

Dedicated To Providing Education, Information, and Organization To Those Interested in Woodturning

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

by Alan Lacer

This year will see many changes for the American Association of Woodturners. We have three departing board members who have been active since the very beginning of the AAW: Ernie Conover, Rus Hurt, and Rude Osolnik. I would like to thank them for the many hours they have contributed, the tough decisions they helped make, and the expenses that they carried as board members. Four new board members will be coming on in March-three newly elected and one to complete two years of Mary Redig's unexpired term. These four will represent one-half of the voting board, and it will certainly be a time of new inputs and energies. Also, we have a new editor of the journal, Betty Scarpino. She is already running with ideas that build on the fine work of previous editors. I would especially like to thank Pete Hutchinson for the two years of hard work he put in as editor-it was the one constant in a time of turmoil and transition.

Where do we go from here? It is a good question to ask heading into our fifth year as an organization. It seems that since our beginning survival was always the pressing issue. As we start this year, however, stability is creeping in: the roles of administrator and editor are in capable hands, with commitments to the future; new symposium policies will positively affect the organization for many years (systematic rotation of symposium locations, sites that will accommodate almost any number of participants, and relatively low registration costs); and revamped scholarship requirements and policies have been communicated to the membership. Where should we take the organization now that past problems and concerns have been taken care of?

To begin with, addressing more of the activities outlined in our organizational mission would seem in order. Two main areas to focus on are education and promotion of woodturning. Most of us who have been turning very long realize how workshops on turning have spread around the country. Certainly the AAW symposiums and local-chapter activities have played a role in this process. There is still plenty to accomplish in educating people about woodturning. Find activities in your area that could be a vehicle to promote woodturning-schools, teachers, retirees, craft schools, or craft fairs. Some of the most enjoyable demonstrations I have been involved in are the ones in public schools-the younger the audience the more excitement there is. These can be opportunities to promote the safety and craft of woodturning; otherwise, as I find in my area, woodturning is either seen as too dangerous or of little interest. Should we offer very basic (handson) classes for beginners? On the other end of the spectrum, why not offer advanced, specialized courses on woodturning? To be a truly inclusive organization, I believe we must cater to multiple needs.

In the area of promoting woodturning, we have just started to scratch the surface of what can be accomplished. This, of course, can be done on many fronts: workshops and demonstrations (not just for turners); articles in a variety of publications other than woodworking publications; scholarships from tool, machine, and wood companies; and exhibitions at all levels-from county libraries to international competitions. For instance, the Indianapolis, Indiana public library housed a display of turnings from the local AAW chapter in April last year. Iona Elliot from the Nutmeg chapter has been making contacts across the country to encourage galleries, craft centers, and museums to hold woodturning exhibitions. These types of shows give woodturners the opportunity to challenge and stretch their talents as well as to promote their craft.

There are other areas that I would like to see the AAW move towards. One is communication and cooperative ventures with woodturning organizations in foreign countries such as New Zealand, Ireland, Canada, England, and Australia. These countries have either growing national organizations, or very strong local woodturning clubs. Activities we could jointly engage in include international conferences or "best of exhibition," international sections in journals and newsletters describing what is happening in woodturning in other countries, growth of "sister chapters" that exchange newsletters, wood, and ideas. Another area to explore is developing a resource bank of video tapes and literature that would be highly specific and therefore not available from other sources (for example, a video tape of ten turners demonstrating sharpening or interviews with several different turners on design approaches). A third area to consider is other craft organizations that have been around for many years. We can learn much from them. (We have already started a process to interact with such groups and it is having some immediate payoffs.)

So, get ready for some changes and innovations from a number of sources: new board members, new officers, new administrator, and new editor, as well as ideas from other craft organizations and woodturning groups in other countries.

I am pleased to announce the names of the new board members: Dan Ackerman, Nick Cook, Dave Hout, and Pete Hutchinson. It was an extremely close election, a result of the excellent qualifications of every candidate. Over eight hundred AAW members voted, our largest turnout ever!



March 1991

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"Turning Green Wood" Photo by Nancy Gerard

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N. J. White

Remember the screw holes in bowl bottoms and the seemingly constant sharpening of dull chisels in high school shop classes years ago? (Fiftyfive years ago for me!) In spite of those memories, I decided, prior to retirement, that woodworking would be a big part of an active retirement AT HOME! My working years had required a lot of time away from home with travel from coast to coast.

There are a few objections (understandably by spouses) to a workshop inside the home-mainly SPACE and DUST. The room where my basement shop is located is only twelvefeet square. There is no room for a separate circular saw, bandsaw, lathe, or drill press. The Shopsmith multipurpose tool was my answer to the space problem, as it can be moved easily on its retractable casters whenever necessary. (I have since squeezed in a General 260 lathe.) I solved the dust problem by purchasing a 330cubic foot per minute portable dust collector from Shopsmith. This collector, with shopmade chip-and-dusttrapping jigs, removes dust very effectively. It is so effective that no dust filters into my wife's sewing workroom, right next to my woodshop.

Woodworking in general is a lot of fun, but I soon realized that woodturning provided me with the most sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. The recent progress and improvements in woodturning techniques and supplies is amazing. Listed below are some of them.

1. *High-speed steel tools*. They stay sharp at least six times longer than carbon-steel tools.

2. New methods of holding bowl blanks to faceplates are now available. They include two-sided tape and glue blocks, as well as high-quality chucks like the Raffan, Nova 4-Jaw, and Precision Combination. It is no longer necessary to have unsightly screw holes in the bottoms of bowls.



Shaping the outside of a 10×3 -inch bowl on a General 260 lathe. The homemade aluminum dust shield behind the turning can be moved to any position along the back of the lathe bed. It is connected to a dust collector. There is also a dust-collector hose under the front of the turning.



Sharpening a high-speed steel, round-nose scraper using a shopmade jig. The grinding wheel is a 1×7 -inch pink, 60-grit, vitrified-bonded wheel. The other wheel is a white, 100-grit, vitrified-bonded wheel. In front of it is an adjustable-angle tool jig. Both jigs are interchangeable and adjust forward and backward by loosening wing nuts. They are made of 2×2 -inch hard maple and $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch birch plywood and have lasted for years. The grinder shield prevents grinding dust from covering the workbench. It was cut from thin aluminum—the edges are covered with masking tape. The tool jigs and shield cost less than \$5 to make and are repairable.

3. Grinding wheels of aluminum oxide with a vitrified bond provide faster sharpening and much less possibility of burning the cutting edges of tools.

4. *Power sanding*. Sanding time can be reduced approximately seventy-five percent with the use of snap-on sanding discs that are powered by a hand drill. The rotating disc sands against the rotation of the turned piece.

