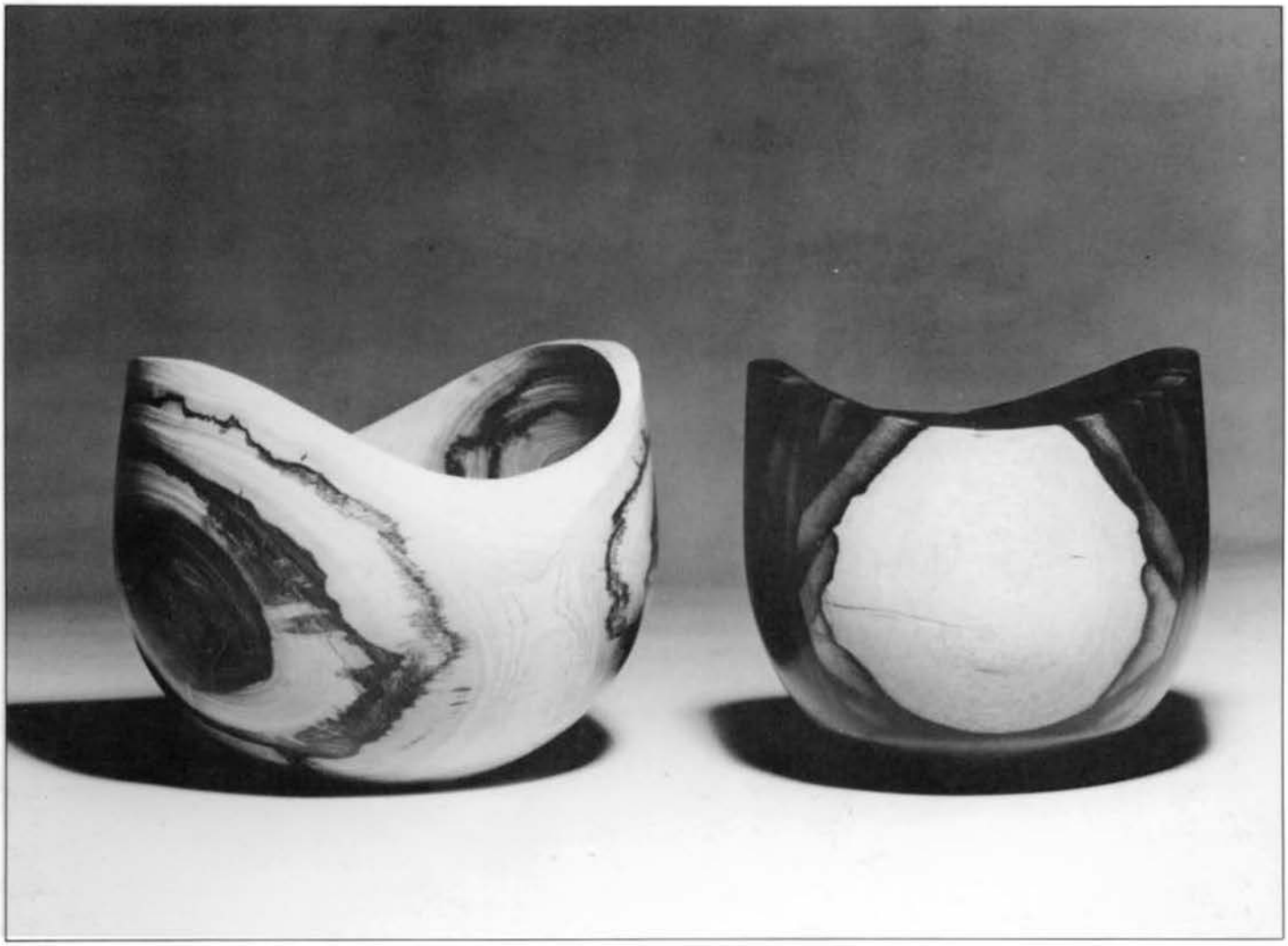
American Woodturner

The Journal of the American Association of Woodturners December 1992 $5.00 Vol. 7, No. 4



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

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Alan Lacer, AAW President

This has been a great year for the American Association of Woodturners (AAW). We have watched our membership climb to record levels, and we are maintaining a steady and consistent growth pattern. With many new members this year, there may be some confusion as to the nature and mission of the AAW journal: Is *American Woodturner* simply another woodworking publication? Do we emphasize one or all aspects of the craft? Who is our audience--the artist or the production turner or the hobbyist? Perhaps the best way to answer such questions is to respond to a letter that our editor recently received. Following is the text of that letter.

I am a new subscriber to American Woodturner, *but a little disappointed with the magazine. Not all, but some of it.*

The article by Steve Loar was very disappointing. If he wants to explore art then why doesn't he send his article to an art magazine. In his article in the June issue, only two or three pictures were really wood turning art, the bowl by Ray Allen, the one by J. Paul Fennell, and the one by Lincoln Seitzman. However, the Owl Bowl by John MacNab was plain ugly. I don't call that wood turning art.

If we want to see real artists in woodturning look to the beautiful work of Dale Nish, Ron Roszkiewiez, David Ellsworth, Bonnie Klein, Ernie Conover, Rude Osolnik, and many others. Come on, you can do better in your magazine.

I know it would cost a lot to put your magazine in color, but it would be worth it as color would show the wood and grain much better. The woodturning magazine from England is in color and a fine magazine for woodturners. We could learn a few things from them.

Also, let's see more advertisements in the American Woodturner *for books, lathes, and tools. It seems England, Australia, and Germany surpass us in this. I looked for six months for a lathe and literature and finally settled for a Delta of which I am satisfied.*

Please do not take offense to my letter, just giving constructive cirticism. I enjoyed the article by Ian Wilkie, "Starting Woodturning on a Budget," and "A Truce with the Skew," by Alan Lacer; also "Turners' Tips." But for the tips, you need a draftsman to draw the tips in a plain way. Respectfully submitted, Harold Miller.

Dear Mr. Miller,

Thank you for your thoughts--I know that you voice the concerns that a number of our members may be having, so I will try to respond in the most open way possible.

First, our membership is comprised of the full spectrum of woodturning enthusiasts: beginners; those turning for more than 50 years; production turners; architectural turners; gallery owners; high-craft or artistic woodturners; ornamental turners; those who laminate bowl stock; those who use solid wood; those who turn materials other than wood, etc., etc. We definitely do not single out one aspect of turning in order to appeal to that particular special-interest group. Articles like Steve Loar's appeal to a number of our members, if only to serve as a type of provocation to consider the issue of design. Certainly not everyone will agree with all that Mr. Loar says, but at the least it will cause readers to consider the questions he raises. And there is another reason: design is seldom spoken about in many publications, and it certainly needs a forum from time to time. I have heard it attributed to the English turner, David Pye, that technique reaches a point where it becomes easier once you start to learn and apply it, but design never gets any easier. Clearly this area will lack the precision that technique is often given, but design discussion still has great value at some point in everyone's development as a turner.

You also suggest that such articles be sent to an art magazine. Mr. Loar's article, in all likelihood, would have been redirected from such magazines to a woodworking publication--and the major woodworking publications would probably not publish it, as it applies to a rather narrow group of woodworkers and to a non-technical aspect of their craft. So, at times we are the first and last stop for articles that clearly speak to such concerns in our field.

On balance, I must say that we have not gone to an extreme on publishing articles that deal with non-technical issues; quite the opposite. Looking over the three previous journals from this year (considering major articles) I find that only about two deal directly with design, while fourteen speak to areas of technique and application, and about eleven cover areas of general interest such as conferences, exhibitions, and historical themes. Clearly, some of the regular features such as "Focus on Hidden Talent" and some of the exhibition articles will certainly raise questions of design and whether or not you find the work representative of good turning. However, the balance is so heavy in favor of technique or the more general areas that maybe we could stand a bit more in the way of articles looking at questions of design, innovation in the field of woodturning, and instruction. I would only ask that you approach our journal the way you might any woodworking publication: some articles will grab your attention while others may not fit your interests or your stage of development.

You raised several other issues concerning the journal. Why don't we go to color? Your question actually poses a more fundamental question: Would the increase in quality of photographs be worth the expenditure--would our journal actually improve by such a move? There might be some improvement in photo quality; and the ability to see colors and grain would certainly be a plus; and the fact that it might just look a lot "slicker" would appeal to some readers. But I have watched two major woodworking publications in the U.S. make the move, and I'm not convinced that the magazines became better in any significant way. I actually prefer the older issues that often had more substance, and I even liked the tone of black and white photography--in much the same way that I enjoy many movies that were in black and white. A quality photograph of an excellent turning will look good regardless of the format. As an organization we have raised this question of using color photographs in the journal, and it is still very much alive--but in the context of the questions I mention. And there may be a middle ground: color where color would help, black and white elsewhere. We plan a detailed discussion of the question at the next AAW board meeting in early 1993.

Another concern you had dealt with the issue of advertising. We could add more advertising and make more money, but AAW is not a magazine publisher--we are a non-profit organization, devoted to education and promotion of woodturning, not the promotion of businesses. We not only publish a journal (far more than a simple newsletter!), we conduct annual conferences, provide educational scholarships, assist with organizing local chapters, and promote the craft. Part of that non-profit status

(Continued on page 45)

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

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On The Cover

Bob Stocksdale, two bowls
lignum vitae, 6" x 7 1/2"
ebony, 6" x 71/2"
photograph by Tom Grotta

American Woodturner is published quarterly, March, June, September, and December, by the American Association of Woodturners. Yearly membership in the American Association of Woodturners is $25 U.S.A., $30 Canada, and $40 overseas and includes a subscription to *American Woodturner*. Send dues to Mary Redig, AAW Administrator, 667 Harriet Avenue, Shoreview, MN 55126, U.S.A. Send articles and advertising to the Editor.

MAKING SUCCESSFUL MINIATURES

John Russell *furniture made by Jose Rodriguez* *photographs by John Russell*

Photo 1 round table, mahogany; covered vessels, l. to r., tan oak and camatillo, olivewood and ebony, maple burl and ibony; platter on wall, cocobolo; book case, cherry; bowls, l. to r., lignum vitae, tan oak; small covered vessel in book case, boxwood and pink ivory; tall vase on floor, myrtlewood burl

When I began this article on miniatures it seemed straightforward. I would first make a list of all the questions people have asked me about miniatures; then add some techniques I use in my turnings; photograph examples that answered the questions; and finally, illustrate the techniques. It all seemed quite simple. Well, the list grew to a volume, the techniques became at least two chapters, and the photographs to illustrate all this would fill a good-sized coffee-table book. Back to the drawing board!

I sat down, had a cup of coffee, and asked myself what was the common thread in all the questions and techniques? The answer seemed to be another question: What are the elements that make a successful miniature? Now I had something to work with, and I will try to answer that question. I feel obligated to add, however, that the opinions in this article are my own. I learned a long time ago that when a question like this is tackled, a suit of armor may be required.

Element 1: Believability

Miniatures fall into two basic categories, scaled and "small things." The scaled category is somewhat easier to define. Most doll-house miniatures are one-twelfth scale: 1 inch equals one foot. There are other scales, but the two above are the most common. I stated "somewhat easier to define" because when you scale something, you first must know the size of the original. If we are talking about common items like dinner plates, goblets, period furniture, or a salad bowl it's easy. A six-inch miniature goblet will be one-half inch tall. Where it gets a little fuzzy is with things like hollow and lidded vessels, decorative bowls, platters--things that vary in size. If you start to make a miniature 14-inch tall John Jordan vase and it winds up to be 3 inches tall, you could always say it was a 36-inch tall vase. In that case, it would a miniature Ed Moulthrop vase.

The "small-things" category is just that, small things. Whenever we make something small, calling it a miniature vase or bowl seems to describe it better. Small things fall into the eye-of-the-beholder realm.

All of the pieces photographed are one-twelfth scale with four exceptions. In photo 7 the largest lidded vessel is a "small thing," and the smallest lidded vessel could be considered half scale--it's 5/8-inch tall. In photo 3, the smallest goblet is half scale, 11/32-inch tall, and the quartert is full size.

What does all this have to do with believability? When you make something small it is all too easy to have it look clunky. The stem on a goblet is thick because you broke the last six you tried to turn. The wall thickness of a bowl or hollow vessel is now 1/8-inch thick because you just really don't need another 1/2-inch napkin ring due to punching a tool through the side. A good test of a miniature, especially scaled miniatures, is to photograph it and see if you can tell how big it is. If you cannot determine whether or not it is a miniature from looking at the photograph, you have achieved beliveability.

Photo 2 dining table, mahogany; on table: small goblets and candle sticks, brass; plates and serving bowl on front right corner, olivewood; tall goblets, dogwood; soup bowls, holly; lidded bowl, center bowl and small serving bowl, cherry burl; side table front, mahogany, bloodwood, holly; bowls on top, l. to r.: maple burl, madrone burl, olivewood, lignum vitae sapwood; table in back, mahogany, applewood; on top, l. to r. champagne glass, lignum vitae; tall vase, myrtlewood burl; lidded bowl, spalted curly maple; platter on wall, cocobolo

Element 2: Detail

The details on turnings of any size can make the difference between success and failure, at least from a design sense. The treatment of the base or the rim on a platter or bowl or the choice not to have any detail at all can make a big difference in the artistic quality of the final product. In miniatures this is no less important. The details just get a lot smaller. My approach in making a miniature piece is the same as when I make a full-size piece. If a bead helps the design, it gets a bead even if the bead may be only 1/64-inch wide. A lid that falls off because the fit isn't quite right is even more annoying when you are crawling on the floor trying to find it--or worse yet, you hear a crunch. Finishing the bottom is also just as important. I turn the bottoms on all my miniatures, sign, date, and sometimes include the wood used (photo 10). This gets tricky, but more on that later.

A lot of my full-size work is inlaid or overlaid with gems and minerals. I use turquoise, opal, azurite, crysocola, pewter, copper ore, malachite, and others. Recently I have started making miniatures with inlays as well (photo 4). My best advise is to let your imagination go.

I could not think of a better example of how important attention to detail is than in Jose Rodriguez's furniture. The turned and carved legs, the edge treatment to tables, the claw-and-ball feet just amaze me. This guy even dovetails his drawers--now that's detail. The use of his furniture in the photographs is key to the believability element. Jose, in my opinion, is truly a master at miniature-furniture making.

Element 3: Material

What works best? Just about any material you would use for full-size turnings will work in miniature, with an explanation. I like burls, especially madrone, maple, boxelder, and myrtlewood. Tagua nuts, dogwood, boxwood, ebony, and holly are great because of their tight grain. Brass, aluminum, and copper also work well.

Now for the explanation. The particular material you use is not the important consideration. It is the characteristics of that material that element 3 is all about. Think of it this way. If you want to make a set of plates, you will end up with something about one inch or less in diameter. If the wood has open grain like red oak or it came from a fast-growing tree and the growth rings are half-inch wide, it may not be the best choice. Try using end grain, side grain, part of a knot -- whatever gives the wood the appearance of also being scaled down. One of the reasons I like burls is that you can get almost any representation of scale by where and how you cut the blank.

I don't find that the type of wood I choose is any harder to turn in miniature than in full size. Sometimes the more figured wood can even be easier if you keep the tools sharp and go slow. I have made 3/4-inch tall goblets out of redwood burl. The stems were only about 1/32 inch in diameter. I don't recommend redwood for this--it's very soft and breaks easily--but it can be done. The point being, don't restrict yourself. Use whatever material will make the best looking piece, making it believable. For example,

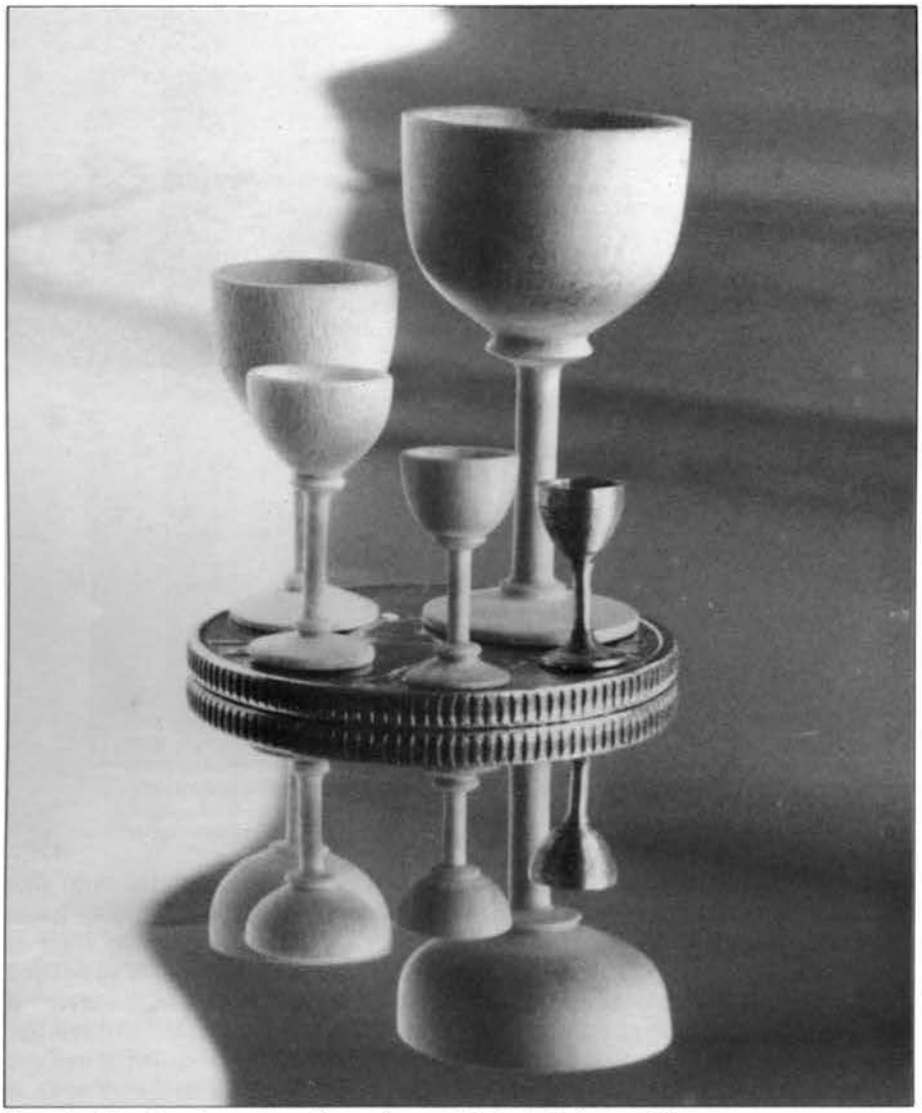


Photo 6 goblets from largest to smallest: olivewood, holly, holly, boxwood, brass

when I make sets of bowls, plates, or goblets, I use the same section of wood for the entire set. I select a section of say, olivewood or spalted maple, with the same pattern and large enough to make all the pieces in the set. That way they will match each other in color, figure, and texture. Photo 6 is a good example of the selection process. Even though myrtlewood has large growth rings, the burl eyes were tight and in scale for the size of the piece.

This brings to mind one of the most often asked questions: Where do you get the wood? As I mentioned, I also turn full-size work. One of the reasons I started turning miniatures was that I don't like to throw anything away, and I always have a lot of trimmings from a blank. I cut some into pen blanks and others become miniature blanks. The only thing left is the shavings. I guess I could glue them into blocks, but that might be taking a good thing too far.

Element 4: Equipment and Tricks

Everyone wants to know what kind of lathe and tools are best. The best lathe for turning miniatures is the one you have and the one you are most comfortable with. All of my turnings pictured were turned on a 12-inch Woodfast lathe. Jose used a Dremel lathe for all the turned parts in his furniture. That just about covers the range of lathes. I have two smaller lathes, but I don't find them as comfortable to use, so I use them primarily for other tasks (one is a metal lathe) like tool making and demonstrations as it is hard to drag around my Woodfast lathe.

One consideration is the speed of the lathe. I find that 2500 to 3000 rpm works best for me. If the speed is too slow the cleanness of the cuts is diminished. Some people like higher speeds, however, I find that they can cause more problems than lower ones. When the wall thickness gets down to 1/32 inch or less, chatter and centrifugal force become a factor.

A set of miniature turning tools is almost a must. The Bonnie Klein set and Sorby set are both great and may well be all you ever need. When it comes to woodturners and tools, though, it seems that building a better mouse trap is inherent. I make special tools to do special things (photo 8). I find HSS drill blanks and air-hardening drill rod work well. Drill rod works best for bent tools and where a lot of grinding is needed to get the shape. The drawback is that you then have to harden and temper the tool. This is an art in itself. I find that air-harding drill rod is easier and more forgiving than oil- or water-harding rod. Tempering can be done in a kitchen oven. Drill blanks are much easier because they are already hardened and tempered. Just remember not to grind them so fast that you loose the temper. Also, they will hold an edge as long as most tools. The holder in the photo was made from 3/8 inch drill rod. I drilled a 3/16 inch hole in the center and tapped a set screw to hold 3/16 inch drill blanks. This way I only need one handle for many of the tools that only get used occasionally. The tools I use often are epoxied into their own handles.

