

■ Large Segmented Bowls ■ Remembering Rude ■ Laser Measuring ■ Work of Al Stirt ■

American Woodturner



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

PRACTICE AND PLANNING MAKE FOR GOOD DEMOS

I HAVE JUST FINISHED TEACHING A woodturning class of ten men and women. Some were experienced; some were novices; and some had never turned, but wanted to see if they enjoyed turning and could make their own wooden bowls. Some had turned when they were in high school shop class and, as they near retirement, wanted to see if turning was a hobby they'd like to pursue. Some came to master the bowl gouge. Others were interested in working with green wood. Two students even mentioned sharpening. They all had one thing in common — they were excited about woodturning and during the week we all shared ideas, techniques, and tips. Everyone, even the teacher, learned some things.

But there was one group missing from that class — young people. Not only were they absent from my class, but they are missing or in small numbers at our clubs and symposia. One reason is the shop class, once part of the curriculum in most high schools, has all but disappeared. Also, less and less emphasis is placed on doing things with our hands. We don't repair; we replace. Television, computers, internet, and video games compete for our spare time. Everyone is bombarded with these activities, but few are exposed to woodturning.

This is where you, as a woodturner and AAW member, come in. As it states on the cover of this Journal, the AAW is "Dedicated To Providing Education, Information and Organization To Those Interested in Woodturning". At chapter or club meetings we all share turning experiences and many demo for other members. Whether you are a beginner, intermediate or advanced turner, you can share your knowledge and skills to help non-turners learn to enjoy and appreciate the beauty of turned wood. The demos can be at craft shows, woodworking shows or other public places. An even more exciting place is a local school. I can think of no greater reward than watching a

student's face light up with excitement when an object begins to take shape from that wood block spinning on the lathe. You have exposed them to an art form that has been around for thousands of years, but is brand new to them. You never know; there may be a future star woodturner and a chapter member just waiting to get started. You can read about teaching programs by the Alabama Woodturners and the Brasstown Woodturners on Page 4 and Page 8.

No matter what your skill level, you can demonstrate. I'll share some of my thoughts on the process. Do not be overly ambitious; pick a project that you have done many times or one you can do easily. Take the time to go through the full process step-by-step, until you fully understand why you do it the way you do. Make some notes as you go. Then consider how to explain each step to your audience. Next practice it — the talking and the turning — without an audience. Later practice in front of your spouse or a friend and ask for feedback. Now you are prepared to present a good demo. And, guess what? Not only does your audience benefit, but you also learn to be a better turner. More hints for demos are on Page 13.

Apply for an EOG

We have again had a great response to our Educational Opportunity Grant program and have awarded grants to those we chose as most deserving. Thanks to all who applied. We are trying something different with the program this year. Grants will be awarded twice a year: on March 1st and on September 1st. Also, applications not receiving grants in the first round will be considered a second time, along with additional applications received before the second deadline, July 15, 2002. Because of the success of the auction at the St. Paul symposium, the Board decided to increase the amount of money awarded as grants. See the Winter 2001 Journal for details/application.

Run for the AAW Board

It's that time of the year when the Nominating Committee (Mark St Leger, chairman; Dave Barriger, past Board member, and a Member-at-large to be announced) are searching for good candidates for the Board of Directors. If you not familiar with the job, here is a very brief summary of a Director's responsibilities. There are nine directors. Three are elected each year for three-year terms. They oversee the AAW finances, publications, videos, symposia, education programs and employees. The Board splits up into committees for specific tasks, ie budgets, chapters, etc., and report to the complete Board for review and approval. There is no monetary reward for the Director. It does take time, but is rewarding when one sees projects to completion. If you are interested or you know someone who is, please let one of the committee members know. The candidates will be chosen by the committee and profiled in the Fall issue of the Journal. The membership votes by mail in September and October; winners take office on January 1st.

The 16th Annual Symposium is getting close. I hope you are making plans to be in Providence, RI on June 28-30, 2002 for what we think will be, if not the best, at least one of the best we have had. See the list of demonstrators on the enclosed registration form in the back of this Journal. We are featuring spinning tops this year and have some outstanding top makers from Germany, Japan, and the U.S. and want you to bring your turned tops. Hopefully you will donate one or more to the charity we have chosen to help while we are in Providence. I am also expecting to see a fantastic Instant Gallery and your participation will help make it. I am always amazed at the quality and variety of the pieces.

See You There.

— Bobby Clemons is president of AAW.

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AMERICAN WOODTURNER
is published quarterly by the
American Association of Woodturners
3499 Lexington Ave. N., Suite 103
Shoreview, MN 55126.
Periodicals postage paid at St. Paul, MN
and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
AAW, address listed above.

AAW does not endorse any product
featured or advertised in this journal.

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A Note about your Safety

An accident at the lathe can happen with
blinding suddenness; respiratory problems
can build over years. Take appropriate pre-
cautions when you turn. Safety guidelines are
published in the AAW Resource Directory.
Following them will help ensure that you can
continue to enjoy woodturning.

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On the cover: Ceremonial bowl by Alan Stirt is turned and carved from Maple burl. The finished piece is 24-in. in diameter. Stirt is profiled by Ken Keoughan in an article beginning on Page 14. Keoughan found Stirt to be a master turner, as well as a nice guy. Stirt's friends and colleagues agree, and praise his quest for pure form in his work. Cover Photo by Alan Stirt.

Submissions to *American Woodturner* are encouraged.
Please contact the editor with articles or proposals.

American Woodturner (ISSN 0895-9005) is published quarterly, Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter, by the American Association of Woodturners. Yearly membership in the American Association of Woodturners is \$35 U.S.A., \$40 Canada, and \$60 overseas and includes a subscription to *American Woodturner*. Send dues to Mary Lacer, AAW Administrator, 3499 Lexington Avenue N., Suite 103, Shoreview, MN 55126, U.S.A. Send articles and advertising to the Editor. Copyright 2002 by the American Association of Woodturners. CPC IPM Product Sales Agreement No. 1580647. Canadian Mail Distributor Information: EMI, P.O. Box 25058, London BC, Ontario, Canada N6C 6A8 Printed in the U.S.A. by Ovid Bell Press, Inc., Fulton, MO, 65251.

Subscribers: If your issue arrives damaged through the mail, please contact the Administrator.

Thoughts about Rude

When I think of Rude Osolnik, the picture that forms in my mind is that of a slightly disheveled man with wood shavings in his hair and hanging off his flannel jacket, an impish grin on his face, shuffling around his shop trying to find the tool he needs. He was almost a contradiction in theory — this man that often came across as an “absent-minded professor” also had so many “pictures” in his mind that came to fruition as beautiful and exquisite works of art created on the lathe.

Rude was not only a master woodturner, but a master story teller as well. His demonstrations were an experience, not only about his craft, but about his life on Poverty Ridge. If you were ever fortunate enough to be present at any of his exhibitions, you experienced much more than his turning. Rude was a person that was full of life and underneath that sometimes rough exterior, there was a heart of gold.

I will miss Rude greatly. He is someone that I was privileged to know and to be able to call “friend.”

—Dave Hout, Clinton, OH

More Memories of Rude Osolnik are on Page 38

Who decides what is art?

I was not able to attend the show “Nature takes a Turn.” However, having read the comments by Charles Brownold of Davis, California, I have few comments of my own. Traditional or nontraditional, who is to determine what constitutes a turned object of art or not. If we still locked ourselves in the mindset that if it is not round, it is not turned we would still be turning the bowls and platters used for salad on our mothers’ dinning tables and we would be to going galleries to view paintings and ceramic sculptures. How do we ever thank the wonderful artists that gave us so much? For

Rude Osolnik for his timeless and beautiful candle sticks; for his use of plywood to create bowls. For David Ellsworth who possibly more than any other turner created the hollow form we all covet today. For the new and upcoming turners such as Jason Marlow whom I had the privilege of meeting at Provo this last year and was able to view his beautiful Helms. For the many other artists I have come to respect and admire such as Stoney Lamar, Todd Hoyer, Hayley Smith and Binh Pho.

Yes, there will always be a place for Bowls and Platters and I turn those also. But I am thankful that through the visions of many others I am going beyond and I hope I can find my niche and that one day my name will be there beside those other wonderful turners who have given and are giving so much.

We cannot progress if we close our eyes!

— Dale Scott, Colorado Springs, Co

Not enough turning involved?

The winter issue cover of *American Woodturner* was very attractive and the object is a beautiful work of art, but I have a problem. The bottom edge of the cover has “woodturning” in the “dedicated to ... statement.” This piece clearly required much carving and probably very little woodturning. There seems to be a trend to recognize beautiful works of art that require very little lathe work.

One question might be “How little lathe time is allowable and still have the piece called “woodturning”? Perhaps all we non-artists can ask for is a public assessment of

hands-on lathe-work time versus bench-work (carving, drilling, latice-work, etc.) time.

Charles Brownold, on page 3 of this same issue, has also voiced an opinion. Is he the only one to have expressed a concern?

— Robert Opdahl, Hurley, NY

High resolution photos?

I note in the current issue of *American Woodturner* you encourage members to submit “high-quality photos, slides or high-resolution digital images” to you for consideration for use in the Journal.

Because more and more folks are purchasing digital cameras these days, I wonder if you might be able to clarify what your definition of high-resolution might be.

— Chuck Bjorgen, MN Woodturners

Larry Mart Replies: Welcome to the world of digital confusion where we usually end up comparing apples to oranges.

You are not alone if confused by these new terms that come with digital photography. It seems that everything concerning digital is an abbreviation: DPI, PPI, TIF, JPG, etc.

DPI stands for Dots Per Inch and only comes into play when printing an image on a device like an ink jet printer. Until we print the image onto paper, we don't have any dots. This is usually confused with PPI, or Pixels Per Inch. This is the camera parameter indicating image size. The sensor in the camera that records the image is made up of rows of individual “pixels” and the number of pixels in the rows, width x height, determines the maximum

Corrections on TN town

One of my favorite pastimes is exploring Tennessee, my adopted state. Guess it was only a matter of time before I got everything confused and invented my own community. Jim Bentley, who was featured on the back cover of the Winter issue, lives in Fairfield Glade, not Fairfield Glen. Our apologies to Jim and anyone who had problems with Directory Assistance. — Editor.

resolution of that camera. It's in the millions of individual pixels and is advertised as a "2 megapixel" or "3 megapixel" camera, etc. The more pixels, the more detail it's capturing in the photo. Cameras on the market these days fall into the range from 2 megapixels to 5 megapixels.

The image sizes, in pixels, for each sensor are approximately as follows:

2 megapixel=1600x1200

3 megapixel=2048x1536

4 megapixel=2270x1700

5 megapixel=2560x1920.

The cameras will also allow you to save the pictures in a smaller size to squeeze more shots on a memory card, but this will reduce the quality as well.

For the best quality images shoot at the highest resolution the camera will allow. For publication, a sharp, well focused, well lit picture of 1600x1200 (2 megapixels) or larger should reproduce just fine up to 5 or 6 inches. The bigger the image file, the bigger it can be printed. The sharp, well focused, well lit part is more important than the pixel count.

Another important factor is how you save the image in the camera's memory. The choices in most of the consumer grade cameras are either an uncompressed "TIF" file or a compressed "JPG" file. The TIF file is the best quality and holds most of the detail fed to the camera during exposure. However, it is a very large file and takes up lots of memory, resulting in fewer pictures per memory card. JPG files are compressed into a much smaller file, about 1/10th the size, but this compression slightly degrades the quality. In the real world this slight loss of quality will never be noticed. If you have sufficient memory in the camera use the TIF setting, otherwise I recommend saving the images in the best JPG mode the camera offers.

Burn a copy of the picture onto a CD-R and send this to the editor.

One file from a 2 megapixel camera might fit onto a floppy disk, but the larger image sizes will require a CD-R.

— *Larry Mart, Carrollton, TX, is a retired professional photographer, who shot many of the color photos in our first color issue, Fall 2001. See his tips for shooting photos for publication on Page 34.*

Collaborative endeavor or competition?

The Bucks Woodturners have been around from the early beginnings of AAW, and our first active participation in a chapter collaborative was with the Totem Pole ten, or so, years ago at Arrowmont. Collaborative challenges accelerate growth in the AAW and foster meaningful relationships both within chapters and between chapters. This is not written as a losers "sour grapes." We are proud of our entry and the collaboration which made it possible. We have a problem with the fundamental shift from a strictly collaborative endeavor to a competitive challenge. The AAW and the lathe turning community set the standard in the arts for openness and sharing. Any activity, which places collaborative openness at risk, should be very carefully thought out.

Competition can help to promote camaraderie amongst local club members, but does it do this at the peril of our national camaraderie?

Does competition run contrary to the AAW by-laws, specifically Article II: Purpose — "to foster a wider understanding and appreciation of lathe-turning as a traditional and contemporary craft and a form of art among the general public, hobbyist turners, part-time turners, and professional turners. This will be accomplished by providing education, information, organization, technical assistance and publications relating to woodturning.

More specifically we propose

principally to offer services as newsletters, technical bulletins, conferences, audio/video programs, computer software, seminars, shows and exhibits, but may also conduct studies, undertake research and carry out education and disseminate programs on woodturning or offer scholarships or stipends toward that end."

If it is important enough to expand the purpose of the AAW to include competition, then it is important enough to take on the challenge of officiating it in a fair and professional way.

Officiating starts with a clearly stated set of rules for judges to follow. The attending public at an AAW conference is not qualified to judge for several reasons.

First, there is no expectation of impartiality. (Our members saw ballots being cast BEFORE all the work was displayed.) Second, they do not have coaching on the rules, nor do they, generally speaking, have the inclination to spend more than a couple of minutes in evaluating the work. If clubs are to participate they need the assurance that the fruit of their labors get a fair objective look.

The effort to convene a neutral panel of turners and local art school professors, artists, press to serve as judges, is not too much effort for an organization of the magnitude of the AAW. It is critical to the turners who have contributed selflessly in the collaboration to have proper judging.

No one likes losing a fair competition, but everyone wins in a collaboration. Competition/Collaboration? Which is more important to the membership of the AAW?

The Bucks Woodturners are reluctant to participate in the next national collaborative challenge until our concerns are addressed. If the AAW should decide to go back to a national collaborative format we will be there with no hesitation.

— *Mark G. Krick, Doylestown, PA*

BRASSTOWN GUILD MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN NC HIGH SCHOOL

The Brasstown Woodturners Guild has taken a keen interest in the Hayesville High School Vocational program in Clay County, NC. During the 2001 school year:

- Four members donated eight Jet mini-lathes to the school.
- The Guild donated \$500 worth of basic gouges.
- The Guild also purchased high-speed steel blanks and made scrapers and skewers; bandsaw blade cutoff tools were also made.
- Two members donated hand-made hollowing scrapers; another member made longer tool rests for the Jet mini-lathes.
- Two members taught turning classes to the instructor and two separate classes for the first semester. Others members assisted.
- One member donated eight face shields.
- Bob Rosand gave several of his small handmade skewers to the class during a week when he was teaching at the John C. Campbell Folk school.
- Nick Cook, Talmadge Murphy and Doug Barnes, the Guild president, gave special demonstrations.
- The school provided the Guild with a monthly meeting place in their wood shop and the Guild made their Powermatic Lathe available for school classroom use.



Students, L to R, Kane Martin, Daniel Moss, Justin May, Chad Hunt and Derrick Lovingood with some of their work.

- The students made many items on the lathes during the first semester's classes. Students in grades 9 through 12 participated.
- Two Guild members will teach the 2nd semester turning classes.
- The Guild received the Communities In Schools award from Clay County.
- The vocational class teacher went from zero turning ability to being quite proficient. A grand finale was the turning of a large Bradford Pear vessel, shown below, held by Danny Jones, the wood shop teacher. The vessel was turned by a committee comprised of one class of students and the teacher. The students

did the outside and the teacher did the inside.

It's hard to say who had the most fun with the lathe, the teacher or the students. The two Brasstown Guild instructors, Jack Parrish and Glen Love, are sure they had the most fun and got the most out of the turning, since both are the fathers of daughters and the students became like their adopted sons.

The Brasstown Woodturners plan to seek funding for additional lathes for the school, so that all students have access to a lathe during the classes. We also plan to add more special purpose turning tools and accessories, so that the students' work can have a more professional look. One of the heartwarming things that we and the school staff saw during this first semester was that some students improved academically, as well as being enthusiastic woodturners. Their sense of a better control of their destiny was apparent as they created turned objects that had real class.

Our AAW Chapter has enthusiastically supported the efforts thus far and anticipates furthering this support to woodturning as a hobby and to some as a profession.

— Glen Love, Hayesville, NC



Shop teacher Danny Jones with donated lathes and the committee bowl.

CAROLINA WOODTURNING SYMPOSIUM THE BEST EVER

The Triangle Woodturners of North Carolina and the North Carolina Woodturners conducted a very successful woodturning symposium last November. Other participating chapters were the Down East Woodturners, the Carolina Mountain Woodturners and the Piedmont Triad Woodturners. It was our fourth biennial symposium and was viewed by many as our most successful one yet. Much of our success was due to the support of the AAW through a generous grant.

The object this year was to give experienced, inexperienced and wana-be woodturners an opportunity to see the diverse talents found in local woodturners, to provide the local woodturners the opportunity to develop their demonstration techniques, to provide local woodturners at all levels of expertise a place to show their work, and to keep the registration fees as low as possible. This did not preclude contributions and attendance by woodturners throughout the entire southeast. The objectives did, however, allow many local woodturners, who otherwise would not have had a chance, to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in such a forum. We found, quite frankly, that many of our lesser-known woodturners are equal to and many times better than those of "big name" demonstrators.

The committee to select demonstrators first determined a wide scope of subject areas for demonstrations. From that list demonstrators from the region were then solicited to fill the slots. The 21 different subjects finally selected were demonstrated by 14 different demonstrators. A small stipend was paid for each demonstration and, it goes without saying, demonstrators were exempt from registration fees. The results were very satisfying—big names and big fees are not



A section of the Instant Gallery at this year's Carolina Symposium.

essential to a successful educational woodturning program.

We were fortunate to have the new Civic Center in historical downtown Statesville, NC as a site for the symposium. That facility fit our needs perfectly. The demonstration rooms were large and nicely appointed, and, while we didn't have a large number of vendors, the space was just right. The vendors were very pleased as they had ample room to spread out and to display their merchandise. Many of them are already making plans to return in 2003 and to expand their inventories.

As we have learned to expect, the Instant Gallery was a huge success. It was a mini-mirror of AAW national symposium galleries with pieces of every kind reflecting extraordinary artist talents as well as high-quality craftsmanship.

This symposium was also the testing grounds for a new type of educational event we called "Break-Out" sessions. Break-Out sessions are intended to be small group instructions in the application of some particular skill. The main purpose is to provide hands-on opportunities. This year, on a trial

basis, we selected the sharpening and use of the bowl gouge as the Break-Out session topic. Two such sessions were scheduled at times where there were no regular demonstrations. Both sessions were very well attended. Everyone who wished to do so had opportunities to try out the various "cuts" as they were presented, under the supervision of an instructor. Many who had been unsuccessful with the bowl gouge found that they could do it and went home with application techniques in mind. We plan to expand the Break-Out sessions in future symposia.

Our symposium was well attended and received rave reviews from attendees and vendors alike. We were blessed with a number of very dedicated volunteers to supervise the Instant Gallery, provide and maintain equipment, provide wood and supplies, register guests, handle the clean up, organize demonstrations and to provide administrative leadership. Not the least of all, we are grateful for the financial support of the AAW. Our symposium in 2003 will be even better.

— Bill Johnston, West End, NC

LOOKING TOWARDS PROVIDENCE, RI

The 16th annual AAW symposium in Providence, RI, June 28-30, 2002 promises to be one of the best, with something for every turner.

The four featured national demonstrators selected by the Board are Michael Hosaluk, Canada; Michael Lee, Hawaii; Frank Sudol, Canada; and Al Stirt, VT.

International demonstrators will be Masaaki Hiroi, Japan; Stuart Mortimer, Great Britain; Graeme Priddle, New Zealand; and Christoff Guttermann of Germany.

In addition to a full rotation of great demos (see the full list of demonstrators and their topics on the registration insert in the back of this Journal and on the inside back cover), and our usual features --The Instant Gallery, Chapter Collaborative competition, a trade show devoted exclusively to tools and other items for woodturners, and activities for non-turners among us, this year's symposium will offer several special features.

We will try to go over the top with Tops and other toys to help a RI charity as part of our Give-Back-To-The-Community program. The charity has yet to be named, but it most likely will be a group working to assist children.

Two of our featured demonstrators — Masaaki Hiroi of Japan and Christoff Guttermann of Germany — make especially intricate tops that captivate any child and challenge every turner. Other activities are described on the next page.

Other special features include the a repeat of last year's Learn-To-Turn



Another Learn to Turn Night -- One of the highlights of the St. Paul symposium made our first color cover last Fall, as former Board member Larry Hasiak helped give a first turning lesson to Patience Stewart. The expression on her face says it all. Board members and volunteers will again set up lathes on the Thursday evening before the symposium to give people a chance to try their hand at turning and perhaps make a top or two for our Give-Back-To-The-Community program. More details will be in the next Journal and the Symposium brochure that comes with your registration packet. Photo by Larry Mart.

Night on Thursday, as shown in the photo above. Last year at the St. Paul Symposium it was difficult to tell who had a better time — the

new turners or the board members and volunteers helping them get a first hand taste of turning. There were lots of smiles and tons of shavings all around.

Some other special programs, described on the next page, cover getting your work into galleries and other topics that add to the more technical demonstrations of many symposium rotations.

If you have any questions on the symposium, contact the AAW

Design A New AAW Shirt

Want to try your hand at a little clothing design? The AAW is looking for a new shirt design. It should feature our familiar curling chip logo, and be versatile enough to look great on any type of shirt— T-shirt, Polo, sweat shirt or dress.

Send a drawing illustrating your design to Mary Lacer in the AAW office in Shoreview, MN.

SYMPOSIUM PLANS AND A CALL FOR CANDIDATES

SPECIAL TOPICS FOR TURNERS

We all enjoy our shop time, but there is a lot more to the art than just making shavings. To help you with some of these ideas, the Board is offering some special programs at this year's symposium.

1 - "Soup-to-Nuts" a question and answer session with John Jordan and David Ellsworth.

2 - "Getting into Galleries" with Jan Peters of del Mano Gallery and David Ellsworth.

3 - A rotation by Chris Weiland on various design topics.

4 - Jury slides. Several projectors will be set up to review slides from attendees. Session conducted by Linda VanGehuchten, Jacques Vesery and photographers Larry Mart and John Lucas.

This will give you a chance to have your slides evaluated by experienced professionals, both from the artist's viewpoint and the photographer's. Make sure you bring five of your best slides.

TOPS, TOPS, TOPS

Board member Bob Rosand wrote an article in this Journal describing how he makes tops (Page 22) and he will be demonstrating how he does it at the Learn To Turn sessions.

And a friend of his, Jim Hilburger of Colden, NY, will repeat a fund raiser he did at a county fair last summer, making 500 tops in a week. "I always get good crowds around my demos. I guarantee that I will make the top in less than 2 minutes or else I give the top away. I have a clock mounted on my lathe which creates excitement. I just worked the traveling woodworking show for 3 days and did not go over the 2 minutes once." Sounds like fun. More details in the next Journal

How About Running For The Board of Directors?