5. Good safety protection. Face shields, dust collection systems, and even air helmets with powered airpurifying respirators minimize exposure to dust and chemicals.

6. Woodturning instruction books and videos by master woodturners are a tremendous aid to beginning woodturners.

7. Woodturning supply stores such as Craft Supplies USA and Zimmerman's House of Woodturning cater primarily to woodturners through the mail.

8. Woodturning workshops all around the United States offer individualized instruction.

9. AND the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS. Membership in the AAW includes four fine issues of *American Woodturner*, the opportunity to register for an annual threeday symposium featuring seminars and demonstrations by master woodturners, and the right to apply for woodturning-tuition scholarships. There are over thirty local chapters of AAW in the United States.

After a few years of woodturning, following the instructions in books and woodworking magazines, I decided to obtain some professional instruction. (Besides, I was *only* sixtyeight years old.) I contacted Russ Zimmerman and spent two-and-a-half days as a "live in" student at Zimmerman's House of Woodturning. This is very close to individual instruction, as Russ takes only two students at a time and each person has a lathe. My next instruction came



from a few hours at Dick Gerard's Artistic Woodturning Workshop in Indianapolis, Indiana. (Dick even came to my home when I purchased a General 260 lathe to coach me on the use of my new lathe.) Since then I have attended several workshops conducted by master woodturner Rude Osolnik and others. And, of course, I attended AAW's three-day symposiums to observe demonstrations by a variety of excellent woodturners.

These woodturning-related trips are really wonderful mini-vacations, as my wife and I have met some of the finest, most enthusiastic people we have ever known. Many are retirees and have the time and the desire to devote to this fascinating hobby. Although I could never be a master woodturner, I am not too old to learn and enjoy woodturning. The pleasure and relaxation derived from transforming a rough piece of wood into a bowl or hollow vase and seeing beautiful grain patterns exposed by the use of hand-held tools are reward enough. 🕥

N.J. White, age 71, retired seven years ago as Vice President of Independence Life and Accident Insurance Company.

When I was a beginning woodturner, my main concern was to complete successfully a turning that I had started. Later, I began to turn wood with unusual grain patterns, spalted wood, wormy wood, burls, and other found wood. With an increase in confidence and turning skill, I became more interested in exploiting the natural beauty inherent in each piece of wood. I began letting the pattern of the wood characteristics dictate the shape of the turned object. Sometimes a bowl would emerge, other times I would create a vase.

More and more, I found my attention captured by the beauty of the interplay of sapwood and heartwood found on the endgrain of log sections. How could I capture that contrast and incorporate it into the design of my turnings? In particular, how could I use interesting pieces of "found" wood that had small holes running the length of the wood at the pith line?

After a number of unsuccessful attempts, I evolved a method that works for me. I call it transverse turning. The trick is to select just the right piece of wood. The log section must already be somewhat seasoned, it should have a hole in the middle where the pith used to be, and the wood surrounding the hole should be sound. If the wood is green, the turned object will crack (perhaps a desirable effect in some cases). If the wood does not have a hole at the pith, even seasoned wood will develop cracks in the endgrain part during or after turning. Rotten wood will not cut or finish well (and could, of course, fall apart during turning.)

After selecting the "perfect log," follow these steps to create a visually exciting, turned piece. First, measure the diameter of the log you are going to turn. (The first time you try one of these turnings, start with a small log, something 6 inches or less in size.) Let us assume it is 12 inches. Measure just the wood, not the bark. Cut the log to a length slightly over 12 inches $(12^{-1}/_2 \text{ inches})$. Draw a centerline through each end of the log (see figure 1) so that these lines can be connected with a line drawn the length of the piece of wood. Mark the center of the dividing line, $6^{-1}/_4$ inches from each end, with an awl. Repeat the process so that there is a center mark on both the top and the bottom of the log.

The holes made by the awl serve as reference points for attaching the log to the lathe for spindle turning. Pound a drive spur into the log, then place the spur into the headstock with the log attached. Line up the tailstock with the other hole and secure the log very snugly. A note of caution here. If the bark is soft or thick, remove it with a chisel before attaching the log to the lathe. Remove the bark only at the attachment points.

Set your lathe at a very slow speed—the larger the log, the slower you should start out. Make sure that everything is securely tightened, stand off to one side, and turn on the lathe. If everything has been done properly, the log should rotate smoothly. Turn off the lathe, and adjust the



This 6-inch log section is a good example of a solid log with the pith area gone.

toolrest so that it just clears the piece near the tailstock. Since the piece is basically a square $(12^{-1}/_2)$ inches x 12 inches), visualize the finished piece as a ball and proceed to take light cuts with a sharp, round-nose scraper or other tool of preference. After rounding the piece to the center or slightly beyond, move the toolrest to the headstock end and round that end so that the piece is round on all sides. Remember to take light cuts. Shape a flat bottom on the headstock end, cutting as close to the drive center as possible.

Study the natural wood pattern with the lathe off, then tentatively shape the vessel. The tailstock end will be the top of the turned piece. Remove the log from the lathe and chisel off the wood left by the drivespur attachement. You will now have a flat-bottomed, somewhat-vessel shaped, chunk of wood. At this point, consider again the soundness of the wood—will it withstand the pressure of cutting on the inside, and is the wood sound enough for faceplate screws to hold properly?

Attach a faceplate to the flat bottom, getting it as close to center as possible so that the live center in the tailstock will fit into the same hole as it did before. Attach the faceplate and log to the lathe, then bring up the tailstock to help hold the piece. Once again, use a very slow speed to start with, and take light cuts while you true-up the piece.

Once the piece is balanced, increase the lathe speed and make final decisions about the outside shape of the vessel. Be sure to leave enough wood on the bottom of the bowl to turn away the screwholes from the faceplate. Study the contrasting sapwood and heartwood to determine the desired shape. Finish shaping the outside of the vessel.

You are now ready to hollow out the inside of the vessel. (Or, you can



Soft maple vessel, H. 9 inches × Diam. 8 inches

turn a small, shallow opening such as the ones in the photographs.) With large turnings, keep the tailstock mounted, and make a 3 to 31/2-inch opening, leaving a narrow cone in the center to help support the turning. After slightly less than half of the vessel is hollowed, cut the point of the cone to a narrow diameter, shut off the lathe, remove the tailstock, and gently knock the cone out of the vessel. (Because there is a hole running through the center, the length of the wood, the tailstock can only be useful for part of the inside turning.) With the tailstock out of the way, refine the interior of the vessel, making the sides thinner. Because part of the sides are endgrain with a hole where the pith was, it will lack strength and be difficult to get very thin. Keep your tools sharp and take light cuts.