Three things I find invaluable are cyanoacrylate glues, double-stick tape, and black electrician's tape. The glue is for holding the blanks to the glue block, for inlays, and for adding different woods in lids and handles. The tape is used mostly for remounting to turn the bottom recess and inside of lids. If you are making plates, for example, turn a tenon the same size as the plate, square the end off so it runs true, and tape the top of the plate to the tenon. Electrician's tape works best because it stretches. It will almost center itself automatically. Now the

Photo 4 l. to r., maple burl, 1/2" tall x 1/2" dia.; boxelder burl, turquoise, opal, crysocola, 7/8" tall x 1 1/4" dia.; madrone burl, turquoise, 13/16" tall x 1 1/16" dia.

Photo 5 large piece in center, maple burl, tagua nut, walnut, 3 3/8" tall x 1 3/8" dia.; small pieces l. to r., maple burl and ebony, spalted tan oak and camatillo, boxelder burl and ebony, boxwood and pink ivory, and olive wood and ebony

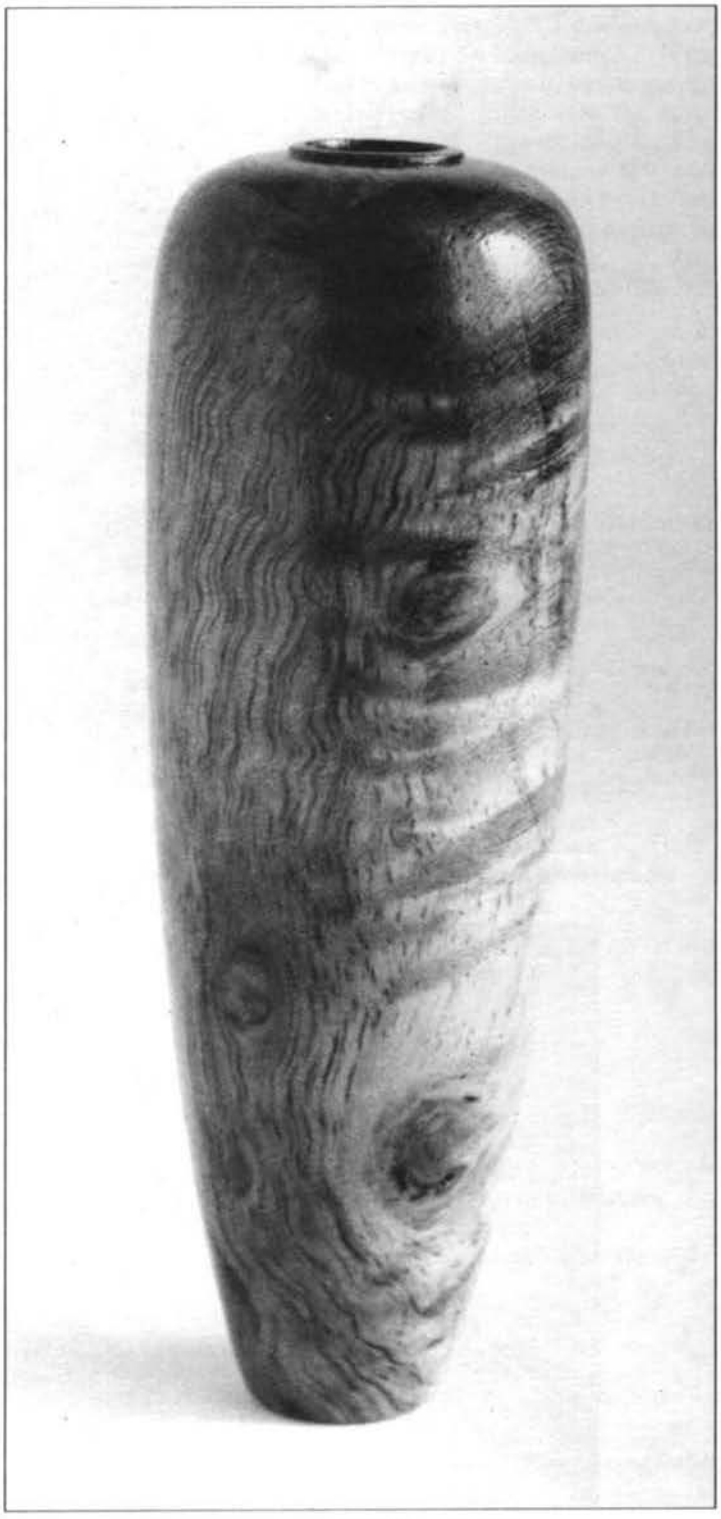


Photo 6 myrtlewood burl, 2 3/8" tall x 3/4" dia.

Photo 7 table in foreground, walnut and cherry; on table: stack of soup bowls, holly; stack of plates, spalted maple; goblets, dogwood; lidded bowl, boxelder burl and ebony; salad bowl, marbled maple; fork and spoon, rosewood; side table in back: mahogany, cherry, bloodwood and ash burl; on top, l. to r.: boxelder burl, madrone burl, maple burl; desk, cherry; platter on wall, maple burl

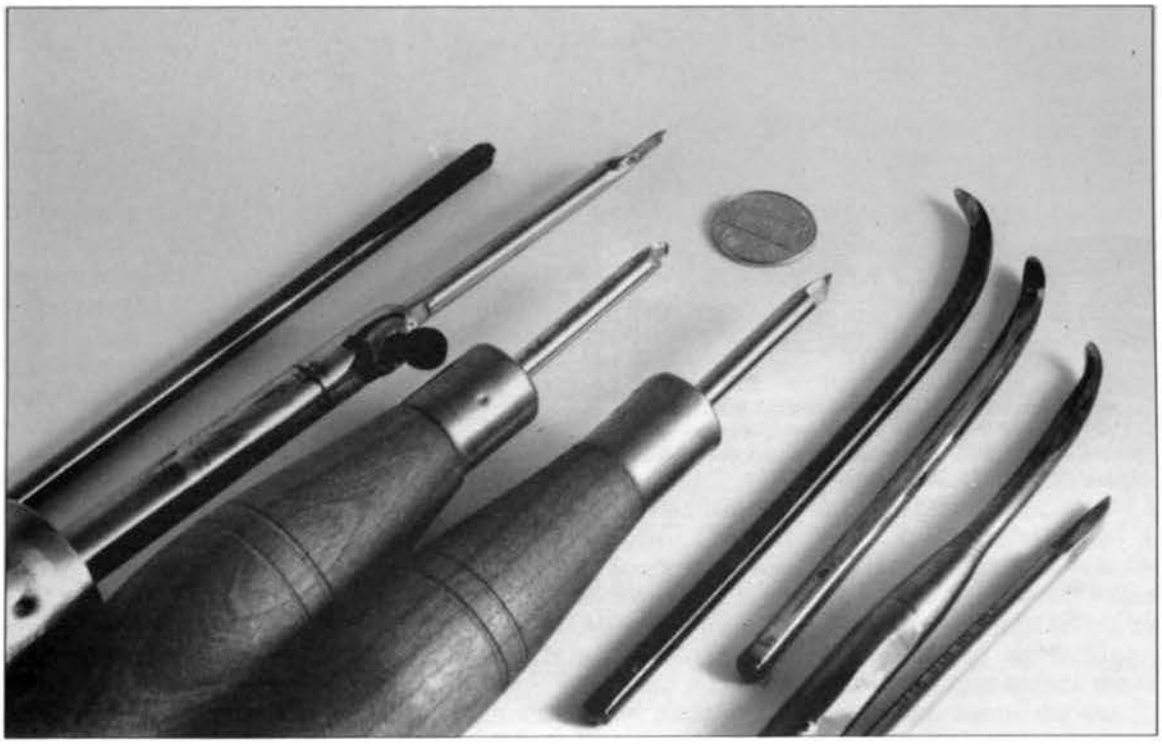


Photo 8 l. to r., small deep-fluted gouge made from 3/16" drill rod; 1/32" parting tool in holder made from 3/16" drill blank; 3/16" round scraper, made from 3/16" drill blank; pointed scraper made from 3/16" drill blank; three curved tools to hollow out vessels, made from drill rod; round-sided scrapter, made from 3/16" drill blank

Photo 9 spalted tan oak and camatillo, 7/8" tall x 7/8" dia.

Photo 10 boxelder burl

bottom recess can be turned. Double-stick tape serves a similar purpose where the electrician's tape might get in the way.

Another trick of sorts is how to sign the bottom. I use technical pens and India ink found at most art-supply stores. If you are writing small, use a small point. The point I use for miniatures is .13 inch. These pens are a pain and tend to clog easily, but if you clean them after each use, your mental state will be better. Replacement points are available, but like the pens they are not cheap, about nine to twelve dollars. As for having a steady hand, you're on your own. My only advise is practice and patience.

Conclusion:

I hope that I have at least provided some food for thought as to what makes a successful miniature. Two sources that may be of interest are *The Nutshell News* and *The International Guild of Miniature Artisans, Ltd.* To a large degree, success lies in being happy with what you've created and the enjoyment that your creating gives to yourself and others. Above all, don't be afraid to try. Explore the possibilities, use different woods, make a few 1/2-inch napkin rings . . . failures often lead to greater achievements. And, should you hear negative comments, ignore them. One person picked up a goblet; studied it intently for a while; set it down and said, "totally useless." I thought, yes, he was right in one sense. You wouldn't serve wine in it, unless maybe to a designated driver. On the other hand, I had a lot of fun making it; many other people enjoyed looking at it; and I've talked with others about how it was made--some were intrigued enough to try making one of their own. So, after all, it wasn't totally useless.

Source List:

MSC Industrial Supply Co.
151 Sunnyside Boulevard
Plainview, NY 11803-9915
800/753-7900
Drill rod, HSS-drill blanks, and lots of other things

Campbell Tool Company
2100 Selma Road
Springfield, OH 45505
513/322-8562
Book: *Hardening, Tempering & Heat Treatment* by Tubal Cain
Also drill rod and other supplies

Nutshell News
published by Kalmback Miniatures
P.O. Box 1612
Waukesha, WI 53187
414/796-8776

Miniature Collector
published by Collector Communications
170 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10010
212/989-8700
Magazine dedicated to miniatures

International Guild of Miniature Artisans Ltd.
P.O. Box 71
Bridgeport, NY 13030

John Russell lives in Springfield, Virginia.

A CASE FOR CLOCKS ON THE LATHE

Stewart Dawson *photographs by Rip Rippengale*

Victorian blackwood, 15 1/2" h. x 9" w. x 4" depth; dial dia. 5", Danish oil and wax finish

So, what's new about turning a clock case? For centuries woodturners have been involved with the clockmaking industry: supplying housings, bezels, finials, pillars, and split turnings, usually in production runs of commercial quantities. Today, with the easy availability of reliable quartz movements--for less dollars than there are numbers on a clock dial--any handy person can become an instant "clockmaker." The emphasis has been shifted from the importance of the mechanical qualities and expense of the movement to the appeal of the case, allowing more flexibility in design with less skill needed for previously difficult fitting and assembly.

The challenge for the woodturner is to combine these modern measuring devices of passing time with the beauty and memory of times past captured in the structure of wood. In fact, wood in its structure contains a natural clock so accurate that it is used as a time-measuring "yardstick." In a science known as dendrochronology, trees are employed to date events and conditions of the ancient past and to check the accuracy of other "clocks" such as carbon-14, used in radio-carbon dating. All of which makes wood an ideal medium for constructing clock cases.

Having the ideal ingredients--accurate movement and wood--what is now required is to put them together to produce a desirable creation. There are at least three possible ways to proceed: 1) buy a set of plans with movement and necessary hardware. 2) Copy an existing model or modify it to your liking. 3) Originate a design to express a concept or fit a special decor.

The first two options are straightforward and should produce already-tested, acceptable models. The third is the most difficult, the most rewarding, and also the most likely to lead to failure. As it is not possible to create an entirely original model, you will have to be satisfied with something that is at least unique, an expression of your personality, or that suits a certain decor. If the first attempts fall short of your expectations, don't give up. You can always make another model, gaining from your experience and maybe develop new and valuable turning techniques.

Perhaps a quote from the inscription on an eighteenth-century English water clock might help to get you moving:

As the hours passeth away
So doeth the life of man decay
Time can't be bought at any cost
So use it well and let no hour be lost.

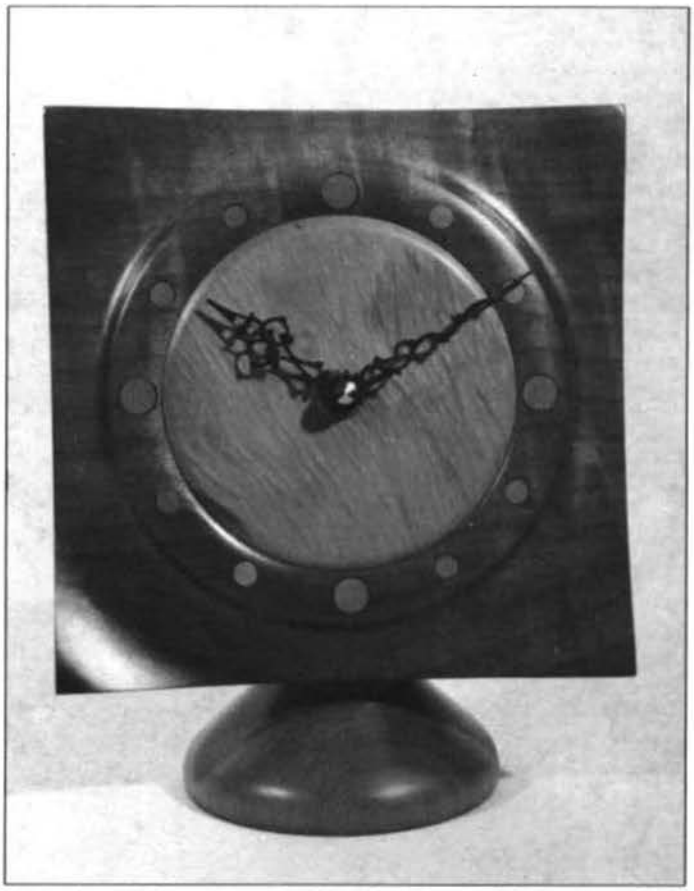
At this point, having decided to turn a clock case, it would be advisable to order catalogs from your craft suppliers, particularly those specializing in clocks and associated accessories. Having this information can help develop ideas, assist in deciding what suits your purpose, and importantly, what fits your pocket.

Make a sketch to clarify your concept, and then obtain the movement and hardware. With these in hand, make an accurate detailed drawing, bearing in mind the limitations of the lathe, your ability as a turner, the nature of the wood, plus the mechanical requirements of the clocks. Always observe the guidelines of good design rules and proportion while never forgetting that the main purpose of a clock is to tell the time with ease and clarity.

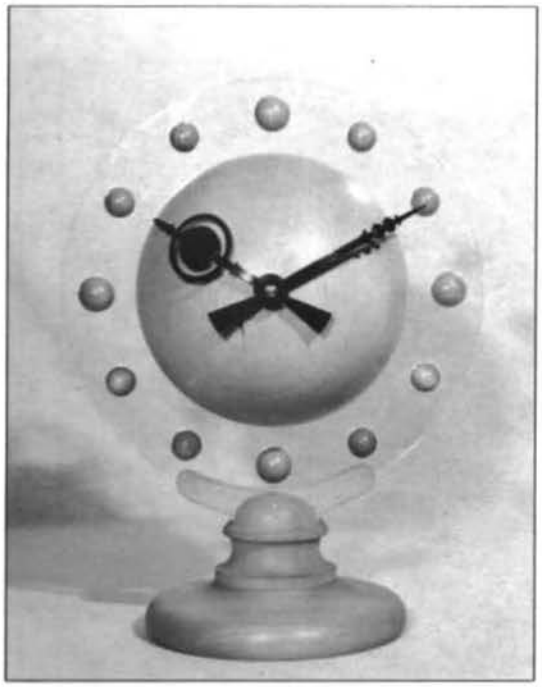
Some Hints to Avoid Pitfalls and Frustration

1. Design the case to fit the movement.
2. Obtain the movement first, before construction starts, then build the case around the movement.
3. The movement must be fitted so that it can be removed later for adjustment or replacement. This also applies to glasses.
4. If fixed bezel or glass is used, make sure there is a hand-setting facility at the back.
5. Pendulums must have clearance front and back as well as at the sides for full oscillation where box construction or pillars are used.
6. Length of center pinion and center-fixing diameter dictate dial-board thickness and hole size.
7. Chiming movements need space and an outlet for the speaker.
8. Allow easy access for battery replacement.

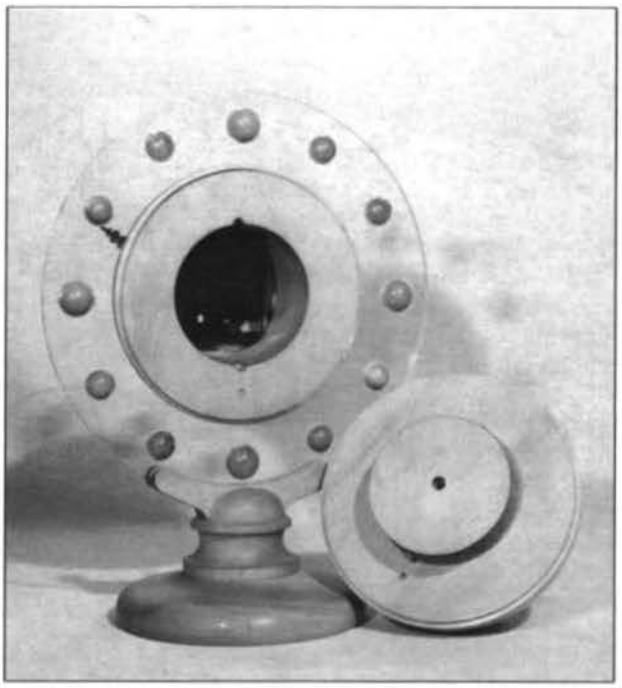
jacaranda, 7" h. x 4 1/2" w., Danish oil and wax finish



huon pine and Tasmanian myrtle, 7 1/4" h. x 6" w., Danish oil and wax finish



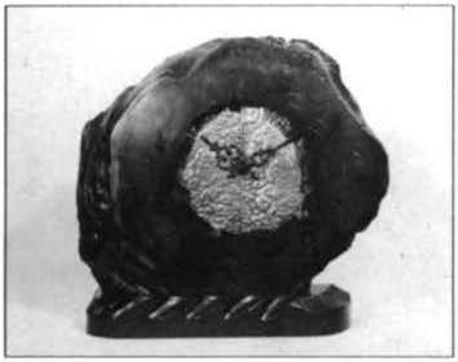
"Planet with Satellites," huon pine and acrylic globe, 6" dia., 11 1/2" h. x 9" w., buffing oil and wax finish



back half of "Planet with Sattelites," globe removed to show method of fitting

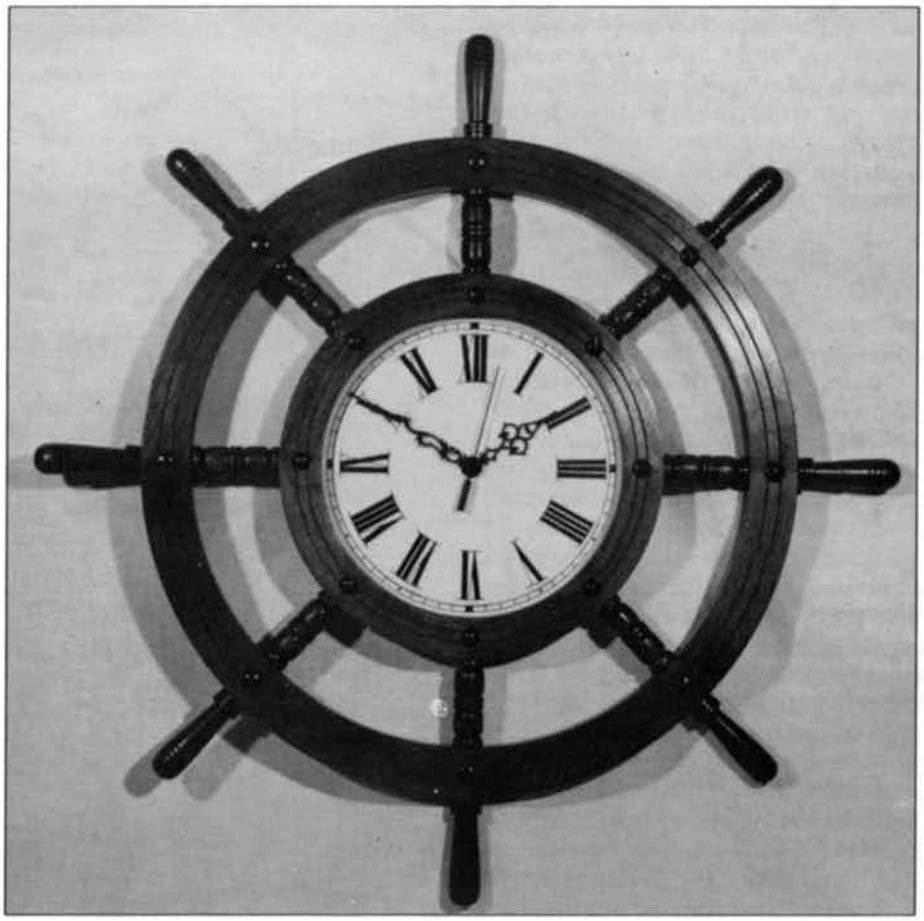
modified version of early twentieth-century German bracket clock featuring finials and split turnings, 13 3/4" h. x 7 3/8" w.; dial, 4" x 4", polyeurathane finish

Brazilian mahogany, display frame for pocket watch with glass dome; 4 3/4" h. x 4 1/4" w., Danish oil and wzx finish

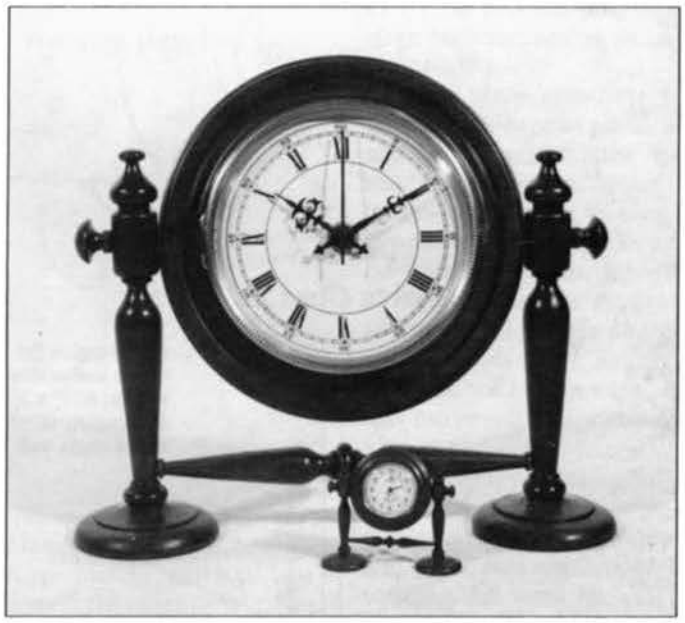


West Australian jarrah burl, hand-beaten copper dial; 13" h. x 14" w., dial 6" dia.; buffing oil and wax

Radiata pine, overall dia. 10 1/2"; dial dia. 4 3/4"; walnut stain and polyeurathane finish



Victorian blackwood, overall dia. 29"; dial, 10" dia., Danish oil finish



Victorian blackwood picture-frame clock with miniature; miniature, Tasmanian myrtle, 1 3/4" h. x 2 1/4" w., dial, 13/16" dia.; picture-frame clock, 8" h. x 9" w., dial, 4 1/4" dia.

