■ Green wood vessels ■ Vacuum Chucks ■ Turned Oil Lamp ■ Work of Clay Foster ■

American Woodturner

The Journal of the American Association of Woodturners Winter 1998 $5.00 Vol. 13, No4

TURNING TALL VESSELS

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

Inspiration for all of Us

In just 12 years the AAW has grown from several hundred to over 7,500 members. The AAW was created by a group of advanced and expert woodturners. Most of these turners have gone on to become some of the most noted turners in our field today. It was through their shared enthusiasm that we caught the excitement and joy of woodturning.

The AAW's growth has been the result of the enthusiasm they generated by sharing their knowledge and skills with us through their demonstrations, classes, writings and videos. While many of us in the AAW are hobbyists, beginners or intermediate turners, our advancement to a higher level of craftsmanship has been through the demonstrations and teachings of our better turners at local chapter events, regional conferences, AAW national symposiums or classes in turners' studios or schools like Arrowmont and John C. Campbell. Each of us has had the exhilaration of being so inspired by a demonstrator that we couldn't wait to get back to our lathes to try those newly learned techniques or new design ideas and forms. That is the how and why of the AAW's growth as an organization and our individual growth to higher levels of craftsmanship, technical competency and design creativity.

But what inspires our better turners, those who share their talents with us? Certainly demonstrating and teaching gives many of them the inspiration and satisfaction to continue to be creative and the desire to continue to share their ideas with everyone. Yet as more of our members acquire new skills and reach a noted level, how long will the enjoyment and satisfaction gained from teaching and demonstrating to the rest of us continue to be inspirational for them? And what can the AAW membership do to help keep the enthusiasm and sharing going for this increasing number of recognized turners and demonstrators? Up to now most of the AAW scholarships and educational grants have been awarded to beginning and intermediate students, many of whom have developed into some of our best turners. It has been suggested that the AAW expand our scholarship and educational grants program to include our demonstrating turners. The scholarships would enable them to attend classes or programs in subjects that would inspire them, classes that would not necessarily be strictly about woodturning, but about sculpture, design or techniques in different fields, which could be related or transferred to woodturning. The benefit and payback to the AAW membership by the turners who received such scholarships would include doing a rotation at the national symposium and writing an article for the Journal to share their experience and gained knowledge with everyone. Would our membership consider a scholarship program that spent money to inspire our demonstrating turners to be worthwhile and beneficial? My belief is that the vast majority of our AAW membership knows and understands that the sharing between our top turners and our beginning turners and everyone in between is what makes woodturners a very special family and is what has caused our membership to rapidly grow to over 7,500, and would be very happy to support, in any way they can, those turners who share their ideas with us.

A unique characteristic of woodturners is the new learning from the old and the old learning from the new, and it is one of the things that brings and binds together our turning family.

The AAW Board is always looking for new and innovative programs to help our beginning, intermediate, and advanced turners. If you have any ideas to help us do this, please contact our Administrator, any AAW Board member or me with your thoughts. Your suggestions about new programs or improving existing ones (national or regional symposiums, scholarships, the Journal, videos, exhibitions, etc.) really help the Board to help our members.

Thank you: After serving three years on the AAW Board, Bill Stephenson is retiring this December. Bill chaired the Chapters and Membership Committee for 2 years, and developed information packages and documents to help individuals start new AAW chapters. Under his guidance the number of AAW chapters increased by over 35. We now have 120 chapters. He also started the chapter liaison program for Board members to contact and visit local chapters. He has written over 20 articles for the Journal. On the Publications Committee he helped to improve and expand the Journal and our video program; and helped to initiate the AAW web site and web communications among the chapters and the Board. He was active at the national symposiums and organized the Chapter Collaborative Challenge in Akron. On behalf of our membership the Board wishes to thank Bill for his work and the contributions that he has made to the AAW.