Each national symposium and all the activities surrounding it give you a good idea of what the AAW does to help educate, inform and organize woodturners, so it's a good time to think if you might like to become more actively involved.

The AAW depends upon an active, working Board of Directors. Each year, three of the nine positions on the Board come up for election. Each position is for a three-year term. The deadline to announce your interest in running this year is May 15.

To qualify, you:

- Must be a member in good standing for the past three years.

- Must be approved by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee this year consists of the following: Mark St. Leger (chairman), former board member Dave Barriger and a general member to be named later.

If you have questions about serving on the Board, you are

invited to discuss them with a current or former Board Member. If you are interested in serving on the Board, please send the following to the Administrator, postmarked no later than May 15.

- A statement of intent, including qualifications and reasons for applying (Please review statements published in last Fall's AAW Journal for style and length.)

- Letters of recommendation from two individuals who can affirm your organizational and leadership abilities.

- A photograph of yourself.

The Nominating Committee will review this application material and schedule interviews in late May and early June.

Candidates will be announced in the Fall issue, ballots will be sent out before the end of September, and election results will be announced in the Winter issue.

—Mark St. Leger, Nomination Committee Chair.



Tops by Dick Montague of Groton, VT. See them in color on Page 33

ALABAMA WOODTURNERS START SCHOOL

Trying to meet the demand of area woodturners for individual instruction, the Alabama Woodturners Association (AWA), established in 1998, developed a mentor program. In 1999 members who requested individual one-on-one instruction were given a contact list of mentor members willing to teach. This program was requested by more than 25 of almost 100 members of the Association, but it failed. Approximately five members used the mentor program in a year. Members were polled through a questionnaire in December 2000, and the data showed the need for individual instruction was still present but members did not want to "bother" the volunteer mentors. To meet our members' needs, some action needed to be taken.

AWA decided to revamp the mentor program into a Woodturning School. Several actions were taken to accomplish this goal: an educational grant was written for and approved



The Alabama Woodturners school classes don't begin until everyone dons the proper safety equipment.

by the AAW for two mini lathes. After receiving this grant, a member donated his shop to conduct programs and another member anonymously donated two additional mini lathes. The results of these actions allowed us to plan courses the members wanted to take by just designating their preference at an appointed time.

The central location with its three lathes, together with our four, allowed us to plan for hands-on instruction for up to seven members at a time, unrestricted by the time frames of our meeting place. We are able to teach, with the help of

volunteer demonstrators and member assistants, up to three classes simultaneously for nine members (two members brought their own lathes to participate). For example, we taught Christmas tree ornaments, basic bowl turning and bark edged bowl turning on one Saturday. On this day, three instructors and four assistants assisted nine members in their various class projects.

School classes are given a maximum of two weekends twice a year, in the Fall and Spring. More than four weekends a year is an imposition on the volunteers' efforts and ties up the member-volunteered shop. A charge of \$25 maintenance fee per class (8 hours of instruction), made payable in advance provides a commitment by the members. Required helmet safety protection is supplied, as are materials and tools for use by those members who do not have them, at no additional charge. Workshops do not begin until safety head protection is in place. Each class begins with a 10 minute safety and lathe instruction, regardless of the level of the class. It is rare to have "no-shows" or even



One-on-one instruction is an important part of the Alabama program

IF YOU DON'T SUCCEED, TRY REVAMPING



Lots of lathe time, as well as opportunities to learn by observing others, make the chapter program appealing for all levels of students.

people who come late. Most of the time people arrive early and are eager to help set up. Participation in clean up is mandatory of each class member, including the assistants. Participants are signing up for subsequent classes being held the next available session. We had five people sign up for a class on hollow turning six months in advance.

Additionally, we use this location for our hand-on all-day demonstrations with our invited non-club demonstrators at a higher charge. We provide several assistants (a

maximum of 2 participants per assistant) for all classes given in the AWA Woodturning School. This provides maximum assistance to the participants.

We believe the success of our Chapter has been because we are meeting the needs of our members. In four years we have grown from 25 to more than 120 members. During the year 2001, more than 50 of the 120+ member group have taken courses at the AWA Woodturning School. From 5 participants to 50 in one year is a 10-fold increase. To

what do we owe the success of this program? Member preferred courses of one-to-one instruction are given at a central location during designated times by invited demonstrators and by club volunteers for a minimal cost. Where else can you get personalized instruction on a topic you want to learn for \$25 a day? AWA Woodturning School has been declared a "winner" by 98% of all participants.

Our biggest complaints are that we don't have more classes, more often.

What if we would have just said "The mentor program just doesn't work because our members didn't participate?" Before you discard a program, check to see why it didn't work, because revamping might just be the key to success. To my knowledge, this is the only club sponsored woodturning school in existence. And we owe thanks to AAW for the "seed money" which provided impetus to this program and the AWA officers/volunteers/participants, who have made the AWA Woodturning School a success.

"If you first don't succeed, try revamping"

— Maurice Clabaugh
2001 president
Alabama Woodturners Guild

Make A Gift To A New Generation of Woodturners

Remember the thrill that came when you stepped up to a lathe for the first time?

You can help pass on that exhilarating experience and further the training and education of a new generation of woodturners by your financial support.

Please consider supporting the educational programs of the American Association of Woodturners when planning for your estate. These include Educational Opportunity Grants and the

Daphne Osolnik Scholarship Fund.

Though you should check every plan with your family, as well as with financial and legal advisors, the AAW encourages you to consider the following when drawing up a will and planning your estate:

- Donating a percentage of your estate.
- Donating a fixed sum.
- Donating stocks and bonds.
- Donating the residue of your estate after all other bequests have been fulfilled.

As a member of the American Association of Woodturners, you have helped define our craft with your past support.

Now you can help define the future with a bequest to the American Association of Woodturners in your will.

For further information and for answers to any questions, please contact Mary Lacer, AAW administrator at 3499 Lexington Ave. N., Suite 103, Shoreview, MN 55126
651-484-9094

FIRST FLORIDA WOODTURNING SYMPOSIUM A HIT

The First Florida Woodturning Symposium was a major success! Attendees were happy. Guest turners were pleased with the audience. Volunteers and demo assistants helped to manage the weekend activities; and vendors were pleased with the response to their wares. The organizers were kept running hard, but we expected that. We planned for about 120 attendees, but got over 170! But the crowd was genial and we were well prepared, so the wheels turned smoothly.

We met at the Lake Yale Baptist Assembly Conference Center in a remote area of central Florida, where beautiful lakefront areas are complemented by outstanding conference facilities. The Assembly could house and feed us, as well as provide a large auditorium for vendors, auction and instant gallery, and several classrooms for the demonstrations. Chuck Walker, the facilities manager, and his staff were right on the ball when we needed help. The location seemed nearly perfect.

John Jordan, Lyle Jamieson and Willard Baxter were our guest turners. Each turner worked six rotations, for a total of 18 from Saturday morning to Sunday noon.

On Friday afternoon, seven Florida AAW chapters participated in the Florida Turn-A-Round, a statewide turning competition. Each chapter selected someone to turn a Christmas tree ornament. The completed ornaments were displayed in the auditorium, and attendees were asked to vote for their favorite. The ornaments were then auctioned at the Saturday evening session, and the proceeds were given to the three chapters with the most votes. Also on Friday afternoon, attendees not involved with the Turn-A-Round had time to visit old friends, watch the instant gallery fill up, visit with the guest turners, or simply enjoy the Assembly's campus grounds.



Tennesseean John Jordan was a featured demonstrator, despite the football rivalry.

On Friday evening, the guest turners introduced themselves and outlined what they planned to do over the next two days. They also led a critique of some of the 150 items from the Instant Gallery. We were really pleased with the quantity and the overall quality of the items. When the critique was over, we had a little time left to visit with old friends and make new ones before "turning in" for the night. Woodturners must be the friendliest people in the world!

On Saturday, Willard's sessions included natural edge bowl turning from the first step to the last; turning plates and platters; and turning threaded boxes and lids. Lyle demonstrated the turning of hollow forms and the use of the laser measuring system. He also presented a thorough discussion of the use of the bowl gouge, and how to prevent catches. John's rotations included hollow turning of green wood, and how to select and cut the wood prior to turning. He discussed the nature of wood, his own inspirations, and showed slides of his personal works. All three are fantastic teachers! Their talks were warm and friendly, with a generous dose of humor to

balance their extensive knowledge of the subject. And John "Rocky Top" Jordan was inducted into the Gator Fan Club after the Tennessee-Florida football game!

After a full day of turning on Saturday, we held the auction that evening – Willard was our auctioneer. We had about 50 items for auction that netted a bit over \$2000 for the symposium. Most of the items were gifts from the attendees, but we had corporate donations as well — a gift of tools from Packard Woodworks, a number of "Turning Points" issues from The Wood Turning Center (including one with a feature article on Rude Osolnik), numerous articles from the AAW, and a number of items donated by our vendors and guest demonstrators. We would like to take this opportunity to thank both the donors and the successful bidders for their generosity.

At the end of the auction, we had a few awards to present. We announced the winner of the raffle for the \$250 scholarship donated by Arrowmont — Al Gruntwagin from North Palm Beach. Then it was time to announce the "People's Choice" winners of the Florida-Turn-A-

FLORIDA SYMPOSIUM AN EDUCATIONAL AND FINANCIAL SUCCESS

Round: 1st place — Clif Sessions of the Woodturners of Polk County; 2nd place — Jan Squires of Hands-On Woodturners; and 3rd place — Bob Elliot of Central Florida Woodturners. These folks split the proceeds that the seven ornaments brought at auction, and then Clif also got to take home to his chapter the trophy cup turned and donated by R.B. Middleton. And finally, we presented Chuck Walker, our host at Lake Yale, with a trophy cup turned by Bill Stebbins, as a token of our thanks for the use of the facility and the help he and his staff provided.

On Sunday morning, we had two more rotations by each guest turner. These were repetitions or variations of some Saturday sessions. Then it was time to fold it up and head for home! The Organizational Committee was exhausted but satisfied that we built a successful first symposium, and anxious to try to make it even better next year!

The success of the symposium can be traced to the people who gave us the benefit of their experience and their hard work. The AAW gave us a \$1000 grant for seed money to get the process started; the sponsoring chapters (Florida West Coast Woodturners, Woodturners of Polk County, and Hands-On Woodturners) each chipped in \$700. Since this was our first shot at such an undertaking, we took the conservative approach to several things. 1) We kept the number of feature turners down to three so that we could at least cover those expenses even if our attendance reached only the minimum range of our projections. 2) We put a maximum of 175 on our attendance to avoid stressing our infrastructure and volunteer pool beyond the breaking point — we were all new to this and didn't want to be facing too many crowd control issues. 3) We kept our organizational committee members to two from each sponsoring club and had regular meetings



Florida Gallery features pieces like this one by Al Caton.

(typically every 2 months) to keep everyone up to date on the progress of the various activities, and to share ideas and duties. We kept minutes and forwarded the minutes to the members of the committee. 4) We made visits to all of the Florida AAW chapters during the year to promote the symposium and e-mailed these chapters' presidents with occasional updates to share with their members. 5) We required payment for souvenir shirts & caps on the registration form so we wouldn't be left with extras. We believe that these decisions were big factors in our having an event that was not only an educational success, but a financial success as well. The sponsoring chapters each got their seed money back plus a nice bonus to put into their chapters' education funds. We also decided (and were able to) to retain \$1000 in the symposium checking account to fund the initial activities for the 2002 symposium, already in the planning stages.

Help and advice came from outside our committee as well. Butch and Pat Titus provided a wealth of information from their experience working on the AAW symposium and the Texas Turn-or-Two. The AAW staff was great also. Mary and Eunice in the front office built a mailing list of Florida turners for us, and Dave Barriger and Bobby Clemons were on site manning the beautiful AAW kiosk. Dave and Bobby also provided muscle, experi-

ence, and brains whenever and wherever these things were in short supply. Ernie Cassady, from North River Woodworking, provided Powermatic Lathes — one for a turning room, and one in the vendor area — and both were offered as show specials. The rest of our vendors provided attendees with enough beautiful wood, tools, and other turning materials to keep us reachin' for our wallets! "Thank you" Amazon Exotic Hardwoods, Baxter's Belmont Shop, Best Wood Tools, a Change of Scene, Cocobolo, Nairoc, Tropical Turnings & Woods of Florida, and North River Woodworking for your time and support in our first symposium venture.

John Jordan brought his own lathe, his own muscles and his own brain. It's too bad he wasn't a Florida football fan. Oh, well! You can't have everything! Ron Browning from Hands-On Woodturners was our secret weapon. If something didn't work, Ron was on the spot, and there was nothing he couldn't fix or get running! Holly Albright of Florida West Coast Woodturners made sure that all demo rooms were in order and that the demo assistants were in place prior to the beginning of each rotation. Gary Bates and Richard Davis set up and monitored a beautiful instant gallery and auction display. And of course, we must acknowledge the many people who volunteered for the many jobs of a symposium — demo assistants, security staff, check-in and auction staff, and on and on. The hard work of the people behind the scenes was indispensable, and we are grateful!

The end result of all the planning, hard work, and participation by all in attendance was that everyone had a good time, learned a lot, and asked us to do it again next year. We are, and we're looking forward to it!

— Ken & Judy Jackman
Dunnellon, Florida

Putting the 3-ton veneer press into gear

I make a lot of laminated bowls. To make the thin veneer sandwich that goes between the larger pieces I use my car to provide the clamping power.

Make a layered veneer press by placing a piece of 1/2-in. plywood on the floor, then a layer of freezer paper followed by the freshly glued veneer (I use 3 strips of contrasting wood) more freezer paper and another piece of 1/2-in. plywood.

Now simply drive your 3-ton veneer press on top of the sandwich and let it set over night.

— George Grooms, Knoxville, TN

Velcro Sanding Discs

I cut my velcro sanding pads using sharpened hole saws on my drill press. I also recut worn out 3-in. pads into discs that are 1 1/2-in. or smaller in size.

It seems most of the time only the first third of the edge is worn out on used pads. My wife calls me cheap but why pay for new sand paper when you don't need it?

I grind off the teeth on the holesaw and sharpen them on my grinding wheel. You can make any size sanding disc you want if you have the correct size holesaw. I always cut my discs a little larger than the sanding pad I'm going to use, so I can remove it easily. (The newly cut disc has a handle, you might say)

— Pat Bookey, North Pole, AK

Visualizing Form

I got tired of twisting my head sideways to view my piece on the lathe. So I cut a hole in a wooden box just big enough to clear my standard 3-in. faceplate. Now I can set the piece on its current foot and

view it in the normal fashion. This makes it easier to "ponder" and visualize the final form.

— Derrick Te Paske, Belmont, MA

Double-faced tape removal

Many woodturners use double-faced tape but have a problem removing the finished bowl from the faceplate. There is a remarkably simple way to do it if your faceplate has a hole in the center. Turn a wooden plug, about a half-inch thick, to fit loosely inside the threaded portion of the faceplate.

When you want to remove the bowl, take it off the lathe, place the plug inside the faceplate, return it to the spindle, and with the lathe off, slowly thread the faceplate back on the lathe.

The plug easily forces the bowl off the faceplate by pushing through the hole in the center. I pad the plug with a thin piece of cork.

— Wally Dickerman
Green Valley, AZ

Quick Chuck Jaw Removal

I cut off a 2-in section (straight) of the size of allen wrench that my Stronghold chuck uses to fasten the different jaws on. I keep that section of allen wrench shaft chucked-up in an old cordless drill (with reverse) under my bigger lathe. Whenever I need to change chuck jaws — I use my drill powered wrench. It is about three times faster than using a T-wrench.

— Gary Hubbard, Rockford, IL

Finishing Contrasting Woods

I use a lot of Bloodwood in my "Suspension Series" and it tends to "bleed" into the lighter woods such as Birch when sanding. I put a piece of masking tape over the holly and birch, then sand the Bloodwood. When finished, do just the opposite, tape over the Bloodwood and sand the holly.

You'll need to use a spray-on finish like lacquer in order to keep the colors completely clean. If you try to brush or wipe on a finish, you might pick up a red tint into the holly.

— Dave Stacy, Sugarland, TX

Sticking Faceplates

I've heard a lot about faceplates and such getting stuck on the lathe and my solution to this problem is simple. Before you attach your faceplate, cover the end with masking tape and cut out the center with any sharp object, so you can cleanly thread it onto the spindle. I find this works very well, is fast and cheap. A good quality roll of masking tape is two bucks and will last a year.

— Gordon Beaulieu, Columbia, CT

Sticking Faceplates

I tried to make a nylon washer from an Oleo margarine lid, but it didn't fit very well. While trimming the margarine lid washer, I noticed some surplus 1-in. electrical PVC pipe left over from installing an underground telephone wire in my

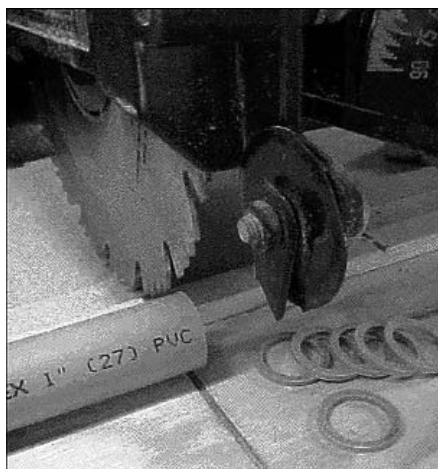
Tip of the Hat for a Good Idea



Best Tip Award

The hat for the Tips editor's favorite tip in Spring issue goes to Dave Stacy, Sugarland, TX, for his idea on how to finish woods with contrasting colors, above.

We all like turing tips and learn a great deal from what others have discovered. How about sending in some of your favorites?



Sawing out PVC washers

shop. PVC pipe measurements are based on the inside diameter of the pipe. The 1-in. inside diameter PVC fit my 1-in. spindle perfectly. I placed the PVC pipe against the fence of my radial arm saw and sliced a 1/8-in. section that I used as a washer between the lathe head stock spindle and the chuck.

The PVC pipe washer worked very well to keep the chuck from freezing and was strong enough to prevent vibration problems encountered with some softer nylon materials. Those people fortunate to have a lathe with a 1¹/₄-in. spindle can use 1¹/₄ in. PVC pipe to make their own homespun spindle washers.

— *Cliff Whitehead, Nashville, TN*

Send In Your Tips

Share the ideas you have discovered in your shop. And become eligible for our Best Tip Award and a free AAW ball cap. Send your tips with your name and hometown to:



John Lucas
Tips Editor

John Lucas
PO Box 1292,
Cookeville, TN
38503.
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Teaching and demonstrating With Bob Rosand

1. Never teach anything that you are not an expert at. If you are uncomfortable with the subject, the audience will quickly pick it up.

2. Don't be afraid to laugh at yourself when you make an error/catch while demonstrating. The audience really does like to see that the "experts" are human and have bad days. When I have a catch I generally explain that these are for demonstration only, but then go on to explain why I had that catch.

3. Handouts. Make sure that you have sufficient handouts that cover the subject at hand.

4. Make sure that you have all your demonstration material and tools at hand. I remember reading the evaluation of one demonstrator at a past symposium. It was noted that "all we saw was his butt as he bent over looking for another tool."

5. Learn how to talk and demonstrate at the same time. Probably one of the biggest complaints we get about demonstrators is when a demonstrator turns for a moment or two and then shuts off the lathe and talks for four or five minutes. For better or worse, the majority of our membership wants to see "chips fly."

6. Do projects or turnings that can be completed in one rotation. My preference is to complete one or two projects in one session so that the members can see the entire process. The work of some turners does not lend itself themselves to completion in one session. At the very least let the participants know that in advance so that they have the opportunity to stick it out or to attend another rotation.

7. When you're teaching or demonstrating, keep in mind that while you are the expert, you need to "get down" to the level of the participant(s). It's easy to show them

how good you are, but not as easy to give them the feeling that they can do what you are doing. Our job as a demonstrator/ teacher is to help them see possibilities and to improve not to blow them away with how good we are.

8. Repetition. This applies mainly to hands on workshops. Don't be afraid to show the students how you do something more than once.

9. I have a nasty habit of doing "too much" for my students and need to work on letting them do more for themselves. This really applies to sharpening. It's so much easier to touch up a tool and then hand it to the student, than it is to allow them to sharpen it for themselves. If they can't sharpen or turn any better by the end of the day, have we really helped them? I try to "taper" off as the day goes on so that by the end of the day, they do most things by themselves.

10. In conducting hands on workshops, one thing I have to be very useful is to have a set of "student" tools. While the student may have lots of tools, they often don't have the tools specific to what I am trying to teach them. Over time, I have put together a kit of tools and have painted or dyed the handles red. This not only makes the sessions go smoother, but at the end of the day, all I have to do is call for all the tools with the ugly red handles. It's a little extra work, but it works for me!

11. It's definitely extra work, but I try to bring all the turning stock needed for my hands on workshops and charge a materials fee. All too often student supplied material is just not adequate.

12. Don't cram too much into one session. Whether it's a hands on workshop or a demonstration, I'd rather slow down a bit and make sure that I cover what I am supposed to than to do an inadequate job on lots of material.

AL STIRT

A turner who's learned life's lessons well

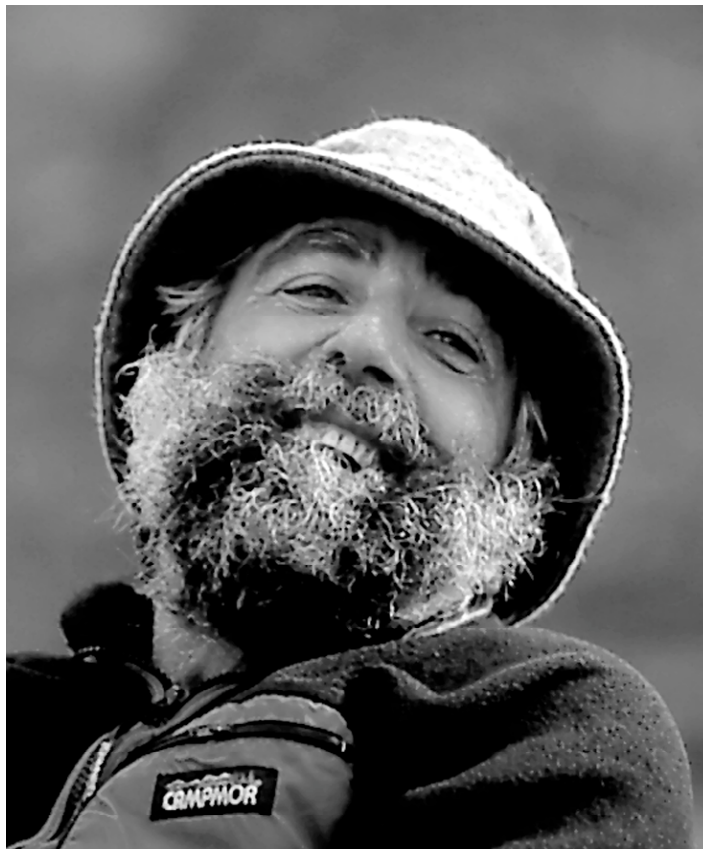
KEN KEOUGHAN

IF I HAD TO CHARACTERIZE AL STIRT, I couldn't. On the surface is a bearded, cheerful, gnome-like fellow with a twinkle in his eye, a quick smile, a lively step or two, and ... poof he's off bubbling on down the stream of his life as lively and cheerful as ever. But this nagging voice keeps saying, "Wait! There's more here. Much more."

