

The last year has been busy, with a combination of both domestic and ecclesiastical commissions – each commission presenting new challenges and rewards.

Kitchen, Berkshire

Since establishing the business twenty years ago, I have had a number of enquiries for kitchens. This is the first to be constructed. Commissioned as freestanding cabinets, the interlocking components can be dismantled and removed to new premises should the occasion arise. Designed as furniture and constructed in solid maple throughout, the island unit provides a dual workstation for the couple who enjoy preparing food together. By softly curving the end of the island cabinet to allow better access, the curve then appears in various guises as a design motif.



It is seen on one side of the push-pull drawers as contrasting inlay (representing nested mixing bowls or the layers of an onion), on the other as a line of projecting hollows to accommodate knuckles behind the handles. The staves on the doors are hollowed, the bow handles project. Timbers used for the decorative work in the kitchen cabinets include tiger maple, walnut, purpleheart and mazar birch.

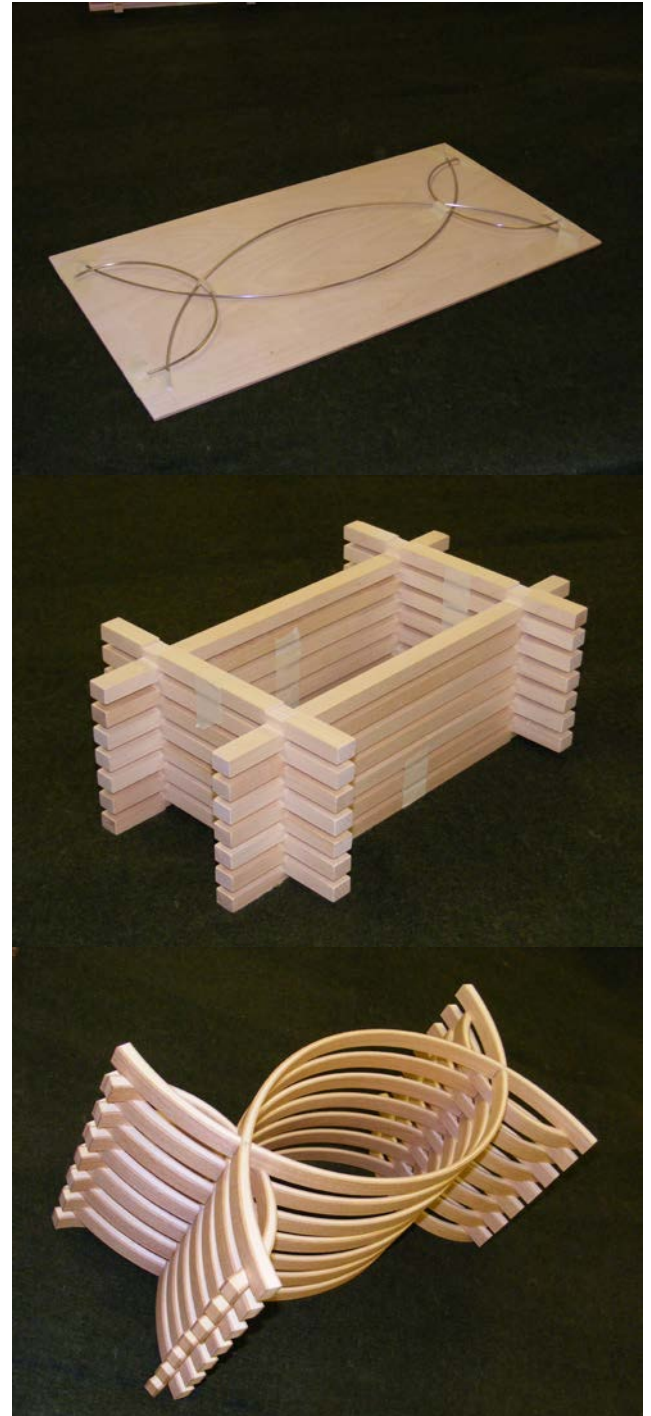
My customers travelled from Maidenhead to view work in progress and at the same time to select the granite work surfaces from my local supplier.