Types of Movement

Mechanical clocks require special consideration so here we will consider quartz only. Briefly, the main quartz types are: standard (time only); pendulum; chime; combinations of these last two; and insertion.

Insertion units come complete. A recess is turned and the unit is held either by tension from the sides of the case or by fixings through the back. The other types require careful planning, measurement, and turning to ensure satisfactory fitting.

Dials and Bezels

Apart from self-adhesive numerals, a large range of dials--metal, paper, plastic, and with and without glasses and bezels--in a multitude of styles, are available. Choose the one most suited to your design; or you can make your own. If you are into inlay or stickwork, a twelve-pointed star could also be used to good effect. No markings at all or discreet radiating lines can produce unexpectedly legible backgrounds for distinctive hands.

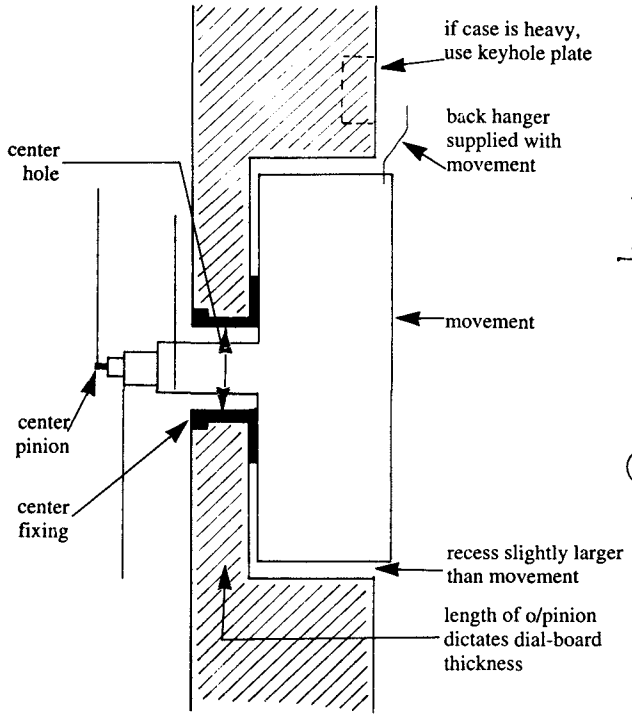
Hands

Hands should be an integral part of the design and in some cases the focal point. They come in a large variety of styles and sizes.

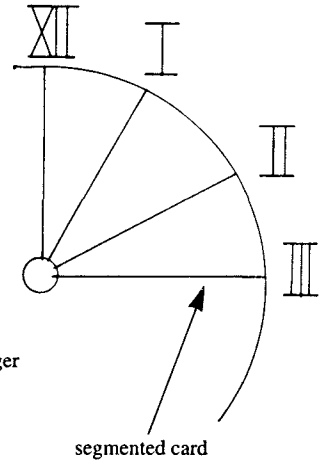
Make sure the hands fit the mechanism as different manufacturers produce different sizes and methods of fitting. The style must compliment the overall design, and the color must contrast with the dial for easy viewing. The length follows the rule that the tip of the minute hand sweeps the rim of the chapter ring while the tip of the hour hand brushes over the bottom of the numeral up to about one third of the numeral's length.

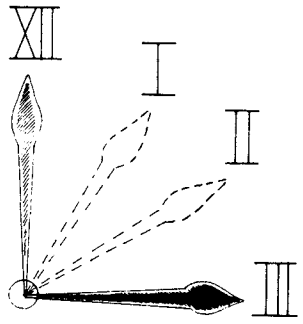
In some instances, individually designed, custom-made hands are more interesting. Carved wooden hands look effective on a rustic-style model. But be careful with the size and weight. Standard quartz movements have limited power so, if in doubt, use a heavy-duty movement. This applies to large dials, 10 inches and over. Whether using commercial or hand-made hands, test run the movement with the hands attached before installation into the case.

Basic Open-faced Model

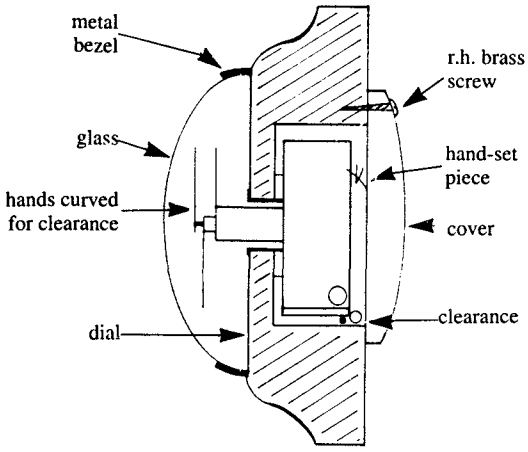


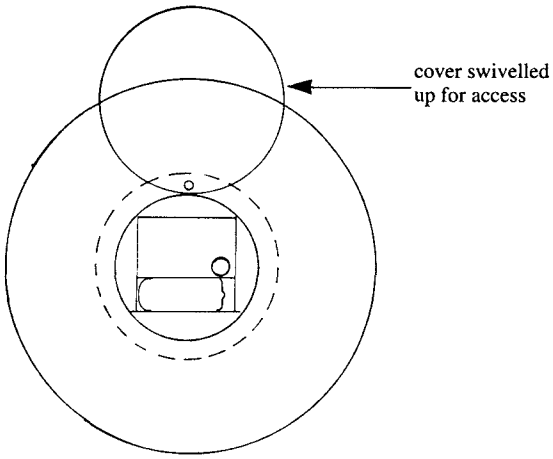
Positioning Numerals



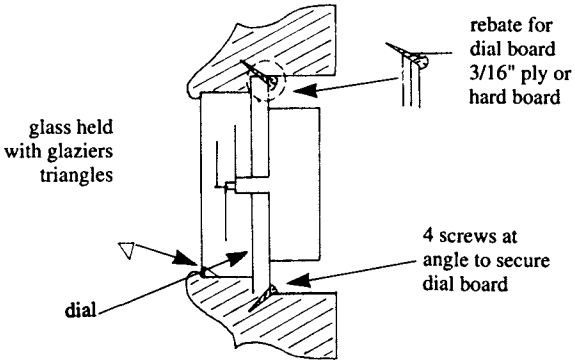


Glass Front with Back Cover

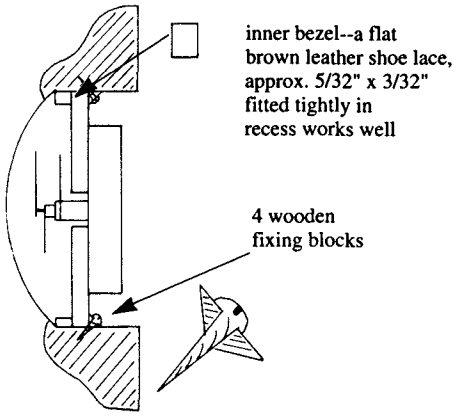




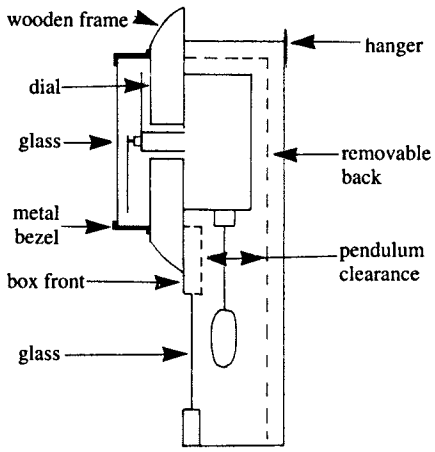
Flat Glass Fitted Inside Case

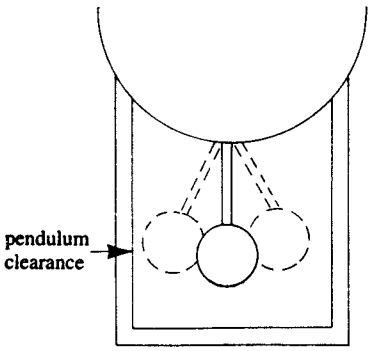


Convex Glass Inside Case

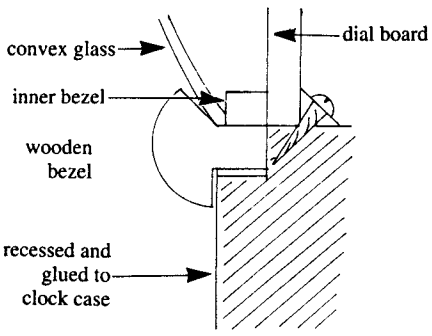


Pendulum in Box Housing





Wooden Bezel



Pendulums

Pendulum-suspension points vary, so check clearances. In a heavy-fronted, drop clock, railway, or schoolhouse style the suspension point must be towards the rear of the movement. It may also need a longer center pinion. There are models available with these features. The polished brass bob supplied can be replaced with one turned in wood, perhaps even carved or pierced. Length and weight, within limits are not critical as the pendulums in quartz movements are decorative only and have no affect on the timekeeping qualities.

Turning

A good starter for novices would be a simple wall clock using self-adhesive numerals. Using platter-turning techniques, make a recess into which the movement will fit easily, taking care that the depth is right for the center spindle and the bottom is flat for the proper seating. Reverse chuck the disc using an expanding chuck or jam-fit waste block. Turn a suitable edge and then drill the center hole and finish with a wax-free preparation so that the numerals will adhere properly.

Place the numerals in position using a cardboard disc divided into twelve equal segments--you can buy a set or make one. Center the correct-sized disc on the clock front and align the numbers with the division marks. Alternatively, you can fit the movement, attach the hands, set them to exactly twelve o'clock and fix the number-12 numeral in place. Then by turning the minute hand one revolution at a time and stopping exactly at 12, align each succeeding numeral with the hour hand.

The more elaborate styles are a greater challenge as nearly all the skills and techniques of lathe operation are needed. Faceplate, center work, deep hollowing, picture framing and lidded container chucking methods, fine detail on finials and split turnings, plus the ability to produce accurate built-up segments for bezels and case bodies will test your skill. Segmented bezels are more stable than wide boards which can move with disastrous effects on glasses and dials.

Accuracy is essential so careful measurement and attention to detail is important. This is particularly so in mantle models which come under close scrutiny and must be well finished at the back. This calls for the fitting of a back cover. Tight-fitting lids as used on lidded containers are not satisfactory. Because of the vertical inclination, any distortion (even well-seasoned wood moves slightly) causes them to drop out or conversely, tighten to the point where they cannot be removed without damage. A simple solution is to turn a thin disc slightly larger than the recess opening and attach it with a round-head brass screw at the top edge. The disc can be swivelled up to allow access to the battery and movement. Other methods include hinging or securing by means of an easy-fitting spigot to which are fitted two diametrically opposed protruding round-headed screws adjusted to slot into concentric grooves carved in the recess walls. Refer to the photo showing the back view of the "Planet" clock.

Surface Treatment

If you have a tried and tested method, use it. I have a preference for tung-oil-based preparations such as Danish oil. I brush the oil on and rub well into the surface and then wipe the excess off. As there are usually difficult corners and details to negotiate, this method eliminates brush marks, runs, and build-up. After several applications over a few days, allow a few more days to harden, and then apply a light coat of wax with 0000 steel wool or super-fine grade scouring pad, and buff to a soft sheen. Remember, don't use wax if self-adhesive numerals are to be applied.

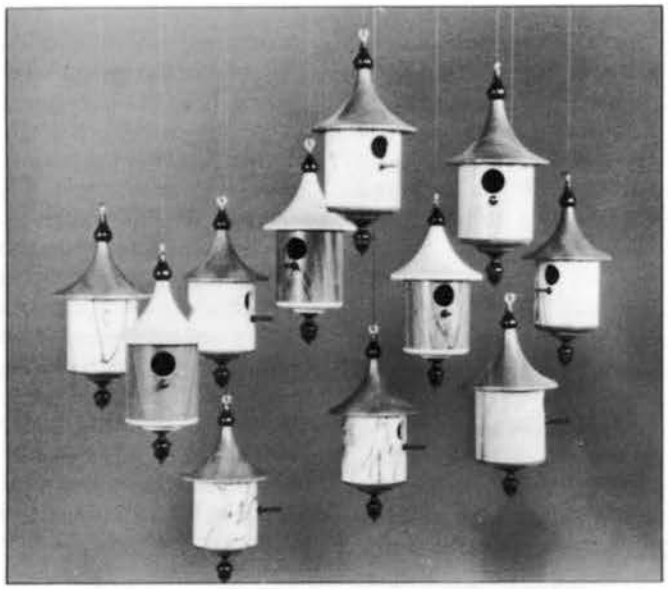
Conclusion

This has been a brief and general account of a complex subject. Clock-case making has been neglected by many woodturners and could be developed into a more widely accepted art form, as has happened in other facets of woodturning such as bowls and vases. I hope this article will inspire some members to experiment with designs and material, possibly creating some outstanding exhibition pieces or, more importantly, encourage the average turner to have a go at what I believe is one of the most fascinating and rewarding experiences to be injoyed on the lathe.

Steward Dawson lives in Mt. Martha, Victoria, Australia.

BIRDHOUSE ORNAMENTS

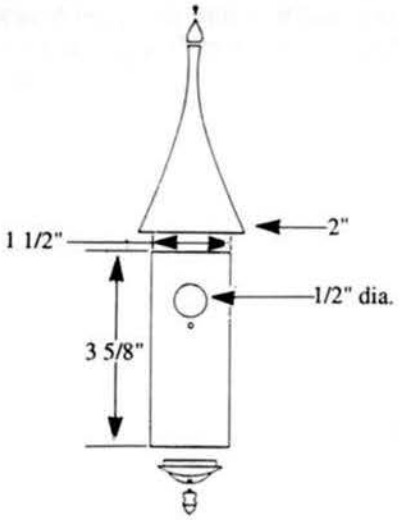
Robert Rosand



Birdhouse ornaments have been an extremely popular seller for me. I make most of them by the same method described in *American Woodturner*, Vol. 7, No. 1. The only difference is that the scale is smaller, and I do not generally use stack laminations for the roofs and bases.

Make the birdhouse body first. I hold my stock in a three-jaw chuck so that I can remove it and do multiples. Cut stock about 4 inches long and 1 3/4 inches in diameter. Turn to a finished diameter of 1 1/2 inch and about 3 5/8 inches long. Remove from the lathe, and drill the 1/2-inch diameter entrance hole and the hole for the perch. Return the birdhouse body to the lathe. Use a 1 1/4-inch Forstner bit to hollow the body or drill a hole through the interior and hollow with a scraper. Sand and part the body from the lathe.

Use stock about 2 1/4 by 4 inches long for the birdhouse roof and bottom. If you want to be creative, glue up all those odds and ends that are too beautiful to be thrown away. Turn the roof, allowing at least a 1/4 inch overhang. Part the roof from the lathe, reverse chuck it, and drill a hole to accept the finial. Use the remaining wood to turn the bottom of the birdhouse. Be sure to drill a hole to accept the acorn prior to parting the bottom from the lathe. The roof and bottom can then be glued to the birdhouse body.



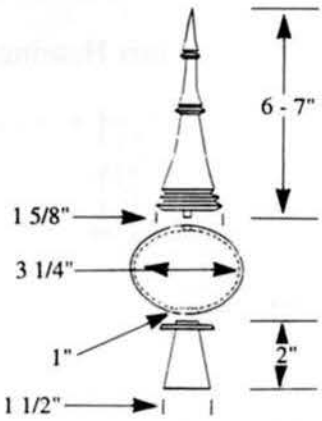
At this point, all that remains is to turn the finial, perch, and acorn and to attach a small screw eye, for hanging the ornament on a tree. Spray the finished house with a couple coats of lacquer.

My only caution is that you keep proportion in mind. It is very easy to make the finial or perch out of proportion to the roof and body.

In his usual generous way, Robert Rosand will be donating a birdhouse ornament to next year's national symposium banquet auction.

CHRISTMAS-TREE FINIAL

Robert Rosand



I had been making Christmas-tree ornaments for awhile when a friend requested a tree finial. After a bit of trial and error, I simply reversed my hollow ornament, making the "icicle" the top and enlarging the base to allow fitting on the tree. (*See* American Woodturner, *Vol. 6, No. 3.*)

The globe is made exactly the same way as for the ornaments except that it is a bit larger--about 3 1/4 inches in diameter. The entry hole in the base of the globe is enlarged to about 7/8 or 1 inch. This allows easier access for hollowing as well as for a base that will fit on a tree.

After parting off the lathe, you should have a globe with a small hole in the top, approximately 1/2 inch in diameter and a larger hole in the bottom. Make the finial from stock about 7 1/2 inches long and about 1 5/8 inches in diameter. Most of this wood is removed, but it allows for a wider base which I feel is more esthetically pleasing. Before cutting the finial off the lathe, be sure to undercut the base to create a snug fit to the globe.

The flared bottom allows the finial to sit on the top of the tree. Use stock about 1 5/8 inch in diameter and about 3 or 4 inches long. True up the bottom and drill a 5/8 inch hole through the piece. Turn the flare and fit to the opening in the bottom of the globe. Again, be sure to undercut to allow for a tight fit.

Assemble using five-minute epoxy, and finish with spray lacquer.

Robert Rosand will be donating one of these wonderful finials to next year's national symposium banquet auction.

TURNING DOMESTIC--CHRISTMAS TREES

William L. Stephenson

Each year many of us find ourselves in the annual predicament of disposing of a spent Christmas tree. With increasing pressures to minimize the types and volume of materials we send to landfills, many creative approaches are being taken to slow down the surge. Communities and neighborhoods are having street parties with bonfires, tree services are establishing delivery points or collection days to grind the remains into smaller pieces, and "live" trees are available which can be planted after the holidays (although for many reasons these trees do not survive very well).

A couple of years ago, a different idea crossed my mind; I gave it a turn, and it worked very well. Use the main stem and the larger branches of the tree to make turned objects! Turned ornaments for next year's tree have been a hit; small weed pots and vases are enjoyed year round; and small end-grain turned bowls have worked well. You, too, may want to give your tree another turn: lob off the limbs with a sharp knife or hatchet taking care not to tear out the wood causing depressions in the surfaces. Cut the main stem into lengths long enough for about three completed objects. A rule for length is 4 to 5 diameters to yield three items. Mount the blank with the grain parallel to the lathe bed (spindle-turning mode) between centers. Using a parting tool or the point of a skew, lay out the length of each object making sure that your cuts go at least through the bark to solid wood.

Think about the finished piece when making the layout for length. Take maximum advantage of the many small and green knots inherent with the many limbs of Christmas trees. Each knot will become an attractive feature of the completed object. Leave enough length for the base and the top to be knot-free. Also leave enough length for any remounting you might need to do if your design will be hollowed like a bowl or bud vase.

Using a spindle gouge, round up the blank as needed for the design. Keep your tool SHARP as you will need to neatly slice through the knots leaving a smooth, chatter-free surface. If your design includes leaving some "bark-on" as in depressions or at the natural edge of an end-grain bowl, take special care to keep the tool under control making slicing cuts rather than scraping cuts (the shavings should come off as curls). Once the piece is rough rounded, you may want to switch to the skew of your choice for completing the turning. At a minimum, sharpen the gouge if you plan to continue to use it so that you will leave a smooth surface with each cut.