Once the interior is hollowed to final dimensions, sand the interior and the exterior with progressively finer sandpaper with the lathe running and the toolrest removed. Follow this with handsanding to remove



Cypress vessel, H. $10^{-1/2}$ inches \times Diam. 8 inches

visible sanding marks. Put the toolrest back on the lathe, then use a parting tool to cut the vessel away from the faceplate and screws, creating a new bottom. This bottom should be slightly concave so that your bowl will not rock on a flat surface.

Finish either on or off the lathe with your favorite type of finish.

With transverse turning, what you see is what you can get. I have turned ordinary hardwoods into unordinary turnings. You can too.

Frank J. Sciara is a professor of education at Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, and has been turning wood since 1979. In the June 1990 issue of American Woodturner, Alan Lacer described his experience with carpel tunnel syndrome (CTS) and wrote that hollow vessel turning with bent tools was most likely the culprit that caused his condition.

Although unaware of any connection between CTS and woodturning at the time I made my tools, I was nevertheless concerned about the potential for strain on the wrist and hand resulting from having to counteract the torquing action while using the bent tool. The following describes ideas that went into making handles for my bent tools and boring bar.

Thicker handles are less tiring to hold than skinny ones, so I make my handles "fat." The girth is as large as my hand can comfortably go around, yet grip firmly. For me, this is a handle about $1-\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter (Figure 1).

For a better handhold, make the handles octagonal rather than round in shape, then sand them with 80grit sandpaper for a slightly rough surface. You can finish the wood with a coat of Watco oil.

The handles are made so that the shaft of the tool can be telescoped in and out. The metal part of the



Figure 2. Tool handle for hollow turning.

tool is held in place with a set screw. This allows you to draw out just enough of the tool shaft for the tip to reach the area being turned. Since the handle is always right next to the tool rest, your left hand always holds the tool by the handle, not by the shaft.

When you have your bent tools made at your local machine shop, have the bar cut so that the shaft is a few inches longer than what you normally would have it sized so that you can take advantage of this "variable length" feature.

Figure 1 shows a cross-section of the tool handle and how it is made. Cut the groove so that the square bar of tool steel will fit snugly. Be sure to dry clamp the halves together and work the shaft in and out to make certain that it does not bind.



Figure 1. Tool handle for hollow turning.

If it does (and it probably will) you can either make the groove a bit larger, or grind a little steel off of the tool bar. For the latter, a belt sander fitted with a 60-grit belt works great, but be careful not to overheat the metal.

One set screw seems to be all that is needed to hold the tool shaft firmly in place for smaller sized tools. Most of my tools range in size from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ inch in cross-section. Also, I generally turn green wood. If you use larger sized tools or regularly turn dry wood, you should use two set screws for greater security.

Most of the handles for my bent tools are 18 to 24 inches long, depending on how far the tools have to reach beyond the tool rest (the deeper the vessel, the greater the distance). For the 1/2-inch-square boring bar, I use a handle 32 inches long. For added heft, I inserted a $(1/2 \times 6 - inch \text{ carriage bolt in the out-})$ board end (Figure 2). For reaching out more than 6 inches beyond the toolrest, a 32-inch wood handle does not offer enough counterweight. The space in my shop is tight, so instead of using a "harpoon" length handle, I slip a wooden collar over the end of the handle to provide the additional weight needed (Figure 3).

The dividend to this approach is that the capped collar allows you to add more counterweight only if needed. As the cross-section drawing shows, a small block of concrete, a bag of lead shot, or whatever can be slipped into the cavity before attaching the collar to the end of the handle. With several counterweights and the telescoping bar feature, the same handle can be used for working different depths in a deep vessel (Figure 4).

Figure 5 shows an exploded view of my toolrest for hollow turning. The $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch bolt can easily be positioned inside a narrow-mouthed vessel. This provides several advantages. Having the toolrest inside the mouth of a turning reduces the reach necessary compared to having a tool rest outside the vessel. It allows for better positioning of bent tools for a more efficient cutting angle. And best of all, you do not have to worry about your tool accidentally slipping off the toolrest, because the head of the bolt acts as a stop.

this article.

for you.





Finally, in using the tools, I have developed the habit of resting part of my forearm on the toolrest as I work the inside of a hollow vessel. I do not work this way when I turn open bowls, so it has to do with how I stand when I use the bent tools and boring bar. By resting my forearm

on the toolrest, a lot of pressure on my hand and wrist is shifted back to my forearm. This, in turn, decreases the pressure exerted on the wrist joint and makes using the tools a lot less fatiguing.



Figure 4. Collar with extra weight and as it inserts into tool handle.

Yosh Sugiyama is a self-taught woodturner who lives in Redding, California. He has been "seriously" turning for about seven years.



Figure 5.

GALLERY QUESTIONNAIRE—TURNERS' REPLY

Iona S. Elliott

The June 1990 issue of American Woodturner contained an article about the results of a survey of gallery owners and their relationship with artists. Feeling the need for a reply from artists themselves, questionnaires were sent to over sixty woodturners who frequently exhibit their work in galleries. Thirty-eight turners responded. Their answers and comments are summarized below.

Two thirds of the woodturners who replied indicated that they spend onehundred percent of their time creating one-of-a-kind pieces. The other one third do some teaching and/or production work. The respondents represented a cross-section of those who are professional, semi-professional, and retired. In addition, one third sold most of their work through galleries, while two thirds sold most of their work through craft shows and referrals.

The majority of respondents deal with less than ten galleries a year and were willing to consign their work; most, however, prefered to sell wholesale, especially to newer galleries. Most turners do not have exclusive agreements with galleries. The majority of woodturners feel that they have a good relationship with the galleries with which they deal and that the gallery owners earn their part of the selling price.

When asked if gallery owners reveal the buyer's name of their work, replies were divided. One third said "yes," one third said "no," and one third said "sometimes." Most respondents get paid within thirty days of the sale of consigned work and receive unsold work back between two to three weeks after the show ends. Most were in agreement that their gallery owners are very interested in educating clients about woodturning. Thirty of the respondents enter competitions during the year, the majority entering between five and nine during a year. Exposure is why turners enter competitions, since sales are not always expected. Some feel these shows are good for their resumé.

When asked if they think it is important for a gallery to advertise their work, ninety-nine percent answered, "Yes!" Methods of advertising suggested ranged from local newspapers and announcements to national publications such as *American Craft* and *Fine Woodworking*.

Twenty-two turners feel that the AAW should not help woodturners in collecting money or work from delinquent galleries. David Ellsworth wrote, "AAW is an educational, not a regulatory organization." Ed Moulthrop suggested, "the AAW could print articles of advice to woodturners by a lawyer or accountant." Judy Ditmer suggested, "The Journal could give information on how to proceed with collection."