On a personal note, I've retired from practicing law and moved from St. Louis. My new address is 4640 Rue Belle Mer, Sanibel, FL 33957, phone 941-472-8248. In the summer my address is 784 Camino Del Monte Sol, Santa Fe, NM 87501, phone 505-982-9242. My e-mail is: dcwahl@worldnet.att.net

I've set up a shop in Sanibel and in Santa Fe and hope to spend more time turning. If you're in either neighborhood give me a call.

—David Wahl, President
American Association of Woodturners

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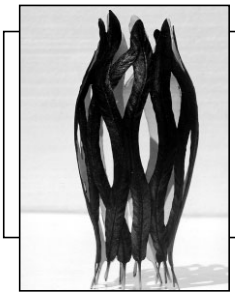
A Note about your Safety
An accident at the lathe can happen with blinding suddenness; respiratory problems can build over years. Take appropriate precautions when you turn. Safety guidelines are published in the AAW Resource Directory. Following them will help ensure that you can continue to enjoy woodturning.



On the cover: *Canadian turner Frank Sudol works on a large, thin-walled vessel. For Sudol, the turning is often just the first step. He likes to carve intricate figures and other details in the walls, then may color them. For the piece shown here, he collaborated with a bird carver skilled in woodburning techniques to create a vessel of feather-like components.* *See article on Page 36.*
COVER PHOTO: Vince West, Prince Albert, SK, Canada.

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

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From North of the 49

We came, we saw and we were IMPRESSED.

Eighty six Canadian turners from Newfoundland to British Columbia attended the Akron Symposium and I know now, not one tree in Canada is safe from these turners.

As for myself, it was "an experience of a lifetime" accompanied with meeting old and making new friends. I'm sure I could have spent all three days just looking through the Instant Gallery, let alone darting from seminar to seminar trying not to miss anything. Oh, so much to see and do in such a short time.

Many demonstrators have visited our clubs over the past 10 years and we now have a list of new ones to give us some "hands on" expertise.

The banquet and auction was a highlight and, of course, the fact that it raised over $23,000 for the education program was a bonus.

The symposium organizing committee did themselves proud... Just superb folks.

On behalf of all the attendees from north of the 49th, thanks.

—Martin Groneng, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.

Pathways Feedback

A juried show is based on critical review; it is only fair that the show itself be reviewed. After working on the Pathways show, catalog, and web site, I eagerly anticipated the fall *American Woodturner* issue. Initially pleased to see two reviews, as I read, I felt cheated — there was little comment on the show itself! Imagine a movie review discussing the costumes, makeup, and vocal delivery of the actors, but failing to mention the plot, cinematography, or directing. What use are reviews of one-time events such as music concerts? Published after the event, they can't help someone decide whether or not to attend. But, though the Pathways show is over, a thorough review should help guide the direction of future shows, and help the next group's preparation. Legitimate critical recognition of the show is one of the few rewards for the volunteers who made the show happen; without such feedback, there will be little motivation for future shows. And there was considerable work involved as Pathways launched from a concept last August, and culminated in a full physical show with catalog (and website) in 10 months.

Despite criticism in the review, the CSU gallery was the best venue possible — and we were fortunate that it was available. Reaching the larger Cleveland population for a month long show took precedence over the proximity to the AAW symposium. A 45-minute drive is commonplace in any moderate sized urban area. To help symposium attendees, the AAW sponsored bus service. Unfortunately, the buses unloaded at the side entrance to the gallery building, bypassing the signage on the front of the building. And, entering the gallery through the side hall spoiled the effect of being greeted by Lyle Jamieson's Torso¸ while Michael Brolly's alien Jewel stared intensely, menacingly leashed to the back wall.

Regarding the installation remarks — pieces too high, not able to see inside work, lighting uneven, etc.: as woodturners, we are spoiled. At chapter meetings, at the symposium, and instant gallery, we succumb to the tactile magnetism of turnings. We pick up pieces, look inside, compulsively inspect the bottom, and even gauge wall thickness with our finger-calipers. In a gallery, this is verboten. The mounting heights for the pedestals were chosen with the professional consultation of the gallery director, and remind me of how turnings were displayed at the Renwick Gallery in Washington D.C.