Sand the completed design starting with about 150 grit. Remember that most Christmas trees are softwood so you will be removing the surface very rapidly. Continue sanding to about 320 or 400 grit or finer. An oil- or solvent-based finish will work the best due to the resin content of softwoods. Expect a matte finish, as softwoods will absorb a lot of the finish, and absorption will be relatively uneven. If a gloss finish is preferred, several coats will be needed, allowing adequate time for drying and a light 400- to 600-grit sanding between coats.

After you complete the turning and finishing of the outside of all the objects to be made from the blank, part the pieces and complete the tops and bottoms by hand. A sharp knife or wood chisel will remove the center stubs. Be sure to cut along the growth rings rather than across the growth rings to avoid tear-out. If your piece is to be turned on the inside, remount the piece and complete the turning.

Many native and naturalized species are used for Christmas trees. Some of the more common are: Eastern white pine, Western white pine, red pine, sand pine, Scotch pine, white spruce, Englemann spruce, balsam fir, noble fir, and Eastern red cedar. All of these species are prime candidates for winter turning, recycling your Christmas tree.

Cracking and splitting of the completed object is not a problem, in general. The trees are usually cut during the dormant period when the moisture content is at its seasonal lowest; the tree and the wood will have dried relatively slowly as most people keep the base sitting in water to retard needle drop; most of the woods are relatively soft with thin-walled cells that shrink during drying; and the completed object is usually small in size which has less total tension to disperse. If the design will permit, bore a 1/16 to 1/8 inch hole through the middle of the object giving the outer wood a place to shrink.

What do you do with the limbs, needles, and shavings? They all make excellent winter cover for plant-seedling beds.

If you have not created turned objects using this method of Christmas-tree recycling, then it is time you gave it a turn.

Bill Stephenson is a professional forester who has been a serious wood turner since 1988.

SCRATCH YOUR OWN BACK!

Stephen R. Garavatti

A politician becomes successful when he or she skillfully employs the age-old practice of "backscratching." This backscratcher was designed to fill the needs of the *unsuccessful* candidate.

Begin with a 1 3/4- x 1 1/2- x 24-inch long piece of wood. Punch a hole *centered* in the end of the handle section, and punch an *off-center* hole in the end of the "hand" portion, which will be cut later. You will use these holes to mount the wood on the lathe with the "hand"-portion end off center. Draw lines to mark the handle as it tapers off-center towards the "hand," and cut out the excess material of the handle using a bandsaw. Mount the wood in the lathe and turn the handle somewhat smooth, as in photo 1, leaving approximately a 1-inch diameter cylinder for the entire length of the handle portion. Slightly round off the corners of the hand section next to the handle.

Turn the handle detail as you please, using sharp skews and gouges. As you work the detail down the handle, the material will flex, so support the work from the back as shown in photo 2. Using a skew, part off the end of the handle at the tailstock.

Sketch a side view for the "hand" (photo 3). Cut away the excess material, using a bandsaw. Leave the fingers relatively thick. Because they cross end grain, the fingers will be somewhat fragile, and the extra material will provide strength. Use a sanding drum with the same diameter as the curvature of the hand section to sand the inside of the hand. Then sand the back of the section and soften the edges. Strive for an even thickness along the length of the fingers.

Mark out three or four lines for making the cuts to separate the individual fingers, and cut about half way through the hand to define the fingers. Completely sand the scratcher and finish with your favorite finish.

Screw an eye hook into the end of the handle or drill a small hole through the handle near the end. Thread a length of leather thong to proudly hang your newest project.

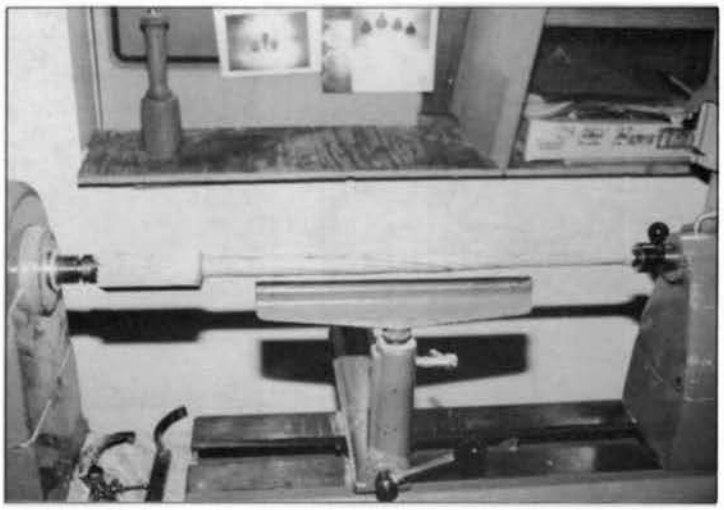


Photo 1

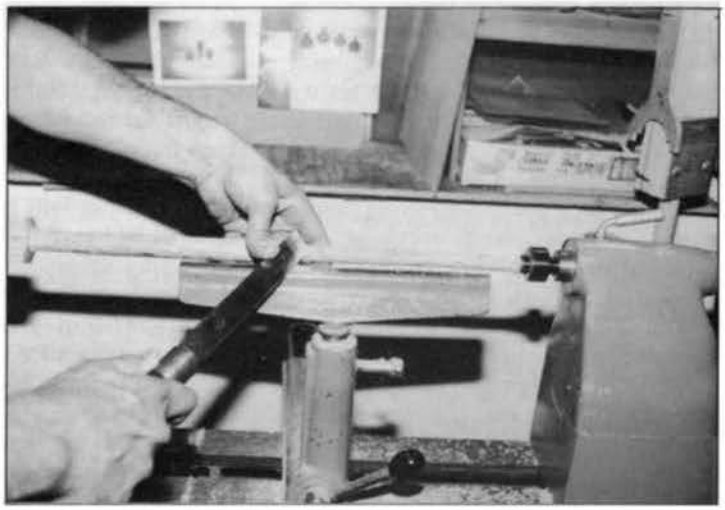


Photo 2

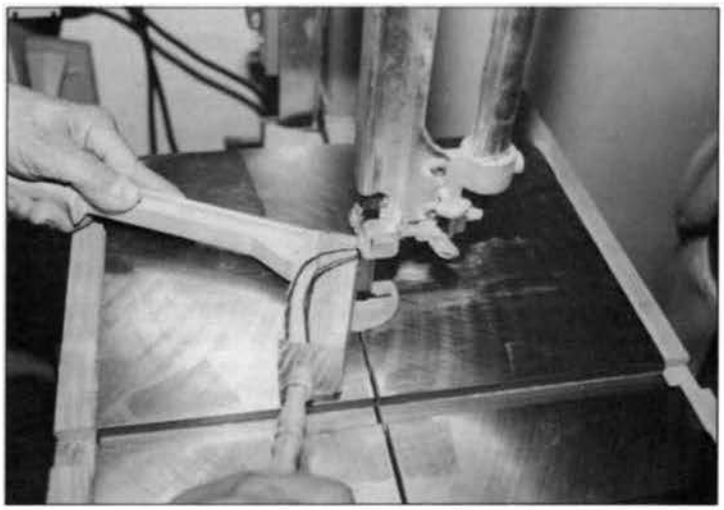


Photo 3

Stephen Garavatti is a bank examiner and president of the Utah Association of Woodturners.

TURNING SHADOWS

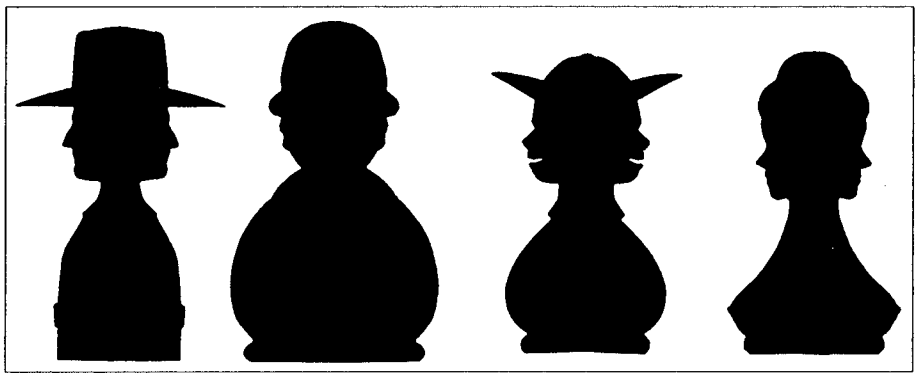
Bonnie Klein

Surprise Muddlers
US Pat's 104381-105182

Can you discover the secret of these muddlers? They are apparently made from well known hard-woods, but we term the wood "AMMAN" or "ALADYE", depending on which piece is being turned out.

The woods are so worked and finished as to contain a secret which insures their successful use by even the most unskilled drink mixer. This secret will be discovered only by the most discerning people. In order to preserve the secret, do not lay the muddler down where it will cast a sharp shadow of its long edge.

description inside the box of muddlers



Cowboy Old Man Baseball Kid Woman

Turning shadow figures was inspired by the "Muddlers" I found in an antique store several years ago. They are two spindle-turned silouettes--one male, the other female. It is not obvious to look at them, but becomes very apparent by looking at the shadows they cast! What fun!

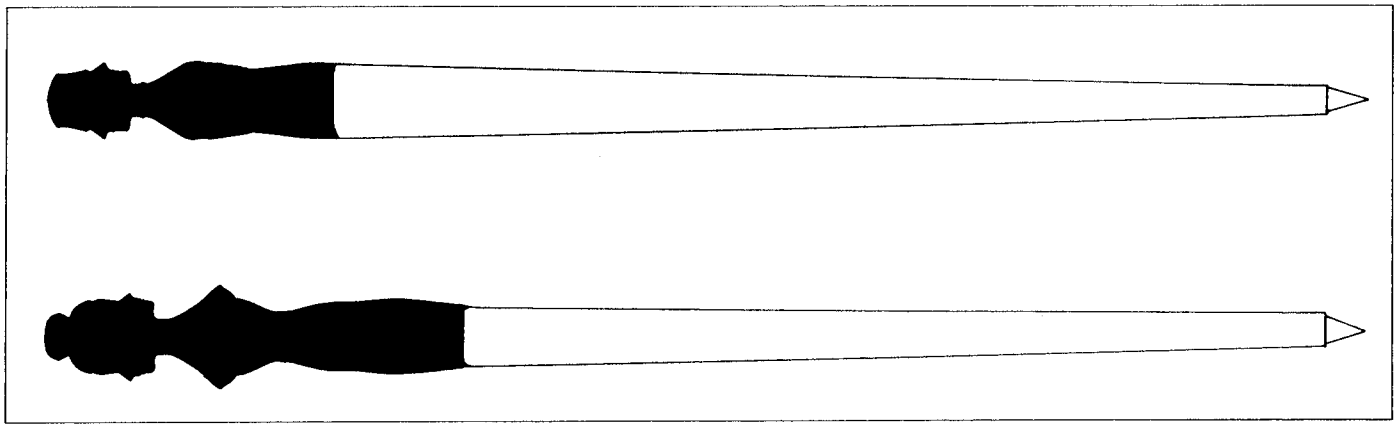
This gave me some ideas for other projects that could cast some unusual shadows. When you turn these or develop your own, be more concerned with the appearance of the cast shadow than the look of the turned spindle.

I have been making cork toppers (or wine stoppers) for several years, so it seemed a natural project for shadow figures. You can experiment with different "characters" by cutting your patterns from black paper folded in half or by drawing the silouettes with a black pen.

Pens

The other project that could benefit from a special "twist" are the two-part twist pens that are so popular, as well as the one-piece pens that use the Bic insides. If you pry the clip off the twist pens and use a slightly larger piece of wood, you can be much more creative with beads, coves, and other shapes--like human figures! This could be a great gift that provides a surprise later when the pen is laying on the desk top, and the shadow reveals a human form.

Bonnie Klein lives in Seattle, Washington.



'AMAN and ALADYE'

A TEXAS TURN OR TWO

Don Grantham *photographs by Larry Mart*

For years we had heard talk of a Texas woodturning seminar. Mark Potter, a man of few words, just plain DID one, with little talking beforehand. He placed a few calls, mailed a buncha invites, and on October 10 and 11, around 200 folks showed up to see what was to be seen.

My club, the Woodturners of North Texas, had 27 people in attendance. Some of us were unpleasantly surprised to find all the hotel rooms reserved. See, it was *Columbus* Day, and the city was *Columbus*, Texas. So I borrowed a tent and set it up in the front yard. The Missus said, "where's the REST of it?" I said, "in the basement?" She didn't buy *that*.

The Missus and I arrived about 10:30 p.m. (called dark-thirty hereabouts) the night before to find a few "Hardcore Turners of Wood" planted around a piece of tree shooting the breeze. We loaded up our breeze-shooters and fired away, retiring around 1:30 a.m. to set up camp.

Note: be leery of the sofest ground--it might be a fire-ant bed.

Morning came (normal) with a cloud sitting on the ground (not so normal).

Quote of the morning: Clay Foster, "sure glad the sun came up--now I can find my flashlight."

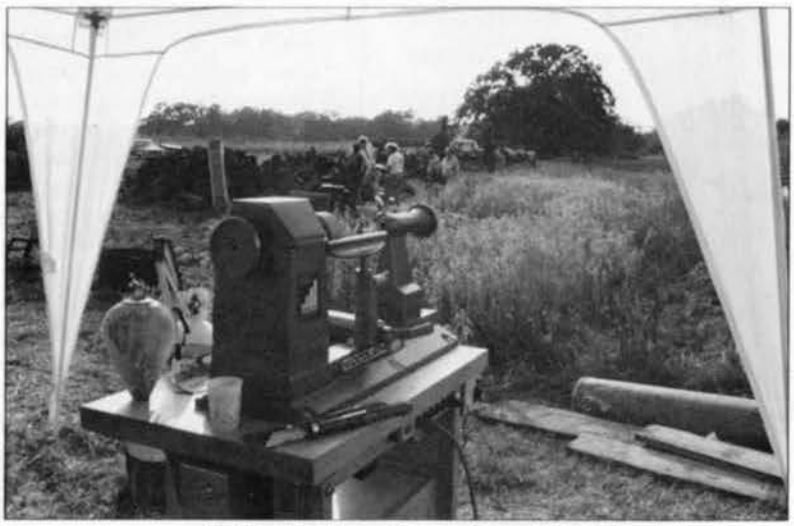
We cooked coffee, toasted the four winds, and went looking. We observed the turning-demo area in a fog thick enough to hide the shop.

The demonstrators from all over Texas were: Clay Foster, Larry Mart, Paul Novelli, Robert Weber, Gary Roberts, James Poppell, James Johnson, Gene Fitzwater, Harvey Helmke, Aaron Lowery, and Luna Ford. Demonstration subjects ranged from tool basics to large turnings and included items that ranged from small lidded boxes to large African ceremonial drums. There were also two slide shows.

Shopsmith brought most of their San Antonio shop and Clayton Cochran made the most of the discounts, selling and turning wood fast and loose. He also donated a few door prizes: a bar of HUT, small calipers, large calipers, Ray Key's turning book, AND THE BIGGIE, a Coronet CL22 lathe.

Door-prize quote: if you ain't here, speak UP!

The symposium was held in a "working" wood shop, so space was at a premium. Demonstrations were held in any available corner.



Ideal weather prompted some demonstrators to move outdoors.

Mark Aaron Lowrey with steady-rest jig used in drum making.

Harvey Helmke demonstrating a box-threading jig.

Gene Fitzwater demonstrates the proper dress code for turning.

Gary Roberts demonstrating

With the aid of an overhead mirror, Luna Ford shows tool basics.

Clay Foster with host Mark Potter

I noticed one difference between A Texas Turn or Two and the national AAW sumposiums--at the nationals, the big guys are hard to approach--they've waited all year to see the *other* big guys and "bench turn" (swap tales). In Columbus, the big guys were readily available to all and sundry, with the exception of in the men's room. Many demonstrators, scheduled for one or two hours, kept right on turning through the end of the seminar.

Quote: "Pardon me, sir; could you direct me to the ladies' room?" " Yes Ma'am, just let me zip up and I'll take you RIGHT there."

We held the First Annual Texas Bench Turning Competition, where a bunch of us old geezers sat around and told baldfaced fibs about turning 48-inch bowls on our Sears lathe. No prizes. Not even for my spalted-pink-ivory-burl 28-by 36-inch translucent vase.

Bench turning quote: A. Nonymous: "Is that Bob Davis' son? What's his name?" Clay: "Davis."

Throughout the event, Mark, who put the whole shindig on with his wife, Jo and son Jared, sold a bit of wood and also put on an impromptu chainsaw class. One piece, a pecan log about four feet in diameter, drew a lot of attention.

Wood sale quote: B. Nonymous: "my wife said if I brought home one more piece of wood, she was leaving . . . Gee, I'm gonna miss her.

An instant gallery showed off items such as Aaron's large drum, a turned hat, Christmas ornaments, lace bobbins, lidded boxes, and vessels in all sizes from miniature to large.

Positive comments overheard: Overdue. Good turn-out. Good demonstrations. Plenty of space for the number of campers on site. We're doing it again next year--even Mark Potter said this!

Negative comments: noisy demo area (sound-control measures are planned for next year). Men's room kinda breezy.

Don Grantham lives in Frisco, Texas.

SASKATOON 92: A SYMPOSIUM WITH A DIFFERENCE

Richard Raffan

The majority of turners work on their own, and mostly this is great. You have total control over what you do and the freedom to make mess without having to consider fellow workers/ artists, factory inspectors, spouses, etc., etc. It's even easy to overcome the problems of shifting heavy lumps of timber around and onto the lathe. But there is a blight on this idyll if there is no immediate critical backup and moral support right in the workshop, a like mind with whom to discuss and assess problems or successes. Hence the popularity of seminars, which always provide considerable stimulation to boost flagging creative energy. We watch virtuoso turning displays, see hundreds of images in slide shows, and develop the twitchy itch of the turner desperate to get to a lathe to try it all out or to a bench to experiment with new embellishing or finishing techniques. After the event the good intentions to release the stimulated energy tend to wane, and the ideas fade from memory. Ideally one needs the chance to get stuck in at the point of stimulation, but seldom at such events is there time to work with other turners on joint projects.

But last August at a symposium at Saskatoon in Canada the organizer, a well-known turner, Michael Hosaluk, aimed to have everybody involved--delegates and demonstrators all in together working in and out and around of formal demonstrations featuring Giles Gilson, Hosaluk himself, Richard Raffan, Mark Sfirri, and Del Stubbs. The format, though loosely structured, proved highly successful with many of the participants getting involved and some of the instructors (notably Raffan and Stubbs) moving into areas they'd not tried before.

The first session had all the demonstrators making bowls to add to a pile previously made by Hosaluk and others for surface ornamentation and other adjustments during the second session. The initial foray into decorating surfaces was somewhat disappointing, as instructors Hosaluk, Gilson, and Sfirri battled for participants in the face of more formal "how to" demonstrations being given by Stubbs and Raffan who split the bulk of the crowd available. However, this scenario changed, and the crowd divided more evenly during the first afternoon session as Raffan and Stubbs began to experiment with forms and work through ideas new to them.

The crowd soon realized that Hosaluk's notion of creative play would prove to be highly informative as projects progressed through early errors of judgment in design, technique, or approach. It is always fascinating to witness ideas being developed and pushed towards their limits, but soon enough the audience began to participate, offering all manner of suggestions as to form or technique. Variations on the themes were turned quickly by the demonstrators, so that in addition to ideas being realized speedily, it was possible to enjoy watching the pros turn at pretty much normal speed. These became highly stimulating design sessions with the demonstrators now functioning as workshop leaders chairing discussions on the mass of work being produced. And egos are not such a problem when so many people are involved with one piece!

Mark Sfirri was brought to the conference for his innovative use of multiple-axis split turnings, materials other than wood, and paint. Del Stubbs is renowned for his ultra-thin classical bowl and vase forms and his phenomenal mastery of cutting techniques. The two men seem poles apart, but with the Hosaluk concept of cultural exchange, halfway into the first day we would watch the immaculate Stubbs technique working on multiple centers under the direction of Mark Sfirri. The result was a spindle of crisp angles not unlike a cartoon lightening bolt, and altogether typical of those Sfirri uses to support his tables. They added some clam-like lips, and during the production session on the following day Stubbs chose to reproduce this complicated spindle as a production item. Having been pushed to try these techniques, Stubbs then started his own variations and soon came up with a very slinky spindle of serpentine form and clam lips, but far more in keeping with his background as a production turner of classical architectural spindles. It illustrated nicely how borrowed techniques and concepts can soon adapt to another vocabulary.

Del Stubbs carried with him a bowl with an integral spout and small handle all turned by Del on a reciprocating pole lathe. This bowl is typical of many that Del saw while in Sweden, and he eats from it every day. It reminded Richard Raffan of the traditional Scottish quaich--a two-handled coopered drinking vessel--which he realized could easily be made in pairs, beginning as a sphere with handles turned between centers. And that split longitudinally this form would provide two bowl blanks which are hollowed before detailing the handles. The initial variations of this form were handed on to Sfirri for carving. Whilst most were successfully developed into stylish and totally different objects, the failures were more educational on their way to the firewood pile, providing an essential comparison between the good, bad, and indifferent. The carved Raffanware then passed on to be spray-lacquered under the direction of Giles Gilson or painted by a Hosaluk sibling. Having creative kids join in is no bad thing on such occasions to loosen the inhibitions of the more elderly. Raffan further developed the quaich form by hollowing one handle to form a spout as he worked through the problems of bringing such an object through to a stage where it could be a viable production item. Sfirri got carving on some of these too.