The second part of the questionnaire required longer answers, and thirty turners completed this section.

What qualities are most important to you when choosing a gallery to represent you?

Roger Barnes: "Aggressiveness in marketing and ability to create sales."

Clay Foster: "Whether or not my work is compatible with other work in the gallery and the integrity of the gallery owner and/or director."

Michelle Holzapfel: "A sense of honesty and long-term commitment."

John Jordon: "Reputation—interest in my work."

David Ellsworth: "Is the gallery capable of promoting my career or are they simply interested in stocking shelves with my work? Do they know what their market is or are they just hoping that customers will become interested in my work once it is displayed? Do they have an 'outreach' philosophy toward marketing or do they expect the market to come to them? Can they talk intelligently about the work to a client? Would they handle the work even if it were not selling?"

How do you acquire new galleries to represent you?

Most who replied acquire new galleries through referral or selection from those galleries contacting them. Few woodturners actively approach galleries themselves first, but some said they send a letter of introduction, slides, resume, letters of reference, and a list of galleries that currently represent their work.

Do you feel it is helpful to visit the galleries that represent you?

David Ellsworth: "Yes, of course! Who would put their children in a private school without first visiting that school and meeting its teachers!"

Leo Doyle: "It's good to see how your work is displayed and what your competition is doing."

Quite a few felt they would like to visit more galleries, however, the expense sometimes makes this difficult to do. Some felt that by visiting the gallery, they were able to help educate the owner and staff about woodturning and techniques used in their work.

What do you expect from a gallery?

Max Krimmel: "Good display, prompt payment, and market feedback."

Rude Osolnik: "Fair representation."

Clay Foster: "For them to be a good sales person so I don't have to deal with that part of the business and can concentrate on my work. They should also pay for expenses of selling, such as advertising."

Bonnie Klein: "Orders!"

Jack Straka: "Sales."

In what ways should a gallery do more to accommodate woodturning and the needs of the artist?

Dick Gerard: "If a person shows interest but doesn't buy, ask why/why not and pass it on to turners."

Skip Johnson: "Have more regional shows of the new stuff."

Judy Ditmer: "Educate customers to understand the woodturning process."

David Ellsworth: "Be more selective with the work. Do not accept work for display that is substandard in either quality of craftmanship or design, or if it is improperly priced for what the gallery's market can bear. Communicate with the craftsperson and advise them on the type or style of objects that the gallery feels will have the best chance of selling. Be receptive to displaying work from the craftsperson that represents any 'new direction' in their creative development."

Should galleries do anything different to increase woodturning sales?

Roger Barnes: "Promote more group shows."

Alan Ritzman: "Much of the public doesn't understand very well what's involved in producing some of the finer woodturning done these days. Gallery owners need to understand the process more clearly themselves and be willing to help their customers appreciate what they're looking at and buying."

Should the AAW do more to help you sell your work?

Roger Barnes: "AAW should participate or inaugurate a large scale public relations campaign to make the public more aware of his medium. It should strive to have articles regularly published in both the art press as well as general press."

Ron Kent: "No. I'm a strong believer in individual initiative and responsibility."

Ed Moulthrop: "Only through magazine articles by retailers, business people, experienced craftsmen, etc."

Johannes Michelsen: "Not the AAW but The Woodturning Center and Albert LeCoff. I think they already are but I think the average consumer still does not understand woodturning as an art form."

J. Paul Fennell: "Help the artist learn how to market his work better. Articles and/or demonstrations on photographing your work, articles on marketing. How about a directory of galleries interested in woodturning?" John Jordon: "Not directly but through education, public forums, demos, exhibition assistance, etc. One very important area would be to include collector activities during symposia, as is currently done in most other media."

Wayne Raab: "Sponsor more juried shows nationally. Provide more information about responsible sources of exotic hardwoods."

Ron Fleming: "I do not believe they should help the artist sell their work but it could be more helpful in keeping the artist more aware of the shows that are available and lead time on schedules of events."

David Ellsworth: "By definition, the AAW is 'dedicated to education, information and organization for those who are interested in woodturning.' If the AAW becomes directly involved in the promotion of woodturning, it would soon lose its grass roots and hobbist members who compromise the vast majority of the organization. What the AAW can do, and is doing, is to provide more educational forums during its annual symposia for those who are seeking directions in marketing, photography, pricing, applying to galleries, and other related professional concerns. It is then up to the individual to put these tools into action."

Iona S. Elliott is a frequent contributor to American Woodturner.

Exotic Exotics - I, Pink Ivory

This is the first in a series of articles on some of the rare woods of the world that are not only simply beautiful, but are also generally considered exceptionally choice. These are the kinds of woods that are on many wood-lovers' wish lists.

Pink ivory clearly belongs towards the top of such lists. This is a wood in which the heartwood ranges in color from a clear pink to bright red to brownish red. As the use of the term ivory suggests, it is a smooth, dense, reasonably homogeneous wood. It has only a few small pores and takes a high polish. It has a nice grain that is not too prominent. It tools well, but it is very hard and cannot be worked rapidly. This is an interesting wood because of its rarity, unusual color, and reputation as an elite exotic. It also has an interesting history.

Pink ivory has long been a sacred tree for Zulus and related tribes. Only Zulu kings were entitled to carry or possess sticks of this wood. These very special trees were only cut-and that was by the king-on the occasion of a son reaching manhood. Violation of these customs was punishable by death. The Zulu king, Dingaan, who was defeated by the Boers in the 1840s, always carried a spear made from this wood. After his defeat, Dingaan ordered himself killed with it. In parts of Africa, some pink ivory trees are still militantly guarded by Zulus, and a poacher of the trees could still be killed.



"Apple Box" by Cas Grabowski, pink ivory with silver leaf and stem, H. $2^{1}/_{2}$ inches \times Diam. 2 inches

The Latin name for pink ivory trees is *Berchemia zeyheri*; in older literature it is *Rhamnus zeyheri*. This is not a tree that grows in lush tropical forests. Rather widely isolated, individual trees grow in dry, rocky, bush areas, usually in mountain ravines and dry stream beds. Their growth is confined to hilly parts of southern Africa. They are scrubby trees usually less than 20-feet tall with a trunk 10 to 12 inches in diameter. A rare individual tree may reach a height of 40 feet with a diameter of 18 inches.