Instead of being scattered on tables, the works were arranged in a manner that may help us look at the work in new ways, from new angles. And, people did crowd around, and look under pieces — a viewpoint not possible if displayed on a low table. Note that the design of the show layout started months before the first piece was received, and was based on the slides and stated dimensions.

Was it a "Special Event?" A writer for the Cleveland daily newspaper came the night before the opening, to write an article for the Opening day's paper. Although she posted her story at 2:00 AM, and it was already printed, she was impressed enough to come back on her own time to see the show opening. And, one prominent AAW member was overheard saying that this was the best showing of turning he had seen. More importantly, the opening drew a significant number of non-turners-evidenced by their purchases of turnings. I had the benefit of seeing the show without the crowds, and, the turnings were much more prominent — but, I enjoyed the opening more: I got to meet many of the artists, after spending the previous month looking at their work on the desktop publishing screen. I saw Michael Brolly, glowing like a new father, displaying the inner compartments and mechanization of "Jewel" to a spontaneously gathered crowd. I saw many non-turners walking around the show realizing how inadequate and understated the term "woodturning" has become. Short of

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

If you are moving and you want to continue to receive your Journal, you need to notify the Administrator of your change of address. Since the Journal is sent via second-class mail, it will not be forwarded; mailing a replacement copy will cost you $7.

Letters edited for clarity and space.

having a band and searchlights, what more excitement can we ask?

There was no mention of the 19th century Peaseware. Turned for Use included historical pieces from Sturbridge Village collection. Likewise, we tried to provide a connection to the past, when turnings were strictly utilitarian. For instance, compare the segmented Peaseware covered urn, to Gary Johnson's segmented vase. An old technique, married to a classic form, and yet contemporary.

In my completely biased opinion, I would like to note the positive aspects of the show: Pathways had double the pieces as Turned for Use, somewhat due to a categorical format that encouraged diversity. There were new names and new styles. The show was professionally displayed, and attracted a good non-turning audience from the local area. Gallery sales allowed us to host a show website, distribute show catalogs to museums, and rebate some of the sponsoring institutions' funding. Compared to previous years, the catalog was twice the physical size, had twice as many pages, featured all but one of the pieces in the show, and had a binding and color. Shows like this help to 'market' woodturning, and the participating artists. I like to think that we raised the standards at least a bit. And, perhaps, excited one or two people.

The biggest negative is the sparse participation by AAW members. The juried show format places responsibility for the quality of the show upon the submitting artists — thus, I agree wholeheartedly with David Ellsworth on "potential." The architectural category had no entries; furniture just a few. The second obstacle was having to fast-track the show. The 10 month timespan was spent not only developing the show, but in building an organization to host the show as well.

Suggestions for the future? First, continuity. Schedule a show annually or biennially, and people can get a 'rhythm.' This builds credibility, to secure future venues and support. This also provides more time — to ask for the entries earlier; to photograph the pieces for the catalog; to plan the show layout; to publicize the show. Define funding — so a promotional budget can pay for signs, banners, and advertisements, and make planning the catalog a less risky venture. Pick the symposium locations for the next 4-5 years, to match the planning time frame of the major galleries. Commit to only hold a show if it advances the 'state of the art:' features more and better turnings, in bigger and more prestigious galleries. A man is judged by the company he keeps — and the outside world's perception of turning is determined by where it's seen.

Questions? Is the format valid? Are historical retrospectives important to the shows? Are shows like this important for the AAW, or should they be left for other organizations? How can we get more participation?

One of the under-fulfilled objectives of the AAW by-laws is promotion of woodturning. Shows such as Pathways provide great exposure outside of our community, and are vital if the AAW wants to grow beyond a technique-centric organization. I only hope that what we did helped raise the standards, and provide a firm foundation for shows to follow. For the past 5 months, I've hardly touched my lathe, but, working on the show helped my understanding of turning much more than making a pile of shavings. My appreciation for turning, and how it is promoted, has really grown as a result.

— Thad Badowski, Northcoast Woodturners, Pathways

Final NOTE: The show's web site is expanding. We've invited the artists to submit additional slides.

