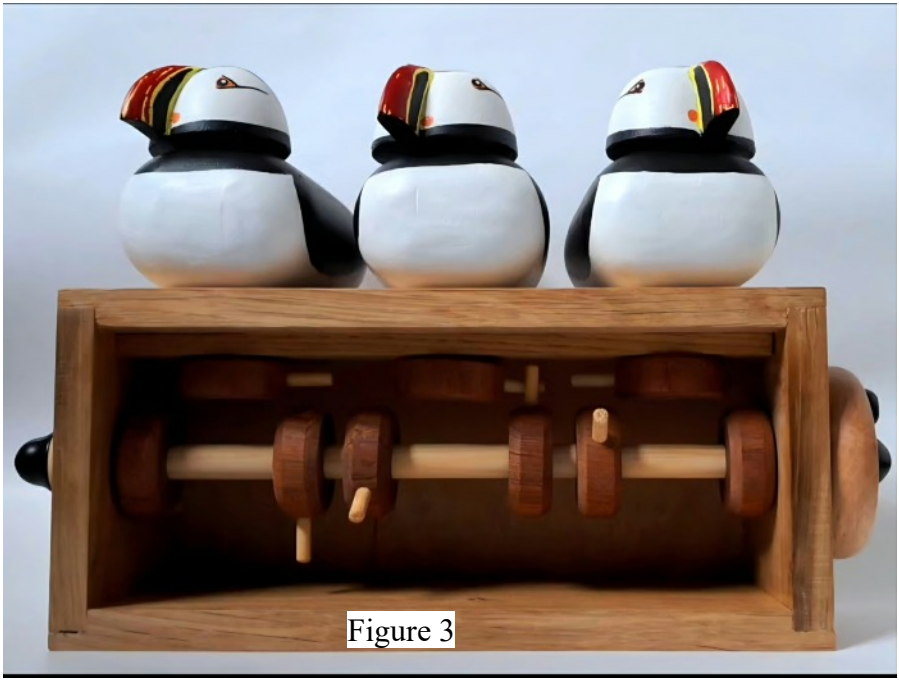


Figure 3

Figure 4

Items For Sale

Disclaimer

The club is not responsible for any item appearing on these pages. The buyer and seller must make their own arrangements as to the condition, suitability, delivery, payment and price etc.

Coombe Abbey Woodturning Club have the following items for sale:

Record Power CL4 variable speed lathe, stand, bowl turning extension and Nova chuck. (¾" 16 tpi thread, 1MT).
Tormek T7 grinder with Woodturning accessory kit.
Proxxon BFW 40/E milling machine, stand & compound table.
Record Power RDX1500 dust extractor,.
Robert Sorby RS60 eccentric chuck. (¾" 16 tpi thread).
Robert Sorby Indexing system.
Miscellaneous turning tools.
Deep hollowing tools.

Contact Rob Sheehan if interested.
The Coombe committee reserve the right to withdraw items for sale and Coombe members will take priority over non-members.

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE & HINCKLEY

CLUB EVENTS 2026

Jan	6th	Hands-On	
	20th	Demo - Rob Sheehan Off-Centre Candlestick	
Feb	3rd	Hands-On	
	17th	Demo	John Evans
March	3rd	Hands-On	
	17th	Demo	Terry Bray
April	7th	Hands-On	Preparation for Daventry
	21st	Hands-On	Preparation for Daventry
	26th	AWGB AGM	
May	1st-2nd	Woodworks at Daventry	
	5th	Demo	Emma Cook
	19th	Demo	Martin Randall
August	29/30	Chestnut Woodturning Weekender	
September	1st	Demo	Tony Jones
	15th	Hands-On	
October	6th	Demo	Wolfgang Shulze-Zachau
	10/11	AWGB Festival of Woodturning	

Events at Coombe Abbey
Saturday March 14th, Chris Parker
Walsgrave Baptist Church