Stirt seems to me to be a man who has learned life's lessons well and thoroughly through the long laborious path of observation, trial, error, trial, improvement, practice, practice, trial, more practice, polish and ... then go forward a little bit. His values, his goals, his strivings, indeed his persona bear the same sturdy texture and polish as stone worn and tumbled in a Vermont stream.

As we watch Al demonstrate, cut wood on a lathe, it isn't effortless yet it is never hard. There'll be vibration and chatter, if that's what the wood brings to it, but it is under control and quietly, quickly takes shape. In fact the process as he practices it, is just right! And that's true whether he is turning, carving or painting. Stirt is a Master. And he's earned it... a bowl and a platter at a time.

What better place for Al Stirt to start than in Brooklyn where he was born in 1946. In time the family moved to New Jersey. Al was going to school, getting along with the other kids and just plain growing up. But life wasn't necessarily easy. His father was a union organizer. A life of passion and pitfalls at a time of frequent



Al Stirt, away from the lathe, reveling in one of his non-turning passions -- whitewater canoeing. Photo by Dave Brown. All photos of finished pieces are by Al Stirt. Some color photos of his work are on Page 31.

labor/management turmoil.

By the time Al Stirt got to Harpur College he had absorbed the idea of "fairness." "It was an essential part of my upbringing." But he was also aware of "the system" and the fact that it was not particularly "just." He had decided that he wanted a life that was not part of that "unjust system." We're talking the latter part of the 60's, tie dye, free love and hair tangled in the fabric of life. He studied psychology and earned a bachelor's degree. On graduation he chucked the idea of graduate school and took off in the car of the times, a VW beetle, to Mexico with three friends.

On his return to the United States three things happened in short order: 1) he bought a paperback edition of Geoff Peters' book on basic woodturning; 2) he bought a Toolcraft lathe; 3) he moved in with his brother in New Hampshire and started turning wood.

"I made candlesticks and small bowls and started selling them in craft shows in the Boston area", he says with a reflective smile. In 1976 he participated in the ACC Regional Show in Rhinebeck, New York. At that show Paul Roman, the founder of Fine Woodworking, and eventually of the entire Taunton Press empire, asked Stirt to write an article about woodturning. Roman himself took the photos and the article ran in *Fine Woodworking* in the Summer 1976 issue.

Enter Albert LeCoff. LeCoff saw the article and invited Stirt to come to Philadelphia and "teach or do a demo." By 1976 LeCoff and several others had already begun to attract annual gatherings of woodturners. (See *American Woodturner* Spring 2000 pp 16-18). So Stirt appeared at the George School gathering and was immediately seized with misgivings. "There were people there that really knew what they were doing: Dale Nish, Palmer Sharpless, Steven Hogbin and Frank Cummings just to name a few."

"And here I am, this little guy from Vermont who is making bowls and candlesticks and platters. I was so intimidated that I set up my demonstration to be in the evening after dinner.

The Quest for Pure Form: Work by Al Stirt



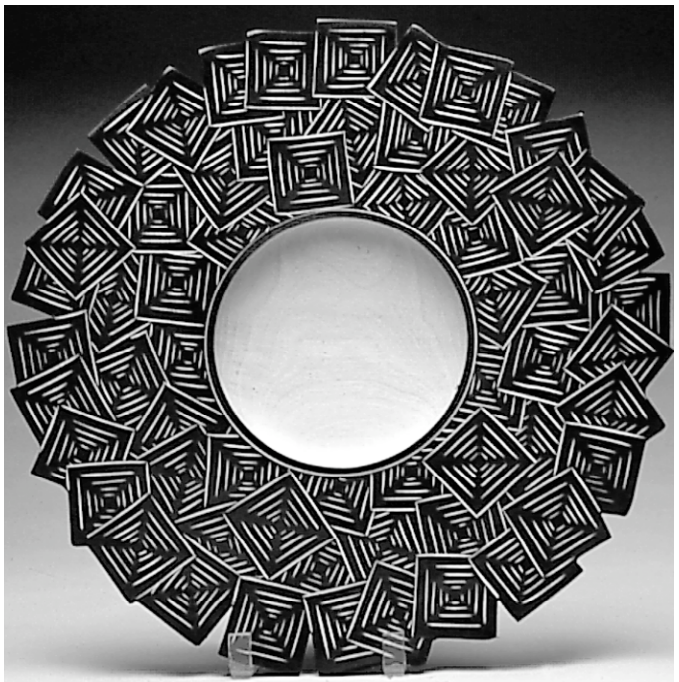
Pine Needle bowl, 9-in.-dia., Maple; 2001.



African Series, 9-in.-dia., Maple burl; 1997.



Maple bowl, 16-in.-dia.; 1999.



"Crowded Square" bowl, 16-in.-dia., Maple; 1996.

Stirt is the finest designer of "pure forms" in woodturning today. "The beauty of Al's treatment of the geometric forms and patterns in his bowls and platters is a reflection of a man who has found his 'voice' and is in total unity with his work." — David Ellsworth

I thought that would minimize the attendance and thus minimize my embarrassment. But it didn't work. They seemed to like me and said nice things about my work despite my insecurities."

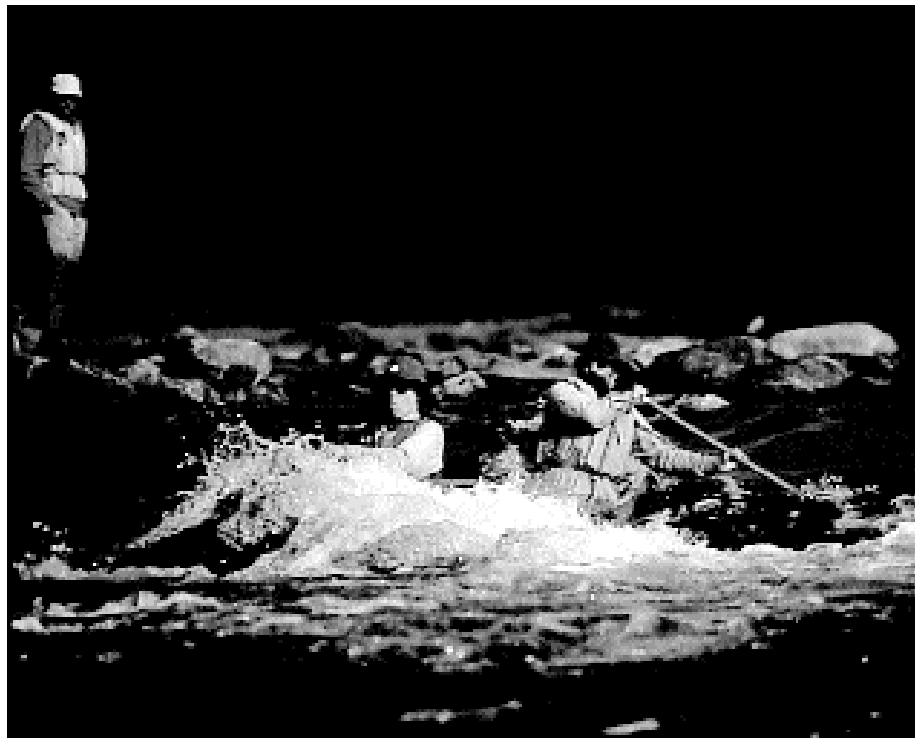
"Albert LeCoff had an incredible effect on woodturning. At a time when turners were few and we were all isolated, he brought us all together. That really helped the field. And he doesn't seem to get as much credit for it as it warrants. The synergy and energy that these gatherings released was very wonderful and very important."

Vision and Concept

Subsequently Sandy Blain invited him to Arrowmont in 1978 to participate and teach in an event called "Woodturning Vision and Concept". Again all or most of the "known" woodturners were there. It was a genuine success as attested to by the fact that it was out of this gathering that the American Association of Woodturners took shape and was formed.

Stirt was on the first board of directors and later was named AAW's "person of the year" and was given an Honorary Lifetime Membership. This title was awarded in 1997.

Through all the years from then until now Al has kept on keeping on.



Al and Wendy Stirt relaxing in Labrador. Photo by Dave Brown.

He has worked earnestly and steadily and accumulated countless awards. His work is in the White House, the Smithsonian, the American Craft Museum, the Mint Museum of Craft + Design, The Detroit Institute of Arts, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and, of course, the Wood Turning Center. In addition Stirt has work at the Arizona State University Museum of Art, the High Museum of Art, the Mobile Museum of Art and the Arkansas Art Center. Stirt's work is also in virtually every serious private collection.

What do Alan's peers say? David Ellsworth says, "Stirt is the finest designer

of 'pure forms' in woodturning today. The beauty of Al's treatment of the geometric forms and patterns in his bowls and platters is a reflection of a man who has found his 'voice' and is in total unity with his work."

Iona Elliott, writing in the British magazine *Woodturning*, says, Alan Stirt (is) one of the greatest Masters of pure form working today."

Sandra Blain, former Director of Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts says, "Alan has had a major impact on the rise of woodturning internationally."

Ray Leier, co-owner of del Mano Gallery, arguably the most influential marketer of wood as art today says, "Alan's approach to texture and balance set him distinctly apart." The Collectors of Wood Art recently presented Leier and his partner Jan Peters a Lifetime Achievement Award for their contribution to the wood art field at del Mano during the last 28 years.

No article about Alan Stirt would



Fluted bowl, 13-in.-dia., Butternut; 1990.



Stirt in a familiar role: teaching, above, to a group at a workshop sponsored by the Maine Woodturners and right, critiquing a vessel. Photos this page by Malcolm Ray.

be complete without a few words about his techniques. He works on a Oneway 24/36 lathe with a three horsepower motor. Occasionally he uses the lower outboard extension for large diameter pieces. He can go to 44 inches with this extension.

For carving fluted bowls he uses a homemade amalgam of reciprocating stone cutting tools into which he inserts wood carving gouges. The stone cutting tools have a very short "throw" and thus yield a very controllable cut. For smaller carving cuts such as his geometric pattern pieces he uses electric carving tools both rotary and reciprocating. When painting pieces black in order to carve a "reveal" into the wood he uses flat black acrylic paint. The patterns are then traced onto the pieces using watercolor pencils. After the carving the pieces are given a protective coat of

water-based satin luster polyurethane sprayed on. He usually uses two to three coats. A final fun tip, he uses "fun foam" bought at craft or discount stores such as Ames, for gaskets on his drum chucks for the vacuum system. This material is inexpensive and adheres well with waterproof contact cement.

Again, the nagging voice

But what about that nagging voice that keeps saying, "Wait. There's more here. Much more!"

He and Wendy, his wife of 14 years, love to take canoe trips. But this is not "up the lazy river by the old mill run..." This is three to seven weeks in the wilderness of Labrador. All provisions, all camping gear, all medical supplies are transported by canoe. It is easy enough to get to their jumping off place. You drive 11½

days out of northern Vermont and, take a 12-hour train ride, then get someone to drive you to a ghost town that used to be mining camp. After that... well you get the picture.

Want to know how far off the beaten trail they go?

The last time they had a serious medical problem, a badly dislocated shoulder in another member of the party, the help parachuted in out of the Hercules, stabilized the injured person, and then called in the helicopter to evacuate.

Who paddled his load on the way back, I wonder?

So ... we're back where we started. If I had to characterize Al Stirt I couldn't.

Ken Keoughan is a turner and writer in Friendship, ME, and a contributing editor at American Woodturner.

LARGE SEGMENTED VESSELS

The achievement makes the risk worthwhile

DAVE RAMSEY

MOST WOODTURNERS EXPERIMENT with larger vessels as they gain experience in their craft. Many collectors and galleries also favor larger vessels, so creating them can involve both good design and business sense.

When a craftsman begins turning large vessels, he or she will quickly encounter a number of problems not found in turning smaller works. For the purpose of this discussion, I'm defining "large" as any vessel over 18-in. diameter. In this article, I will discuss the experience of turning a 24-in. diameter vessel.

Most of the new-design lathes today allow for large diameter turnings. Oneway and Vicmarc swing a 24-in. diameter vessel over the lathe bed. Woodfast allows 22-in. and the Nichols lathe a whopping 42-in. Many professional build their own lathes to an even larger diameter capacity.

In my article in the Winter 1998 issue of *American Woodturner*, I described the techniques for turning tall segmented vessels. One principle described in that article also pertains to the turning of large diameter vessels. In both cases, the farther the turning point is from the faceplate, the greater the instability of the cutting action. As instability increases, the chances for a bowl-wrecking catch grows. In turning a large diameter piece, the force on the vessel and its faceplate increases in proportion to the square of the diameter. Thus, the leverage on a 16-in. radius cut is four times as great as an 8-in. radius cut. In a large diameter vessel, it is possible to bend a $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. thick-steel faceplate if a catch occurs. When this happens, the vessel is almost always ruined and an exploding turning can inflict severe injuries to the turner. I will detail some techniques to mini-

mize similar dangers with large diameter turning.

The speed of turning is another important consideration in large diameter vessels. As the radius of turning doubles, so does the diameter of the vessel. The effect, at a given speed, e.g. 1000 RPM, is that the rate in feet per second passing the tool's cutting edge will double as the radius of the turned piece doubles. Therefore, it is wise to start large turning at a slow spin rate and cautiously increase speed until optimum cutting performance is attained.

Determining safe lathe speed

Dale Nish of Provo, UT, has a formula to determine the maximum safe turning speed for a vessel. The maximum diameter of the vessel in inches times the revolutions per minute (RPM) of the work piece should be in the range of 6000 to 9000. For example, a 10-in. diameter vessel should be turned at a maximum of 900 RPM ($10 \times 900 = 9000$).

Another problem related to large vessels is the destabilizing effect of rotating an off-balance work piece. Unevenly balanced vessels of large diameter will vibrate violently at high speed and make it impossible to obtain an even cut. Use great care in aligning the segments of a new layer to the vessel to assure an even distri-

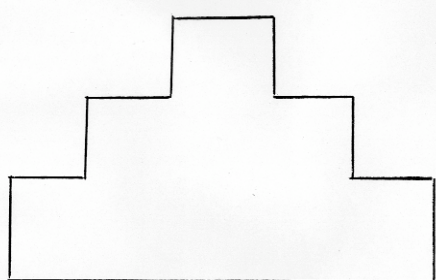


Dave Ramsey with his segmented bowl Thundercloud.

bution of weight when the piece is rotated for the cut. If a layer is glued to the lower substrate slightly off center, it may be necessary to turn at a slow speed to rebalance the vessel. For the 24-in. diameter piece described in this article, the maximum RPM is 375 (9000 divided by 24 equals 375). As a general rule, turn any large vessel at the slowest speed possible that will obtain the desired cut.

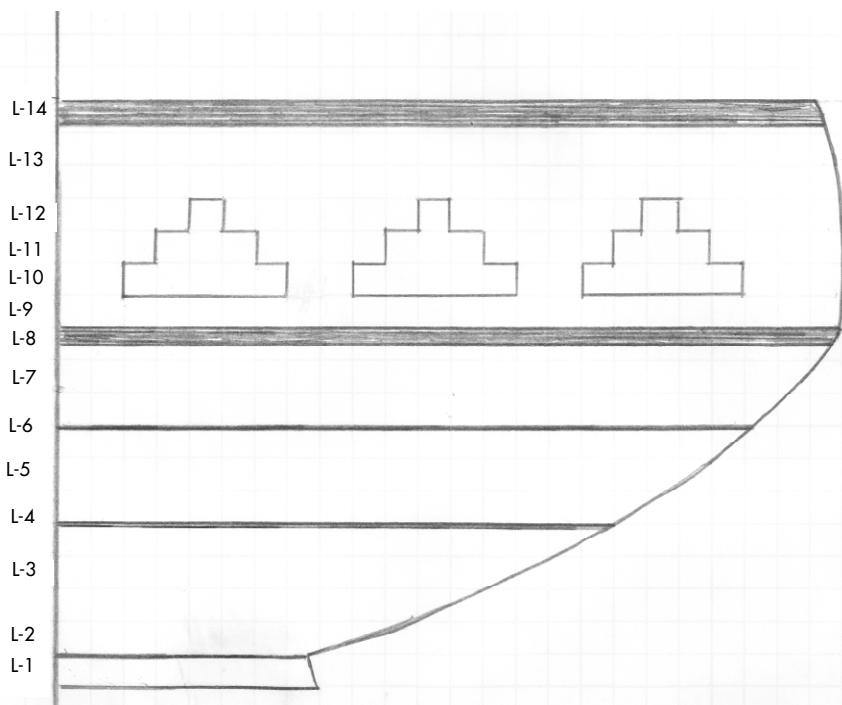
Let's describe the making of a "Thunderhead", a 24-in. diameter vessel as shown above. This bowl had both horizontal and vertical segments as shown in the drawing on the next page. It has 12 constructed and two single-disc levels. I began this project with a 7-in. disc of $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. hard maple fastened to a 6-in. steel

Anatomy of Thunderhead



Layers of Vessels:

- L-1. 4/4 Cherry, solid disk
- L-2. 1/8-in. Ebony
- L-3. 8/4 Cherry/solid disk
- L-4. 1/8-in. Ebony
- L-5. 8/4 Cherry, eight segments
- L-6. 1/8-in. Ebony
- L-7. 8/4 Cherry, eight segments
- L-8. 1/4-in. Ebony
- L-9. 5/8-in. Cherry
- L-10, 11, 12. Cherry/Bocote segments fitted to each space around 12 Thunderhead symbols.
- L-13. 4/4 Cherry
- L-14. 1/4-in. Ebony



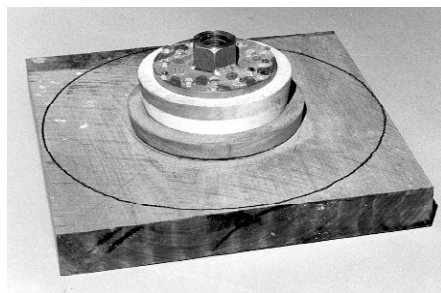
Drawings and Photos by author.

faceplate with 18 1-in.-long lag screws. This was a very secure foundation, as shown below, for the five pounds of wood soon to be added. A sacrificial disc of $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. by 7-in. poplar is then glued to the maple. Poplar is a good wood for this use since it is inexpensive, has sufficient strength and is soft enough to cut off with a parting tool when the vessel is to be removed from the faceplate. Next L-1, a 1-in. by 8-in. disc of

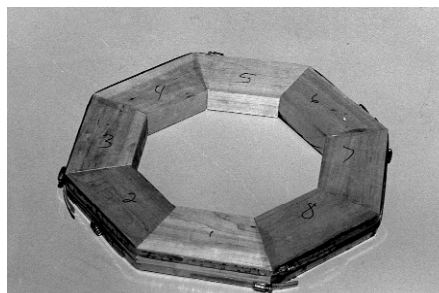
cherry is glued to the sacrificial disc. This is the bottom layer of the vessel. It is turned round and level. The next level, L-2, is a $\frac{1}{8}$ -in. thick layer of ebony pieced together around the perimeter of L-1 and glued under the pressure of a veneer press. Turn it round, then add L-3, a 16-in. square by 2-in. billet of cherry to L-2 as shown in the first photograph. Note that I did not cut the billet to a circular shape until just before the turning

began. This prevented the end-grain, which was wax coated by the supplier, from drying and possibly checking before turning began. L-3 is then turned to conform to the plan. Its top surface is flat turned to insure a tight fit with the next layer, L-4. The next level is $\frac{1}{8}$ -in. thick ebony. These thin pieces are cut from one-in. stock and fitted so that there is a slight projection on the exterior to allow for the expanding size of the

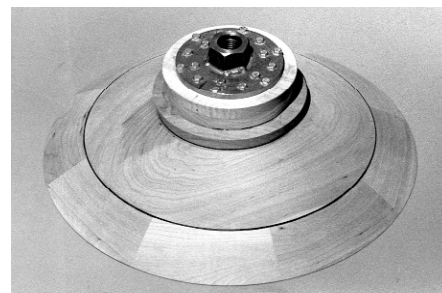
ESTABLISHING THE BASE — Shaping and joining the bottom five layers of Cherry and Ebony.



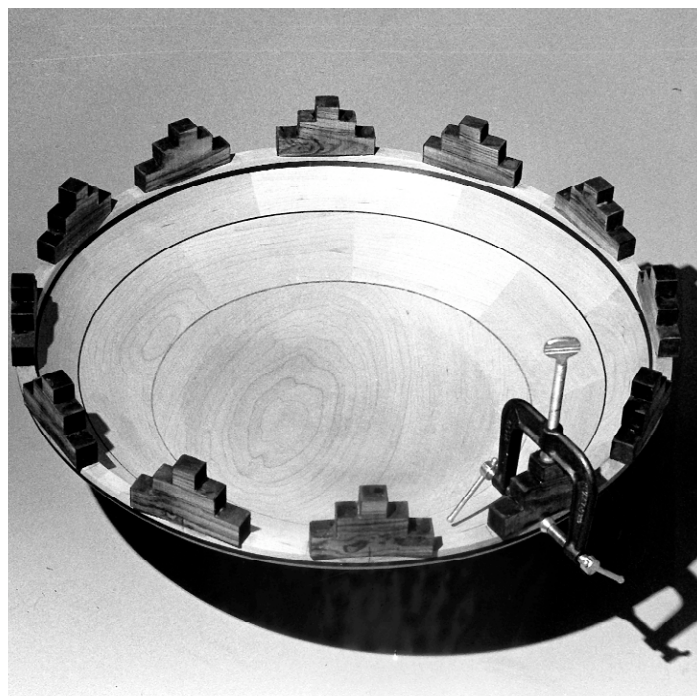
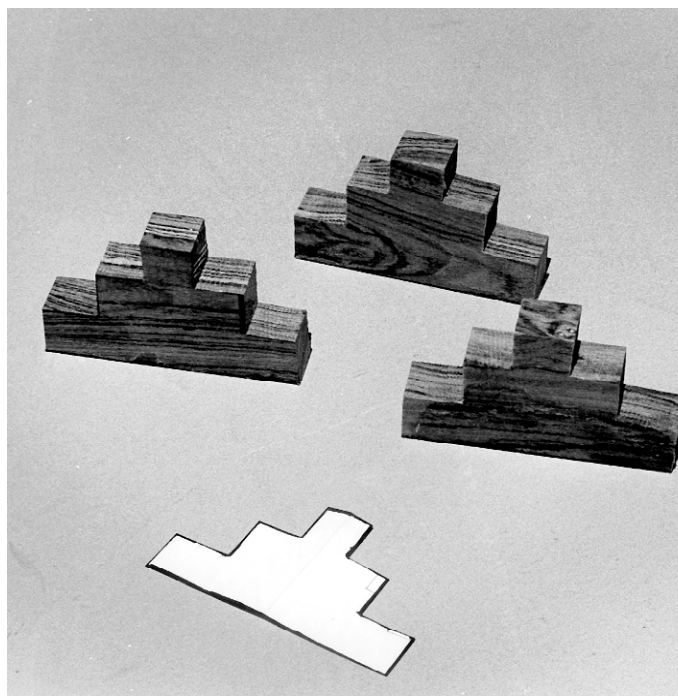
1. Glue the base to a 16-in. billet of 2-in. cherry



2. Level L-5 is assembled from 2-in. cherry stock.



3. L-5 is turned to the dimensions in the plan.



Above left, Thunderhead symbols cut from 1-in.-thick bocote, following the pattern shown on the previous page. The symbols are individually glued to the vessel, above right.

vessel as its height increases. At this point the wall of the vessel is about $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. thick.