There were two finishing areas. Giles Gilson directed the spray booth, concerting a number of erstwhile staunchly woody traditionalists to the use of colored lacquers as well as the joys of the spray-gun and masking tape. Michael Hosaluk had all manner of carving gear and paint available in his corner along with a sandblaster, so it was possible to do just about anything to the numerous turned forms available. Not only did people get to try a variety of techniques for themselves, rather than watch someone else: they were able to play and experiment and fire off one another, and I hope such things happen more often in conferences in the future, although there will always be the need to counter balance these free-ranging sessions with the good old full-on "how-to" demonstrations.

The Saskatoon event was so enjoyable that the demonstrators felt the need to collaborate further and put the whole deal on a commercial basis to save later discussions as to who would keep what. So: Del Stubbs, Mark Sfirri, Richard Raffan, Michael Hosaluk, and Giles Gilson will work jointly on pieces which will be shown and offered for sale around April 1993. Collectors interested in what promises to be a fine collection

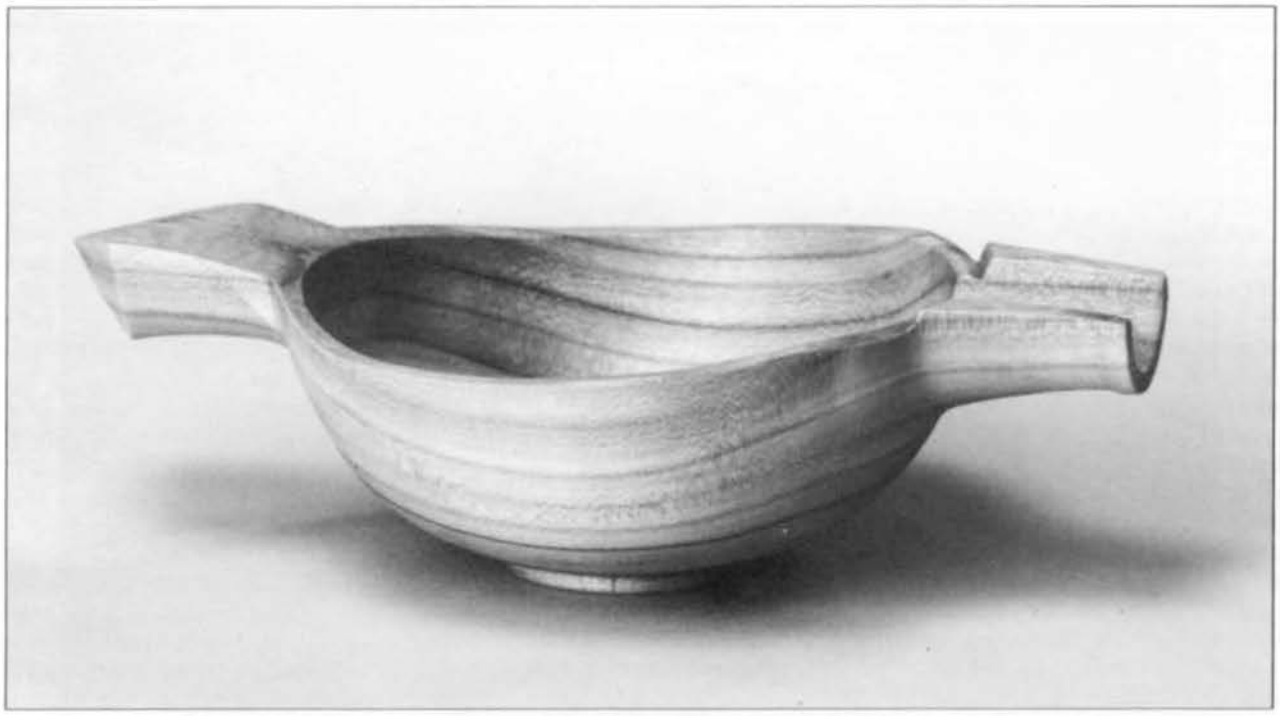


photo courtsey Saskatchewan Craft Council

bowl with spout and handle, Richard Raffan, Mark Sfirri, 7" long, elm

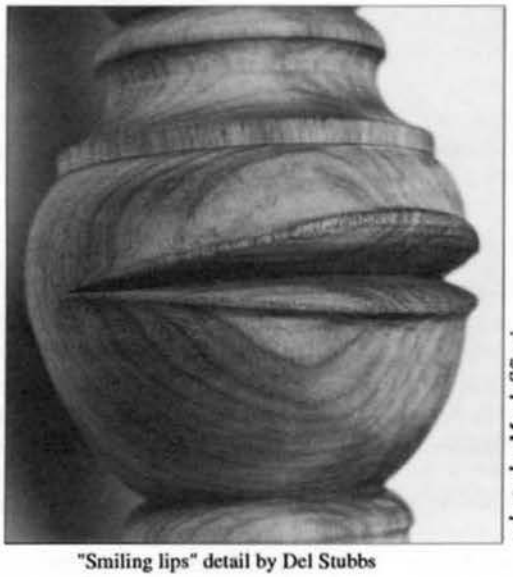


photo by Mark Sfirri

"Smiling lips" detail by Del Stubbs

of pieces, uniquely blending the styles of some of the best known names in the business should contact Mark Sfirri at 1669 Pineville Road, New Hope, PA 18938.

Richard Raffan lives in Australia.

photo by Mark Sfirri

two turnings by Del Stubbs--l. classical column form with multiple-center "clam" in center and lips on lower section; r. serpentine shape; piece is completely turned

A CONVERSATION WITH BOB STOCKSDALE

Merryll Saylan

photo by Ed Saylan

Bob Stocksdale

When I was a student a *few* years back, I kept hearing about Bob Stocksdale: A visiting artist at my school proudly showed us bowls he had made bragging that they were just like Stocksdale's. He told us that he had visited Stocksdale who taught him how to make them. Jerry Glaser, the tool maker, also visited the school; he demonstrated woodturning, introduced us to tool steel, and talked about his friend, Bob Stocksdale. I had heard that Stocksdale learned to turn during World War II while in a camp as a conscientious objector. I had friends who were in the Japanese internment camps and assumed that's where Bob had been. I pictured him filling his time--lots of it--learning how to turn, which he then continued to do for forty years.

When I went to interview Bob Stocksdale, I found this early history interested me the most. How did he start turning? What motivated him, who else was turning at the time, and who was this man?

Bob told me he got a lathe when he was about fifteen years old, "a cheapie," which was powered by a gasoline engine because the farm where he grew up didn't have electricity. No bowls could be turned on this lathe, the shaft had no thread, he had no faceplate. He was doing reproduction and refinishing work and sometimes needed to make a spindle or a table leg. I questioned him about this interest in woodwork while growing up on a farm and was told, "I always had a hankering to work with wood even when six or eight years old. We remodelled a house and I took all the lath scraps and tried to make a birdhouse--the first one being unsuccessful."

Before Bob was drafted he had worked in a couple different factories where he learned how to use all kinds of woodworking machinery, big machines. "I worked in two different factories: one built cedar chests and one I made cracker peels for a bakery. They're a wide paddle about two feet

wide and four feet long with a small handle, and tapered all the way for the four feet from 1/2 inch down to 1/16 inch. They are used on an endless belt picking up crackers as they come out of the oven. You can get a lot of crackers on a paddle that big. They had to be made as light as possible and were made of balsa wood which is too fragile for that thin an edge. The last five inches of the tip was made of two layers of airplane plywood, (three layers of laminated wood only 1/16-inch thick). We would take a sheet, cut it on a bias, put one piece on each side of the tip, shave it with hand planes, taking the very tip back down to 1/16 inch. I did the whole thing from start to finish, starting with a pile of rough wood. It was a whole lot of different operations, and I learned to use all kinds of tools. Right away, when I was drafted, I told them of my experience, and they put me in charge of their woodworking shop. I worked eight hours a day, five days a week in that woodshop."

The first conscientious objector (CO) camp Bob went to was in Michigan at the Forest Service Headquarters where there was a complete workshop for making signs, tool sheds, tool boxes for trucks, and whatever they needed. One time Bob made a "two-hole toilet, a big one, complete, portable, with a hardwood floor." The main project for this camp was to replant the trees that had been cut rebuilding Chicago after the big fire in the 1800s. "All the trees, wonderful, wonderful pine had been cut. There were still stumps, six and eight feet across there. We went through the forest and replanted pine trees--good pine, sugar pine, white pine."

The government decided that planting trees was not of enough national importance and sent the CO's out West to fight forest fires. Bob remained primarily in the woodshop but once in awhile by personal request, would go out into the forest and see what the others were doing. The CO's were paid nothing for their labor and in fact, Bob paid $50 a month for his upkeep until his money ran out. He served three years and ten months before being released.

One day, a Forest Service man suggested turning a bowl on a lathe, a Delta 12 inch. "We hunted up a piece of cherry, some walnut, and made several bowls. My first customer was a Quaker woman from Columbus, Ohio. She visited the camp. She told me she liked what I was doing and told me she'd take most anything I wanted to make but, `whatever you do, keep up the quality. I don't care what it costs--what I want is quality.' That was in 1944, and she was in business way before I met her. And I had a show there two years ago."

When the men fought fires, sometimes they worked for a week, both day and night. Work time was counted as eight-hour days, each fire day becoming three work days. They received vacation time--the same as the army, two and one half days a month. Bob started accumulating a lot of furlough time, once as long as a month. He started coming down to the Berkeley, California, area and got work in a furniture store, Hudson Furniture. The owner would save up work for him. He also started making his timber contacts. At the camp, he had had his own tools shipped out from home and set up a workshop for the other CO's to use so they could make things for themselves such as footlockers. He would buy them wood on his trips to the Bay Area. If he hadn't had such a "cushy job, he might have gone AWOL." But he felt a responsibility to the other fellows and to the woodshop.

After release, he and two friends decided to move to Berkeley. None of them had much money, and Bob offered to help with a down-payment on a house if it had a place for a woodshop. They found the house Bob lives in now. The house is a duplex; one family moved into one side and the other on the other side, and Bob moved into a back bedroom. The first thing he did was to excavate the basement area about eighteen inches and put in a concrete floor. The furniture man sold him his tools at a very low price, "about $100 for his lathe, a spindle shaper, a bandsaw."

"I started turning bowls right away. During my time in the camps, I established connections with lumber companies, not only here but in Los Angeles also. I had good sources of supply for imported woods as well as local woods, so that was a big help to know just where to go to get wood. I had established connections with a joint called Gumps, in San Francisco, while in the camp. At that time, it was very difficult to get any craft work at all. Buyers from all over the country would go in there. Sometimes they would give them my address depending on the prestige of the place. I was selling to some pretty prestigious joints in the early '50s--George Jensen, Bonniers in New York. They specialized in imported things like Danish, Scandinavian things. That was the first time ever I had a chauffeured limousine pull up in front of the house. Everybody on the street got excited about that. The chauffeur sat out there while this guy came in. They're out of business now, but they bought several times. I never did sign an exclusive with anybody. Gumps wanted one, but I said no. I learned right at the beginning to say no once in awhile."

At this point in our conversation, I felt I needed to get to more serious questions about woodturning.

Merryll, Did you have contact with other turners like today?

Bob, No, there weren't any!

Merryll, Prestini?

Bob, I visited him in Chicago when he was still doing turning. He worked in a corner of a furniture factory and would get wood from them and have the factory throw the finish on. He was a full time teacher, taught at the Chicago Art Institute.

Merryll, Were you part of a craft guild of those days?

Bob, Yeah, the Designer/Craftsmen of California. It was a cross-media group; we had a retail shop located out in the Cliff House in San Francisco.

Merryll, Now, Bob, two much more serious questions--about "The One-Tool." Do you use only one tool for

photo by Sione and Steccati Photographers

bowl, tuhya burl, 4 1/2" x 7"

Bob, I started that way and never changed--stubborn. Glaser keeps sending me these new gouges that he makes, I try them, and keep going back to my old gouge. Maybe, he'll wean me away.

Merryll, The sandpaper issue: that Bob Stocksdale--he starts with 36 grit. He doesn't turn, he uses 36 grit sandpaper. We have to discuss that. I heard this, even while in England. Have you heard that yourself? Bob laughs through it all and interrupts.

Bob, I have 36 grit. I've used it. It depends on the wood, you know, and that with lignum vitae, I start with 36 grit on that, because it's so difficult to cut it with sandpaper, 36 grit takes it off real neat. So I use it on that. Any extremely hard wood, like African blackwood, I use it sometimes on the inside of the bowl. Most turning I start with 50 grit.

Merryll, What about the jokes about starting with 120, or 150, or 180?

Bob, Bragging.

Merryll, Has that always been a part of woodturning?

Bob, You can scrape it down with real sharp tools, razor sharp, but you can knock it off three or four times as fast with sandpaper. Shaping is better, the rotary disk works better on the outside of the bowl.

Merryll, Have you ever taught or taken in students?

Bob, No, just demonstrating. I don't like to teach. I'm allergic to teaching.

Merryll, How do you deal with the people who visit you? Is it a problem when you're trying to get out work?

Bob, No, no. I don't find it a problem at all. Chance to rest a little. I'm the only craftsman I know of that has always maintained regular hours right from the beginning. I never worked more than a forty-hour week, never worked on weekends, nights or anything like that. If I had worn myself out you know, grinding out bowls, night and day, it would have gotten to be such a drudgery. But as it is, I quit, quite often right in the middle of a bowl and I'd just dearly love to see what it looks like finished but I quit--I just put a sack over it if it's wet and do it the next day. In fact, I've cut my time down now to twenty hours a week.

Merryll, The shapes of your bowls and forms? Are those forms you started with or?

Bob, More refined, and I'm always getting variations.

Merryll, Do you think that over the years and your sales, has the concentration been on salad bowls, functional items or the decorative things? Which sold better?

Bob, I could just devote my full time to making good salad bowls and sell them all. But I don't like to--I prefer making the decorative bowls because they're more of a challenge, and then a lot of the woods I get are too small for salad bowls.

Bob loves wood; at this point on two visits, he takes me in to see bowls made out of particular timbers and how he used them. How a particular shape could only be the way it is because of the wood. In an article in *American Craft Magazine*, by Richard La Trobe-Bateman, Dec/Jan 1987/88, he talks about Bob's "goal to discover unusual grains and colors in any wood that I work with." The article examines the philosophy and depth behind Bob's work. La Trobe-Bateman: "a man like Stocksdale . . . is so central to the vitality of applied arts. We are more in debt to the few creative people who plumb the limits of their art . . . It is depth that Bob Stocksdale has given us."

I feel a debt not only to the beautiful forms that Bob Stocksdale makes and that inspired me in my work, but to the philosophy and consistency of how he has lived his life. I am glad I got this chance to have this conversation with him.

Merryll Saylen lives Berkeley, California, and is a full-time wood artist. Over the years, she has contributed numerous articles to American Woodturner.

WORLD-CLASS TURNER

Richard La Trobe-Bateman

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Bob Stocksdale is 74. He has turned wood professionally for more than 40 of those years. His single-minded dedication has taken his work quite outside the changes in the field of craft and applied art that have occurred over that time. His own words are the best starting point in trying to judge why his work is so special:

> I work with the rarest woods in the world as well as with many common types. My goal is to discover unusual grains and colors in any wood that I work with. I develop the forms on the lathe, for many times I have to change my initial design to eliminate flaws in a piece of wood. I do not turn bowls as thin as I could, for I try first to give the piece strength and durability and then thinness without fragility.

This statement is completely straightforward, exactly in keeping with the activity it is describing. Stocksdale is talking about turning wooden bowls--no more. If it seems modest, that is only by comparison with the high-sounding statements we are more used to hearing from creative people. There is no evidence in the field of applied art that lofty achievements need to be accompanied by lofty statements of intention. Stocksdale's reputation is dependent *solely* on the quality of the single turned bowl, not on any grand framework of ideas or on original, challenging concepts. His work speaks for itself.

My goal is to discover unusual grains and colors in any wood that I work with . . . Imagine working for almost half a century exploring wood as a material. Clearly his sources of that material become a crucial factor in the end product. Over the years an informal network has grown up around the world of individuals who are on the lookout for exceptional varieties for him. The longer he goes on working, the wider the net will be, and the richer and more diverse his supply. It would be misleading, however, to overemphasize this aspect; the material only gives him a starting point--it's what he does with it that matters.

I develop the forms on the lathe, for many times I have to change my initial design to eliminate flaws in a piece of wood . . . Each species and each individual piece of wood can be made to yield a different result depending on the relationship between the direction and position of the axis of the tree relative to the axis of rotation on the lathe. An opportunity may be offered by the shape of the log, or by a grain pattern that flows sinuously with one particular form, or by the contrast between heartwood and sapwood that produces yet another form. Or there might be cracks or faults or rotten spots in the most beautiful material which then force him to discover new shapes in order to use the good material. Thus there is a constant need for *flexibility* that Stocksdale's creative aptitude obviously responds well to, and which means the longer he goes on, the more shapes he will discover.

Placing the work he did 10 years ago alongside his current piece shows how his work now has greater freedom and a less predictable geometry. It has greater life to it. It is more relaxed and more taut at the same time. Where the work of other leading turners often seems to have started with a fixed idea, Stocksdale's forms seem to have evolved as they were being made. We can sense this quality, this spontaneity, without knowing exactly where it comes from. The difference is a slight variation of profile and changes of curve--but it is crucial to the end result. At this level, a craft like turning becomes comparable to a sport; few are gifted with an instinctive execution that separates the world-class player from other top-class players.

Some design theory may be helpful here, as many people do not have a framework of ideas from which to look at objects. One key idea in "seeing" a turned bowl is to know (in an intuitive rather than an analytical way) the constraints that have generated the form. In turning, the system (not the operator) produces a circular cross section in one direction but does not entail anything else. It is possible to set up a secondary system that predetermines the shape in every other direction (as is done constantly in engineering by the lead screw and cross slide).

Our eye is intuitively sensitive to whether a shape has been generated by mechanically predetermined means, or is a "free" form, or is a free but geometrically "fair" form. It is reasonable to say that there is little satisfaction to be had from a turned work that is wholly haphazard or that clearly fails to achieve the form implicit in its overall shape.

It is also reasonable to say that when the eye detects that a shape has been mechanically predetermined, it commands attention only up to a certain level--probably because we grasp it too easily. The writer David Pye's idea of the workmanship of risk and its attendant skills is central to turning (which is probably where he got it from anyway, being a turner himself). What makes a turned section so "alive" is that tension between mechanical predictability and its opposite--no perceived form at all.

Stated simply, the central reason a Stocksdale bowl is so "beautiful" is that those two poles are brought into perfect balance with one another. The shape is neither so mechanical that it goes rigid nor so free that it goes soggy. There is maximum tension between an underlying sense of geometrical inevitability and an underlying urge to be free of any predetermined shape.

Stocksdale's work is becoming more alive--the longer he goes on, the more underlying discipline he absorbs, so the freer he can become. Some of his work truly "sings," or has the wings of a bird or seems to inhabit another more rarified world than our everyday one. The oft-quoted story, in various versions, of his having "discovered" that Oriental potters had been copying his shapes for thousands of years is memorable rather than just plain silly because underlying it is a strong idea--the tendency for turned and thrown objects to evolve toward certain forms irrespective of the point in history or the culture that produced them.

I do not turn bowls as thin as I could, for I try first to give the piece strength and durability and then thinness without fragility . . . Here is a

photo by Stone and Steccati Photographers

bowl, para kingwood (violetwood) from Brazil, 2 3/4" x 6 3/4"; 1983

strength and durability and then thinness without fragility . . . Here is a practical man speaking and giving a gentle reprimand to the exponents of wood turner machismo, roughly expressed as "the-thinner-the-wall, the-cooler-the-guy." Stocksdale's bowls gain their loftier qualities precisely by being practical. However we may feel about them as objects of contemplation, we will always have a useful bowl at the end of the day.

Stocksdale's childhood and early years on a farm in Huntington County, Indiana, where he taught himself to turn, seem to have given him a totally down-to-earth attitude toward work. We can imagine that world as one in which a man could talk about "beauty" in a shape, in an uncomplicated, unself-conscious way. We can safely guess that as his confidence and his achievements increased over the years, only then did this bring in its wake more sophisticated ideas about "art"--a very different situation from that facing anyone setting out in the field today.