The charm of pink ivory is its unusual color; however, not all of the wood from this tree is pink or red. The sapwood is light and creamy. The heartwood of healthy youngish trees is beautiful and dense, but is more brown than red. It also constitutes less than 50 percent of the log. It is only the trunks of dead and dying trees that contain a significant amount of red heartwood (limbs have only a limited amount of pinkish wood). Apparently the physiological stresses that endanger the lives of these trees are also the factors that are responsible for increasing the relative amount of heartwood to sapwood and converting it to the pink and red colors. This process seems to go on after the tree dies, because the reddest wood comes from tree trunks that have been dead for many years. The dry climate and the relative imperviousness of the wood to the action of termites and fungi make these dead trees stand out conspicuously in the bushy countryside. They

are referred to as "skeletons" and are the only trees that can be legally cut and exported (except, of course, from Zulu land!). Therefore, if you are concerned about tropical tree conservation—and all of us should be—be assured that using pink ivory will not affect the future of this tree.

Pink ivory has always been very rare; the supply, however, seems to be somewhat more available right now. This resulted from a drought that occurred in this tree's habitat between 1980 and 1987. Apparently the drought pushed a number of trees, which normally barely survive in their dry climate, over the brink and into the "skeleton" category. This also suggests that the current supply is a "one-time only" situation and not a continuous one.

Historically, pink ivory has always been expensive. At times it has been sold by the ounce (\$1.50 per) and choice pieces suitable for knife handles have sold for as much as \$100. Currently, untrimmed logs are available for from \$6 to \$10 per pound. Pieces of clear dimensional heartwood can go for \$20 to \$30 per pound. Since a board foot of pink ivory will weight 6-1/2 pounds (it is heavier than water), it can cost \$120 to \$150. A 12-inch diameter log can cost several thousand dollars. If you are buying this expensive wood without first seeing it, you should be aware of the great variability in the color and quality that is inherent in the nature of pink ivory.

Like many very dense, slow-grow-

ing woods, many logs of pink ivory develop cracks in the center as they grow. These resulted not from careless seasoning, but are present before the wood is cut. In the case of pink ivory, these cracks frequently become very black. Such black, irregular streaks are not necessarily bad because they can add considerably to the beauty of a turned piece. Another feature of pink ivory that should be kept in mind is that the wood, in both finished and unfinished states, will very slowly become brownish with exposure to light. This process takes years and may be delayed by avoiding strong light.

I would like to thank Michael Tisdale of Homestead, Florida, who has personally collected pink ivory in Africa, for supplying me with much of the information used for this article.

In future parts of this intermittent series, I will discuss snakewood, satinwood, the ebonies, and some of the more unusual rosewoods. I will also try to take a hard look at what makes these exceptional woods so desirable, to see if we can use this information to perk up woods that are more readily available.

TOXIC WOODS

Sculptors working with wood should be aware of the toxic properties of many wood species. This listing of toxic woods was compiled by Robert Woodcock, R.N., B.S.N., C.E.N., and is reprinted with permission from Art Hazards News, Vol. 13, No. 5.

WOOD	Reaction	Site	Pot	tency	Source	Incidence
Bald Cypress	S	R	+		D	R
Balsam Fir	S	E, S	+		LB	c
Beech	S,C	E, S, R	++	and the family	LB, D	C
Birch	S	R	+ +		W, D	C
Black Locust	I, N	E, S	+++		LB	C
Blackwood	S	E, S	+ +		D, W	C
Boxwood	S	E, S	++		D, W	C
Cashew	S	E, S	+		D, W	R
Cocobolo	1, S	E, S, R	+++	and the second	D, W	C
Dahoma	I	E, S	++		D, W	c
Ebony	I, S	E, S	++		D, W	C
Elm	1	E, S	+		D	R
Goncalo Alves	S	E, S	++	10.00	D, W	R
Greenheart (Surinam)	S	E, S	+++		D, W	C
Hemlock	C	R	2		D	U
Iroko	1, S, P	E, S, R	+ + +		D, W	C
Mahogany (Swietenia)	S, P	S, R	+	12.10.20	D	U
Mansonia	I, S, N	E, S	+++++++		D, W D	c
Maple (C. Corticale mold)	S, P	R	+++		D	C
Mimosa	N		?		LB	U
Myrtle	S	R	++	a to a to a	LB, D	C
Oak	S	E, S ++			LB, D	R
	C		?		D	U
Obeche	I, S	E, S, R	+++		D, W	C
Oleander	DT	N, C	++++		D, W, LB	C
Olivewood	1, S	E, S, R	+++		D, W	C
Opepe	S	R	+		D	R
Padauk	S	E, S, N	+		D, W	R
Pau Ferro	- S	E, S	+		D, W	R
Peroba Rosa	1	R, N	++		D, W	U
Purpleheart	and the second sec	N	++		D, W	C
Quebracho	1	R, N	++		D, LB	C
and the second second second	C	and the second second	?	100 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10	D	U
Redwood	S, P	R, E, S	++		D	R
Posewoods	1.8	DEC	++++		DW	C
Satinwood	1, 5	DEC	++++		D.W	C
Saccafrac	S	R, E, 5	+++	Concession of the	D, W	P
Sassanas	DT	Ň		1 B. F. B. F.	DWIR	P
	C		2	C. C. Martin	D, 11, LD	I II
Sequoia	1	P			D	R
Snakewood	CARLES AND ADDRESS	R	4.4	Contractory of the local division of the loc	DW	R
Spruce	S	R	+		D.W	R
Walnut, Black	S	ES	++		D.S.	C
Wenge	S	RES	++		D. W	C
Willow	S	R.N.	+	Contraction of the	D. W. LB	Ŭ
Western Red Cedar	S	R	+++		D. LB	C
Teak	S. P	E.S.R	++	Contraction of the	D	C
Yew	1	E, S ++			D	C
	DT	N.C	++++		D. W	C
Zebrawood	S	E, S	++		D, W	The second s
Reaction		Site		1	Source	Incidence
I - irritant S - Sensitizer		S - skin E - eyes		D - dust		R - rare
C - nasopharyngeal cancer		R - respiratory		W - wood		C - common
r - pneumonitis, aiveolitis		- cardiac		LB - leaves,		U - uncommon
DT - direct toxin		IN - HOSE		Dark		
N - nausea, malaise						

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Woods Toxic to Man, author unknown Woods, B., Calnan, C.D. "Toxic Woods." Br. Journal of Dermatology. 9513, 1976, 1-97.

ILO Encyclopedia of Occupational Health and Safety, 1983. Lampe, K., McAnn, M. AMA Handbook of Poisonous and Injurious Plants, AMA, 1985. Poisondex, Micromedix Inc. 1990.