The next layer L-5, is the first major segmented addition. It is constructed from eight pieces of 2-in. thick by 4-in. wide segments of cherry. The segments are cut at 22.5° angles after determining the exact length from the plan. I use a Dubby Cut Off Sled available from In-Line Industries, Webster, MA (506-949-2968). A precision cut is a must for tight joints. Note in the photograph on the previous page that the glued pieces are pulled tightly together by using hose clamps on both the top and bottom of the assembly. I prefer Titebond glue.

After two hours, release the hose clamps and flat turn L-5 on one side before gluing it to L-4. For details on how to flat turn a layer, see my article in the Winter 1998 issue of *American Woodturner*. The new level is then glued to L-4 and placed in a veneer press. After two hours drying time,

turn L-5 to conform to the plan, flat turn the top edge and add L-6, another layer of the ebony veneer. Turn the ebony to conform to the vessel's outline and prepare the second layer of cherry segments in a similar manner to L-5. When L-7 is attached, a $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. thick cherry layer, the vessel should be about $23\frac{1}{2}$ -in. in diameter as shown in the drawing.

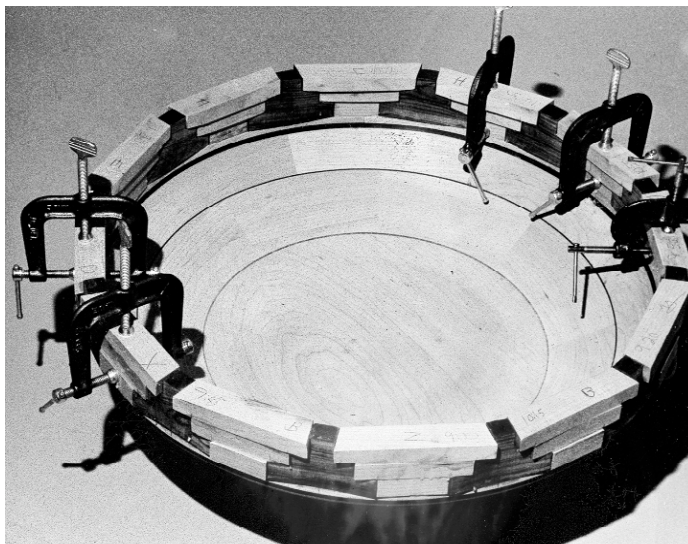
At this point, the vertical extension of the bowl begins. Attach L-8, a $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. thick ebony layer to the vessel with no outward expansion. This is followed by L-9, a $\frac{5}{8}$ -in. thick layer of cherry, also extending upward, not outward.

Making Thunderhead symbols

The turning's name "Thunderhead" comes from the next layer, consisting of 12 Navajo Indian thunderhead symbols shown in the photograph. These are cut from 1-in.-thick bocote. The bocote is then edge clad with $\frac{1}{32}$ -in. black veneer available from Constantine (800-223-

8087). The pieces are then spaced evenly and glued to L-9 as shown above. The use of edge veneer clamps as shown, above, assures a tight fit. The spaces between the thunderhead symbols, L-10, 11 and 12 are then filled with cherry pieces which are hand fit to fill each space as shown at the top of the next page. This is not as tedious as it might appear. Once the first piece at each level is fitted, the other 11 can be cut to almost the same dimension with a minimum of fitting for each opening. L-13, a 1-in.-thick layer of cherry is then attached and followed by L-14, the $\frac{1}{4}$ -in.-thick top layer of ebony.

Finish the turning by sanding with 3-in.-diameter discs of sandpaper in a rotary hook-and-loop holder. These are available from Craft Supplies USA, Provo, UT 800-551-8876. I begin with 80-grit paper, followed by 100, 120 and 220. My finishing begins with two coats of tung oil to bring out the color of cherry and bocote followed by 12 coats of General Fin-



Cherry pieces are fitted and glued into the spaces between the Thunderhead symbols, at left. The completed vessel is shown above, right.

ish's High Gloss Urethane available from Woodsmith Shop, Des Moines, IA (515-255-8979).

What are the special problems encountered in turning a vessel of this diameter? As indicated earlier, the problems encountered in turning smaller vessels are magnified in large vessel turning. There are some other conditions which don't occur with smaller vessels. First and foremost, think safety at all times. A large vessel has the weight and can have the momentum to inflict a serious injury to the unwary. Wear a protective face shield, not just safety glasses. I wear the 3-M Air-Mate system from Enviro-Safety Products (800-637-6606) which combines a hard hat, face shield and air blower filtration unit. Good tool use is very important. With both small and large turnings, a sharp tool is necessary. In turning a large vessel, a disastrous catch is much more likely to occur with a dull tool. If one tool is not cutting properly, try another. Proper tool selection is much more important as the vessel diameter increases. Experience will quickly rule out the wrong-shaped tool. Often, a half dome scraper chisel is better than one which is less curved. Never use a lot of pressure on the chisel. This is an invitation to a catch. In a large

turning, the sheer mass of the wood creates a centrifugal force that resists slowing down quickly. Until I appreciated this, my large vessel began to unwind from the spindle when I shut down the motor too quickly. The result was the need for me to catch a 5 pound, 24-in. bowl spinning at 400 RPM as it flew off the spindle. This was a character building experience! I now slow down large turnings over a 10-second-period to prevent centrifugal force from loosening the turning from the spindle. It is also wise to tighten the faceplate to the spindle with a wrench before turning begins. Chatter is an annoyance with smaller vessels, but can more easily become a catch on a large turning, because the magnitude of the chatter movement increases directly in proportion to the diameter of the turning. As the turning gets to size in excess of 22-in., chatter is unavoidable with some woods. Ebony and hard maple are two woods that chatter easily. If the turner cannot find a tool which will eliminate chatter, consider sanding away the unwanted wood with a 3-in. rotary disc in the Power-Lock System sander using 60 grit paper, available from Craft Supplies USA. This device is very aggressive and the wood will be quickly reduced. Be aware that this

type of sanding produces clouds of dust. Wear protective breathing equipment and provide some means of exhausting the dust out of the shop. Finally, be careful carrying these large turnings around your shop. Because of their large size, it is very easy to bump into something which will dent that perfect finish and require that you do time consuming and often frustrating repairs. When the piece is finally completed, put it somewhere where it will be safe from the knocks and scratches of every day life.

All woodturning has some risk, but turning large diameter constructed vessels is not for the faint hearted. The possibility of personal injury is increased and there is always the potential of suddenly turning an almost completed work of art into a pile of expensive worthless scraps.

It has been said that the risk and reward are closely related. One of the most rewarding aspects of making a large diameter vessel is the great sense of achievement of mastering a difficult level of our craft. This factor makes the risk well worth the undertaking.

— Dave Ramsey is a retired medical researcher and turner in Rio Verde, AZ

TURNING TOPS

Have fun and help a needy charity

BOB ROSAND

On one of my visits to the Western New York Woodturners, I received a couple of bags of rainbow-colored wood from a chapter member. The pieces were about 4-in. long and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ -in. diameter. He told me the pieces were cut offs from a yo-yo factory. They were too short to be of use to the yo-yo factory, but ideal for a woodturner making weed pots, ring holders and spinning tops.

Tops are an especially good project right now. They are always fun to make, but this year we are asking everyone attending the AAW annual symposium in Providence, Rhode Island in June to make and donate tops to a local charity. At Thursday night's "Learn-To-Turn" session, board members will also be available to help you make a few tops and other projects. For more details, see Page 6

You can see color photos of some of my tops, and some tops made by Dick Montague of the Woodchuck Turners of Northern, VT, on Page 33.

To get you started making tops, I'd like to describe how I made the simple spinning tops shown in the color photos. My tops are made from some of those odd pieces of colored wood.

You can also make tops from any other hardwood you might have around. You'd be surprised at how many attractive tops can be made from even small scraps. I save all my odds and ends from other jobs and on those days that I feel a bit obsessive/compulsive, I glue these scraps up into larger usable pieces. I cut these laminated chunks into pieces $\frac{3}{4}$ -in.-square by about 4-in.-long.

This size block gives me enough material to make the handle used to spin the top, as well as the pointed section on which it spins. The only other part is the disk, which provides the centrifugal force to keep the top spinning.

Making the top

I made the disk for each of the tops shown in the photos from old yo-yo bodies. I sliced them into pieces about $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. thick.

Safety warning

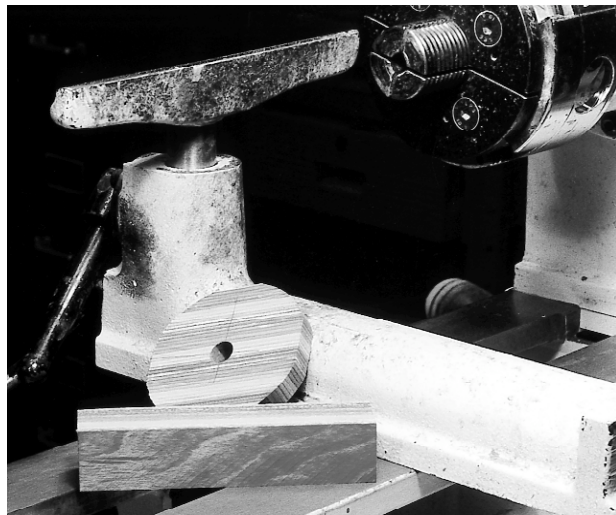
A word of caution is needed here. Be very careful if you cut the circular slices on a band-saw. Since the pieces are round, they can catch and ruin your whole day. Check the manual that came with your bandsaw or other source for information on how safely to cut round stock on a bandsaw. Lately I've begun to glue the slices to larger waste blocks, so that I can cut them safely on the table saw or the chop miter saw.

Once you have the segments cut, mark the center and use the drill press to bore a $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. diameter hole through the center of the disk. Here again, you might consider a jig to hold the piece while drilling. I've cut my fingers a few times when the piece caught and started spinning while I was boring out the center hole.

Turning the spinning stem

Next take the $\frac{3}{4}$ x $\frac{3}{4}$ x 4-in. piece of colored wood you previously prepared and chuck it between centers on your lathe.

Turn one end, the end toward the tailstock, to a cylinder that just fits the $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. diameter center hole in the disk and extends about $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. through it. I



Top Kit: Making tops doesn't require much: a lathe, a wooden disc (you'll find likely candidates in your scrap pile), and a rectangular block. The rest is up to you. Have fun as you shape the disk, the handle and the point on which the unit spins.



epoxy these pieces together using gap filling epoxy just in case the fit is not perfect. So far I've had no failures.

Once the epoxy joining the disk and stem dries, we're ready to turn. Place the top in a spigot chuck and bring up the tailstock and lock it in place. This centers the top and provides support. (You could turn these tops between centers, but I find it easier to support one end with the jaws of my spigot chuck. It also allows me to use the long point of my skew to get a sharp point for the top to run on.)

Using a roughing out gouge turn the disk perfectly round, then use a



After turning the rectangular blank to a cone shape, above left, the author epoxies it into a hole bored in the disk and begins to refine the shape of the top. The stem protrudes only a half-inch below the disk. Photos by the author.



Rosand shapes a small bulbous end on the top of the stem, above left, then refines the shape of the point.



The final shape of the point on which the top spins is done after the tail stock is removed, above left. Then a skew is used to refine the top and part the piece from the lathe.

$\frac{3}{8}$ -in. spindle gouge to refine the shape.

I leave about $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. of material at what will be the point of the top and then turn the handle. At this point, I carefully sand and then use a skew with its long point down, to make a sharp point for the top to run on.

Next, I remove the tailstock. Again, using the long point of the skew down, I cut the top from the lathe, clean up whatever imperfections might remain, and finish. Any good clear finish will do: use your favorite.

That's about it, except that I should say again that you don't need colored

wood to make tops like these. Any good hardwood will do.

Bob Rosand is a turner and teacher in Bloomsburg, PA, and on the AAW Board of Directors. He will be turning tops at the Providence, RI symposium.

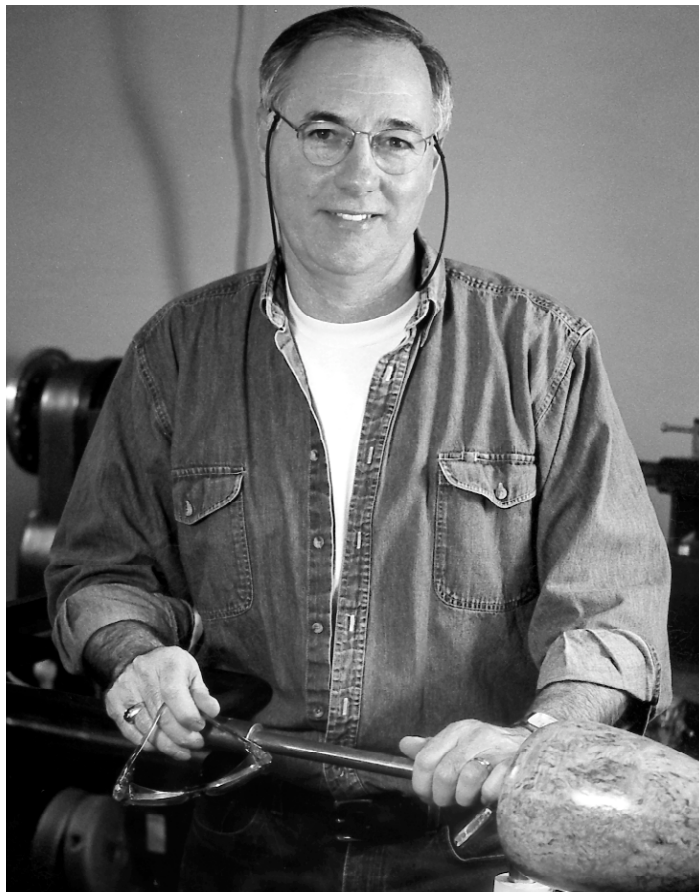
RED HOT LASER MEASURING

Accurate, fast and fun, but how do we use it?

LYLE JAMIESON

LASERS, LASERS, LASERS, everyone is talking about lasers! Lasers, really nothing more than a device for generating an intense, highly focused beam of light, can effectively measure wall thicknesses of hollow forms. Lasers have many more uses and provide exciting technical short cuts to understanding problems such as measuring the bottom of bowls while using coring systems, or showing the shape and depth of the inside bottom contour of any turned form, even through the waste block area.

The laser is the latest advancement in turning techniques to sweep across the country. It is the best new aid to the turning world since the stabilized boring bar systems came into wide usage. There are many methods of measuring the wall thickness of hollow forms, many have been around for quite some time. I didn't get too excited about the old measuring systems because they had limitations and I



Lathe artist and teacher Lyle Jamieson thinks laser measuring systems are the best turning idea since boring bars. One of his sculptures is on Page 33. Photos and drawings by the author.

didn't want to work within any set of parameters that would limit my creativity.

My laser system can be used to measure anything, any place, any wood, any thickness desired, tiny Christmas ornaments or huge vessels. It doesn't impede the tool movement to get into those hard to reach places you have been dreaming of creating.

In the beginning

As far as I know, it all started when Dave Thompson of Seattle, WA, published an article in December 1999 describing his idea for sus-

pending a laser light above his boring bar to see where the cutting tip was. See the original article at the following web site: www.fholder.com/Woodturning/article7.htm. After reading the article, I called Dave and told him how excited I was about using and teaching with the laser. He told me to have fun and encouraged me to let the whole world see how much fun it is to use. Thank you, Dave!

I realize how many turners are making their own systems. My students have been thrilled with the laser's simplicity. So I will outline the techniques I have found that work.

In the companion article on the fourth page of this article I discuss the fundamental ideas behind all wall thickness measuring no matter what caliper or measuring methods you choose.

The whole idea of the laser is really simple. You

set the laser light so that the beam of light passes by the cutting tip at the distance you want your wall thickness. The distance between the light and the cutter is your wall thickness, as shown in Figure 1, below left. While the light shines on top of the hollow form, the cutting tip is hogging away wood inside the vessel. When the laser shines around on the side of the vessel, slow down and watch your cutting pace. As the light no longer shines on the turning, it skips off the edge of the form and shines on the floor — You stop cutting! The set distance between the light and the cutter is now the de-

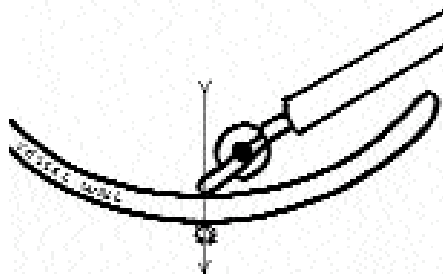
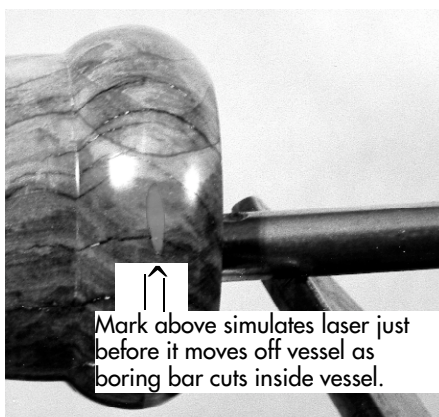


Fig. 1: Distance between the cutter inside the vessel and the laser outside equals the thickness of the wall.



Mark above simulates laser just before it moves off vessel as boring bar cuts inside vessel.



The author's laser system, above. As the tool moves, the laser moves in the same way. The beam is set to desired wall thickness, as shown at top left. When the desired thickness is achieved, beam slips off vessel, as shown at lower left.

sired wall thickness. Go back lightly now and smooth away any tool marks without reducing wall thickness any further.

For best results you need a stable platform like the Sudol, Jamieson or McNaughton system, or one of the shop-built variations, such as the one by Steve Sinner and Dale Hupp in the Fall 2001 *American Woodturner*. The two tool rest platform for boring bars is preferable but not essential. It should be possible to set up a laser on a hand held boring bar, although I have not seen the laser used that way.

Setting up the laser

To set up the laser light, position the laser above the cutting tip so that the light will shine down vertically near the boring bar cutting tip, as shown in the photos, above, top left. Lock down all supporting hardware so that all you have to move for an adjustment is the bracket holding the laser. Now all future adjustments can be made easily by moving or swivel-

ing the laser holding bracket at the end of the tubing that supports it.

Preparing for measurements

To prepare for measuring with the laser system the first step is to set the boring bar at the angle you need to get through the little entry hole and put the cutting tip in a position to cut. Note the angle of the boring bar assembly. Pull the boring bar out of the vessel and support the boring bar on the front and back stabilizing tool rests at that same angle that is needed to cut. If you set the laser at one boring bar position and go into the vessel and cut with the boring bar swung around at a different angle you will get a false measurement. With the boring bar supported on both tool rests you can now position the laser to measure perpendicularly, or at 90°, through the wall. I use the back of one of my business cards as a set up aid. I use the lines on the card as an aid to show me where to adjust the laser light. The line drawn near the edge on the busi-

ness card is my wall thickness and the arrow line indicates the direction that would measure perpendicularly through the wall. The star is the laser position, as shown in Figure 2 on the next page. Now place the card along the outside of the hollow form where you will need to hollow and at the angle needed to measure perpendicularly. Move the card from the work, keeping it at the same angle, and place it next to the cutting tip. Move the laser holding bracket to shine the laser light dot on the star on the card. The cutting tip is inside the vessel, the distance between the two is the desired wall thickness. You are ready to hollow.

Watch the perpendicular

As with any of the other measuring methods the measurement must be close to perpendicular to the side of the vessel. The position of the laser in relation to the cutting edge must be kept perpendicular. The laser needs to be moved periodically depending on the shape of the vessel.

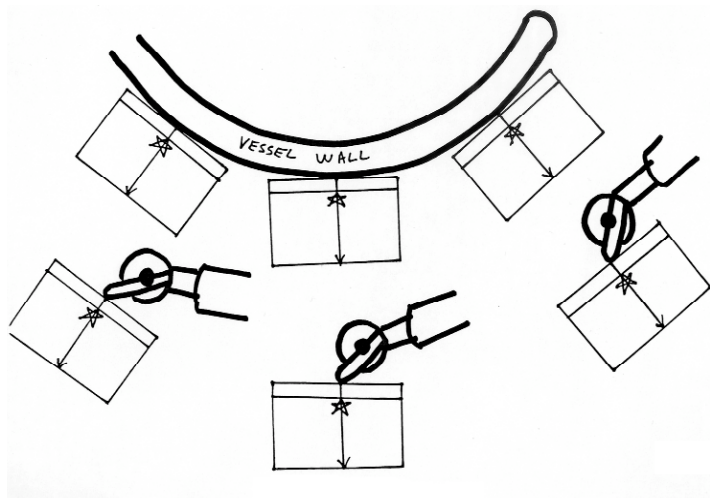


Fig. 2: Lines on a business card help line up the laser to measure perpendicularly to the vessel wall.

(See Figure 2 for an example of the positions I would put the laser to measure accurately.) The setting of the laser with the business card

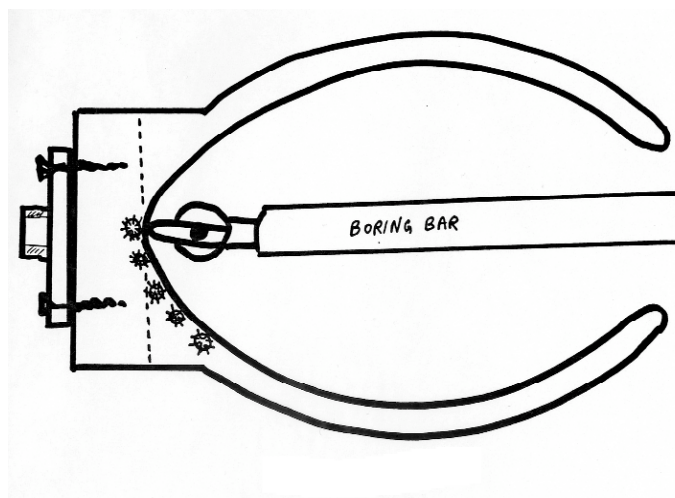


Fig. 3 : Dotted line indicates depth of vessel. Spots indicate laser light as it sweeps across the bottom inside contour.

