

# Pen Assembly Press Improvement

## A Simple Alteration Makes a Big Difference

by James Duxbury

In Issue #15 (Fall 2007) of *Woodturning Design*, I described how to make a simple wooden pen press. The press was easy to make, could be adjusted quickly to accommodate different sizes of pens, delivered a controlled positive pressure, and cost almost nothing to make. Most of all, it uses the equipment available and doesn't require purchasing another \$40.00 gadget.

I usually make a small production run of at least twenty pens at a time. Unfortunately, the small tip (ink end) digs into the surface when pressing the brass tip into the bottom section of the turned wooden pen blank with the press. This is good and bad. It is easy on the small brass tip, but after pressing in a few dozen tips, the pressing face often needs to be resurfaced. This is easy enough to do, and if you use the pressing surface in the headstock of the lathe, all you need to do is move the tool rest into position, plug in the lathe, and resurface the end with a small gouge. One small improvement, however, eliminates this problem and makes the device work better.

I cut out a 3/4" square from an old piece of 1/2"-thick Corian that I found. The pressing surface is turned nice and flat, and the Corian glued to the newly surfaced face with cyanoacrylate glue (CA or superglue) (see Fig. 1). Next, sand the sides flush,

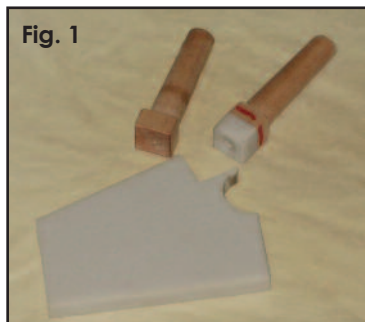


Fig. 1

Glue the Corian to the newly surfaced end with cyanoacrylate glue.

### SUPPLIES

One piece of Corian 1/2" x 3/4" x 3/4"  
Tools: saw of choice, lathe, small gouge, ruler  
Cyanoacrylate glue (CA or superglue)  
Assorted grits of abrasive paper

Please refer to all manufacturers' labels for proper product usage.

remount in the pressing end in the lathe, and cut a slightly concave surface. The same improvement could be made to the tailstock end of the press, but if you just use this Corian surface on the tip end when assembling pens (see Fig. 2), it probably will not be needed.

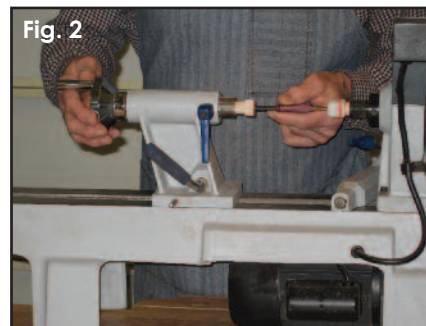
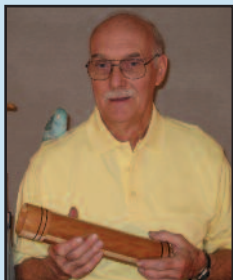


Fig. 2

You can modify the tailstock end as well, but it probably won't be necessary.

This simple alteration has made a great improvement in the press. It saves time, doesn't require constant attention, and is still gentle on the pen parts. If you made the press, I encourage you to make this modification.



### James Duxbury

James Duxbury, woodturner and inventor, is the kind of guy who thinks and creates "outside the box." His turnings are unique and he seldom turns the same thing twice. With the help of his pet parrotlet, Bean, creativity abounds—all sorts of fine turnings are made from small bottle stoppers to bowls, and even a working Foucault Pendulum.

Jim's kaleidoscopes are a signature item, custom designed, and have been the recipient of numerous blue ribbons. Although Jim quit working in 1996 and has claimed to be retired, he has since obtained two U.S. Patents and has a third one in progress.

The inventor of particulate dust respirators, his company, Duxterity LLC, markets the Resp-O-Rator™ and Resp-O-Rator Jr™, while Elegant Creations markets his gallery of fine wooden objects, including Kaleidoscope Plans, Kaleidoscope Building DVD, and custom wooden Kaleidoscopes. Details can be seen at [www.duxterity.com](http://www.duxterity.com).

Jim welcomes your questions and comments and can be reached by e-mail at [cyberdux@bellsouth.net](mailto:cyberdux@bellsouth.net).