Two years ago I was able to locate some fresh-sawn, green persimmon lumber and stacked it to dry in a stickered drying pile in my garage. I've managed to salvage some usable pieces cut out of the center of the boards, but the ends have checked badly, as much as 3 to 4 inches into the boards. Could I have prevented this checking or is persimmon just a difficult wood to season? —Betty Scarpino, Indianapolis, IN

Jon Arno replies: You may have been able to reduce the severity of the checking by coating the endgrain of the boards before they were allowed to dry, but persimmon, Diospyros viginiana, is a notoriously difficult wood to season. With an average volumetric shrinkage of 19.1 percent (green to oven-dry), persimmon loses almost a fifth of its volume as it gives up moisture. By way of comparison, a relatively stable cabinet wood such as American black cherry experiences a volumetric shrinkage of only 11.5 percent. Persimmon's severe loss in volume puts the wood under intense stress as its natural bonding agent, lignin, attempts to hold the wood tissue in place while the cells seek to shrink and realign. It is true, however, some woods that experience fairly high shrinkage are not anywhere near as difficult to season as persimmon, because they are able to absorb the stress. A good example here is basswood, Tilia americana. Even though basswood experiences a volumetric shrinkage of 15.8 percent, the walls of the cells are so thin they are able to distort and accommodate some of the stress. The problem with persimmon is that,

not only does it experience extremely high shrinkage, it is also a very dense wood with thick cell walls. Persimmon, with an average specific gravity of 0.64 (oven-dry weight/green volume), is actually heavier and harder than white oak.

Under the best of circumstances, persimmon is a real challenge to air dry, but I can at least offer a couple of tips to help minimize the checking. First, be sure to coat the end grain with some sort of sealer while the wood is still green. There are special products available for this purpose, but I simply brush on a coat or two of ordinary, yellow carpenters' glue that has been diluted to the consistency of a light syrup, about two-parts glue to one-part water. Next, be sure to select a location for your drying pile where the wood will be allowed to dry slowly. If possible, it should be under a roof, preferably in an unheated area, but try to select a place where the temperature remains above freezing. Persimmon is a member of the ebony family, Ebenaceae, and its pores are clogged

Problems with persimmon

with a black, gummy substance that retards the escape of moisture, except by permeation through the cell walls. If the environment is too hot and dry early in the drying process, the outer cells begin to shrink before the moisture trapped deeper in the wood can migrate to the surface and this compounds the stress. After several months in a moderate environment, the wood can be brought into a heated room and allowed to dry out more completely. It will eventually attain equilibrium with the prevailing humidity and be ready for use. To be on the safe side, I'd suggest you leave it sticker stacked in this final environment for at least one year per each inch of the wood's thickness. Admittedly, this is a long time to wait for a supply of any kind of lumber to thoroughly season, but persimmon is such an attractive wood it's worth the trouble to do it right.

-Jon Arno is a woodworker and amateur wood technologist. He lives in Schaumburg, Illinois, although he will soon be moving to Michigan.

TIPS FOR TURNERS

One of the drawbacks to digging up root sections for use in woodturning is the dirt and rocks imbedded in the wood. You can dull or even break a bandsaw blade if the wood is not cleaned before cutting it. What works well for me is to stop at a self-service carwash before going home. Use the sprayer to loosen and clean the dirt and rocks from the roots and stumps.

-Donald L. Price, Brazil, Indiana

Send your woodturning tips the editor: Betty J. Scarpino 5613 Ralston Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46220



Robert Rosand R.D. 1, Box 30 Bloomsburg, PA 17815

I have always enjoyed turning wood simply for the sheer joy of it. In fact, I left a career in psychology so that I could devote my full time to woodturning. I have no lofty ambitions of ever being a trend setter in the field, but if I am known or remembered for anything, I would like it to be that I never became stagnant and that I was always growing. I like to think that the forms I turn "flow." That is to say, I try not to impose a form on the wood that is forced or inappropriate for that piece.

Lately, the combination of woods particularly manufactured woods such as Baltic birch plywood and burl or other "natural" woods—have become an important aspect of my work. I am intrigued by the contrast obtained by joining the manmade and

the "natural." Most important, the forms must work with the combination of woods I have chosen, and the finishes must be as clean as I can get them.





Vase Baltic birch and Honduras rosewood H. 14 inches x Diam. 8 inches

Bowl Baltic birch, Brazilian rosewood and padauk H. 4-3/4 inches x Diam. 8 inches Buz Blum Box 732 Palmer, Alaska 99645

The carving represents the wild Alaskan meadow grasses that grow where the tree was felled. Aside from that, the forms make my statement for me.



Bowl Black birch H. 6 inches x Diam. 5-3/4 inches



Bowl Black birch H. 5-3/4 inches x Diam. 9 inches

These pages are dedicated to those who make objects from the lathe. Photos are selected from the Wood Turning Center's archives. If you feel you are a *Hidden Talent*, send your 5" x 7" glossy b/w photos, resumé, and a personal statement to Albert LeCoff, HIDDEN TALENT, 42 W. Washington Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19144 U.S.A. Accepted photos will not be returned; nonpublished photos will be returned if a self-addressed stamped envelope is supplied.

WOODY TURNER

by Cynthia Wessel



"Louise, don't buy any of that 60-grit stuff!"

EDITOR'S COMMENTS by Betty J. Scarpino

As many of you know, American Woodturner is somewhat different from other publications that you might receive. It is the official publication of the American Association of Woodturners, a nonprofit organization "dedicated to providing education, information, and organization to those interested in woodturning." When you pay your dues, you become, not just a subscriber to the journal, but a member of a young, growing organization. One of the key elements in any group is communication and the journal serves that purpose. AAW is comprised of members with a variety of woodturning interests. The Board of Directors, through American Woodturner strives to address the needs and concerns of all members. With that said, you will notice a vast amount of American Association of Woodturners' businessrelated information in this issue. Your board members have been very busy since the symposium and some of the results of their activities are contained in the pages of this issue. I would like to personally thank them for putting a "rush" on things in order to meet journal deadlines. I would also like to thank Professor Ralph Gray, editor of Journal of the Early Republic for his consistently high editorial standards and for willingly proofreading page proofs for this issue. Any remaining mistakes were undoubtedly made by

Since communication is vital to understanding what is happening in your organization, an editor's comment section will appear from time to time. I will do my best to keep my comments brief, of some importance, and nonpolitical.

me after his careful reading.

The last issue of American Woodturner was printed and mailed in Indianapolis, Indiana. Except for a lastminute, jump-through-some-hoops at the post office, everything went smoothly. The copy for this issue goes to the printer tomorrow, January 31, 1991, with an ultimate goal of copies reaching members in early to mid-March. The process of typesetting, lay-out, proofing, and labeling takes about one month.