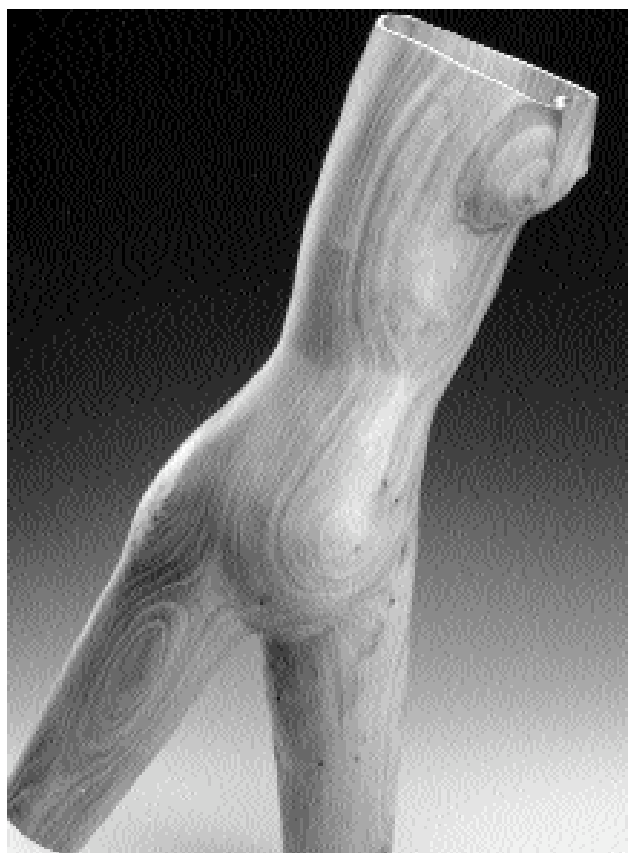
helper only takes a few seconds with one hand on the laser holding bracket and one on the business card. Now measuring is easier, faster, a lot faster, and accurate, plus a lot more fun. Maybe it's not fair for those using the laser, since they can do hollow forms in half the time. Does that mean they make twice as much money and have twice as much fun?

Let's explore even more exciting uses for the laser. There is the inside bottom of the vessel to deal with, which is hidden in the waste wood of the face plate or chuck. You can reset the laser to do bottoms so the gap between the laser and the cutting tip is zero, as shown in Figure 3, above right. Now with the cutting tip down in the middle of the bottom of the vessel you can see exactly where the inside depth is.

Draw a line on the waste block at the edge of the laser. That's the bottom!! No more attempting to measure the inside depth and extrapolate it somehow to the outside. Is that cool or what! No more cutting a hole in the bottom when you finish the foot of the form. Hang on! It gets even better!! With the laser still set with zero gap you can watch the light as you cut the bottom contour inside the waste block area. As you make a cut inside the vessel the light will flow from the previously measured center of the bottom to the previously measured side wall thickness where the waste block ends. (See spots in Figure 3, above right)

Watching the light move on top of the waste wood allows you to make any shape bottom you want to create. Flat bottoms, cone shape bottoms, or just a nice rounded bottom are all a piece of cake. Take care not to cut in the previously measured wall because the laser will be at the tip and not set to measure the wall again.

Laser systems available from Cutting Edge (800-790-7980), Packard (800-683-8876), Craft Supplies USA (800-551-8876) or in Canada from Jacques Coulombe (877-866-5799).



Jamieson's *Go For the Gold*; Chinese elm, 27X18X10.

A More Traditional Approach For Measuring Wall Thickness

Recently it was my honor to demonstrate at the Central Florida Symposium. The event was a great success thanks to Ken Jackman and the support of the Florida clubs in that area. I was showing my new laser measuring system and demonstrating tips and techniques for successfully using it. I took the opportunity to poll the participants to see if my theory on measuring wall thicknesses was accurate. What I found, by my very unscientific poll, supported my theories that: (1) not everyone uses calipers or other measuring aids besides the finger method, and (2) a majority of turners have used some kind of measuring device in the past and still blown through the side of a vessel or bottom of a bowl.

The assumptions I have drawn from my poll are: first, I assume most turners have tool control and know where they are cutting and second, I assume many turners blow up pieces because of measuring errors.

So I believe many turners have tried to measure wall thicknesses, and failing, have SETTLED for the finger method which leads to uneven wall thicknesses and heavy, thick bottoms. Fear lets the wood remain in control. Fear of blowing up a piece dictates how you turn. I prefer the fun and satisfaction of being in control. Fear is stifling to creativity and is certainly not fun. How do we rid ourselves of fear and get in control? It's easy to say but not so easy to do.

In a hollow form or deep sided bowl the standard calipers won't reach the bottom contours. I have used the bent wire method taught by David Ellsworth with great success. The bent wire method has become the foundation for all the other calipers I use. To use the wire you simply set the gap at the end of the wire at a constant measurement. Let's use a $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. gap for this example. If my desired wall thickness is $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. and we place the wire ends perpendicular to the wall we are measuring we have a gap or air

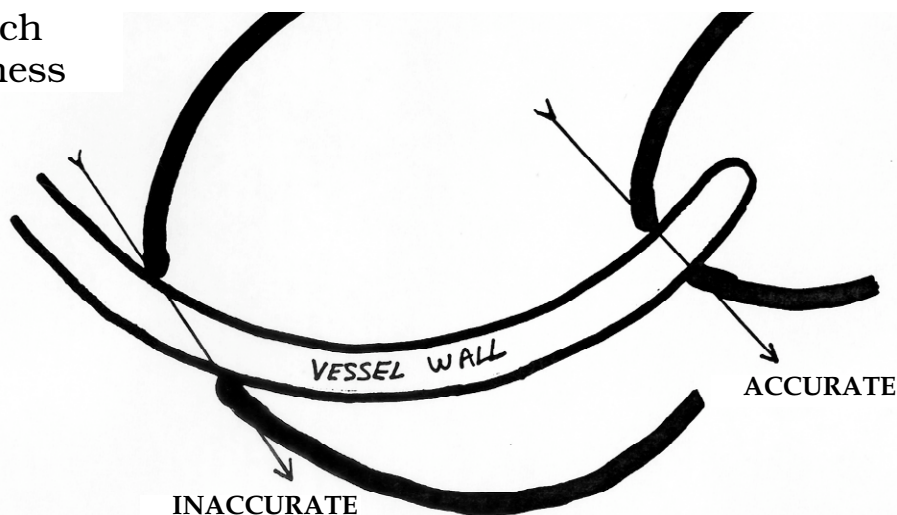


Fig. A: The author says the hard part is to measure at right angles to the surface. Calipers on the right, above, will measure accurately; those on the left won't.

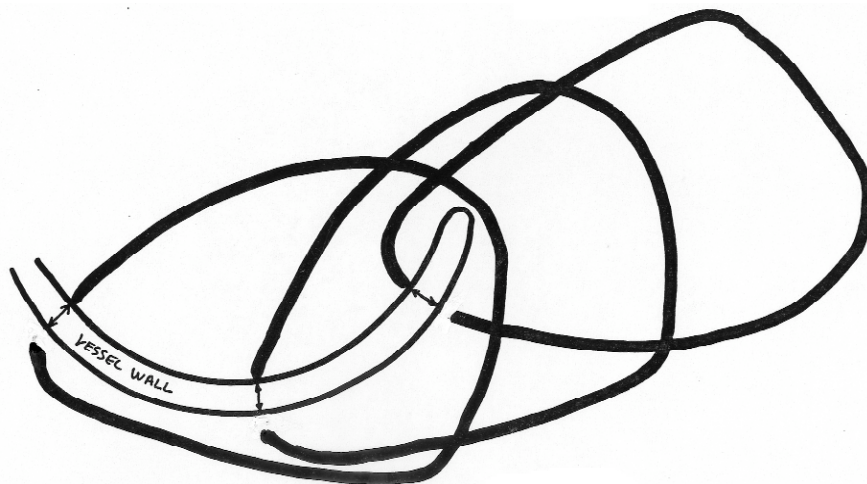


Fig. B: Bend the wire to whatever shape is needed, as shown in the three examples above, while still keeping the angle of measurement at 90° .

space of $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. wood plus $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. air gap equals $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. wire gap. The hard part is to keep the measuring at right angles or 90° to the surface at the point where the measurement occurs. If you measure at an angle through the wall thickness at more or less than 90° you will get a false reading. (see figure A) I use this "watch the air space" method on all the different kinds of calipers I use, such as standard, figure 8, or Stewart calipers. Using the double ended calipers you tighten down the adjustment screw and set the calipers at the thickest portion of the vessel. Then move the caliper back and forth along the wall surface and watch the gap of air on the outside of the vessel. Very small vari-

ances can be detected and this is important when thin wall thicknesses are the goal.

The success in measuring accurately is dependent on measuring straight through or perpendicular to the wall. (See figure B for an example of wire measuring.) Notice the wire has been flipped over and swept in an arc in order to measure 90° to the wall. The nice thing about the wire is that you can bend it in any shape needed to measure where you need to measure. But how do we measure the waste block area?

See this exciting breakthrough in the laser article.

Lyle Jamieson is a sculptor and teacher in Traverse City, MI.

CHRIS WEILAND

Penn Run, PA — A New Spin on a Playful Process

The word "design" can paralyze many turners, but to Chris Weiland it's more like an invitation to do better and more personal work. He will try to show us how at the 16th annual AAW Symposium in Providence, RI, June 28-30, 2002. His description of his program is intriguing: "Design play and inventiveness are both a part of turning, especially when it comes to designing tops. The secret design process will be discussed and demonstrated, featuring component shaping/arrangement, offset axis carving, inlay/detail assembly and balancing methods." Examples of his work are shown on these two pages, along with some quotes from his artist's statements in his portfolios and published materials. After reviewing his portfolio, along with a section of a sketchbook, I definitely want to know more. Dick Burrows, editor.



"The Spin top as an art form" is one of the alluring phrases in Weiland's description of his symposium program, but he doesn't give a clue as to what the "Secret Process" might be.





"The spin top (a toy) has been a topic of interest for me for quite some time. From both a design and conceptual standpoint, this little object has been a central figure that has played an important role in my work as an artist and furniture maker for the past several years. In the most subtle way I have drawn inspiration from its obvious nature as a toy and its refinement as a simple form of design. Playful, energetic, and centrally focused, the top is a visually dynamic object that represents some of the most basic qualities that I like to explore and capture in my work."

— Chris Weiland



If you'd like a preview of some of Weiland's ideas check out his article "Component Arrangement and Assembly: A Design Process" in the June 1989 Issue of American Woodturner.



DAN BRANIFF

Ontario, Canada.

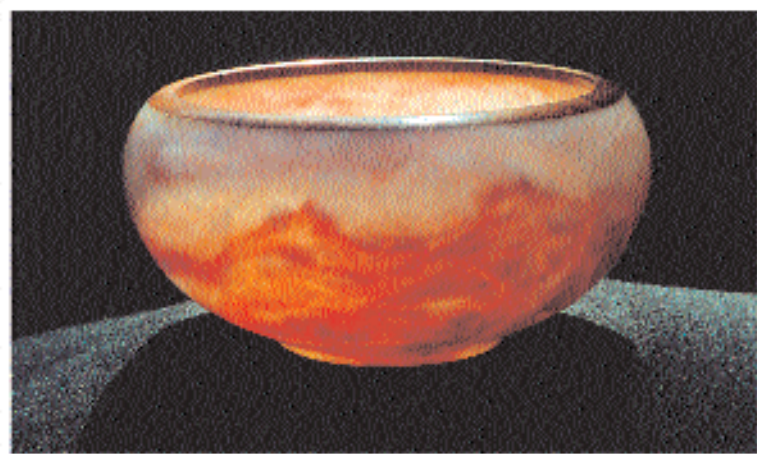
Dan has written in the Journal about some of his techniques: Eggshell Texturing (Spring 2001) and Epoxy Inlay (Spring 2000). Here are some more examples of his artistry.

Photos, right, from top to bottom: "Seabs", lidded boxes, cherry and maple, 4-20 cm. Multi-axis hollow vessels to be arranged to suit the whimsical moods of their master.

Alabaster Bowl with inlaid cherry rim and base, 11 cm. diameter X 5 cm. high. Turned to 4 mm thickness for maximum translucency.

"Black Corral I", cherry, 30 cm. diameter X 12 cm. high. This is the first of his Black Coral Series. Turned to 3 mm. thickness, painted on the outside, carved and pierced with an air-powered dental drill.

Photo, bottom left: "Deep Sea", birch, 15 cm. diameter x 58 cm. high. Part of his Black Coral Series, inspired by night snorkeling at Grand Cayman Island. Turned to 2 mm. thickness, painted black, carved and pierced. Images are of sea life: tropical fish, man-o'-war jellyfish, turtle, starfish, snail, seahorse and variety of seaweed.



AL STIRT

Enosburg Falls, Vermont.

Al Stirt will be one of the featured demonstrators at this year's 16th Annual AAW Symposium in Providence, RI, June 28-30.

Ken Keoughan in his profile of Stirt, beginning on Page 14, calls Stirt a real master, who has worked very hard to master his art "a bowl and a platter at a time."

Renowned turner David Ellsworth calls Stirt the finest designer of "pure forms" in woodturning today. "The beauty of Al's treatment of the geometric forms and patterns in his bowls and platters is a reflection of a man who has found his 'voice' and is in total unity with his work."

Photos, right, top to bottom:

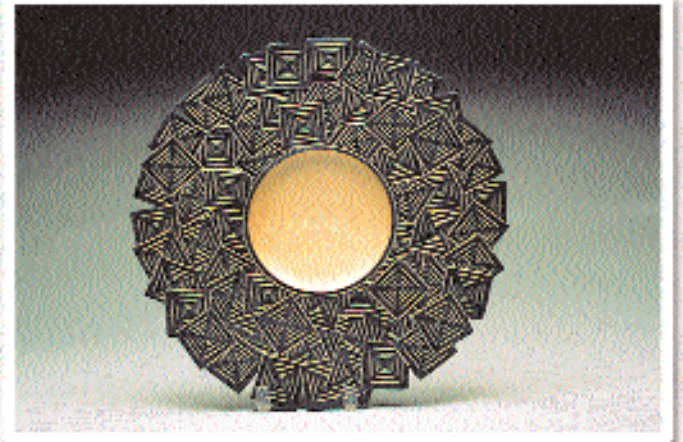
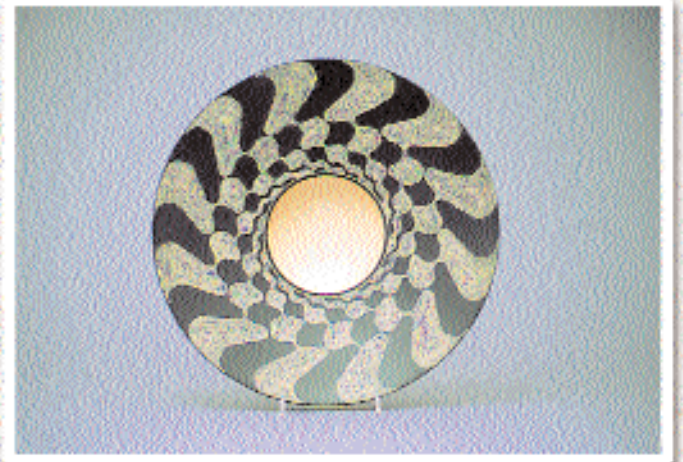
Fluted bowl, butternut, 13"-diameter

"Transforming Wave", maple, 16"-diameter

"Crowded Square", maple, 16"-diameter

Photo, bottom left:

"Pine Needle Bowl", maple, 9"-diameter



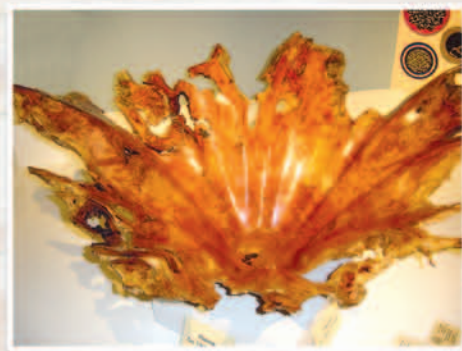
MEMBERS GALLERY

Displays from turning events in California and Ohio.

The Spirit of Wood was a big hit at this year's annual California State Fair. We reported on the event in the last issue, but had to wait till now for the color photos. Photo top right: Series of turnings including ornamental turned boxes by Gorst du

Plessis (bottom shelf 3rd and 4th from right) and Jon Sauer (top shelf, 3rd and 4th from left.). Photos, bottom, left to right: Platters by featured artist Diana Kwan. Three pieces by Malcolm Tibbetts: "For the King", Beech and White Vase and Vase of

Drawers. "Firedance Series #9," lacy redwood burl, by featured artist Gary Stevens



"Turning 2001", the three-day annual symposium sponsored by the Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild, Oct. 19-21, 2001 was also too late to make the last issue's color section. Below are photos from the group's Instant Gallery taken by Andi Wolf of Columbus, OH.

More photos can be found on the chapter's web page:

w3.one.net/~ovwg/index.htm.

If you'd like more information about OVWG activities, contact Earl Choromokos, president, 513-771-5908. or e-mail echoromo@fuse.net

Photos, top row, left to right: "Iris Bowl", Andi Wolf; Three pieces by Dennis Montville; Vessel by Dickinson Gray.



Work From The Mailbag And Authors In This Issue.

Photos, counter clockwise from top right:: Tops by Dick Montague and Robert Rosand. See tops for charity article on Page 7; two bowls of Alaskan soapstone by Leslie Barenholtz, of Palm Beach Gardens, FL.; "Yellow Segmentation", satinwood with zircote trim, by Ed Zbik of San Diego, CA; Two pieces from the exhibit "Masters of Wood", curated by Bill Hunter, March 1-30 at Gallery Materia in Scottsdale, AZ. "Tulip Rinconada", Brazilian Tulipwood, by Bud Latven; "Deeply Involved & Incised," Sycamore, by Robyn Horn; and Torso by Lyle Jamieson. See pp 24-27 for Lyle's article on using lasers for measuring the thickness of a vessel wall.



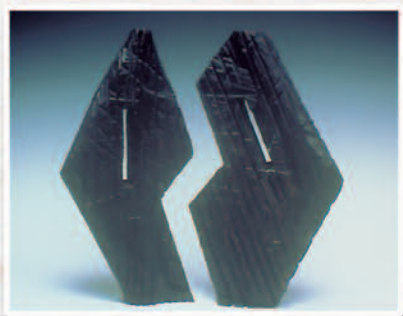
Dick Montague



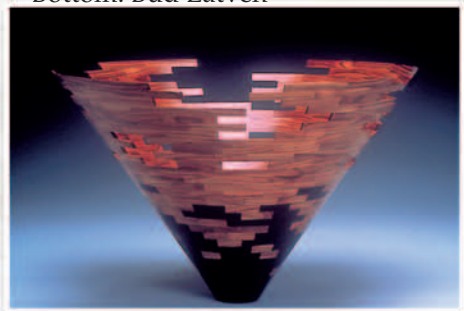
Lyle Jamieson



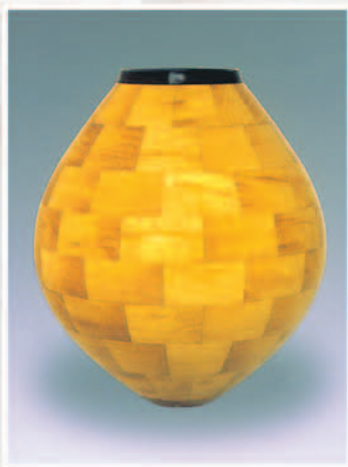
Robert Rosand



Top: Robyn Horn
Bottom: Bud Latven



Ed Zbik



Leslie Barnholtz



TAKING PHOTOS FOR PUBLICATION

A do's and don't's for editorial photography

LARRY MART

LONG AGO, IN A FARAWAY UNIVERSE, I made my living producing photographs for advertising and catalogs. That experience led to my photography demonstrations at the San Antonio and Akron AAW Symposiums and a few pictures, including some of the first color shots, published in *American Woodturner*, which brings us to this article.

Many of you now are looking toward taking color photos for the Journal and I have been asked to offer a few suggestions to guide you. To illustrate my points, we are publishing both good and not-so-good photos.

All the photos are unretouched, just the way they came from the camera. Graphics programs like Photoshop can do wonders in improving photos, but it's best to get the shot right from the start. The better the initial photo, the better the chances that the published photos will be good.

It doesn't take expensive or complicated camera equipment to make good photos of woodturnings or turning events, just a little instruction and a bit of concentration (Sounds like woodturning, doesn't it?). Most modern 35mm cameras and many of the digital still cameras on the market are up to the job.

My film cameras have been resting on the shelf for the past few years while I've been playing with digital. Many publications will now accept digital files. Whatever your equipment, be familiar with it and comfortable using it. My photos in the past two issues of *American Woodturner* were all taken with a 3 megapixel digital camera.

Also be familiar with the requirements of the publication you are submitting to. *American Woodturner* is primarily a black & white magazine with a few pages now in color. Check with the editor to see if he would

What You Are Shooting For:



These photos by Larry Mart are published as he took them, without modification. Every photographer has personal preferences on things like backgrounds, but the goal is to produce clear photos that showcase the work. Work by Trent Bosch, above; Rude Osolnik, below.



Some common Photo Problems



The author calls the photo above the "Driver's License" picture! Direct flash and poor background are less than flattering.



In this shot the background is very distracting and the harsh sunlight is too strong.



This bowl doesn't come close to filling the frame. Enlarging the small image will reduce the quality of the photo.

rather have you send slides, prints, negatives or digital files on a floppy disc or a CD. Most of our photos are shot in color, but will usually convert to black & white without problems. When in doubt, I suggest using color print film for maximum versatility.

To increase your chances of being published remember these important points: your pictures must be sharp and well-focused. An out-of-focus or blurred photo will certainly be rejected. Use a tripod whenever possible and focus carefully. Fill the frame with the subject, but leave a little "wiggle" room for the editor to re-

crop the image if necessary. Bracket exposures (shoot some lighter and darker) and choose the best after you see the results.

When using a digital camera, photograph at the highest resolution the camera will allow. You never know when your picture might be used on the cover and they will need all the quality possible from that image. Most digital images need to be "tweaked" with regards to color and contrast. Almost all computers now have a photo editing program that will accomplish this task, or if you're not comfortable doing this yourself let



Proper framing in the camera creates a better printed image which more effectively shows the turning.

the magazine do it for you.

You have to control the lighting and shadows to produce the best photo. When you are shooting static, individual turnings on a tabletop, you'll find that a light tent, like the one on the next page, is an effective way to produce soft, pleasing lighting. A frame made of wood or plastic pipe covered with a white translucent fabric makes a great tent. Shine the photofloods through the fabric to diffuse it and soften the shadows. Be sure your subject separates from the background, for example light colored wood against a dark back-



The David Ellsworth vessel, at left, was photographed in a simple light tent the author made from PVC pipe draped with white, translucent fabric, which softens the light for a more pleasing portrait effect.

ground and dark wood against light. In a color photo, the colors themselves will provide separation but when converted to black & white everything becomes shades of gray and the subject and background might blend together.

Beauty shots of turnings usually fall into two categories: the equivalent of your driver's license picture or a

fine portrait. Strive for the portrait. Use a plain, neutral background that will not distract the viewer from the subject. Gray paper or poster board works very well as a background for turnings. Avoid bright background colors; they will only distract the viewer's eye away from the subject.

When photographing live events,

such as demos, use your camera as an excuse to sit in the front row, or better yet, roam around and photograph from different angles. Again, the pictures need to be sharp and well focused, so I recommend using flash, if it's allowed. Flash can provide stronger lighting, better contrast, and a little extra "snap" that looks better in print. Always ask the demonstrators beforehand if the flash might disturb them. And be courteous to those around you who also want to see the demonstration. There's nothing worse than a pain-in-the-butt photographer blocking someone's view.