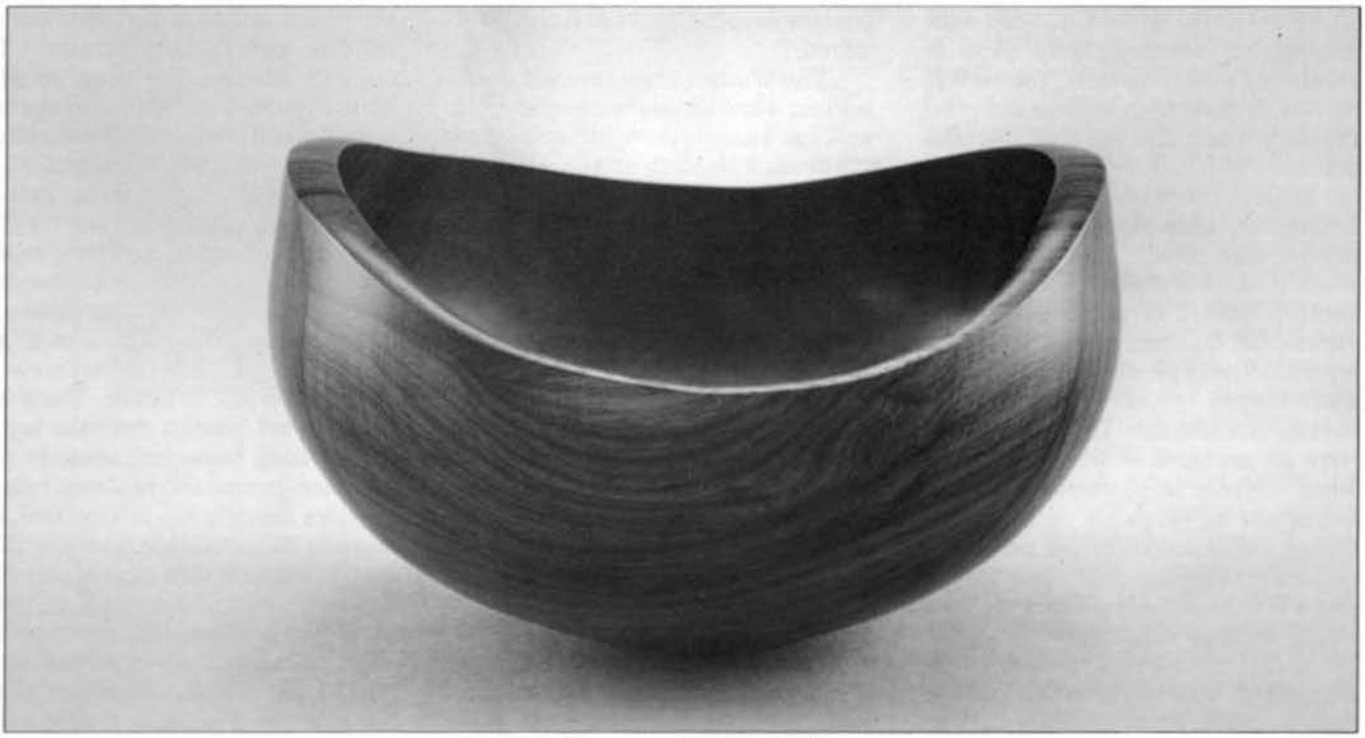
He also absorbed from his background the artisan's discipline of pacing himself, always working regular hours and conserving effort for continued output. These characteristics are, to say the least, uncommon in our field, but they augur well for Stocksdale's work in the future. How many of us can honestly say we are likely to be working with creative vigor when (and if) we reach our 80s and beyond?

Stocksdale was a conscientious objector in World War II. The right or wrong of the action itself is of no particular relevance to his work, but what it shows about his relationship to the world around him is. First, he clearly knows his own mind and is not easily swayed by prevailing attitudes. Second, the reasons he gives for that decision are typical of him. These are not religious, or philosophical or any high-sounding stuff--but straight down to earth: "I simply believed that war never solved anything and the best way to stop war was not to participate."

The parallel between his approach to a social issue like this and his approach to his own work is clear. This self-sure attitude means that he has never been diverted either from the outside by fashionable ideas or from the inside by indulging his ego in the luxury of lofty claims. He makes wooden bowls, and whatever fancy ideas others might have, he has never lost sight of what he is doing.

Stocksdale's work raises a number of issues central to the world of applied art and can doubtless be used as ammunition in those discussions. One issue is the polarity between traditional and progressive art. We should acknowledge that to many of us involved in art as consumers and makers, the *idea* of progressive work is itself so attractive that we unintentionally blind ourselves to objects that we need to see in a more contemplative way. It is also obvious that genuinely traditional nonprogressive work--i.e., work that makes no attempt to develop but merely reproduces--is of secondary significance, however well executed, when compared to new work. The problem lies in our perceptions of what is "new." To contrast Stocksdale's turned wood with that of the Canadian Stephen Hogbin, for example, will help illustrate this point. Hogbin's work affects us most strongly by the innovative way he exploits his turned components rather than by the detailed character of each piece. This is not to say that he does not give great consideration to the individual turnings before he reemploys them in his overall design, but our response to the newness of these strategies will always dominate any other response we might have. The effect of Stocksdale's work on us is just the opposite.

But we are in an era of art in which innovation has ousted refinement as a legitimate measure of progress. It is



bowl, Brazilian rosewood, 3 1/2" x 6 1/2"

our loss. Perhaps the skilled handcrafts which are by their very nature processes of refinement can lead us back from this lopsided vision, bringing a new depth to our use of history. Not history as a source of pastiche and comment (as is so common now, under the respectable sounding title of "eclecticism" or its trendy manifestation, postmodernism), but as a model to work on and improve.

Today, the word "tradition" has been robbed of its true meaning and had come to stand for imitation, a debased form of creativity. But the essence of tradition is change (a cliche**, but true), and Stocksdale actually has changed the traditional form and our expectations of turned wood bowls. Yet, because it is easier to see in his work what has gone before rather than what is different--how he has developed the tradition--there is a danger that his work will be dismissed as nonprogressive and, even worse for the field, that it will be cited as critical justification for genuinely nonprogressive work by others.

There ought to be no need for most conventional bowl turners to assume an elevated critical stance. If they use a material as beautiful a wood, learn to cut it cleanly, have an eye for line and a feel for mass and volume, the work will speak for itself. It need not speak of "new or "big" or "important" things. It can speak in a gentle, ordinary voice of the universal feelings we have around objects. Turned and thrown forms act on our senses in a particular, almost magical way that has not been altered significantly by the passage of history or by altered artistic styles, including modernism.

Another issue raised by Stocksdale's work is the status of utility in the applied arts today. If we take away reasonable use from a utilitarian object and then devalue (by implication or overt intention) those objects that still retain utility, we are making a strong statement, possibly more than we realize and different from what we intend. Observing craftsmen in all fields turning more and more to the "art object" as a vehicle, I detect three attitudes, conscious or unconscious. The first is a pragmatic acknowledgment of the marketplace, in which "art" commands higher prestige and sells for more than craft. The second seems to be saying, "There is nothing we can do; the ship is sinking, so let's at least go down posing in style." The third is a desperate need to create an object that makes a *personal* statement: "This is *mine*. It is different from anyone else's and not just another bowl."

I see nothing admirable in any of these responses. Quite the contrary, which is why a man like Stocksdale, who stands out against all three, is so interesting to me, so *central* to the vitality of applied arts. We are more in debt to the few creative people who plumb the limits of their art than we are to the greater number of artists who extend the means that art employs. It is depth that Bob Stocksdale has given us, not novelty.

Richard La Trobe-Bateman is an English furniture maker whose work was recently exhibited at the Contemporary Applied Arts gallery. London (October 15-November 14, 1987). During 1986-87 he was visiting professor of furniture design at San Diego State University, California.
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THREE MEN AND A HaWK

Mark Krick and Ken Wurtzel

The HaWK is the first shop-built ornamental turning lathe that is controlled by a computer. The HaWK derives its name from its three designer/creators, Dave *Ha*rdy, Ken *W*urtzel, and Mark *K*rick.

Unlike conventional lathes, ornamental lathes use a rotating tool to cut the work, which is, in turn, slowly rotated, or indexed. Ornamental-turning lathes, as perfected by the Holtzapffel Company, were produced from 1780 to 1914. Holtzapffel, Evans, and Goyan were producers of ornamental lathes. These machines were all produced in that bygone era when elegance in construction was as important as elegance of function. Today, these machines are prized by collectors as well as craftsmen. Sadly, just a few of these machines are still being used to create pieces today. Many of the objects produced on ornamental lathes were crafted during the Victorian era when fashion dictated elaborate decoration. These pieces are usually more wonderful for their complexity than their beauty.

Running an ornamental turning lathe can be likened to playing a fine musical instrument; both require skill, technique, and sensitivity. The computer does not remove these creative aspects from the HaWK--it only provides a new vehicle to carry the notes.

The idea of building an ornamental turning lathe started with Dave Hardy some thirteen years ago. Frank Knox, who was a skilled ornamental turner and author of the first book published on the subject in many years, provided Dave with information and inspiration. Shortly after meeting with Frank, Dave began to convert a Logan metal-turning lathe into an ornamental lathe. After partially completing the project, he stopped work, knowing there had to be a better way.

Dave is a well-known woodturner and carver. He has given demonstrations and lectures for a number of organizations, including the American Association of Woodturners' (AAW) national symposium this year in Provo, Utah. He also hosts a monthly gathering in his shop to teach woodturning. For over twenty five years, Dave has run a successful machine shop business and is now semi-retired.

Ken Wurtzel is a turner and woodworker, when not at the computer. He works as a electronics systems engineer and heads a research and development design group. Mark Krick is an avid woodturner and cabinetmaker and teacher of both. He manages the Shopsmith store for woodworkers in the Philadelphia area.

Dave, Ken, and Mark met through the Bucks Woodturners, a chapter of the AAW. We first worked together, along with many other members, on the chapter's section for the AAW totem poles at Arrowmont. Without organizations such as the AAW and the local chapters, we would not have met.

During the fourteen-hour drive to the 1990 AAW symposium held at Arrowmont School for Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, we decided to do a project together. Many different projects were discussed, but Dave knew that the ornamental lathe was alive again. Neither Ken nor Mark had any real idea what an ornamental lathe was, let alone how to build one. Dave explained the tremendous number of repetitive operations required to make an ornamental piece. Sometimes hundreds of mechanical parts (gears, pulleys, cams, lead screws, mounting arms) must be combined to create a complex ornamental pattern. After understanding only a portion of what would be required for a mechanical implementation, the discussion turned to having a computer control the details of the lathe's operation. The fundamental concepts of the HaWK were decided.

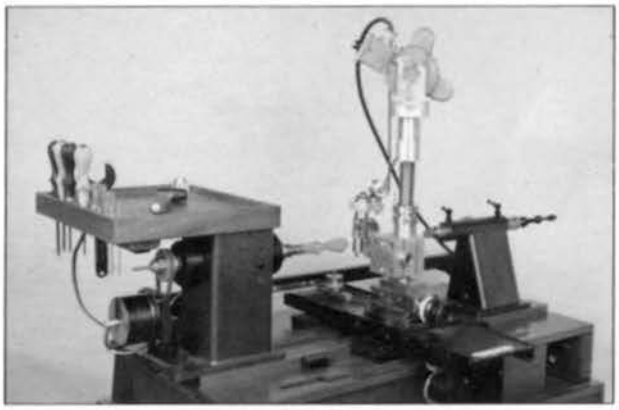
Shortly after returning from Gatlinburg, a mock-up was constructed to establish the overall specifications of the lathe. The HaWK can swing 14 inches over the bed, 11 inches over the carriage, and ornament a workpiece 21 inches long. Dave did all of the fabrication and custom-machine work to build the lathe. Other than bearings and bolts, no purchased parts or castings were used to construct the basic lathe.

Bearings are mounted on the outside of the headstock to provide rigidity and the best possible access to the workpiece. Dave also hand made all of the tailstock pieces, even the handles and locking screws. The tailstock has an offset barrel to allow better reach over the carriage and provide full support of the spindle throughout its 3 3/4-inch travel.

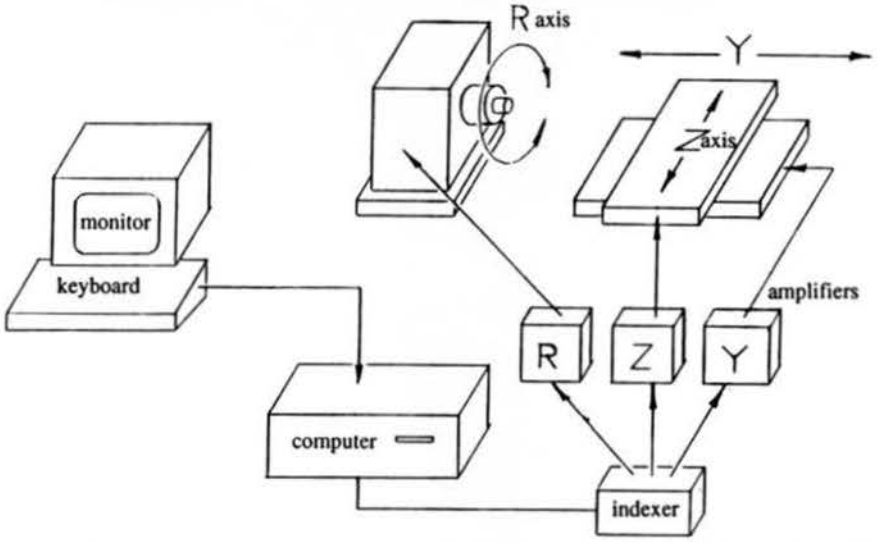
The HaWK has three axis of movement, each driven by a permanent-magnet, stepping motor. These motors allow the computer to precisely direct and coordinate all movements of the axis. The Y axis (left/right) and Z axis (in/out) move the cutter frame and its motor. The Y axis is supported beneath the lathe bed on recirculating linear ball bearings with precision-ground and hardened rails. It provides the right <-> left motions, and supports the cross-slide assembly. This design keeps the rails clear of chips and debris. A fixed, lead screw of 1-inch pitch with anti-backlash nuts provides exact linear motions in increments of 0.001 inch. The Z axis moves in and out over the Y axis, at a right angle, on the same type of bearings. The Z-axis lead screw and anti-backlash nut provide incremental moves to a resolution of 0.0001 inch (a sheet of computer paper is about 0.003-inch thick)! The R-axis, stepping-motor controls workpiece rotation through a pair of pulleys and a timing belt. This arrangement provides exact control to a resolution of 0.1 degree.

The control system's electronics and software were designed and constructed by Ken. Although the control-program design is still evolving, the basic design allows us to create programs in a fairly simple way. The system is menu-driven so that we can have the machine execute either a single command or a series of commands combined to form an *application program*. This system allows total design flexibility. Ten thousand separate application programs can be stored and called upon when needed.

The control program has provided an easy way to implement complex patterns, even for people with little computer experience. As an example, a spiral is formed by a coordinated movement of the Y axis together with a rotation of the workpiece. A graceful spiral or a fine thread may be defined in this way. Mark has successfully used



HaWK lathe



this interface to write most of the 40 application programs created to date. Creating an application program typically takes from 5 to 50 minutes; some have required over 40 hours.

The diagram gives an overview of how the system works. From an application program the control program constructs sequences of commands which are sent to the *indexer board*. The indexer board translates these commands into *step and direction pulses* that drive the *motor amplifiers* which in turn drive the *stepping motors*. The indexer board can simultaneously control as many as four motors (of which three are currently used) in either independent or coordinated motions.

A foot-operated treadle was used on antique machines, with a system of overhead belts and pulleys, to provide power for the cutter as well as the spindle. On the HaWK a stepping motor drives the spindle and an electric motor replaces the treadle-operated overhead to power the cutter. Cutter height is a critical factor in ornamenting pieces. The HaWK's brass stop collar allows fine manual adjustments to be made to the cutter height. In the future, a fourth motorized axis could provide this motion, as well as enhancing the HaWK's creative flexibility.

Many of the goals for the HaWK design were inspired by the Holtzapffel tradition of fine craftsmanship and attention to detail. Any machine run by computer has an abundance of cables, wires, motors, and sensors. The HaWK had to have a much better than merely utilitarian appearance, and one of the design challenges was to hide as much of the paraphernalia as possible. The need to be portable, so that it could travel to demonstrations and between its owners' homes, also complicated the design of the HaWK.

Mark's cabinet design and construction beautifully executed these sometimes conflicting goals. The lathe is supported and surrounded by Honduras mahogany and black-dyed, birdseye maple. The electronics package is hidden in the cabinet just beneath the lathe. It is accessible by removing a locking pin and opening the drawer. Baltic birch plywood, 3/4-inch thick, with finger-joint construction provides the strength and resistance to racking that the cabinet must have to support the lathe during operation and more importantly, during transport. Two side cabinets, that will provide storage for tools and accessories, are under construction.

Countless hours were needed to construct the HaWK (and they weren't counted). Friendship, teamwork, and camaraderie were as important in the creation of the HaWK as were the metal, wood, and wires. Designing, building, and running the HaWK has constantly challenged our skills and talents. Every part of the HaWK's design was discussed, sometimes with more than a little "enthusiasm," until we all agreed. This philosophy of cooperation has been a constant throughout the two years invested in the HaWK and will continue into the future.

We have had a blast designing, building, and running the HaWK! Working together towards a specific goal has made the last two years a very pleasant, memorable experience for each of us. The HaWK would not have been possible without the support and cooperation of Florence Hardy, Donna Wurtzel, and Deb Krick, our wives--we thank them most of all.

In August 1992 the national meeting of the Society of Ornamental Turners of America took place at the Rochester Institute of Technology's North American Center for Ornamental Turning. The meeting was hosted by RIT professor Kener Bond. The HaWK made its national debut at this meeting. Each year the "Friendship Cup" is awarded to the year's most outstanding ornamental turning. The cup was a gift from Roger Davies of England's Society of Ornamental Turners. The HaWK trio took home the "Friendship Cup" for a rose-engine-turned maple vessel, which is still in process.

ORNAMENTAL TURNERS OF AMERICA: National Meeting

Ken Wurtzel and Mark Krick

Kener Bond hosted the national meeting of The Ornamental Turners of America (TOTA) at the North American Center for Ornamental Turning (NACOT), August 20, 1992. NACOT is affiliated with the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York, which provided the facilities for the meeting. NACOT held its first meeting at RIT some thirteen years ago. The TOTA is a new organization that has just affiliated with the American Association of Woodturners.

Ornamental-turning (OT) lathes, in use since the late eighteenth century, are used to apply decorative patterns to turned objects. The Holtzapffel Company of London, England, brought ornamental lathes to their pinnacle. Many lathes manufactured by Holtzapffel between 1780 and 1914 are still in use today. Ornamental turning is often extended, in modern times, to include the related art of *rose engine* turning. Perhaps the most familiar examples of ornamental turnery are the plates used to print the currency all of us carry.

Ornamental-turning meetings represent a major opportunity for the exchange of information among those interested in ornamental turning. The NACOT set up a room full of antique OT lathes to be used by the participants to practice and receive instruction on OT techniques. These lathes were available to all in an open workshop. A second room was dedicated to the display of four hand-built ornamental/rose-engine lathes.

photo courtsey Wood Turning Archives

Frank Knox, ornamental turning

Paul Cler, Villa Grove, Illinois, brought with him one of the several small metal-turning lathes he has converted for rose-engine work. Paul had many examples of his work on display. **Al Schwartz**, Whippany, New Jersey, demonstrated a remarkably versatile, converted metal lathe. **Fred Ambruster**, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, gave a presentation on the ongoing construction of a reproduction, Holtzapffel rose-engine lathe. **Dave Hardy**, Sellersville, **Ken Wurtzel**, Feasterville, and **Mark Krick**, Doylstown, Pennsylvania, demonstrated the HaWK lathe, the first shop-built, computerized ornamental lathe. Ken, representing the trio, gave a presentation on the construction of this machine.

The largest portion of the meeting was devoted to formal presentations. Kener Bond did a fantastic job of arranging the presentations and provided a masterful study in point and counterpoint. **Dan Brush**, New York City, is a well-known artist in several fields, among them ornamental turning. He presented a historical background on the machinery of rose-engine and ornamental turning. We got glimpses of his studio and five ornamental lathes. He also presented several slides of his work--beautiful, inspiring examples of complex, ornamental turnings. **Bob Baker**, Mattawan, Michigan, presented his masterful job of reconstructing and restoring the Wing's rose-engine Holtzapffel lathe. He described many of the techniques and methods used in the restoration process. The end result of his work was a beautifully rejuvenated, turn-of-the-century machine, ready for the next one-hundred years. **Dale Chase**, Penn Valley, California, presented two topics: the critical sharpening requirements for ornamental work and a discussion of some of the principles of rose-engine turning. As one of the

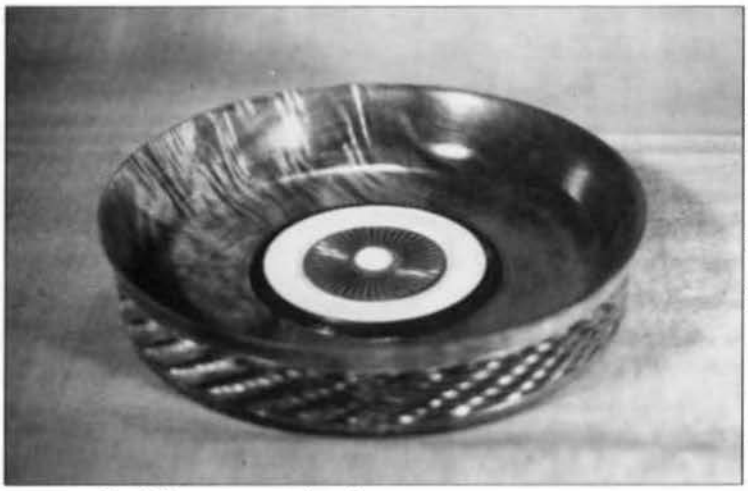


photo courtsey Wood Turning Archives

Frank Knox, ornamental turning

best-known practitioners of rose-engine turning, he was able to share many valuable insights with the group.

HaWK is an acronym for the three designer/builders of the HaWK lathe, **Dave Hardy, Ken Wurtzel,** and **Mark Krick**. Ken, as spokesman for the trio, presented the methods and teamwork involved in the two-year effort to design and construct the lathe. While all three participated in all aspects of the project, each contributed a specific expertise. Dave is the chief mechanical designer and head machinist. Ken did the electronics and software implementation. Mark designed and built the cabinets that house the HaWK. The presentation made it clear that without the combined efforts of all three, the HaWK would not have been possible.

