

Making a Watford (Cassiobury) Croquet Club Trophy Plinth

Common Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), is a native tree that can grow to a height of 20 to 30 metres. It thrives in moist soils and there are many fine examples growing in the old Watercress Beds by the River Gade in Cassiobury Park. This is a short description of how the trophy plinth was made from a tree felled during nature reserve clearance of this area during March 2022.



A Cassiobury Park Alder tree with felled wood at its foot showing the beautiful honey-colour which the timber develops after it has been cut. The inset photograph shows the characteristic rounded Alder leaves.



Alder being harvested in the Park for wood turning, May 2022. The plinth was made from the arrowed branch.

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The first step was to cut the wood into manageable slabs using an electric chainsaw mill.

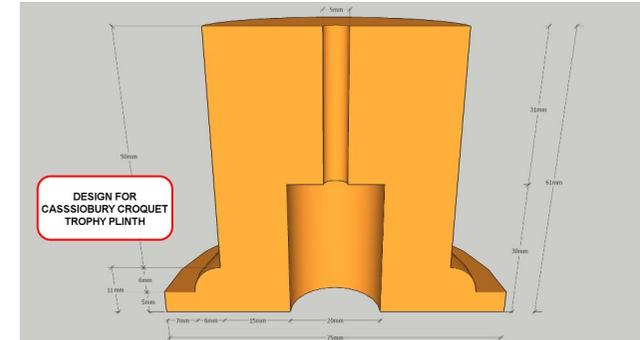


After slabbing with the chainsaw, it was further cut into turning blanks using a bandsaw. The arrowed block, after more trimming, became the turning blank for the plinth.

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The rough cut turning blank mounted on the lathe (between centres) for making the plinth.



A scale drawing of the plinth showing the required dimensions.



After turning to a cylinder, measurements taken from the scale drawing were used to shape the plinth to the required size.

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A bowl gouge, one of the tools used for shaping the spinning wood on the lathe.



Here the base and the sides of the plinth have been shaped with bowl and spindle gouges.



With the wood securely held in the lathe chuck, a recess of 20mm diameter was drilled to a depth of 30mm in the base of the plinth, using a Forstner drill bit.

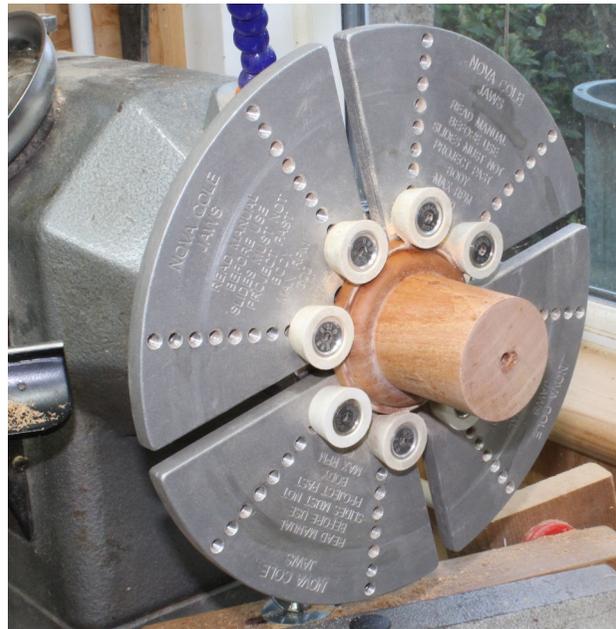


A 5mm diameter hole was then drilled right through to enable the trophy attachment bolt to pass through the top of the plinth into the recess.

Making a Croquet Trophy Plinth - 5



Using a pull saw to separate the plinth from the spigot



The plinth was then reversed on the lathe, held firmly but gently by rubber buttons on large chuck jaws, to enable completion of the top.

Making a Croquet Trophy Plinth - 6



The Watford (Cassiobury) Croquet Club trophy mounted on the completed plinth.
(Photographs by courtesy of Simon Hathrell)



To preserve the natural colouration of the polished wood, it is recommended that the bowl is not exposed to strong sunlight (e.g. not kept on a window sill subjected to strong sunlight).

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