See: www.pathways98.org

I'd appreciate any comment and feedback on the website- email to:

webmaster@pathways98.org

Update for AAW-L list

There have been a number of new members to the AAW-L list and I thought it would be a good time to review and update the list mission for those of you who have just joined. The list details are listed on the AAW home page at http://www.RTPnet.org/~aaw/locals/aaw-l.html.

The searchable archives of the messages are also available from a link on the page.

There are 114 subscribers to AAW-L representing 77 local chapters. If you know of leaders of chapters which are not represented on the list, have them contact Mary Lacer at aaw@citilink.com with their email address and a request to be added.

In brief, the list was set up to discuss local chapter issues. It is composed of up to two members from each chapter as assigned by the local chapter president. Also included in the list are the AAW board members, administrator, editor, and webmaster and other individuals approved by the AAW administration.

As with any listserv, it is important to clearly identify the topic of the message in the subject line. Messages to the list should clearly be about local chapter issues or at least somewhat related to the mission of the list.

If a question arises from an email message which is outside the realm of local chapter issues, please email the person directly rather than use the list.

Also, clearly identify who you are and your chapter. Email from next door looks the same as from around the world.

—Roger Austin, AAW Webmaster, Raleigh, North Carolina

Welcome to New Chapters; Apologies to neglected friends

The AAW continues to grow , and we are delighted to welcome many new chapters to our family of woodturners.

The new chapters formed in the last year are:

Alabama Woodturners Association;

Chattahooche Woodturners (north and northeast Georgia);

Central Illinois Woodturners.

Concho Valley Woodturners (San Angelo, Texas);

Rio Grande Woodturners (Rio Grande valley area of Texas);

Hunt County Woodturners (Greenville, Texas);

Tri County Woodturners (Tampa Bay FLorida);

Woodturners of Southwest Florida (Fort Meyers, Florida);

Northeast Wisconsin Woodturners (Oshkosh, Wisconsin);

Dakota Woodturners (North Dakota).

That brings the total number of AAW chapters to 120. Each of the chapters offers a lot to turners and the communities in which they live. They don't get recognized often enough, so I'm especially sorry to be the person who ran a list asking for help forming chapters in areas where the AAW already had active, thriving chapters.

My apologies to the following :

Central Connecticut Woodturners;

Borderline Turners (El Paso area);

Cascade Woodturners (includes Portland, OR);

Inland Woodturners (includes Riverside, CA);

Northwest Woodturners (includes Portland, OR);

Rio Grande Woodturners (includes McAllen, Texas) chapters;

Tidewater Turners of Virginia (includes Norfolk).

I'll try to do better in the future, but please help me out. Sometimes sorting out the names and geographical areas gets a little confusing.

— Dick Burrows, editor

Time to Renew your Membership

AAW membership cycles with the new year. Membership renewal packets were sent to all current members in September. If you did not receive a renewal form in your packet, you have already renewed for 1999 (check the expiration date on your card or journal label). Renewals continue to come in, but the Administrative Office is anticipating the need to send out reminders to those we haven't heard from - renewing now will save that expense. Also, any address changes, the addition of an email address, host status, or inclusion in the instructor/demonstrator directory (you must be a current member to be listed) are needed now for our deadline of January 15.

If you would like to advertise in the Resource Directory, our advertising deadline is also January 15. Contact the Administrative Office for an ad rate schedule.

Please join us for another year and continue to receive the Journal and Directory.

— Mary Lacer, AAW Administrator

AAW Board of Directors Election Results

Two board members were re-elected and a new member elected to three-year terms on the AAW Board of Directors in the recent election conducted among the membership. In addition, a new board member had been named to fill the unexpired term of Phil Pratt, who resigned.

Re-elected were current Board president David Wahl of New Mexico, and director Dave Barriger of Florida. The new member elected is Roger Austin of North Carolina.

Beginning in January 1999 Adrian Sturdivant of Mississippi will assume the unexpired two-year term of Phil Pratt.

We wish the successful candidates the best of luck with their duties.