Fred Armbruster presented his work in the reproduction of a rocking-head, Holtzapffel rose-engine lathe. He detailed the steps involved in the making of the dozens of parts required for the lathe, which is still in process. The steps included: making patterns; having parts cast; rough- and finish-machine work; and final filing and finishing. Fred also showed many of the machines, jigs, and fixtures he constructed in order to achieve the superlative quality-of-workmanship evident in his machine. A tremendous labor of love.

The last day of the meeting began with an equipment swap and sale where participants exchanged unique items that included a diamond-lapping machine and an antique Holtzapffel slide rest.

Following the sale the group held a business meeting where we selected a committee for planning our next meeting. After much discussion, we decided that the group should take advantage of the many benefits of affiliating with the American Association of Woodturners and voted to become a special-interest chapter of AAW.

The final event of the meeting was the awarding of the Friendship Cup. Roger Davies from the Society of Ornamental Turners in England presented this award to our group last year. The cup is awarded at each meeting to the person who has produced the most outstanding ornamental or rose-engine turning since the previous meeting. This year, Dave Hardy, Ken Wurtzel, and Mark Krick took home the cup for a rose-engine-turned maple vessel of a floral design that they produced on the HaWK lathe.

For information on The Ornamental Turners of American, contact Anthony (Tony) Kushon, 631 6th St., Trafford, PA 15085, 412/856-8584. Yearly dues are $20.00 and the next national meeting will be in held in Florida, in the fall of 1993. Anyone interested in being a presenter contact Michael Brooks, 2965 Hobbs Place, Titusville, FL 32796.

The Wood Turning Center and the Hagley Museum and Library are jointly planning an international conference at the Hagley Museum in Willimington, Delaware, April 21-25, 1993. The conference will explore the history, theory, aesthetics, and practice of lathe-turning--attracting international specialists in contemporary crafts, furniture history, and the history of technology. There will be a concurrent public exhibition of lathe turning from the Wood Turning Center and the Hagley Museum Collections along with a series of workshops and demonstrations designed to introduce the public to the turning craft.

Forty three artists, scholars, and historians will participate in verbal presentations, panel discussions, process presentations, and visual interpretations in conjunction with tours of local exhibits. Presenters include Professor Gottfried Bockelmann, Germany; Stephen Hogbin, Canada; Rude Osolnik, U.S.A.; James Prestini, U.S.A.; Bob Stocksdale, U.S.A.; Reg Sherwin, England; Hans Weissflog, Germany; and Vic Wood, Australia.

For a registration brochure contact the Wood Turning Center, P.O. Box 25706, Philadelphia, PA 19144 USA, 215/844-2188.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

The American Association of Woodturners announces the date and location for their 1993 national symposium--June 25-27 in Purchase, New York, near the eastern border of New York state. Members of the AAW will receive registration information in early spring, 1993. We look forward to seeing many new faces at this symposium!

SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCED

Dr. Dale Nish of Brigham Young University announces the establishment of a scholarship, funded in the name of AAW. Money received by B.Y.U. from this year's national symposium for workshop expenses was channeled into a scholarship fund for students in the Department of Technical Education. The AAW thanks B.Y.U.!

TURNERS' TIPS

Robert Rosand, Section Editor

Send tips to: Robert Rosand
Dutch Hill Woodturning
RD. 1, Box 30, 717/784-6158
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

Greetings from your fearless page editor! I would like to thank all the local chapters that have continued harassing and haranguing their members to send in their turning tips. Please keep it up! To all those "famous turners" I wrote to, it's still not too late to share your vast knowledge with the masses. All tips are welcome. What may seem insignificant to you may be a relevation to another. Send your tip TODAY!!

I have received some requests to field questions in this column. I discussed this with Betty Scarpino, and we decided that it might be worth a try. Soooo . . ., if you have questions concerning woodturning, please send them to me. If I can't answer them adequately, I will contact someone who can. Now, on to the tips.

Hot Stuff nozzle clog

How many times has your Hot Stuff (cyanoacrylate glue) nozzle clogged up? You can use a small drill to open it up, but it will just close up again in a short time. You can also buy new nozzles.

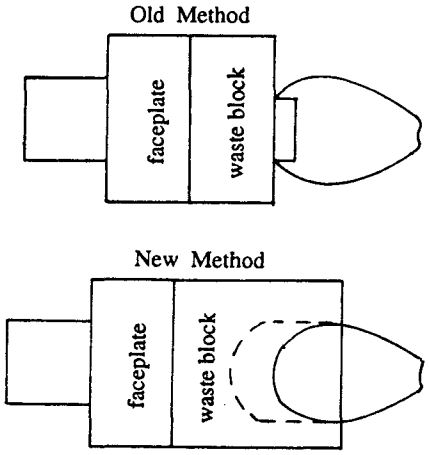
I save the nozzles from my empty containers and store them in a small bottle of acetone. When a nozzle clogs, I put it into the acetone jar and remove a clean one. When the acetone becomes yellowish in color, it's time to change it. I've been doing this for several years and have an unlimited supply of clean nozzles.

--Larry Hasiak, Tarpon Springs, Florida

Concave bottoms

Turning concave bottoms in the miniature lidded containers I make had always been a nightmare for me. I would part the container from the lathe and friction fit the lid to a waste block. All too often, the rim of the container would crack or was just not secure enough to allow turning the bottom.

The solution was simple enough to be embarrassing. I now glue up odd scraps of pine, soft enough to not scratch most woods, then fasten them



to a faceplate or three-jaw chuck. I scrape out a hole into which the shoulder of the container fits snugly. The turning can then be finished and removed without damage to it.

--Robert Rosand

Sandpaper file

A 12-compartment accordion-style file folder makes an excellent holder for sandpaper. A black felt-tip pen marks the grit size on the tab for easy reference. This keeps the pieces dry and flat. It also separates those small pieces into the correct compartment.

--S. Gary Roberts, Austin, Texas

Electric-knife sander

Convert that old electric knife into a reciprocating sander. I had one with a broken blade. The stub of the blade was shortened to 4 inches, inserted in one side of the machine, and wrapped with duct tape. A single wrap of double-sided tape provides the place to hold the paper. Now, hit the trigger and watch it go! This works great for those that carve after the vessel is turned.

--S. Gary Roberts, Austin, Texas

No more brush cleaning

I use Deft for a lot of my turning finishes. The finish is quick and of high quality. However, cleaning the brush was a pain and forgetting to do so even worse. Rude Osolnik showed me a trick that works. I use a one-quart container with a good screw-type lid and fill it with Deft. Shorten the handle of a quality one-inch brush so that the lid closes over the top end when sealed. Leaving the brush in the liquid keeps it from hardening. I have been using the same bottle and same brush for two years. Thanks, Rude.

--S. Gary Roberts, Austin, Texas

Convert your screw chuck to one that works

When turning things that have a hole in the middle, I use a piece of 1/4-inch threaded rod, screwed into the screw chuck. Just remove the screw and most have a thread that can be matched with all thread rod. Slip on the blank after drilling and run down the nuts to secure. I use an acorn nut on the end of the threaded rod and run the tailstock up with a live-cup center that snuggles up to the nut. Now, I have it very secure and safe and can reverse it for access if desired.

--S. Gary Roberts, Austin, Texas

Lathe-stand modification

Arthritis has taken my mobility away from me, and I must use a walker to get around. Also, my garage is small and the few pieces of equipment must have rollers to move them about as needed. I have built some things to accomodate my situation.

The photo shows a cabinet arrangement that houses chisels, chucks, and everything related to woodturning. Since the photo was taken, I have set the top section on a 12-inch lazy Susan bearing and added a drawer for small chisels. I can reach everything while sitting on the stool at my lathe.

I constructed a base for my lathe to allow me to sit at and under the the lathe with clearance for my knees. The centerline height is about 38 inches with no obstruction between the lathe bed and my knees. I have tapered blocks that raise the stand off the rollers for stability.

--Ben Atwell, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Ben Atwell's lathe-stand modification

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Your last issue contained two fine articles on collecting exotic wood. Both, "Raiders of the Lost Bark" and "For the Love of . . .," made fascinating reading for me and for others who enjoy collecting their own turning stock.

I came close to harvesting an exotic wood several years ago in the "boneyard" of a tree service in south Georgia. As the blade of my trusty Stihl 028 chainsaw bit into a strange-looking log, and chips began to fly, my wife had a severe allergic reaction. The intense and distinctive smell from the fresh-cut chips immediately identified the log as camphorwood. I was allowed, after pleading and begging, to bring back one small piece. The trip was not a total bust, though, because the bed of my pickup truck contained the remains of a carefully cut and bagged pear tree. It was not your run-of-the-mill pear tree, because the wood of the trunk and main limbs was deep red in color.

True exotics are out of reach for most of us living outside the subtropical southern edge of the country. However, there is sufficient variation in our native species to keep alive the wood-hunting instinct. Two years ago I found elm, sycamore, sourwood, and hophornbeam trees that had wood much darker and redder than usual. These trees were growing near a stream in soil containing a noticeably high level of iron. I suspect, but don't know for a fact, that the heavy iron concentration is responsible for the increased pigmentation. There was also a high incidence of burls in this grove. It seems apparent that unusual environments make for unusual trees.

Occasionally, true exotics do arrive in nonexotic places. About a year ago, my daughter and her fiance brought back a piece of wood from Costa Rica. The local name for this wood is rom-rom. I turned a wide-mouthed hollow vase from the piece, and gave it to them as a souvenir from their trip. The wood looks very much like the picture of goncalo alves shown on page 49 of the *Good Wood Handbook*. If anyone out there in "latheland" is familiar with rom-rom, I would greatly appreciate hearing from you.

Please print more articles on wood harvesting.

--J.D. Wolterstorff, Jacksonville, Alabama

Dear Editor,

I would like to make a few comments on Jacques Morin's article in the September issue about extracting rosewood from Belize's forests (Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 13). I have lived and worked in Belize on and off over the last 20 years (as an archaeologist and anthropologist) and in fact learned woodturning in Belize from a man who used to make bowls for the tourist trade.

Contrary to what Mr. Morin says, Belize *does* have a major tourist industry, and its offshore Cays have become the number one destination for scuba divers in the world. The inland areas, with their wealth of archaeological sites, wildlife, caves, and waterways for fishing, are readily accessible. You can take trips into the forest on horseback, foot, or vehicle through a large number of companies in the growing eco-tourism industry. Tours are advertised in the backs of most travel magazines, or you can write to Belize Mesoamerican Tours, 4 South Park St., Belize City, Belize.

One thing you may *NOT* do in Belize any longer is to export rosewood, cedar, or siricote lumber as Mr. Morin describes in his article. The government passed laws this May prohibiting their export, after protests by local woodworkers. Foreigners have been willing to pay such high prices for these woods, that local woodworkers and craftspeople have not been able to get the raw materials they need to make a living.

I realize that foreign woodworkers want to have access to these beautiful woods, but we need to pay attention to the impacts of our purchases on local crafts and people who depend on these woods for a meager living. (This is one of those ethical issues that Alan Lacer wrote about in his September president's page.) I know that much of the wood that Morin finds would probably never be recovered without his efforts, but I also know that rosewood is increasingly scarce and expensive in Belize. Simply put, raw lumber exports bring much less cash into the local economy than exports of fine crafts. Belizean woodworkers do some lovely work and turn some fine bowls--just because we have the money and resources, should we deprive them of their raw material?

There are well over 150 species of trees in Belizean forests which *can* still be legally exported. Some of them are quite beautiful and abundant, and most have never even been tried for turning.

Any woodworking visitor to Belize should visit the Forestry Department office in Belmopan to see polished samples of most of Belize's native species. They might also visit the Forestry Department woodshop to speak with some very expert local woodworkers who have experience with most of the local lumber. In the past I have had a lot of success visiting sawmills to obtain usable pieces of wood, without trecking off to the bush like Mr. Morin.

--Richard Wilk, Bloomington, Indiana

Dear Editor,

The article by Charles Brownold on page 28 of the September 1992 issue was of particular interest to me and was most opportune. A short time ago I bought a school desk top, 18" x 24" and 30" high, and fixed it up in a not too dissimilar fashion to Brownold's "mobile island unit" with castors for mobility. However, to avoid any tendency to top heaviness, I have installed racking at the low level to make good use of precious space.

Part of the desk top is hinged and lifts to reveal a storage area beneath (it has also been signed by about very kid in the school!).

I also liked his tool rack suspended from the ceiling, and I may very well adopt this idea. Thank you Charles--most helpful!

In closing may I say that I get a great deal of help and pleasure from the journal. Thank you everyone concerned.

--John Holyoak, Norfolk, England

Editor,

Many thanks to Rodney Swain and Marke Lane for their input on dust collection filters ("Letters," Sept. 1992). I've always been an advocate of gaining "best" information whenever possible, and with their help I can improve my own system.

--David Ellsworth, Quakertown, Pennsylvania

Editor,

In November 1991 several trees that had been injured during a severe freeze the previous year were taken down in a Sacramento supermarket parking lot.

My brother and I, after obtaining permission from the store owner, picked up a van load of the better pieces. We cut most of these into bowl blanks and proceeded to rough turn them green. I gave four of the remaining pieces, still in the round, to a friend, Charles. I took another piece along with a twig with leaves to another friend, Miles, who, being somewhat of a dendrologist, I hoped could identify the wood. He told me it was silky-oak (*Grevillea robusta*), and he had just finished green turning a couple of pieces of it. *Grevilla robusta* is in the same family as the macadamia-nut tree, and although the common name, silky-oak, suggests that it is an oak, it is not.

I green turned most of my bowl blanks (about 70) over the next week, coating them as usual, and stacked them in my shed to dry. The next time I talked to my brother he told me that when he turned his he had broken out with water blisters on his wrists. I said I had not had any problem with mine. A few days later I had a call from friend Charles saying that he had broken out with a rash on his arms, and he thought it was caused by the silky-oak. He offered me the remainder of the pieces back if I would like them.

The following Saturday a student in my turning class, Monica, wet turned and finished a small bowl of the silky-oak. The next Saturday when she arrived for class she had some fine red marks on her left wrist. I asked her if she had a rash there and she said yes, it had come up the previous Sunday morning but had only lasted a couple of days.

In early May I green turned a large bowl of silky-oak as a demonstration for a woman, Dede, who was in my turning class at the U.C., Davis Craft Center, and her son, who was planning to take a class at my studio. The next Monday I got a call from her saying she would not make it to class that night because she was on heavy medication for a rash that had started not long after she had gotten home from my shop on Saturday. Her son had it also, along with severe respiratory distress.

In mid July I decided I did not want this wood around, even though I personally had no problems with it. I called friend Miles and asked him if he had experienced any problems with it, and he said he had not. I offered my roughed-out bowls to him, and he came over and picked them up. A few days later I learned that after finishing one of the bowls he suffered a severe rash on the back of his neck, along the edge of his Airstream helmet.

Cas Grabowski described his experience with silky-oak in an article in *American Woodturner*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Sept. 1990). Unfortunately I and several other turners in this area did not observe, remember, register, or whatever that silky-oak has this undesirable property. Thus, I am writing this to reiterate that we must take warning when we see or hear about a problem. Also, there may be some out there who are new to turning and/or new to *American Woodturner* and have not seen or heard about this tree. I do not know about other areas of the country, but I have seen many of these trees planted as ornamentals in this area.
--Norman Hinman, Davis, California

(*Editor's note: alergic reaction to silky-oak is much like that of poison ivy. The tree is:* native to eastern Australia, however, its ability to withstand drought has made it a widely planted cultivar in warm, dry regions throughout the world, including the Southwestern U.S. Its fern-like foliage tends to repress but not totally block out sunlight. *Jon Arno, "Wood of the Month,"* World of Wood, *Vol. 45, No. 10.*)

Reader Wants to Know

Jeff Nasser would like to obtain a copy of *Woodturning Music Boxes* by James Jacobson, Sterling Publishing. If you can help him, call 502/895-8534 or 502/895-8583.

STRANGE MAIL

Well, I asked for it! The most creative response to my sandpaper-use question in September's journal came from Charles Brownold, Davis, California. He sent me a postcard made from 36-grit garnet paper and said to pass it on to someone who needs it! You readers are soooo clever! Keep watching *your* mail . . .

Half the respondents said that 60- or even 36-grit paper was just fine; half said that sanding ought to start at about 120-grit. Perhaps my question should have stipulated *bowl* turning with "normal" wood. Oh well, it was nice hearing from all eight of you.--*B.S.*

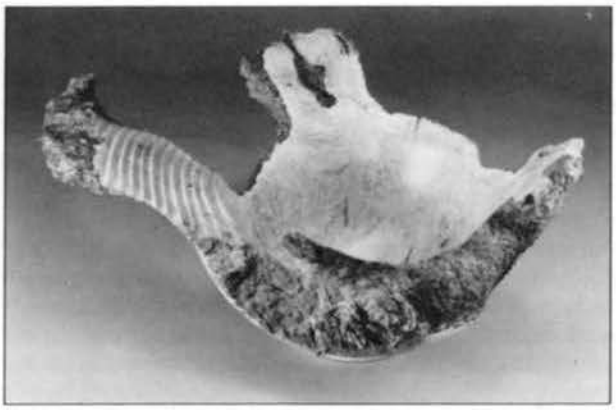
THANK YOU TENNESSEE!

Once again, the Tennessee Association of Woodturners was pleased to be able to donate $500.00 to the AAW general education fund. The money was generated from the successful conference Tennessee sponsored in September. Thank you very much!

photo by Cynthia Huff

On behalf of the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, Sandy Blain accepts "Mr. Eli," by Stoney Lamar. Lamar donated the bleached maple burl sculpture to Arrowmont's permanent collection on the occasion of Blain's 25th anniversary with the school last August. Lamar said the sculpture was given in appreciation of her support to the field of woodturning.

AAW GALLERY . . .



rhododendron root, 11" dia. x 4 1/2" h., Bill Johnson, West End, North Carolina

rhododendron root, 13" dia. x 6" h., Bill Johnson, West End, North Carolina

huon pine with birdseye inclusions, 7 1/2" h. x 7" w., Robert Dawson, Asutralia

photo by Rip Rippengale

Judd Mosser, 1992 turned and constructed table, red oak, white ash, glass, paint, 15" h. x 48" w. x 36" diam. regional exhibition, "Craft Art from Western New York," Burchfield Art Center, Buffalo

photo by Judd Mosser

John Timby, Deming, New Mexico

If you would like your work considered for publication in the "Gallery" section of *American Woodturner*, send black and white or color PRINTS to: Betty Scarpino, Editor, *American Woodturner*, 5613 Ralston Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46220.

William Moore, 1992, "A Tray for Apollo," spun and etched bronze, myrtle burl, 4 1/2" x 22" x 15". Lipton Collection

photo by Harold Wood

Susan Ellison, Oxford, Maryland, "Festival," cherry, holly, mahogany, 8 1/4" x 6 1/2"

Susan Ellison, Oxford, Maryland, "Spirit of the Chasm," maple burl, 8" x 5 3/8"

ABOUT WOOD: In the Eye of Hurricane Andrew, or, Where to Get Tremendous Quantities of Prime Wood, Free

Cas Grabowski

My home, on 2 1/2 acres, lies in the southern portion of Dade County, Florida, about 25 miles south of downtown Miami. On Sunday night, August 23 this year, the eye of Hurricane Andrew--the fiercest part of the storm--passed over it. We probably experienced winds in excess of 165 mph, although no one will ever really know. Andrew was definitely in the killer-hurricane class.

The damage to homes, buildings--and trees--is unbelievable. Many square miles of urban, suburban, and agricultural land have been virtually leveled, and many more square miles severely damaged by peripheral portions of the storm. You have seen bits and pieces of this on national television, and so have I, but you can't really appreciate the devastation until you see it at close hand.

First, let me tell you about the trees. Fairchild Tropical Gardens, a lush collection of trees and plants, was in the path of the storm. It is a total disaster and is being described as a "forest of toothpicks." The same can be said of my yard, except that there aren't many "picks" left. About 3/4 acre was planted with grass and ornamentals, about 3/4 acre was devoted to tropical fruit trees, and one acre to a natural, native forest. When we moved here 14 years ago, this latter area had about 50 or so large (30-50 feet tall) "Dade County pines" and a few nice live oaks, but most of this area had become overgrown with trash trees and dense vines. We cleared the vines out (although I am still fighting them) and replanted with native S. Florida (largely Caribbean) trees. We planted hundreds of Cuban mahogany, lignum vitae, Jamacian dogwood, buttonwood, willow, bustic, and others, many of which we started from seed. I teased my wife, Doris, who was the compulsive seed planter, that we were incredible optimists to plant seedling trees at our age and expect to see them mature. But they have. We do have a 12-month growing season. Some of the native trees grew to 35-foot heights within 6 years and started to seed themselves. It was a beautiful mini-aboretium. We had, for example, 15 varieties of palm trees alone.

This is now our "forest of toothpicks." The tallest pines are all gone, but a few smaller ones still have some green on top. The few live-oak stumps that remain are completely denuded of leaves. Some trees have been cracked and crushed, many more have been uprooted.

I first descended into this maelstrom four days after the storm. My first impression was the visual one, the area looked NUKED. As I wandered around, rather dazed, I also quickly became aware of a very strong sweet smell of fresh-cut wood--the only good sensation I had that afternoon.