Shoot lots and lots of pictures and edit later. Extra film is the cheapest insurance you can buy. One of the best ways to learn is to study the pictures that are published in the various magazines and books. Every one of them passed inspection by an editor.

— Larry Mart of Carrollton, TX, shot photos for our first color section last Fall.

Larry Mart on Photography

Larry demonstrated his light box at the San Antonio symposium. I've found Phil Pratt's report valuable, so we are printing it again.

Larry Mart's session on "Photographing Your Work" finally cleared away a lot of the misconceptions and problems I was having after many attempts to take good slides of my turnings. Larry showed how to make a simple photo tent and diffuser (similar to the one Steve Meltzer described in the June '96 Journal) from PVC pipe and a bed sheet. Adding some aluminum reflectors and clear photoflood bulbs, it's possible to put it all together for less than \$75.

But his real nuggets of wisdom dealt with "shading down" the background by adding a baffle between the light tent and the seamless background paper, and brightening dark areas by bouncing light off of white cards and aluminum foil. "Every time you add another light, you add another shadow," warned Larry.

Mart also provided sound advice on getting the right depth-of-field (go for f22, unless you're purposefully trying to throw part of your object out of focus) and "bracketing" exposures to get a range of lighting contrasts to choose from.

—Phil Pratt, Greensboro, NC

RUDE OSOLNIK

Memories and Tributes

RUDE'S FRIENDS

Rude Osolnik, one of the world's master wood turners, died at his home on Poverty Ridge, in Berea, KY on Nov. 18, 2001. He was 86 and died of congestive heart failure. Funeral services were private, but the family is planning a memorial service for 11:30 a.m., April 17, 2002 at Union Church in Berea.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Rude and Daphne Osolnik Scholarship Fund, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, 556 Parkway Drive, PO Box 567, Gatlinburg, TN 37738

— Del Stubbs:

Rude and I go back to the 70's in the George School Symposiums in Pennsylvania. Later, when I was teaching at Arrowmont, he would often come to pick me up and we would go off for adventures into the back country, meeting mountain craftspeople. He seemed to know interesting people everywhere. Wherever we went, he would bring his wonderful laughter and stories and out would come theirs. Nobody loved people more than Rude. One thing about him that I have never met in another human being, is the completeness of his listening. When you would be speaking to him, he was so focused on your words and thoughts, that unconsciously his mouth would be forming your words as you spoke. He listened with a capital "L".

I remember one infamous weekend at his place. A dozen woodturner friends of Rude's came for a gathering at his place. One of the adventures that Rude dreamed up for us was to dig out this huge ancient lathe and motor from a shed, and get the twelve of us all turning on a log at the same time. The lathe and motor, like Rude, was "older 'n dirt"!!! Somehow we got power hooked up to it, way in the back of another shed where there was a breaker. Once most of the crew got



Rude in his shop. Photo courtesy of Del and Mary Thouin-Stubbs.

the log started spinning by hand, a relay of yells would get to me in the far back shed. I would throw the breaker — the motor groaned, sparks would fly, and the log would slowly get up to speed. It wasn't long before a dozen turners and their gouges proved too much for the ancient tar-soaked motor. It would get so hot that the oil and tar would start to drip and then billow smoke so that sometimes you couldn't see the log! Rude was more than happy to sacrifice an old motor for a good time!

Later that evening this wild and boisterous crew was gathered in his living room, filling it to overflowing - it was getting late and Rude needed to go to bed (he woke up with the roosters). So ... out comes a jug of Rude's famous North Carolina moonshine. It was incredible — in five minutes you could have heard a mouse.

He knew how to get some sleep. Rude was still laughing about that years later.

One time when I was visiting, I asked him, "Rude, how in the world do you turn those birch plywood bowls — everyone knows plywood is cussed abrasive stuff, you must have a secret?" He said "Sure, I've got one glued up — let's do it." Well, in classic Rude style, he picks out what must have been the biggest block of birch plywood he ever glued up. With my eyes bulging, I carried this in to the far back shed where his biggest lathe was. While he was mounting this thing, he handed me a dozen of his bowl gouges and said "Stubbs — go sharpen 'em." Now my mouth is hanging open too! A dozen gouges? The grinder, of course, was away in a different shed. When I got them tuned up and ran all

the way back to where Rude was, he had the bowl blank mounted. He took the first gouge and dove in. Sure enough, that edge didn't last long. In 10 minutes he handed me six dull gouges, and with that Rude twinkle in his eye, said "Stubbs — I thought you sharpened these?!!" It took most of the day — as fast as I could sharpen six gouges and run them back to Rude (5 or 10 minutes), he would have six more dull gouges waiting! We laughed our way through that entire bowl. It turned out beautiful, of course. I learned Rude's secret. Pure undiluted tenacity.

— Mary Thouin-Stubbs

As much as Rude loved woodturning, he equally loved people, loved to tell stories, and loved to laugh. One of Rude's favorite stories was about a time after he was on his own. Del came for a visit and woke up earlier than anyone. He thought he would treat this house of bachelors to biscuits and gravy. Del found sausage in the freezer for the sausage gravy part, but after digging through cupboards for a half hour looking for a biscuit recipe, Del gave up and had to rely on memory. Del also couldn't find any baking powder, but he did find baking soda. Figuring that baking soda must be weaker than baking powder, Del doubled what he figured was the right proportion of the baking soda. So — biscuits were happily mixed and baked — and the household of bachelors was im-

— David Ellsworth

Throughout the turning world, we often hear the names; Bob, Ed, Mark, Mel, Dale, Stephen, Michael, Richard, Ken, Liam...to name only a few...and everyone pretty much knows who you mean. But mention the name Rude, and suddenly people seem to light up, almost as if they knew him personally, even though he may have been just part of some distant conversation. The term 'affection' comes to mind.

I met Rude in the late '70's in Philadelphia when we juried the Gallery of Turned Objects show for Albert LeCoff. We commented later that neither of us had had such an easy time jurying a show, because we both instantly agreed on everything we saw on the screen — yeah or nay. It was a wonderful way to connect with this man who was old enough to be my father, but didn't act like one; who had forgotten more about turning than I would probably ever learn; and who, in my mind,

pressed, at first, with Del's culinary efforts. When they dove into their breakfast, a collective "crunch" was heard — teeth wouldn't penetrate the surface of the rock hard biscuits. Del had baked something akin to those baking soda 3-D maps we used to make as kids. In uproarious laughter, with everyone practically on the floor they were laughing so hard, Rude's son Joe shouted "you're trying to kill my father!.. And when Joe's dog

helped set the stage for both the foundation and the future of this field with two simple words: honesty and integrity.

And for those who are not aware, Rude was a pioneer in the designs of the objects he made, and his works greatly helped advance the field of woodturning from a craft into a legitimate art form. He spent a lifetime helping to educate the next generation of turners, and he gave his free time to help organize and nourish craft organizations like the Southern Highlands Guild and the AAW.

Like many of his era, Rude was also a pretty good storyteller. He also had a pocket full of one-liners that he used to rattle off, and here are two of my favorites: "You'll never hear me say a bad word about anybody, unless I mean it." And my favorite (that has been published before), "I like to treat people with the same respect I give a piece of wood, and I especially like the ones that have cracks in them."

wouldn't eat them....."AND MY DOG, TOO!!" Somehow they all recuperated, but all was not forgotten. A few days later, Rude received a package from Del. It was a woodturned biscuit out of madrone burl which dried and shrunk to be quite like a biscuit - complete with bite marks carved into it — and a pad of butter done in osage orange that dripped down the edges. From that day on — every time I visited Rude — he would bring out the wood biscuit and re-tell the story, laughing harder each time it was told. Rude's bright laughter will always ring in my ears.

— Ray Key

I first met Rude at Arrowmont in 1985 at the Visions and Concept Symposium (where the AAW was spawned) and an instant rapport was struck.

— Stephen F. Caudill: I first became aware of Rude's work through my father, Forrester. He and I were fortunate enough to attend several seminars taught by Rude at Highland Hardware in Atlanta, GA. We also attended a "hands-on" seminar at Rude's shop on Poverty Ridge.

I feel fortunate to have a couple of pieces that he made. I have one of his signature candlesticks that was included with his book "A Lifetime Turning Wood" as well as one of his weed pots that my father bought for me at a gallery in Berea.

Rude was a positive influence on me as well as the untold thousands of others he has taught.

We became firm friends from that first meeting and I have some wonderful memories of times and experiences spent in his company.

Teaching up at Poverty Ridge was always an experience, something I did on three occasions.

The first time in 1988 my wife Liz and son Darren were with me. We arrived a day early in Lexington and checked into a motel, planning a leisurely look round the next morning before going to Berea. I phoned Rude that night to tell him our plan. "Heck," he said, "there will be ten students here at eight o'clock in the morning. You had better be here for then."

Next year I came by myself, arriving in Lexington late at night — they closed the airport behind me — but no Rude to pick me up as arranged. So I waited and waited, no sign of Rude. When I phoned him, he was in bed: "You're not supposed to be here until tomorrow." He jumped out bed got half dressed and came to pick me up.

So one year I was a day late, the next a day early. Something fishy there, as my diary was correct each time. I reckon Rude's diary came from some bargain sale — he loved sales. I guess they were for the wrong year.

— **Ken Sager:** Rude was one of the world's finest gentlemen. Our friendship goes back about 15 years when Del Stubbs introduced us and what a wonderful 15 years it has been for me. Although we kept in touch and I knew of his failing health, it was a sad day when I heard of his death.

In 1990 I invited Rude to come to New Zealand and, although his health was not good even then, he said "I will be there Ken." The night he arrived his caregiver, Zenobia, was on the phone. "You take care of this man. He is a very special person. He is under doctor's orders — no fats, etc., etc." My wife Connie, a registered nurse, took over and contacted the clubs he was to visit and when he left he said "I feel like a new man."

We in New Zealand feel very privileged to have had Rude with us and I know that I speak for all of us when I say Thank you Rude, rest in peace and our sincere condolences to his family.

— **Jamie Donaldson** Arrowmont, October 1994
"A Tribute to Osolnik"

During a morning question/answer session, someone asked the panel of John Jordan, Stoney Lamar, Michael Peterson, Todd Hoyer, Al Stirt and David Ellsworth "how they would like to be remembered?" Trained as a social philosopher, I flashed back to the events of the previous evening, the roast and toast of Rude Osolnik. Regardless of Judeo-Christian ethics or karma quest, most of us will not leave timeless monuments of our earthly passage, but live after our mortal moment only in the memories of those we knew. Over the years I have concluded that these collective memories measure the man — the value of a life is judged by affecting those we touch. I consider myself blessed to have traveled and worked with Rude — he was a full professor of the philosophy of turning. My times on "Poverty Ridge" were all good, even when I tried to best him trading wood! Woodturners everywhere, professional or amateur, young or old, Rude touched us all, and we are richer for his legacy. Thanks Rude, we will always remember you.

I got Rude mad on two occasions, once in the workshop and once at the Boone Tavern.

When I walked in the workshop prior to the class, he had a piece of work in some stage of development on each of the ten lathes. We agreed we had to free up those lathes. He had a pigeonhole display unit in the workshop, so I put a piece of his work in each hole and a Malt Whisky container in one hole also. I told him I would take a photo and send it up to Dale Nish telling him Rude did his best work when he had sampled what was in the container.

Now that got him mad, 'Don't you dare,' he protested, I took the

photo without the whisky container.

Staying with Rude was something else in those days. At night he would sit in front of the television with the sound way up, fast asleep in front of it. If you turned it down, he was awake in an instant and channel hopping ensued. So to bed at midnight, TV still loud, Rude in the chair. Around 2 am he wakes and goes to bed, peace and quiet and sleep at last.

The next thing you hear at 5.30 am is Rude outside your bedroom window, cutting wood with a chainsaw for the class.

Another time I got him mad was in the Boone Tavern. I picked up the bill and was going to pay, as he had treated us wonderfully. But Joe told me to let him pay as this was Rude's special treat for Liz and me and he was getting very upset about it.

In March of 1994 he came down especially to Arrowmont while I was teaching there. It wasn't long before Rude was demonstrating, teaching and selling raffle tickets. He made that day special for all of us privileged to be there. What a man.

He said if I came over for the symposium, he would arrange a workshop to help defray some of our costs. (There were no fees for demonstrators).

We ran a three-day workshop afterwards., Joe acted as assistant and Rude came in and did a demo or two, and one was of his trademark candleholders. His eyes were giving him trouble then but his hands hadn't lost their sureness of touch. The neck of the candleholder was a bit thicker than normal but with a little coaxing from me, 'a bit more off Rude' the candleholder emerged a classic, as good as ever.

He was legend in his own lifetime. I have nothing but fond memories of a man who inspired thousands, taught hundreds. We will never see his like again. He pushed boundaries as one of the trail blazers of the modern turning movement.

He signed a book for me once with the words "To a person I wish I had known sooner."

I can only reciprocate those sentiments.

— Dick Burrows — I first drove up to Poverty Ridge to meet Rude about 20 years ago. Rude said we'd start early, so I pulled in about 6:30 a.m. He was covered with shavings when he leaned out the open shop door and yelled, "Hell fire, boy, you said early."

The "Hell Fire" would hit me many times. Sometimes it was almost affectionate. Other times it was clear Rude didn't think I was living up to my potential that day. Rude, not being a believer in political correctness, usually added a blunter term to make sure I understood.

I learned turning by copying Rude's pieces displayed in Southern galleries. People said he was making turning pay, so I knew he was the one to imitate. A cheap lathe, two scrapers and I was in business. Good thing I didn't give up the day job.

He laughed off the copying, but was upset that I'd done such a poor job of stealing. Anyone who has done a Rude candlestick and had

— Chris Ramsey

I met Rude three years ago in Berea, when Johannes Michelsen and I had gone up to Poverty Ridge to visit and talk with the living legend. Since that time, and living just 25 minutes from Rude, I visited him regularly and we became good friends. Just two weeks prior to his death, Rude continued to come out to his shop to watch me turn and give me some pointers. We talked



Ramsey believes this 23-in. diameter Snakewood platter was the last piece Rude turned.

about turning, Rude's travels and life experiences. We also did a lot of laughing.

Saturday, the day before Rude passed away, he had given me a scholarship to Arrowmont and had called a few of his students and made the recommendation to them that they take some private

lessons from me. I had no knowledge of Rude doing these things for me. It wasn't until after his death that I learned what he had done. I wish I could thank him for all he did for me.

The turning world, as well as the art world, has lost an icon and many of us have lost a good friend.

him critique it knows what I mean.

Rude sensed anything I knew came from books. I might be long on knowledge, but I was pitifully short on skill. He set out to rectify that.

Eventually, years later, I could pass for his shop assistant, but he never listed me as a triumph of his teaching career. The important thing was that along the way we became friends, through good times and bad, fire and ice. We always worked things out, and that is one of the most precious parts of friendship.

When health problems derailed my career, Rude was one of the few who stuck by me. He knew how hard it was to lose what you cared about. "The boys in hell want ice

water, but they can't have it either. That's the way it goes sometimes."

"That's the way it goes sometimes." Not the warm fuzzy I thought I deserved, but just what I needed. No matter how you feel, you drag yourself out to the shop and go to work -- that's where the joy is, at least if you believe Rude.

Rude helped me to see, to think, to improvise, and, most important, to express myself. There is something beautiful in a chunk of wood. There is a unique creative force inside every person. Mix the two elements and, if you work hard and are a little lucky, something magnificent can happen. Hell Fire, Rude! Wish I had been a better pupil

PIG PLANTER

A Whimsical Addition To The Deck

STEPHEN HATCHER

LIKE MOST AMATEUR WOODTURNERS, my first interests were in creating 'serious' art. These 'serious' projects usually end up taking a lot of time and concentration. Last summer I started getting inspired instead to create whimsical forms that could be made in few hours while providing a lot of satisfaction and years of chuckles from friends and family.

This is one of these projects which was conceived after dinner and finished before midnight. Depending on your tools and experience, it might take a little longer, but this project only requires average skill. The hardest part probably is the forming and locating details: ears, tail and feet. These parts require freehand carving and power sanding. The upside of this type of challenge is the imperfections give the pig planter character and they look better (i.e. funnier) when they're a little cockeyed.

Pig dimensions

The dimensioned drawing in Figure 1 allows a standard 4-in. plastic pot to be inserted. To get good results it's more important to match the proportions than the values, as long as the plastic pot will fit. Of course, if certain woods are used, like old growth cedar, there is no need to use the plastic pot because the wood itself is resistant to rot. To obtain the dimensions for a different size pot, simply scale up or down as needed. Since almost every copy machine allows variable scale enlargements, it might be helpful to enlarge the diagram to the size you want to make and create a template of the basic outline.

Shaping the jug

Turn the 'jug' shape as shown in Figures 1 and 2. The block needs to be about 1-in. longer than the design

goal to allow for the end wood (nose and tail) being damaged from turning between centers. I recommend starting with a block that allows you to

turn side grain, but this is not critical. Rough sand with 80-grit, but don't bother sanding to any finer grits: about half of the surface will be



Pig planters made from two varieties of big leaf maple, both finished with exterior grade polyurethane varnish. The dark planter on the left was spalted; the one on the right features a fiddleback figure.

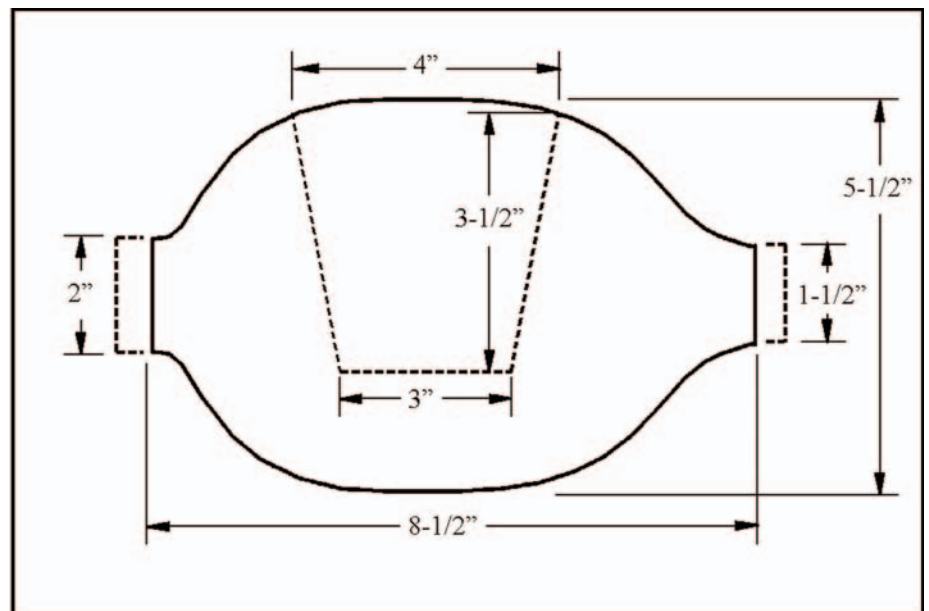


Figure 1: The dimensions shown are for a pig planter that will accept a 4-in. diameter plastic flower pot. For larger pots, scale up the drawing. You can enlarge it on a copier to create a template, if needed. Photos and drawing by the author.

carved and sanded again when you add ears, tail and feet. When the basic shape is completed, use a cutoff tool to remove the excess material at the nose and tail. After sanding, place an inverted plastic plant pot on top of the woodturning and determine the best place for the recess. Mark the center line all the way around the woodturned figure. This will help you position the figure for the second axis tuning.

Turn on the second axis

Reposition the piece on the second axis as shown in Figure 3. The goal here is to turn a recess that will fit a small chuck (roughly 2 1/2-in. diameter). Make the recess as deep as your chuck will allow to 1/2-in. Also remove material from outside this chuck recess as shown in figure 3 and 4, creating a raised 'ring'. Initially this 'ring' will be used to get a good grip on the planter while hollowing. Later it will be carved into the pig's feet.

If you've turned the original form from side grain, this 'ring' is not particularly strong. When I do the next step, hollowing, I keep the piece between centers thereby getting additional support from the tailstock. An alternate procedure would be to first make only the recess leaving the creation of a ring until later. Then there's a lot more wood mass around the chuck and the setup is more stable. Then when the hollowing is finished, turn the piece around and create the ring.

Hollow the pot recess

Turn the piece around and hollow out the pot recess. Since this will be buried under potting soil, a clean cut is not critical. I try to get the wood out as fast as possible and I don't worry about tearing the endgrain inside the planter. Use hollowing tools if you have them but otherwise make do with what you have (like a scraper and cutoff tool).

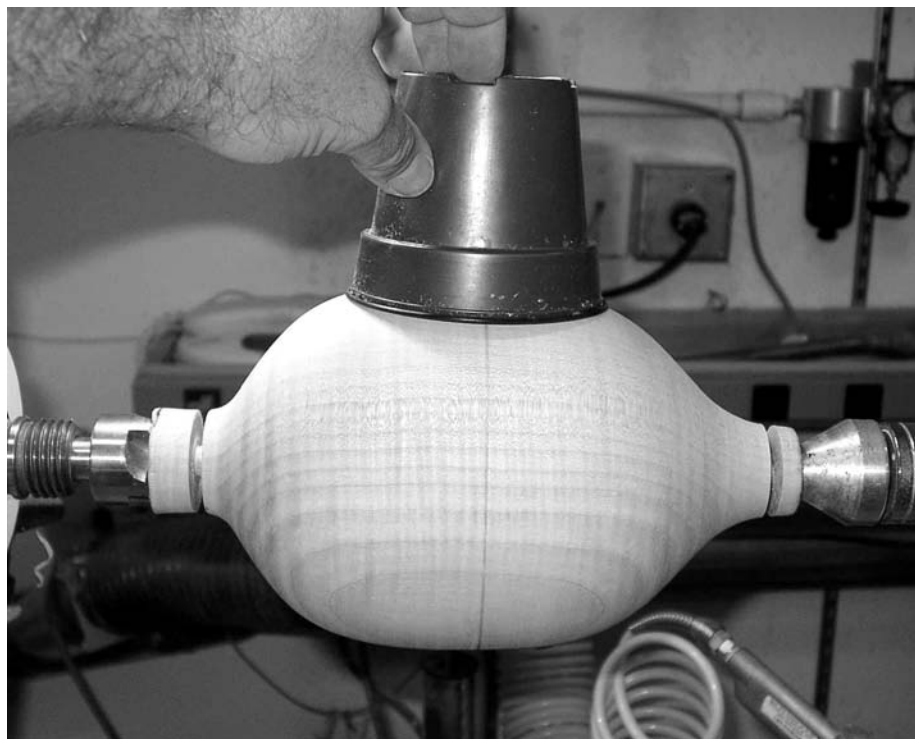


Figure 2: After turning the basic pig planter shape between centers, the author sets the plastic pot on top to determine where he will hollow the form to accept the pot. The centerline of the pot is marked to help him locate the piece for the second axis turning, which will hollow out the planter body.