In spite of this process taking so long, we are able to have the results of the Board of Directors' election in the March issue. Mary Redig (AAW's Executive Director) is, at this moment, SWAMPED with ballots, renewal applications, new memberships, and various other business-related mail. Nonetheless, Mary assures me that she will have election results by February 20 and a current set of mailing labels by the end of February. All of you who renewed your membership, as well as new members, will get

your first journal of 1991 in March. By that time, Mary will have to dust the cobwebs off of her lathe!

The deadline for submitting articles and black-and-white photographs for the September issue of American Woodturner is July 2, 1991. I mention this now, because the September issue is our Christmas-project issue. It is not too early to start writing an article and taking black-and-white, glossy pictures of Christmas projects. Then, of course, send them to American Woodturner, at the address below.

AAW member's business-related matters should be sent to Mary Redig, whose address is plastered all over this issue. Matters concerning articles, photographs, and advertising in American Woodturner should be sent to the editor at 5613 Ralston Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46220.

GENERAL 260 LATHE RAFFLE

The drawing for the General 260 lathe will be held April 6, 1991, at the Executive Director's office. We want to thank General of Canada for their generous donation to our organization's educational fund campaign. It was through the efforts of Rude Osolnik that we were able to obtain the General 260 lathe for our raffle, and we sincerely thank him. We are pleased, also, that so many members purchased tickets. Every little bit helps our education fund grow, which in turn benefits AAW members by providing scholarships.

If you still wish to purchase tickets, send \$5 for one, or \$20 for five tickets by the end of March to the address below. You will be sent $1/_{2}$ of each ticket purchased, acknowledging receipt of your contribution. Your membership number will be put on the other 1/2 of the ticket which will be put into the drawing box.

AAW Education Fund Raffle 667 Harriet Avenue Shoreview, MN 55126

In retrospect, I suppose I no longer consider it odd that following my teacher's advice and counsel would lead to my catering lunch for some twenty curious, hungry cows. Because of a series of improbable events, I found myself some years ago at Arrowmont attending David Ellsworth's woodturning course. I was the rankest of beginners, with no prior instruction, experience, exposure, or even any particular interest in or appreciation of woodturning. I was simply curious and had found myself in the unusual (and infrequent) posture of being able to afford what was, for me, to be a small vacation, after which, life would continue on as before, or so I thought.

Woodturning proved to be a fascinating process, David was a warm, engaging person, and the entire Arrowmont experience was wholly intoxicating. Like others in the class, I became caught up in the events of that week, more enthusiastic than perhaps I had ever been. So, late in the week, when David suggested that upon our return to our home shops, we practice bowl forms using poplar, this advice sounded great. I mean, poplar is abundant in eastern Tennessee, I owned a chainsaw with a 24-inch bar, and I had a buddy with a 100-acre cow farm, containing plenty of trees. It was all falling into place-perhaps too easily.

Shortly after my return home, I wandered out to see my good friends, Bob and Marge, at their farm. Sometime during the course of the day, I mentioned my desire for a poplar tree, which I hoped they could provide. Bob spread his arms in an encompassing gesture, looked around, and said, "help yourself." Realizing that I wanted to get started right away, Bob offered the use of his chainsaw to fell the tree. I could return later to haul away the billets. "Just don't drop the tree across my fence line," chided Bob. "Yuk, yuk," said I.

It was a nice day, and I still had the turning fever visiting upon my soul, so I wandered through the woods, in search of just the right tree, just the right size, with bowls aplenty awaiting release. And I found it—it was even close to a gate where I could drive right up to the felled tree and load, once I got my trailer. And best of all, this tree was badly scarred and needed to be removed, which tickled me no end, for now I was actually doing Bob a service. We would both benefit, and the tree would be immortalized through the wondrous forms that would one day emerge-a dandy situation for all concerned. Of course it was a little close to a fence line, but I'd felled lots of trees. Besides, there was a clearing on the side of the tree opposite the fence, into which this tree would nestle nicely.

Off I went to get Bob's saw. The chainsaw started easily, and I buried it a third of the way into the tree, opposite the fence line. This notch would be precisely where I wanted it. All that remained was to back the saw out, undercut the notch, walk around the tree, and ease it ever so gently into its assigned spot. No problem.

Maybe I'd done something to offend the forest gods that day. Or perhaps the cow gods wanted to intervene. Maybe the wind gods were mad at the fence gods. I don't know. All I know is that when I went to withdraw the chainsaw from the tree, apparently the tree and the saw had fallen in love and were in no mood to release one another. When I looked up, it was also apparent that a breeze had arisen.

Well, no matter. This had happened before, and I knew the cure. Off I went again, this time to fetch Bob and a trusty rope. I figured that we could tie the rope to the tree, and one of us would tug on the rope while the other removed the saw. I could then finish my task. On our way back to the tree, however, the breeze not only switched directions, but also became a wind. Fickle, but nonetheless effective. With a mute mixture of fascination and horror, we watched from a distance as the tree bade an anguished farewell to its new love and began falling, ever so slowly and with wondrous majesty, directly toward us. Jilted, the newly spurned chainsaw flew into the air, then landed with a thud. The fence, however, was right in the path of the falling tree. The top third fell nicely between two fenceposts, stretching the strands of wire and laying them, as gently as possible under the circumstances, along the ground. Viewing the scene more closely, we both

decided no real damage had been done to the fence. The chainsaw was another matter. It had not fared well, and I knew I had a reapir job in my future. Bob was chuckling as he left me to my cleanup task.

Perhaps cows and humans share more traits than this, but a sense of morbid curiosity afflicts both species. Just as humans will jump into a car to follow a fire engine or ambulance, cows will come to the site of a recently fallen tree, albeit at a much more dignified pace. But that simply means that the cows arrived, unannounced, a bit later. I had just finished cutting the tree out from the fence line area (using Bob's ax), when I heard distinct heavy breathing behind me. Now Bob and Marge's two daughters were too dignified for this type of behavior-besides, they had moved away from home some years ago. I astutely eliminated them as possible sources. My mind quickly considered several other delightful possibilities. I must admit, however, that I was unprepared, when I finally turned around, to be staring into the soft brown eyes of twenty cows. I think the eyes were probably assessing the newly available poplar leaves more intently than they were checking me out. Who really knows what goes on in a cow's mind? Another cow, most likely.

With some alarm, I then considered the possibility of those cows escaping through the fence—especially after Bob's "just don't drop the tree across my fence line" comment. I was relieved to find out, however, that the cows were really more interested in poplar-leaf dessert than in escaping, at least for the time being. I repaired the fence line as quickly as possible. The contented cows chewed poplar leaves while watching the entertaining human. Just before leaving, I even tossed some smaller poplar branches over the fence for my new-found friends. And thanks to them, cleanup of the area was much simpler.