A 20-foot tamarind tree is still standing, but the bark was almost completely stripped off by the wind! A description of the trunk of a fallen pine tree will give you the best idea of what the full fury of a hurricane can do. The trunk, at its base, is 11 inches in diameter and the tree top measures about 20 feet from the break to the top. The bark and one to two inches of the superficial layers of the tree are wound in a very tight spiral, extending 8 inches above the break. This tree top was not blown over, it was literally twisted off! People have described seeing during the storm uprooted trees whirling like dervishes in the streets. At first I was skeptical; now I believe. These kinds of things are apparently due to many relatively small tornadoes that are frequently spawned within the larger spiral bands of a hurricane.

When I first moved to Miami in 1960, a botanist told me that there were no tall trees in Miami because hurricanes kept them pruned. It has been 28 years since the last hurricane blew over this area. Andrew, the big PRUNER, had a large target in front of him. He did a good job.

There are zillions of tons of wood lying around Dade County right now. Some of it is really prime, such as Cuban mahogany, black olive, Norfolk Island pine, sea grape, live oak, and Indian rosewood. Burls are rare, but root balls from uprooted trees are not. I roughly estimate that it will take a crane and from 4 to 8 large trailer loads to clear my yard alone. Multiply that by thousands, perhaps a million, of homes and you can begin to see the mountains of wood that will have to be picked up and disposed of someday, somehow, somewhere.

The devastation is not just confined to the suburbs. For several days after the storm I stayed in residential section of Miami that was only exposed to the periphery of the storm. Every house here has anywhere from 1/2 to 2 trailerloads of debris in front of it, mostly wood. Many streets, a week after the storm, are still completely blocked with overturned royal palms, ficus, and other trees.

My wife, her son, and his family, and a family of friends spent the night of the storm in my home, far from the water, on relatively high ground. This area is considered to be one of the safest parts of the county in which to ride out a hurricane. Our home shuddered and shook. The wind shrieked incessantly for several hours, sounding like the proverbial freight train going through the house. Broken tree branches kept banging into the house. As the eye of the storm passed over, they experienced very sharp, transient pains in their ears and sinuses. A corner of the roof was damaged and lots of wind-driven rain spread through the attic and eventually drained into the house. We lost the patio screening, but that is a give-away in a hurricane. Otherwise, the house is structurally intact. Fortunately, theirs was not the ultimate horror story, which happened to thousands of people here, of having their house crumble around them during the height of the storm. My shop, located in the woods survived without a scratch. This is fortunate because we need the tools and supplies it contains for repairs.

Where was I during this storm?--about 30 miles to the north in a hospital recovering from major surgery. I was on the 12th floor of a 13-story unit built as a "T" shape. My room jutted into the storm. This building also shuddered intermittently, probably experiencing 100-120 mph winds. Our beds were moved out into the corridor for some slight degree of protection. Before we were moved out, I could see the TV commentators plotting the path of the eye of Andrew on a street map of Dade County. I knew then that my home and family were going to be hit by the fiercest part of the storm.

After I was moved back to my room in the morning, I kept my eyes glued to the TV set, hour after hour. From a hospital bed, there was nothing else to do. It was horrible to see the drama unfold, because the devastated shopping centers, buildings, and homes were very familiar to me--this was my neighborhood. ABC evening news that morning started by showing the ruins of a large shopping mall close to home. I was beginning to

panic. I knew that roads were impassable and telephone lines were down on a massive, near-total scale. I kept watching hoping to catch a glimpse of a member of my family to know that they were all right.

At 10:00 am Tuesday morning, the National Guard announed that they were bringing in specially trained dogs to sniff for bodies in the rubble of the thousands of ruined homes. I was devastated by now. At 11:30, I finally got a phone call from my daughter-in-law telling me everyone was all right. I broke down. That was the longest 36 hours of my life.

Neil Smith, president of our South Florida Woodturners Guild personally drove deep into the disaster area several days after the storm and left word that he was able to determine that every member of the guild was alive and well. Some were battered and bruised, but healthy. I respect him greatly for this. It was not only a thoughtful thing to do, but also a difficult and dangerous undertaking.

It is now September 1--nine days after the hurricane. I am back home and under doctors' orders not to lift anything over 5 lbs. for 3 more weeks. This is a difficult order to follow but it doesn't matter. We are alive and well and have a reasonably good roof over our heads. We hope to have electricity in two to three months.

Last May I retired from my university position and felt that, at last, I could turn wood to my heart's content. What a joke! The yard is full of good turning wood, and I can't touch it. I suppose that I will save the trunk of my macadamia nut tree and a few other choice goodies. If I ever turn this wood I will call it my "Andrew line."

This was not written in any way to be a personal appeal for help. However, there are over two hundred thousand people in this part of the country who did lose their homes and all of their possessions. Fortunately , the death rate was relatively low (30). If you do feel so inspired, send a contribution to the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, or other favorite charity, and mark it for the "Hurricane Andrew Disaster Relief Fund." Help will be needed for a long time.

Keep your world turning!

twisted pine-tree trunk, grapefruits next to it

Update, October 15, 1992

I sent the above article to the journal editor as soon as I could, hoping it would make the fall issue. It didn't, so Betty asked me to provide an update.

It is now 7 1/2 weeks after Andrew. Some things have changed, but many others have not. There is still a 10 p.m. curfew in this part of town. I still feel a bit shocked and depressed when I venture into the world around me because it still looks like a war zone. Many entire blocks of homes and businesses are damaged or destroyed. Despite a tremendous clean-up effort on the part of the county, there still are mountains of building rubble, debris, and trees on the streets. It seems almost like the storm occurred just a few days ago, and the clean up is just beginning. A few grocery stores and gasoline stations have managed to reopen. Some pharmacies are operating from large trailers set up in parking lots. Overall, there are few stores, virtually no restaurants or fast-food outlets within ten miles from our home. There are enough nails on the streets to make flat tires a common problem. A lot of traffic lights are not working yet. Any trip can be a mini-adventure. A tremendous number of contractors and workers have descended into this area. Still, there is so much devastation that the latest estimates are that it will take up to ten years to rebuild South Dade County.

We got our electric power three and a half weeks after the storm, but still do not have phone service. Cable television people do not expect a full restoration of service until January.

The county moblized much more efficiently for debris removal than I expected they could. They managed, with the help of the Army Corps of Engineers, to attract thousands of dump trucks into the area. Some of the tree debris is being mulched. Most is being burned, in pits, fanned by jets of oxygen to minimize smoke. Environmentalists are protesting, but not too loudly. The problem is immense. County officers claim: 1) already overloaded landfills cannot be used; 2) burning the debris could take a year or so; 3) mulching would take over three years, and then what can you do with all that mulch? I grossly underestimated the amount of tree debris from my yard alone. We had three hurricane-debris pickups and these filled a total of 18 trucks. And we haven't started on the wooded portion of the yard.

Yes, there is still lots of good wood on the streets, but separating the wheat from the chaff in a large mound of debris may not be easy. There could be golden finds--two weeks ago I passed a street that was once lined with beautiful old mahoganies. One could easily have picked up a ton of good wood pruned by Andrew on that street alone.

The news about the trees is both good and bad. Many surviving trees and bushes are reacting to the hurricane-induced injuries with fantastic spring-like greening. Some of the toothpicks now look like large green lollipops. A few of the flowering trees and bushes have also been stimulated to bloom out of season. Some uprooted trees died quickly, but many tenaciously hang on to life, sprouting new branches and leaves even though they are horizontal. Several

weeks after the storm we are propping up these trees after pruning them, and they are doing fine. We still have 30-foot oaks and others that look healthy on the ground. I am optimistic that even these can be successfully resurrected if I can only manage it. This capacity for regrowth after a storm is a spectacular South Florida phenomenon. It makes you feel good about the regenerative capacities of tropical forests. Incidentally, the tamarind tree with bark blown away has greened out beautifully. It looks very healthy.

The pines, however, are bad news. Many of the tallest, 40 to 60 feet high, were toppled by the storm. None were uprooted. Trunks, up to 18 inches in diameter, were broken like toothpicks. These I knew would not revive. The stumps are good now only for the owls and woodpeckers. It is disheartening to watch a number of tall pines that managed to retained their green crowns also die. Somehow the stress of the storm was too much for them, and they are having a severe delayed reaction. We may end up losing almost all of our 50 skyscrapers.

For several years now, we have enjoyed the visits of painted buntings in our yard in the fall and winter months. These are the gaudiest of the North American birds. The females are bright pea green. The males have a blue head, red belly, and two-tone green back and wings. These rare beauties summer along the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina and winter in South Florida. Banding studies have shown that individual birds tend to find their way back to the same locations year after year. We were concerned that "our" buntings would not be able to find us because the landscape has been so drastically altered. Last week, the first of these came back to our feeding station. There are three pairs now. Things are coming back to normal. But slowly, very slowly.

Cas Grabowski has written the "About Wood" column for a number of years, and I expect that he will continue contributing to AAW members' understanding of different species of woods.

CRAFT EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

The Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) has established a special fund to assist craft artists in South Florida and Louisiana devastated by Hurricane Andrew. One hundred percent of all donations will be given to craftspeople rebuilding from the hurricane. Tax deductible contributions should be made payable to CERF, marked "Hurricane Andrew," and sent to CERF, 1000 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 9, Washington, D.C. 20036. For those wanting additional information or applications, call 413/625-9672.

The CERF is a non-profit tax-exempt organization which provides immediate support to professional craftspeople suffering career-threatening emergencies such as fire, theft, illness, and natural disaster. CERF is the only organization of its kind in the United States.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

WANTED, educational material to learn laminating for hollow vessels. Floyd E. Harmon, 8 Connie Dr., Shalimar, FL 32579, 904/651-1585

RARE 1916 OLIVER combination patternmakers lathe for sale. For serious bowl turners--will turn 6 ft. on faceplate. No motor. Ship anywhere. Forklift available. Best offer. Phoenix Woodworking, 807/475-8779.

HIGH-SPEED STEEL TURNING TOOLS for sale, also high-speed steel bars. Reasonable. Frank Lynn, 916 South Pacific, Kelso, WA 98626.

BOWLING PINS for sale. Thin coat of plastic over knot-free hard maple. Harold Miller, 230 Pleasantview, Hamilton, IL 62341. Call 217/847-2461.

MOULTHROP BOWL for sale, tulipwood, perfect, 8" x 16", $3,500. 412/826-0776.

WANTED, PRINGLE-BRODEY, back-knife production lathe. Popular during the Babbitt-bearing era. Gene Murdach, R# 5, Box 93, Murphysboro, IL 62966.

TUNG OIL 100% PURE, raw $10.95/qt.; polymerized $18.95/qt.; $4.00 S&H. Pints, gallons also available. VISA/MC. Box 160F, Elliottsburg, PA 17024, 717/582-8279.

$1.00 per word, payment due with order. Make check payable to AAW. Deadline for March 1993 issue is January 15, 1993. Send ad copy and check to Editor, 5613 Ralston Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46220.

PRESIDENT'S PAGE *(Continued from inside front cover)*

entails that there be a limit on advertising in our publications--when any issue exceeds rather strict limits, our mailing costs take a sizeable jump and also calls into question our non-profit status as well as our mission. Personally, my least favorite publications in woodworking are those that are primarily vehicles for advertisements. That is where the money is, however, and the trade-off is a shrinkage of articles, especially the length of articles because it takes away too much space from advertising. In addition, those publishers must actually pay writers for published articles (and not very much most of the time!!!).

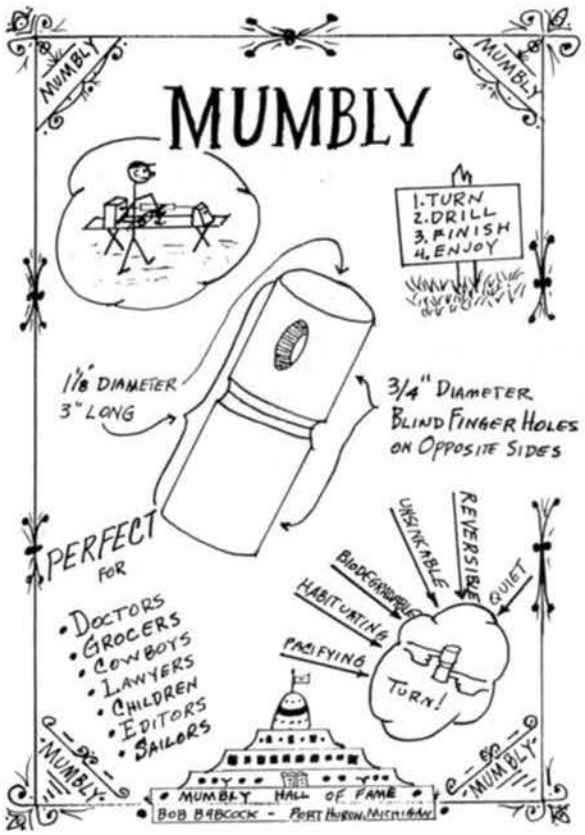
But, I do have a confession: I, like you, do like to know what new tool, machine, product, or gadget is available. Advertising is but one way to meet this need. We are trying to satisfy this need through another avenue, the *AAW Membership Directory* (which you should have received by the time you read this). In addition to listings of AAW members, demonstrators, and local chapters, there is a "resource section" that identifies over three hundred suppliers of just about anything of interest to a woodturner. A number of these are small suppliers that might not be represented in a published ad, yet they provide a product or service of interest to turners. This section is "the new kid on the block" and we hope to expand and better organize it in the years ahead. I think you will find that this will meet your needs for product information far better than anything to date. We will also be selling advertising in the directory to help cover the costs of printing and mailing. We see this as a much better strategy of informing our members as it is clearly more information-based than promotion-based.

You mentioned that we could use a draftsman to construct the diagrams for our "Turners' Tips" section. As of the September issue of the journal, we now have an illustrator to handle such concerns for all aspects of the publication.

Thank you for your thoughts--they are constructive and deserved an answer. What you have paid your dues for is to join the American Association of Woodturners, a relatively young organization. Our journal, *American Woodturner*, will continue to mature from its beginnings in 1986 as not much more than a newsletter to what it is today, a fine woodworking publication. The *members* of the AAW have made us a strong, viable organization by being active in our efforts to promote woodturning. I hope that I have clarified our approach and the reasoning for it, as well as to assure you, and all our members, that we are pursuing the idea of ongoing development. Your continued support and enthusiasm for the American Association of Woodturners is most definitely appreciated.

"A SKEW ASKEW" ASKEW

A sincere apology is extended to Robert J. Lenrow, editor of "A Skew Askew," local-chapter newsletter of the Hudson Valley Wood Turners, for failing to credit his newsletter for the original publication of the article by John Moody and Karen Moody on double-sided tape. Like many local-chapter newsletter editors, John works hard as a volunteer. He was kind enough to give permission for *American Woodturner* to publish items from his newsletter. He deserves the credit.



The origin of Mumbly is hazy. They are not a new item and are sometimes found pictured in old books--children's science, Boy Scout-type books, and magazines.

Mumbly seems to have a calming effect on the user, as well as becoming midly habitual. They are limited in function--they will turn forward, backward, and stop. They can be made from any type of wood. My favorite is cedar, as it is light enough to be carried in a pocket, and it develops a nice patina from being used.

I would appreciate any Mumbly samples that people would like to send. My address is in the AAW directory.--*Robert Babcock*

VIDEO REVIEW

Robert J. Lenrow

Highlights of the 1992 AAW Symposium, videotape, (Westhaven Productions, 1941 South 250 East, Orem, UT 84056, 801/225-6824), 27 minutes, $29.95 plus $4.50 S&H.

The video begins with comments by Dale Nish of Brigham Young University, followed by glimpses of several demonstrators in the course of their demonstrations. Alan Lacer, president of the American Association of Woodturners talks about the AAW and the instant gallery. The remainder of the tape is a walk through the instant gallery to highlight the works on display. Lacer's introductory comments noted that there was no selection process for this gallery, and thus all conference attendees could display their work. The novice turner may have had his or her work displayed next to that of a professional turner whose work sells for hundreds or thousands of dollars.

The tape really gives a sense of walking through the gallery. You see other people viewing the works and walking around. Often, several objects are viewed at once, but parts of some are cut off. It is just like walking through a gallery--seeing larger views, then focusing on smaller views and finally on specific objects. Someone working with the camera operator occasionally picks up a few of the objects, feels them, and displays them for closer views.

Although there are cards by each piece identifying the turner and the object, none of this is made particularly visible. Neither the turners nor the pieces are identified. Thus, something is lost since one usually notes the name of the artist when looking at works in a gallery. Also, there is nothing to indicate why these pieces were selected for viewing--what made them catch the camera operator's eye?

The sense of examining a piece and studying it is missing. There does not seem to be enough substance in the tape to use it as a basis for study. Some explanation of the works and what is being viewed would be very useful. I would not particularly want to see criticism of works on such a videotape, but a knowledgeable commentator could point out the unique and positive aspects of many of the works--whether it was design, the particular piece of wood, the finish, or the techniques used. This would make the tape instructional and more lively.

The tape is good as a first video of an AAW symposium, however, I was disappointed that it did not include more of the demonstrations or at least highlights of the demonstrations. Perhaps the 1993 symposium committee will consider arranging for videotaping and making available highlights of the entire event. Better yet, I will attend next year's AAW symposium.

Robert J. Lenrow is editor of "A Skew Askew," newsletter of the Hudson Valley Wood Turners.

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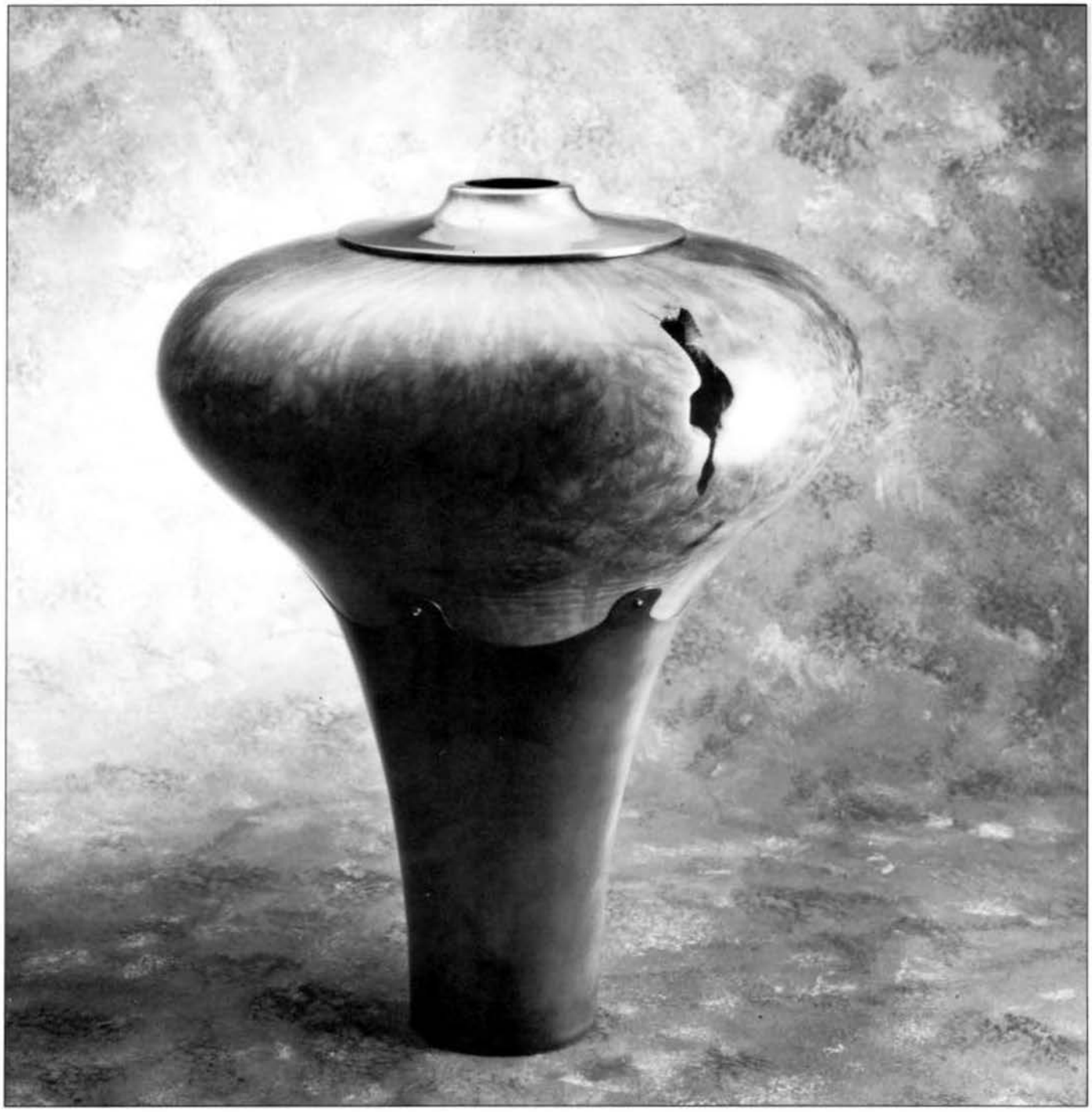

photo by Harold Wood

William Moore, 1992 "Hera"
spun bronze, madrone burl,
18" x 15", Lipton Collection