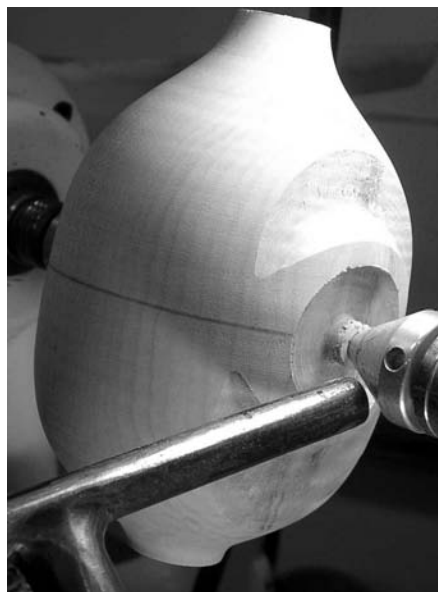


Figure 3: The author turns the base so it can be mounted on a chuck. The area will also be important after the pot opening is turned. The recessed area will later be carved to form feet.

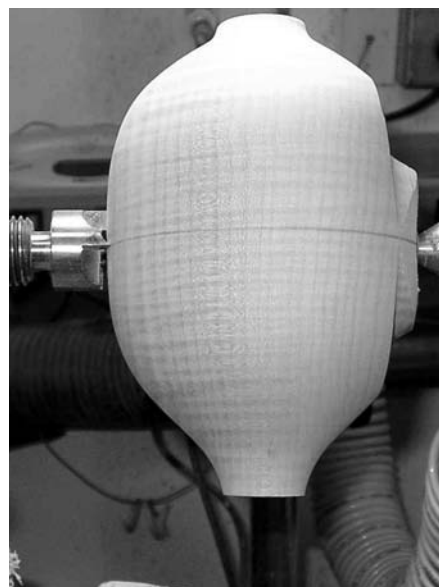


Figure 4: A side view of the base showing the amount of material left for the chuck. It is important to leave enough material to ensure a strong junction with the chuck.

The only part of this recess that is visible is the edge. I usually taper this edge slightly — it just seems to look a little better.

As shown in figure 5, check the plastic pot fit so it just sits far enough inside the planter to hide the pot edge.

Creating facial features

Now finish the nose, eyes, and mouth. I find the 'whimsical' appearance is best achieved by making the nose slightly crooked. I sand the front of the nose on a belt sander (figure 6) and hold the piece slightly askew to get this result. Use about 5 degrees of offset as a guideline. I add the nostrils using a center punch (figure 7).

I use a piece of $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. copper tubing and a hammer to emboss the eyes as shown in figure 8. Then I fill within the embossed circle with a permanent black pen (figure 9).

The mouth is a half circle. I use a $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. copper tube with about half of the end ground away as an embossing tool for the mouth. After adding the mouth I use permanent ink on the embossing so it stands out better.

Carving a curved tail

Figure 10 shows how to create a curved tail. I use a power carving burr but you can use any carving tool for this simple tail. After carving I use power sanding to finish as much as possible then hand sand to get inside the curve.

The ears are simply triangles made to appear raised by removing some wood around the ear. As shown in figure 11 again I use a carving burr but any carving tool will do. You can form the ears with only a power sander as well.

Forming the feet

To form the feet I use a cylindrical Microplane to cut the 'ring' we previously created into four feet as shown

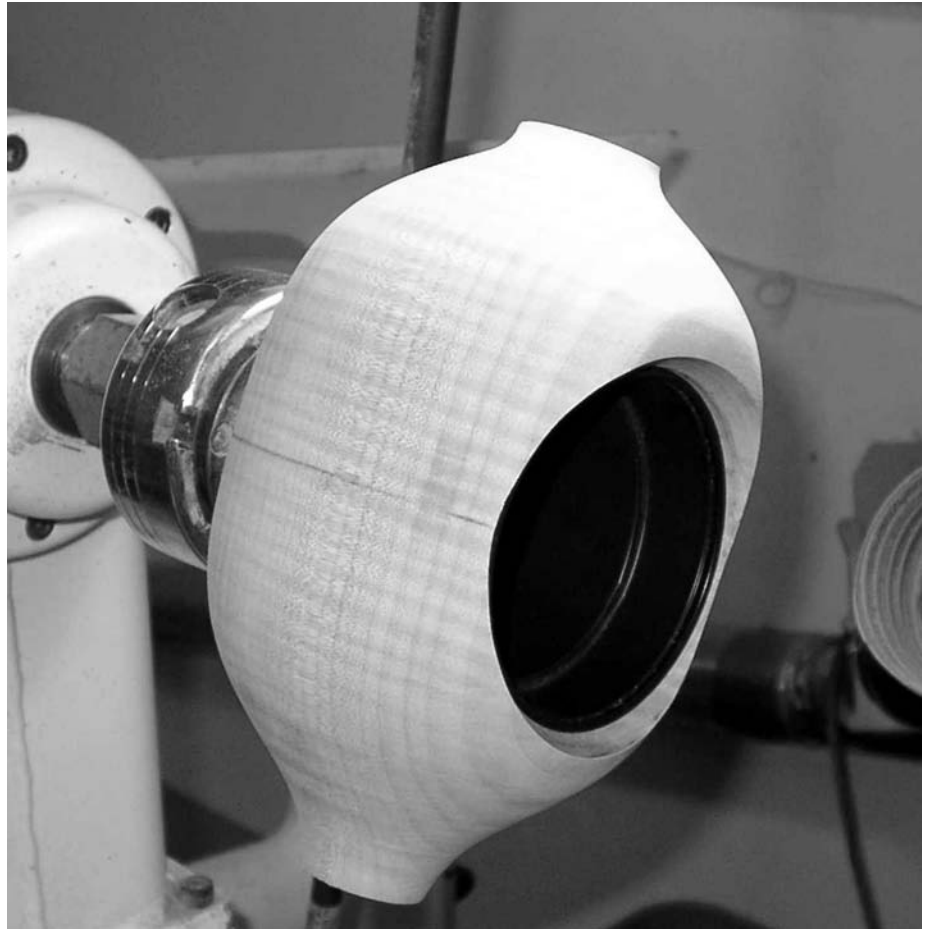


Figure 5: Hollowed planter with the 4-in. plastic pot inserted to check the fit. Note how the plastic unit is set well below the shaped surface of the pig.



Figure 6: Sand the nose flat, but skew the angle about 5° off the center line, to help create a more realistic illusion.



Figure 7: The author uses a center punch to dimple the snout, adding nostrils to the nose.

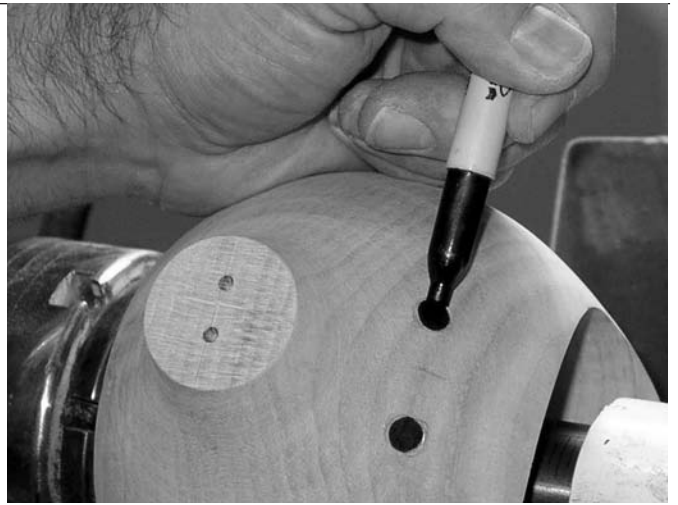


Figure 8: Emboss eyes with a $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. copper pipe and hammer. Figure 8: Fill the lines with permanent black marker.



Figure 10: Form the curved tail by drawing the shape on the planter, above left, then shaping around the line with a ball grinder, center. Some hand sanding is needed to smooth the inside of the curve.

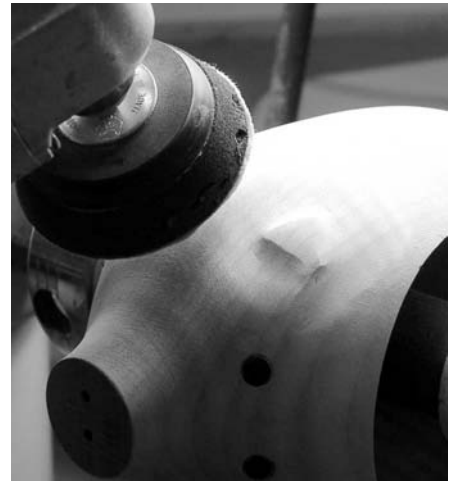
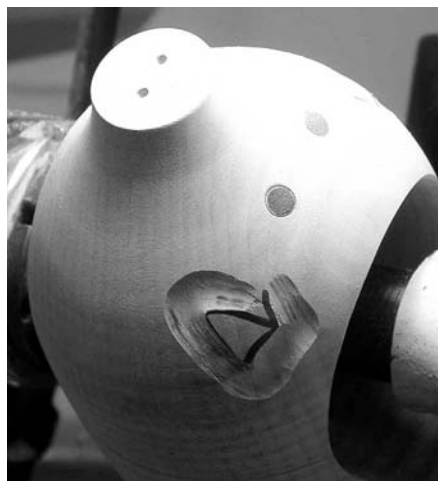
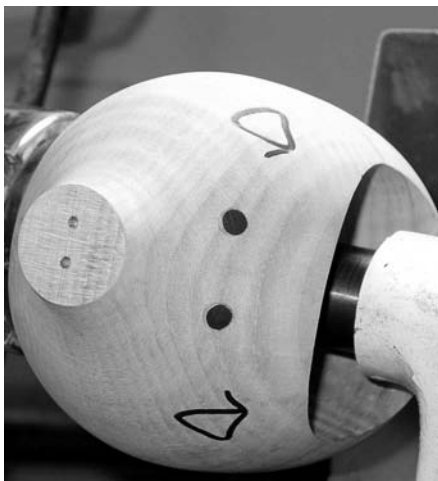


Figure 11: To carve the ears, the author creates two raised triangles on the planter surface. After laying out the ears, above left, he carves out around the layout lines, then blends everything smooth with a padded disk sander, above right.



Figure 12: Form the four feet by carving away the material between the bottom of each foot and then power sand to create smooth transitions. Sandbags are used to stabilize the work and keep hands clear of the cutting blades.

in figure 12.

I also use this tool to round the edges of the bottom as well, then power sand to soften the edges. This is also the time to drill a drain hole in the bottom, if your planter will need it.

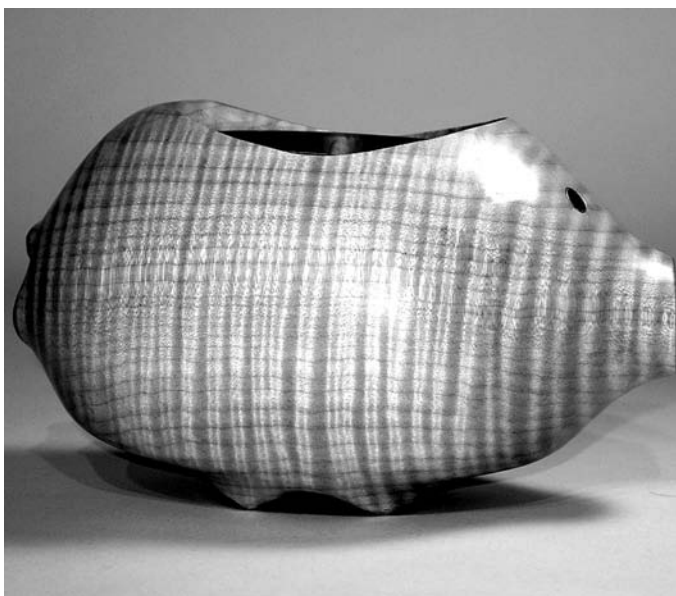
Now sand to your desired finish. For planters used outdoors I generally

don't worry about a fine finish. I sand only with 120 grit and apply an exterior spar varnish. If the planter is to be used indoors, or is a gift, I finish to 400 grit and apply a polyurethane finish.

I'm still experimenting with exterior finishes to find what works best for the inside of a planter. I have

found Varathane Diamond Outdoor Finish works well and has the added advantage of not requiring sanding between coats.

— Stephen Hatcher lives in Renton, WA and is President of the South Puget Sound Chapter AAW. His website is summitdesign.org



The final result, ready for planting and a new life on your favorite deck.

SOAPY BOWLS

An Experimental Treatment For Wood

RON KENT & PHIL WALL

A few years ago Ron Kent happened upon a technique for stabilizing wood before it was turned. He has continued to experiment with the technique and written about the method in a variety of articles, some parts of which are included here. Phil Wall became interested in the process and the two have worked together to present what they have learned and reactions from other turners. — editor.

Ron Kent's early experiments:

Like many others I began using commercial preparations for stabilizing wood for my bowls, some of which are shown on the back cover of this Journal.

Later I started wondering if there wasn't some other, more common liquid that might do the same job. Something that might soak in, harden, and become part of the wood, bonding the fibers more firmly while also imparting a lubricating quality. It had to be transparent and non-staining.

I tried several products over the next few months, haunting the hardware store, drug store, supermarket, and giant discount house; trying all sorts of concoctions, individually and in various combinations. In most cases the results were innocuous, in some downright messy until one day, while on a shopping safari with my wife, I noticed her picking up a bottle of syrupy golden liquid. The liquid I tried and now find so useful is—concentrated dish washing detergent!

What are the benefits? First, there is the advantage of stabilizing the wood; there is a great deal less "moving" and warping both while working on the vessel and after it is taken off the lathe. A second favorable difference shows up in cutting. The shavings are a delight! Clean, long, cohesive ribbons both for fine trimming and for the macho adversarial plunge-cuts that characterize my fa-



Joseph Quesada described this 8X4-in. apple bowl, above, as his "greatest soapy water success" using a variation of Kent's method. "This is a piece of apple. Notoriously difficult to dry without major cracking. It was turned to finished dimensions, rough sanded, then soaked in a 3:1 solution of Ivory Ultra and water. It did develop one minor, easily repairable crack while drying."

vored rough-shaping "technique". It feels almost as if the wood has been lubricated and allows the edge of the tool to slide smoothly through the cut.

Ah, and on the rare (Hah!!) occasions when I resort to sandpaper, it is a whole new experience. For one thing, it allows you to sand not only green wood, but even wood that is soaking wet. The sandpaper still becomes clogged, but a couple sharp slaps on the bed of the lathe clears the grit and allows reuse again and again.

Soapy technique:

I currently use a dilution ratio of one part water to one part concentrated detergent. (I've also tried diluting with isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol and suspect I get better penetration, but am not sure it justifies the added expense.) Even after this dilution, the result is a viscous, syrup-like liquid,

leaving me to suspect that further dilution would heighten the economy without losing effectiveness. I vary the proportion each time I mix it, still seeking an optimum ratio. I do, however, regularly add eucalyptus oil to the mix. It is available at most drug stores; I use about one teaspoon per gallon. What does this add to the process? A distinctive, pungent scent: it just smells good!

I first described the technique in the British magazine *Woodturner*, and have been experimenting with it since.

Treating green wood:

All of my work begins with logs that I get from local tree-trimmers. They bring the wood to me as soon as the tree is cut, and I'm likely to start turning it the very next day. I strip the bark, mount the log, and rough-turn

the shape to about 1-in.-thick. I remove the work from the lathe and slather on a thick coat of the mix, then wait a few minutes for the foam to soak in. Then I repeat the application, maybe as many as a half-dozen times, inside and out. I haven't — yet — adapted detergent to my old "trick" of total immersion.

After the soak — by whatever means — I set the work aside for a few days to allow the detergent to permeate the wood, and become surface-dry.

At this point I re-mount the work and proceed using the usual tools and procedures, enjoying the benefits to cutting and sanding described earlier.

Handling dry wood:

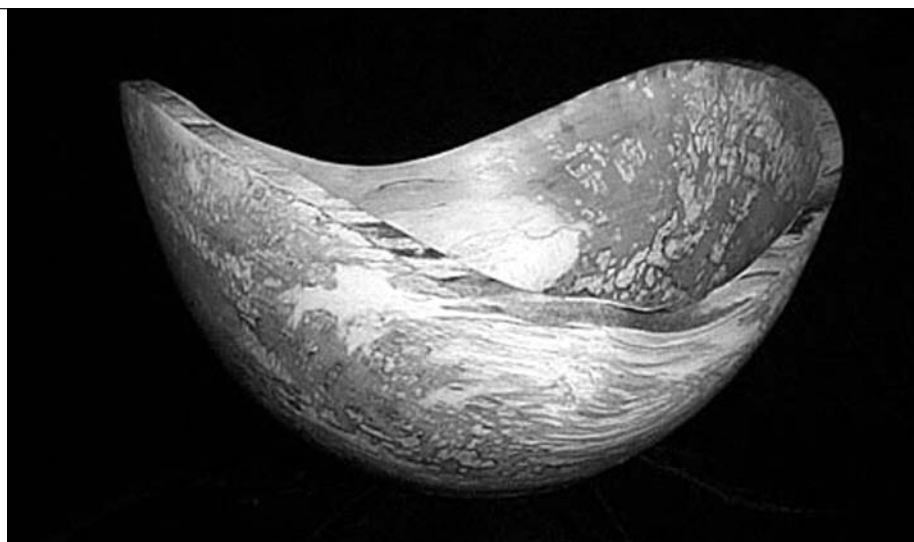
I use the same procedure on logs that have dried out in the woodpile, and I find the benefits are even more pronounced than with green wood. My goal is to penetrate — permeate — the wood with liquid detergent. Sometimes I start working the piece right after the soaking, before the detergent has even had a chance to dry. More often, though, I will subject the rough turned form to repeated soakings over a period of days, then allow up to two weeks of standing before I finish the piece.

Effects on Finishes:

One of the liquids I experimented with was acrylic wax, but I rejected it because of its detrimental effect on the final finishing process. Detergent, on the other hand, seems to actually enhance my own particular technique. It is difficult for me to be certain, but I think that I am achieving even more dramatic translucence from the oils when using wood that was treated with detergent during the forming of the vessel.

Safety Concerns:

We woodworkers should always be conscious of both personal and en-



Another success with soapy water-- Phil Wall's 6X10-in spalting beech natural edge bowl. Photo by author.

vironmental safety in our work. Primary among these concerns is the need for adequate dust protection. I'm no more anxious to breathe detergent-treated dust than I am any other kind. The concentrated liquid dish washing detergent, however, seems quite benign. The bottles carry only a mild word of caution.

After Phil Wall became interested in this process, we began what has become an ongoing e-mail conversation. He and some of his fellow turners have been experimenting and here is what they found.

Phil Wall: — A few months ago I was looking for a special technique for one of my pieces and happened on Ron's web page. Since that time I have shared the process with others in the Bucks, Keystone and Lehigh Valley (PA) chapters.

Here's what we have discovered so far:

Make a 6:1 solution of water: detergent. Use unscented dish detergent. Add some alcohol to retard bacterial growth. **DO NOT ADD CHLORINE BLEACH!** This produces a nasty chlorine gas release.

Put this in a large plastic container and soak a green rough turned item

(1/2-to-5/8-in.-thick) about 3-to-4 days. Remove it from the solution and let drip dry for another 3-to-4 days.

The blank should be finish turned as soon as you can do it without getting a detergent shower. If, by chance, you do not get to it right away, just dunk it again and start over.

With this trick I have gone from tree to finished product in one week or less.

The first test piece was a 14-by-10-in. Box Elder hollow form. This was turned from a log using the pith as a center. To add another test parameter, I glued a piece of Bloodwood to the mouth, edge grain to face grain. That was in November 2000, and it hasn't moved a hair!

What I have found:

1. Little or no cracking/checking.
2. Minimal movement out-of-round (on most pieces).
3. Smoother cross-grained cuts.
4. Detergent acts a lubricant for the tool.
5. Oil finishes are deeper and more colorful.
6. No toxicity to food related bowls.
(One guy even had his wife lick the bowl! Said it tasted like wood!)
7. Inexpensive wood stabilizer.

8. Sanding is improved. Paper doesn't clog. Works like steartated paper only in reverse.

I'm sold. I soak everything now. Best of all, this provides a tool by which we can take advantage of turning spalted logs on-center and get the spalted figuring all around the piece.

One thing to remember. This process will not fix what is already broken. If your blank has an end-check in it, it will respond accordingly as it dries. It works wonders for dry blanks as well as wet.

What makes this work:

One of our chapter members, **Charlie Carter** spoke with Dr. Smith, a surfactant chemist at Condea-Vista Inc., one of the major suppliers to the soap and detergent industry. He felt that the surfactant is most likely doing what we think it is — stabilizing the wood.

There are three theories on how. One is that the polar region of the surfactant is migrating into the wood, associating with the cellulose matrix, and stays in the wood after the piece is removed from the solution and dries. This means that the volume of surfactant remaining in the wood prevents the degree of shrinking or controls the rate of shrinking (by providing a more efficient transfer mechanism for the water to leave the wood) so there is not the large differential between pith and outer rings shrinkage.

A second variation is that the surfactant enters the wood and pulls along with it more water. Together these stay in the wood to limit or control the shrinking. (Measuring the swelling that occurs during soaking in water and a water/surfactant solution would be an interesting data point. Also, checking the moisture content near the pith and the outer rings of samples that have been; 1. - Not soaked, 2. - Soaked in water 3

days and dried 3 days, and 3. -Soaked in water/surfactant 3 days and dried 3 days would show if the water were being held in the wood or just evaporating evenly.)

A third variation is that the surfactant goes into the wood and just retards the natural drying. This could be determined if after several months the shrinkage was the same with or without the surfactant treatment. No difference in shrinkage - just a difference in rate, which of course, will prevent checking.

It is quite possible that a completely different mechanism than the simple polarity of surfactant, cellulose, and water is responsible for this behavior. Of course, it doesn't matter if it works does it? There are many different chemical species in wood and some could be interacting in unforeseen and unfathomable ways.

Reports from the field:

"Mixed to approximately 4/1/1 because the cheap detergent looked thin to me. If I would have bought the good stuff, I may have gone 6/1/1. So far, I've done one Dogwood hollow form —no cracks and only slight warping in the spigot area. Two apple bowls down to less than 1/4-in. wall thickness with very little warping after final turning."

— **Gary Hern (MO)**

"I cut two bowls from opposite sides of the same Cherry log. Both were rough turned to 1 1/4-in. and each was 14-in. diameter. One I soaked for five days and the other I bagged. They both went oval the same amount, about 3/8-in. The biggest difference between the two was that the bagged bowl "cupped" badly, while the soaked bowl hardly cupped at all."

— **Tom Buchner (PA)**

I have just finished two beautiful bowls turned from Walnut burl and

fiddleback Walnut. Both bowls were turned to a wall thickness of about 1/4-in. (+/-) and then they went into a 50/50 bath of dish soap and water with a splash of rubbing alcohol for good luck. I soaked them for a day and dried them for three. I finished the turning and applied clear Deft finish.

That was two weeks ago. They have set out and there has been no cracking or checking; just a little movement, but it has been very minimal. I have seen worse in kiln dried wood. I now have two others in the process. It is nice to be able to finish them out in about a week or so. I am going to try this now on some woods that really tend to crack. We turn a lot of birch here, and when green, it can really move. I will be interested to see how it works."