Timber supplies

During the course of the year I have been fortunate to source a supply of Swiss grade French oak – which in real terms is very well figured wood from extremely large trees (24' in length, approx 3' wide). A premium is paid for such logs, though the quality is well worth it. In addition to the oak, I hold stocks in various volumes of spalted beech and burr elm from these shores, mazar birch and cherry from Europe, sapele and zebrano from Africa, carretto and satina rubana from Columbia, purpleheart from the Caribbean and ripple jarrah from Australia. These are all timbers intended for decorative use with the European hardwoods that my furniture is designed for.

Lincoln Cathedral

Design work for the furniture for the re-ordering of St. Hugh's Chapel at Lincoln is well under way.



Visits to the Cathedral throughout the year have provided much inspiration. Proposals for the altar, lectern and presidential chair, seating for the congregation, credence table and book shelving all incorporate Christian symbolism, and that of St. Hugh. The images above show three stages of scale models in the development of the design for the altar which, when completed, will be approx. 7' in length.

Kelsall Methodist Church, Cheshire

Recently delivered, this commission was part of a significant re-ordering scheme for the church. Comprising a communion table, an adjustable height lectern, five sets of communion rails and a baptistery table all constructed in oak, it has taken several months to build. Incorporating the specification supplied, the designs are based around features within the building, particularly the Victorian organ which has been retained, and Christian symbolism including the triangle, cross, and the numbers three and seven. Scale models were constructed to help with visualisation and presentation at the church and members of the re-ordering committee were welcomed at the workshop on a number of occasions to view work in progress. The glass bowl for the baptistery table is the result of a collaboration with Carrie Anne Funnell.



Red Pepper Pictures

Small-scale work

Small-scale works completed during the year include a coffee table of a laminated cantilever construction in black ash, a casket in oak for the interment of ashes, a pair of turned candlesticks and cedar wood blocks.

St Dunstan's RC Church, Buckinghamshire

During the course of the year, the sanctuary furniture for St Dunstan's, Bourne End has been completed and installed.



This major commission came about following a recommendation by the architect Stuart Mackay of the Edgington, Spink and Hine practice in Windsor after we had worked on the re-ordering of Holy Family Church, Slough. Consecrated in 1979, the building is octagonal in shape and brick-built. As with all commissioned work, meetings, regular visits and ongoing dialogue has ensured

a highly satisfactory outcome. Constructed in oak, the items for the sanctuary included the altar, tabernacle plinth, lectern, presidential chair, two credence tables and three Deacons' stools. Unity in the design was achieved by incorporating Christian symbolism, various interpretations of the cross, elements of shape from the existing fabric and decoration then utilising the back and top lighting to create strong and dramatic silhouettes. It incorporates symbolism relevant to St Dunstan, who was known as a writer and for his interest in music and the metal trades.

The plinth of the altar is based upon a stook of corn, with the top representative of the outstretched arms of Christ, as seen on the suspended statue above the sanctuary. The solid block laminated construction of the top weighs around 170kg and is attached to the substantial base by heavy duty bolts.

Forthcoming commissions

Currently on the bench is an altar, president's chair and communion rails for the Parish Church in Melbourne, Derbyshire, the designs of which reflect the Norman Romanesque architecture of the church. Later in the year, orders for book casing in oak and maple, a desk, settle, TV cabinet, dining chairs, a display cabinet and a further blanket chest will be delivered.

Amongst my lesser-known works are house doors, both internal and external. As you would expect, these are built to specification, constructed in hardwoods – usually oak – are not run of the mill, and often contain glass. Further details will be found on my website later in the year.

Calendar of Events 2012	
3 - 7 May 2012	Craft in Focus - Royal Horticultural Society Garden Wisley, Woking Surrey www.craftinfocus.com
8 - 11 May 2012	Christian Resources Exhibition (CRE) - Sandown Park Esher, Surrey www.creonline.co.uk
26 - 27 May 2012	Derbyshire Food and Drink Fair - Hardwick Hall Derbyshire www.derbyshirefoodfestival.co.uk
22 - 24 June 2012	Craft and Design Experience - Henley Showground Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire www.craftexperience.co.uk
18 August 2012	Ashbourne Show - Polo Ground Osmaston, Derbyshire www.ashbourneshow.co.uk
15 - 16 September 2012	Melbourne Festival Art Trail - Melbourne Derbyshire www.melbournefestival.co.uk
10 - 11 October 2012	Christian Resources Exhibition - Event City Trafford Park, Manchester www.creonline.co.uk
26 - 28 October 2012	Craft in Focus - Wellington College, Crowthorne, Berkshire www.craftinfocus.com