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another. Charles Dickens

> That is how I came to be feeding cows a delicacy when I was only trying to be a good woodturning student. You just never know where the pursuit of knowledge will lead. But great teachers will always lead their students to new levels, new experiences.

> Jerry Spady is a bio chemist under the influence of woodturning.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDRESS

Mary Redig, Executive Director 667 Harriet Avenue Shoreview, MN 55126 612/484-9094

Woodturning for Cabinetmakers, by Michael Dunbar. (Sterling Publications 1990. \$14.95.)

Michael Dunbar is well known for his expertise with Windsor chairs and Federal furniture. In this recent book, Dunbar fills a gap in the world of woodturning by addressing the needs of cabinetmakers and furniture makers who turn wood as part of functional pieces of furniture. Because it is so easy to purchase mass-produced, turned parts for furniture, many woodworkers never take the time to learn the hows and whys of spindle turning. Even if a woodworker chose to learn furniture spindle turning, there are few good teachers available who offer that type of training. Dunbar fills this gap by providing an insightful, comprehensive, easy-to-read text on spindle turning and the how-to's of making turned furniture parts. In the introduction, Dunbar stresses that one of the focuses of his book is duplication. It is one thing to be able to make one spindle, but a chair has four legs. Furniture makers often need to know how to make sets of turned objects. Based on historic precedents, Dunbar offers suggestions on how this can be done successfully.

The 192-page text is divided into 16 chapters. The first two chapters deal with the various parts of lathes as well as lathe tools. Chapters 3 and 4 cover sharpening techniques and safety. Chapters 5 through 9 take the reader step-by-step through the process of turning spindles. Dunbar examines stock preparation, rough turning, and the various elements of a spindle in exhaustive detail. Accompanying all of the text are excellent black-and-white, closeup photos of Dunbar turning each shape, utilizing the various woodturning tools available for spindle turners. In chapters 8 and 9, Dunbar looks at how the various elements of spindles can be combined in decorative furniture designs and how woodturners can then duplicate spindles into unified sets.

The last third of the book deals with green turning, off-center turning, the manufacturing of reeds and flutes, spiral turnings, discs, chair stiles, and various types of pulls, knobs, and furniture parts.

As a furniture maker and restorer and as a teacher, I have only one reservation about *Woodturning for Cabinetmakers*: the book is not long enough. I finished reading it wanting more. Having met Dunbar at a week-long seminar, I was most impressed with his professionalism and concern for detail. He is a remarkable teacher and craftsman. These characteristics are honestly communicated in this latest book by Michael Dunbar. My only hope is that Dunbar will begin offering woodturning seminars or produce a video to accompany this magnificent book. I am glad Michael Dunbar took the time out to write this long-awaited text and would recommend it to all who are seriously interested in becoming a complete woodworker. Thank you Michael.

-review by Warren E. Wyrostek, Pinetta, Florida

by Betty J. Scarpino

The short articles and safety tips in this section are intended to remind woodturners that safety should be an important consideration when using woodworking equipment.

Tom Webster had been cutting a 75-pound piece of claro walnut into bowl blanks on his bandsaw for about an hour. (His bandsaw can cut a 12 1/2-inch-thick piece of wood, and it was fitted with a 3/4-inch, 6tooth, hook blade). He would make a cut, then consider where to make another cut. On the cut made just previous to injuring himself, the blade hit a stone or piece of crystal, dulling the blade. At that point, he had only one small piece left to cut. It was approximately $4 \times 4 \times 7$ inches, and he simply needed to cut it in half. Tom admits that he should have lowered the blade guard from an 8-inch cut to a 4-inch cut. Also, because of the dull blade, he was pushing harder than when he had started the project. He soon sensed that his right thumb was getting too close to the front of the blade. Tom does not remember exactly how it happened, but it happened fast. He was in the process of repositioning his right hand so that his thumb would not be in front of the blade. The blade popped through the piece of wood just as Tom was moving his hand to the other side of the wood. The blade cut his right pointer finger almost totally off.

Tom had his finger sewn back on

and with physical therapy is doing fine today, although it took months to get to this point. Because Tom is such a determined person, he will regain the full use of his finger many people are not so fortunate.

Tom Webster is a member of the Central Indiana Chapter of AAW and is an experienced woodworker with an excellent safety record. He hopes others will benefit from reading about his accident. Safety tip An important point to consider in Tom Webster's story is that sharp tools and blades are safer to use than dull ones. When a blade or tool is dull, more pressure is required to make a cut. Increased pressure in order to make a cut can result in an accident. Even a dull cutting edge can cut skin and bone quite easily. So, keep your tools and blades sharp and use a light, firm touch when cutting wood.

SAFETY REMINDER

Woodturning can be dangerous. Keep safety in mind when trying new procedures, and use tools and machines in an appropriate and safe manner. Select wood that is appropriate for your woodturning skill. Always wear eye and face protection when working in your shop.

American **CONTRIBUTIONS TO** *Woodturner*

American Woodturner is a reader-written journal. The editor welcomes all articles relating to any phase of woodturning. Also welcome are goodquality, black-and-white, glossy photographs. All submissions will be acknowledged. Manuscripts and photos that we cannot use will be returned. Please send your contributions to:

> Betty J. Scarpino, Editor American Woodturner 5613 Ralston Avenue Indianapolis, IN 46220

"Sea Foam" Western Maple Burl, H. 8¹/₄ inches × Diam. 7¹/₂ inches × 14-inch wingspan ROD CRONKITE, Racine, Wisconsin.

The body of the piece is lathe-turned inside and out. The wing is free-form carved on the underside. The carving achieves two things. First, it makes the piece lighter so that it will balance better, and second, it allows me to create a free-flowing form that generally cannot be accomplished through turning alone.

the song of the wood there are days when the wood sings to you as it spins and in its song are all the days through which it grew and all the long afternoons of sun and cicadas and the still nights of deep sky and stars and the songs will tell you of the storms and you will smell all the rains which fell on these days the steel stides along the wood

like a lovers touch a whisper and whispers of the life it led and whispers of lives yet to be on these days the wood peels away sweetly

and the song whispers to your memory and in the smell of the wood are the colors that washed a thousand skies

too there are days when the wood does not love yon when it denies every word you would impose upon its wordless history when it does not know you and you can never know its least moment

days when the long strands point at you like accusing fingers when you struggle and there is no song when you grieve and there are no terms

and уон know the wood takes no account of you and the tale you would redeem from its bones never was there and its only dead elemental carbon waiting to return to air Judy Ditmer American Association of Woodturners 667 Harriet Avenue Shoreview, MN 55126 (address correction requested)

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