— **Greg Christians (AK)**

"I was really thrilled that the apple held its shape so well and did not crack. Both pieces were turned to finish dimension, sanded and soaked."

— **Joe Quesada (PA)**

"So far, it's been my favorite method for working bowls. Another plus, when you want to wash your hands before leaving the shop, you just use this! Works great and you just need a little clean water to rinse!"

— **Gary Hern (MO)**

If you have any questions regarding this process or would like to comment further, please e-mail Phil Wall: woodturner@peoplepc.com or Ron Kent: ron@ronkent.com.

Ron Kent is a professional turner living in Hawaii whose signature works have been highly acclaimed in exhibitions around the world. More on this technique may be found on his web site: www.ronkent@aloha.net

Phil Wall is a member of the Bucks and Keystone AAW Chapters (PA).

COLLARS FOR HOLLOW VESSELS

A neat way to crown your work

ART LIESTMAN

IN THE FALL OF 2000, I STUDIED WITH Jacques Vesery in Damariscotta, ME, thanks to funding from an AAW Educational Opportunity Grant. My two days with Jacques were an incredible learning experience, providing me with lots of ideas to explore in more detail for years to come.

Jacques is known for his small hollow vessels that are made in two pieces. The main body is made of straight-grained domestic wood, usually cherry. Its surface is carved, leaving little if any of the original turned surface, and then colored with acrylic inks and paints. This main body is then topped off with a separate “collar” or “neck piece” made of fancier wood (a burl or an exotic) chosen specifically to contrast with the main body. The collar is sanded and finished with a friction polish, retaining the natural wood look.

The addition of the collar significantly enhances the overall appearance of these carved and colored vessels. A well-chosen collar can also add interest to other hollow vessels. In this short article, I’ll describe the process for making these collars, as well as the tools that will help you efficiently shape these pieces.

Vesery’s special tools

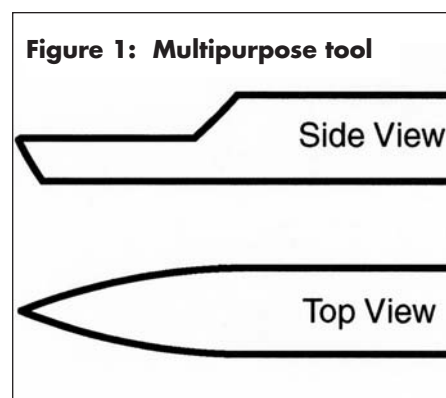
Jacques uses a couple of special tools during the process, although the collar can be made without them. One of these tools is his “multipurpose tool” — a pointed scraper made from a 1/4-in. round high-speed steel blank. This tool can be used in shaping the collar. It can also be used in the final shaping of the main body of the hollow form, particularly on the endgrain. The tool is excellent to use in shaping the concave bottom of the hollow form.

To make the multipurpose tool,



This group of vessels, part of the author’s Puzzling Illusion series features the type of collars described in this article. These vessels, which resemble three-dimensional jigsaw puzzles, range from 5-to-7 1/2-in. high. The bodies are big-leaf maple and the collars are ebony. Photo by Kenji Nagai. Drawings by author.

begin by forming a flat surface at the business end of a 1/4-in. round blank. This surface will become the top of the scraper.

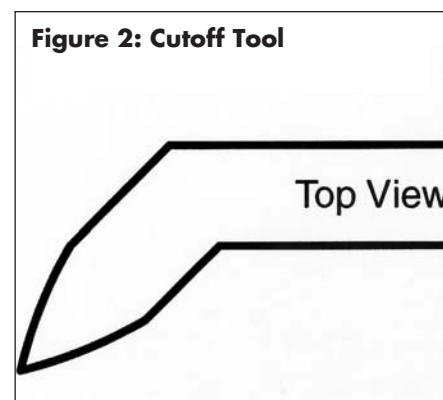


Shape the sides of the tool to form an arched v-shape as shown in the top view of Figure 1, above. The curvature of the v can be adjusted to suit your purpose. Both sides of the V can be used for cutting, but do not

attempt to make deep cuts with the tip of the tool. I find it easier to shape the tip and sharpen this tool with a 1-in. wide belt sander.

Modifying an Allen wrench

The second special tool is the cutoff tool. This is made from an Allen wrench that has been straightened out to less than 90°. Its cutting tip is



shaped much like the multipurpose tool with a flattened top and arched v sides. This tool is used to widen the through hole at the bottom end of the collar and it can also be used for parting the collar off from the waste block, cutting from the inside out rather than cutting from the outside in as with a traditional parting tool.

Creating a collar

To create a collar, follow these steps:

1. Mount a waste block in a chuck or on a faceplate. For the waste block, Jacques prefers a close-grain hardwood such as plain maple. It should be oriented side grain.
2. Cut a small blank of collar material large enough in diameter for the desired collar size and thick enough for the height of the collar plus the thickness of the main body.
3. Use medium viscosity cyanoacrylate glue to attach the collar blank to the waste block.
4. Set calipers to the desired outside collar diameter. This must be large enough to cover the opening in the vessel but can otherwise be made as large or small as you want.
5. Turn the blank to the desired diameter and clean up the top surface.
6. Bore or drill the opening hole into the blank. Clean up the surface with the multipurpose tool.
7. The next step is to set calipers to the size of the tenon to be glued into the opening. The opening may not be perfectly round, particularly if the wood was not dry when the vessel was hollowed. It is important to have a snug fit, so set the calipers to the largest inside diameter of the vessel opening.
8. Form the tenon on the blank near the waste block to the proper diameter leaving extra material on the waste block side for parting

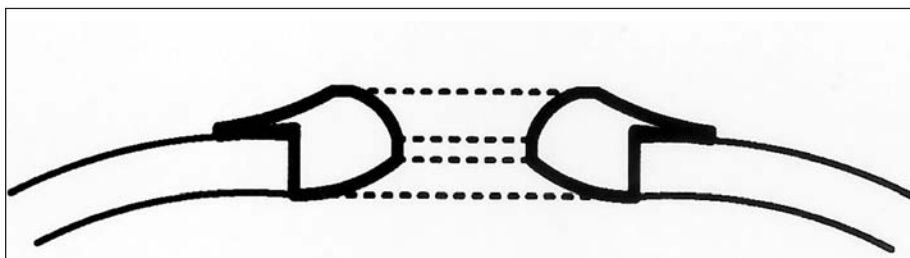


Fig. 3: The cross section of a collar in main body opening. Note how the rabbeted edge of the collar mates with the main vessel, allowing ample material for the top surface of the collar to be blended into the body of the piece.

- off.
9. Shape the collar as desired using either a bowl gouge or spindle gouge. Clean up the surface with the multipurpose tool.
10. With a thin bladed parting tool, undercut the collar to allow the edges to sit flush against the main body.
11. Sand as needed.
12. Apply finish as desired. Jacques uses a homemade friction polish applied with the best-quality toilet paper – a highly recommended shop supply Jacques makes his friction polish by combining two parts shellac, one part oil, and one part alcohol.
13. Part the collar from the waste block. Jacques does this by parting partially from the outside and then finishing the parting from the inside using the cutoff tool.
14. Reverse mount the nearly completed collar in the chuck (or, another option that I have used is to attach the collar to the waste block with double-stick tape).
15. Using the multipurpose tool, clean up the frayed edges at the inside edge of the through hole.
16. Again, sand as needed and apply friction polish.
18. Remove the collar and check the fit with the vessel opening. If the vessel opening has warped, it may be necessary to enlarge it to fit the

tenon. This can be done with a small drum sander mounted in a rotary carver or with hand tools.

19. The collar can then be attached to the main body using medium viscosity cyanoacrylate glue.

Figure 3, above, shows the cross section of collar in main body opening.

Experimenting with design

Since studying with Jacques I have been exploring several designs for hollow vessels that are enhanced by the addition of contrasting collars. The photo on the previous page shows three hollow vessels from my Puzzling Illusion series. These pieces appear to be three-dimensional jigsaw puzzles. The vessels range from 5-to-7¹/₂-in. in height. The bodies are made from big-leaf maple and the collars are made of ebony.

The addition of contrasting collars to hollow forms dresses them up. Give it a try!

Art Liestman is a turner in Coquitlam, BC, Canada. If you would like to see more work by Jacques Vesery, the teacher who showed Liestman this method for turning collars, check Page 34 in the Winter 2001 issue of American Woodturner and the back cover and pages 27 on the Winter 2000 issue. Jacques will also be a presenter at the RI symposium.

ECHO LAKE

A Creative Collaborative for Your Chapter

JOSEPH SELTZER

WANT TO GET MORE CREATIVITY into your club? Consider duplicating the Emma Lake experience in your own area.

As most turners know, Michael Hosaluk has organized a biennial conference at Emma Lake in Saskatchewan to bring people together for a creative and fun experience.

By inviting turners, carvers, furniture makers, metal artists and so forth, he has encouraged a cross-fertilization of ideas and techniques. Three years ago Mark Sfirri (who had attended numerous Emma Lake conferences) encouraged the Bucks Wood Turners club of the AAW to help sponsor a local event. About 25 people were invited, including Remi Verchot (A French turner who was in town), David Lancaster (from Maine) and David Wahl (who was president of AAW at the time). Also invited were Chris Snyder, metal artist, and Robert Dodge, a painter. We decided to call our event "Echo Lake."



One of a six-pack of beer bottles decorated by Mark Sfirri and Michael Hosaluk.



Michael Hosaluk confers with Jean-Francois Escoulen. Photos by Joseph Seltzer.

Conversation and collaboration

For three days we used Dave Hardy's extensive shop and had lots of opportunities for conversation, collaboration and creative critique. Pieces were made and modified, often several times. At the end we held an auction of all the work that was produced (about 40 pieces). Highlights were: many people learning to use gold leaf (thanks to Robert Dodge and Mark Sfirri), a late evening conversation on the nature of craft and art and the creation of two "lakes" to make up for the fact that there is no lake in the vicinity of Dave Hardy's house. We raised enough at the auction to fund the next year's Echo Lake.

The second year we invited more local turners and carvers and tried a four day event. Again we had about 25 people, but the intensity started to wane on the fourth day. A highlight

was a mobile with each participant making a small piece. This was presented to Dave Hardy and then later displayed as the club's entry at the AAW symposium. A number of wall hangings were made this year. The auction of about 65 works raised even more money and allowed us to plan an extension in the third year. We were able to sponsor the trips of several internationally known turners — Michael Hosaluk from Canada, Jean Francois and Monique Escoulen from France, Betty Scarpino from the U.S. and Christian Delhon from France. Adding in Mark Sfirri, Robert Dodge, David Lancaster, John Matthews, a metal worker, and about 15 local turners was a wonderful mix.

We had a three day event and produced 70 pieces for the auction. A few were made by only a single person, while others were worked on by

as many as eight people.

Robert Dodge spent his third year sitting at the painting table for the entire event — his only complaint was that there wasn't enough to do. Partially this was because many people were now painting their own work, rather than relying on Robert. Highlights were: a table in the shape of a large piece of brie, with three legs; a set of five sausage links, a hot dog and a salami that had been cut in half. We also made a person, with different people working on the head, body, arms, hands, legs and feet, and glasses.

A variety of bottles were turned and then painted: Betty's Brew, Buddy Lite, Echo Stout, Saskatoon Lite Duck Beer and, my favorite, Logger Lager, shown on the previous page. The auction raised over \$4000 and ensured that Echo Lake IV will happen.

For a successful event

So, can your club match this success story? I think you can if you pay attention to some norms and expectations.

1. This was a resource table which everyone was asked to contribute to. One could bring in partially finished turnings, portions of pieces, interesting materials (someone brought large thorns and these got into five different pieces) or virtually anything.

2. The sponsor's provided paint, brushes, gold leaf and some other materials. Dave Hardy was especially generous in allowing people to pick from his large collection of wood.

3. People were encouraged to bring some additional wood and turning tools.

It helps to have a large number of lathes available, because initially many people want to turn. However by the last day, hardly anyone was turning — construction of various



Robert Dodge, foreground, spent about a third of his time at the painting table. Behind him are Mark Sfirri and Betty Scarpino.

parts and painting took over.

4. Encourage collaboration. Explicitly say this at the beginning and help establish the idea that one can talk to others about how to proceed on a piece or give it to someone and say "you try next", or simply put it back on the resource table and see what develops.

5. Three days seems best. We began providing coffee and donuts, sodas, lunches and dinners to help keep people there. We asked for \$25 each which covered about a third the cost of the meals and the banquet we had with the auction. The rest of the monies came from the auction receipts.

6. The auction is important, to celebrate the work that has been made (it is an impressive display) and to raise money for the following year. But possibly more importantly, it says — what you make here is experimental and shared. You don't own your work (unless you buy it at the auction) and thus it is easier to let someone else work on it. We all ben-

efit from the creativity and chance to learn from each other.

7. The mix of people is important. You want people with a variety of skills and techniques and people who will get along with each other. If possible, seed the group with some professional turners and artists. You may be able to make this more financially viable for the artist by paying them for a club or weekend demonstration.

8. If possible, try to document what you have done. We took both digital pictures and slides of each piece for the auction. The digital pictures were made into CDs for each participant and the slides were used for a club meeting several months later.

You can boost the level of creativity of your club. Try something like "Echo Lake."

Joseph Seltzer is a turner and collector of wood art in Elkins Park, PA. Thanks to Bill Smith of Doylestown, PA for his help with this article.

LUCKY BOX

A neat design idea to try

GUILIO MARCOLONGO

Last issue Frank Stepanski described how to create a box designed by Australian Giulio Marcolongo. He learned how to make the box while visiting Giulio in Australia. Frank's box was scalloped-footed, but I saw Giulio make another interesting design at last year's Utah Symposium in Provo. I asked Giulio to tell me a little more about that box. — Editor

"As you can see from the photo at right, the shape of my box resembles a four leaf clover, hence I call it my lucky box.

I start out by drawing the design on a piece of graph paper. I cut a selected wood disc 4-in. by 2.5-in. thick and mount it onto a screw chuck. I put the piece onto the lathe and turn on the machine. I mark the true center, which I use to transfer the shape from my graph exactly onto the wood. I then carefully cut the shape on a bandsaw with a $\frac{1}{8}$ -in. blade. I'm careful to get my petals on the design perfectly round; otherwise it would not look very good. Now that I have cut the shape. I put the piece back onto my screw chuck, so the piece is



The author's lucky box resembles a four-leaf clover.

still in true center. I mount a waste piece of pine about 2.5-in. round onto a face plate and I face off the bottom of the four-leaf clover box, then face off the waste block.

I use what we call a reversing mandrel, which on one end has the same size thread as on the spindle of your lathe and on the other end a Morse tape that fits your lathe. Mine is number 2. I mount the face plate with the

waste block with the reversing mandrel into the tail stock and the box goes onto the head stock. This way the two pieces are lined up in true center. I apply glue to one of the surfaces and bring the two together. This is the only way I know to align them, so that when I begin to turn the box and I take my first cut, all the corners hit at the same point. When the glue has set, I remove the box from the screw chuck but I still have both pieces {waste block and the box itself} on my faceplate.

The process from then on is to turn the petals at a speed of about 2,000 revs, so they face upwards and are turned on the bottom side to match the inside. The wall thickness should be about $\frac{1}{8}$ -in.

As you can see in the photograph above, the lid has to follow the shape of the box.

By the way, any shape can be turned with the same method. There are endless possibilities."

Giulio Marcolongo is a professional turner and teacher in Wonthaggi VIC, Australia



Giulio demonstrating one of his boxes at the Utah Symposium.

PROMOTING OUR ART II

Helping the art form grow up

RON VAVRA

Following publication of the article "Promoting Our Art" in the Winter 2000 issue of *American Woodturner*, the author sent copies to about 50 prominent woodturning artists asking their opinion of the ideas put forth. He used the numerous reactions to the article, both solicited and unsolicited, as the basis for this follow-up article.

My original article suggested that the slow emergence of woodturning as a legitimate art form doesn't have to be so slow. By employing the marketing strategies and tactics used to promote consumer products, faster and better results are possible.

The objective would be to legitimize turning, putting it on par with other art forms. Also, I counseled against careless use of the word "craft", and I suggested we need to define the genre. Further, to increase the speed of legitimizing it, we might create a promotional society.

Art versus Craft, again!

I never intended to create a new discourse on this over-worked issue. The subject was raised only in reference to how we label our work for promotion. As tired as the art versus craft discussion is, many people still wanted to weigh-in about it.

In general, most of the turners who are struggling to have their work recognized fervently support an end to references to their work as craft. Craft, like it or not, carries a negative connotation. What is craft is seen to be not art, and not as good as art among art collectors, curators and the general public.

Those who are already successfully selling their work seem more

casual about how they describe their work, and don't seem to feel the same urgency to correct the misnomer as do aspiring artists. Perhaps a sense of modesty prevents them from using the word "Art", to explain what they produce. Maybe some successful artists use the word "craft" as a kind of reverse snobism.

All turners would benefit if the virtually unknown and tiny pond of turned wood art were to increase to even a small lake. That includes the big fish. Why call your area a pond if you want it to be seen as a lake? Why call it craft if you think it's art?

Lathe only a Tool

I was told more than once, and in no uncertain terms, that galleries and the public don't care what tool was used. If they like the work, they like it. Ray Leier, owner of del Mano Gallery, said "a concerted effort must be made on the part of artists, galleries and organizations to further advance the field of wood art. I use the term "wood art", because it is my feeling that the lathe is a tool to achieve a goal and should not be pressed to become the term covering contemporary art being done in wood."

That certainly sounds like an acceptable argument. Why worry about what tool was used? But the idea sparks endless arguments. One can debate all day that it is the result that counts, as Mr. Leier, suggests. Others argue that there is no reason that work produced on a lathe can't have its own devotees, such as the people who collect scrimshaw, which is produced by one type of tool. Or piano music which is produced by one tool, or instrument.

Turned wood art is, or can be, in

my opinion, important enough to stand alone as an art form, and it can be defined. Not my definition, logic's definition: Turned wood art = art predominately made of wood, crafted predominately on the lathe.

A very beautifully produced book *Contemporary Turned Wood*, is an effort by the afore-quoted Ray Leier, plus Jan Peters and Kevin Wallace, also of the del Mano Gallery. I think it should be in every turner's library. However, on the page facing the introduction is a work that some might question as representing turned wood. Clearly the lathe was employed, but apparently so were a table saw, band saw and router. What appears to be the focal point of the piece is copper, or copper clad.

To repeat from my earlier article, I'm not suggesting that restrictions be imposed on any art, or that we have art police to check our work. That would be absurd. The point is that if there is any impetus to promote an art form called "Turned wood", then objects fitting the definition, however defined, is what should be promoted. A number of people disagreed with that concept.

If those disagreeing were curators of a turned wood-art show and someone brought in a metal sculpture positioned on a wood base that had been turned on a lathe, would they accept it? If their answer is no, then they agree with the concept; they are just arguing about where the line should be drawn. To promote an art form called turned wood, or even the broader category of wood art, a line needs to be drawn somewhere.

Those whose work crosses the logical lines defining either turned wood or wood art were the strongest to object to this reasoning,

which is understandable. The emerging field of turned wood art is exciting, promising and they want to be part of it.

The desire to embrace anything that's been near a lathe is a sign of an art form that has not yet matured. If we can't define it, the average gallery owner or museum curator is going to do it for us. The category they use, may not be the one we like. Sadly, all too many gallery owners and curators don't even bother to categorize it; they simply dismiss it.

These issues have long ago been dealt with in the larger world of art. When entering juried art exhibits, one must choose a category such as acrylic, pen and ink, charcoal, etc. If it is charcoal and acrylic, for example, it goes in mixed media. It is not allowed separately in either the charcoal or acrylic categories. It seems to be common sense that we approach wood turning and wood art with the same basic standards that have existed in the rest of the art world since the Middle Ages.

If you want collectors to collect it, and galleries to display it, you need to be able to answer the question, "What is it?"

Groups to promote our art?

The first article suggested setting up a promotional society within, or as an offshoot of the AAW.

Some respondents vehemently opposed creating a new organization. They felt a society connected to the AAW didn't make sense because that organization's primary focus is the craft of turning, not promotion.

A number of these people were from the Wood Turning Center, and pointed out that they were already working to promote wood turning. They said that they admired my cause, but instead of forming a new organization, they suggested that I

join forces with them.

I don't have a cause; I have an idea.

My apologies to anyone who may have felt that I didn't appreciate the progress made so far. There is no disagreement that the Wood Turning Center is, among others, doing good work. These are dedicated people working hard to increase positive awareness through exhibitions, conferences and other activities. The issue isn't what has been done, it's what else can be done, and done faster.

Employing the savvy and strategies of professional marketers can only increase the effectiveness and scope of current promotional efforts.

The concern people involved with existing organizations had about creating a new organization seems rational. It would dilute the current efforts, and further fragmentize the already fragmented world of turned wood/wood art. It would be duplicative and take the limelight away from organizations that desperately are trying to increase their visibility.

Right?

Wrong. The society would not be a competitor. Instead, it could focus attention on the work of existing organizations, increase their visibility and provide cohesion and clarity to everyone's efforts. It would have the power of a single voice that represented the entire art form.

A society could increase the effectiveness of current promotional efforts and reach a far wider audience, with greater impact.

The proposed society's goals would include better publicity for the organizations and help increase membership and funding.

It would set up effective, ongoing programs to increase awareness among galleries, museums and educators. It would more effectively

attract media attention. It would develop alliances with the entertainment industry.

Could such a promotional society be, in fact, a part of an existing organization? The answer is based on the degree of its autonomy. If it had unrestricted movement, it might. If it were subjected to "this is how we do things" rules, the answer is no.

Getting Started

Where does the money come from to support such a marketing effort? In time, fund raising. And fund raising itself, will increase awareness. Because the process would start from zero, it would take some time to gain momentum.

Based on the vast majority of responses to the article, woodturners want the playing field to be level when competing with other art forms. Regardless of their talent, studio turners want to be able to compete on an equal basis — at their level — for recognition along with artists in all art forms. They don't want to wait decades to achieve that parity.

When a turner asks a gallery to display his or her work and is told that "We don't exhibit that sort of thing", the artist, the gallery and the public all lose.

To the people who said you can't market an art form like soap, my answer is, "Yes, you can." Anything can be promoted.

I ask the people who could make this happen — the top turners, turning organization leaders, thousands of turners who might speak up on their own behalf — what legitimate reason is there not to try this?

Ron Vavra is a former Connecticut turner, now relocated to Wilmington, NC. His e-mail address is: ronvavra@earthlink.net

Great Bowls of Fire

Ron Kent
Kailua, Hawaii

Ron Kent's translucent Norfolk Pine vessels come alive in the light. The top three vessels at left are what Ron calls his "classical" style, utilizing most of the log's diameter. The vessel, at the bottom of the column on the left, is one of his new "quarter section" series — "vessels turned end-grain from sections of log that have been wedge split into approximate quarters. This format creates elegant convoluted interaction of grain, spalt patterns, and growth rings, totally different from my customary full-log usage," said Ron. The stitched vessel below is an example of his ongoing "Post Nuclear series." Ron describes his techniques of treating green wood to prevent cracks on Page 47. Photos Courtesy of Ron Kent.