Books & Videos for Chapters

The AAW Board is offering to provide educational materials to assist Local Chapters in starting a library. If your chapter would benefit from any of the selections listed below, have your chapter representative send a written request to the AAW office.

Books:

Project Book, 1987-1992; Techniques and Projects Book, 1993-1995; "Growth through Sharing" show catalog; "Turned for Use" show catalog.

Videos:

Scenes from the 1994 AAW Symposium; Techniques from the 1995 AAW Symposium; Instant Gallery of the 1995 AAW Symposium; Techniques from the 1996 AAW Symposium; Instant Gallery of the 1996 AAW Symposium; Introduction to Bowl Turning with Rus Hurt

This offer is limited to inventory on hand.

LOOKING TOWARDS TACOMA

THINGS ARE SHAPING UP great for the next AAW conference to be held in Tacoma, Washington on June 18- 20, 1999.

To date we have secured several featured demonstrators: Bob Flexner of Oklahoma, Ernie Newman of Australia, Michael Peterson of Washington, Bert Marsh of England and Don Weber of California, and an as yet unnamed Japanese turner. Many more national, regional and local talents will be added in the next few months.

There will be a full slate of exhibitions for those interested in seeing what's being made in the turning arena. As always, the Instant Gallery will hold from 500-1,000 pieces showing all styles and levels of work.

A private Tacoma gallery, American Art Company, will be hosting an invited exhibition of cutting-edge, contemporary turning.

Washington State University will be staging a show of turners and woods of the Northwest.

And a first-ever show of Japanese and Western style turning will be on display near the conference center (check the enclosed insert of this Journal for details).

Many are already combining a vacation into a trip to the symposium.

Perhaps one of the most unique and fascinating parts of the world, the Northwest holds some great sites to see: Mt. Rainier, the Pacific coast, Puget Sound, Olympic and Cascade Mountains, Olympic National Forest, the cities of Seattle and Vancouver to the north, Portland and Northern California to the south. The city of Tacoma (population 176,000) is rich in history, architecture and cultural activities.

The area is readily accessible by car, by air (Seattle/Tacoma airport is just 18 miles away), by rail (Amtrak services both Tacoma and Seattle) or even by boat or ship (Tacoma is a major port city). Also, this area is a major departure point for British Columbia and Alaska.

Mark the dates and make plans to attend what has become the largest annual gathering of woodturners anywhere in the world.

—Alan Lacer, contributing editor, American Woodturner

Scenic Mount Rainier provides an exhilarating backdrop for the AAW Conference scheduled for June 18-20, 1999.

Don't Forget the Chapter Collaborative Challenge

During the 1999 AAW Symposium in Tacoma, the Chapters and Membership Committee will again hold a "Chapter Collaborative Challenge." Each AAW chapter is invited to submit one collaborative work created by as many chapter members as possible - minimum of six participants.

The work can be any turned object, functional or not. The piece must be larger than a six-inch cube, but be smaller than a three foot cube and weigh less than 40 pounds.

Additional details are in the Fall 1998 issue of *American Woodturner.*

The pieces will be displayed during the symposium, and attendees will be invited to select their favorite piece.

We also hope that several pieces will be donated (but is NOT a requirement) to the annual auction of turned objects which benefits the AAW Education Fund. Get your chapter's creative juices flowing and submit an entry.

On Turning and Demonstrating From Texas

A Texas Turn or Two VII

The seventh annual Texas Turn or Two was a **Great** success! TTT is the woodturning symposium for the great 'Republic' of Texas, and was held once again in the naturally wooded setting of the Maricopa Ranch Resort in Canyon Lake, Texas. This rugged setting played host to 278 woodturning enthusiasts, artists, vendors, students, and other assorted woodturning fanatics.

TTT is organized yearly by a volunteer committee from the various Texas chapters of the AAW. The committee was once again headed by Butch Titus and administered by Pat Titus. You might recognize them — they help coordinate the symposiums for AAW. Where do you think they got all the practice to do that? The committee helps to organize the retreat, gathers up demonstrators from the talented ranks of the local clubs, as well as some big name Woodturners to headline the event.

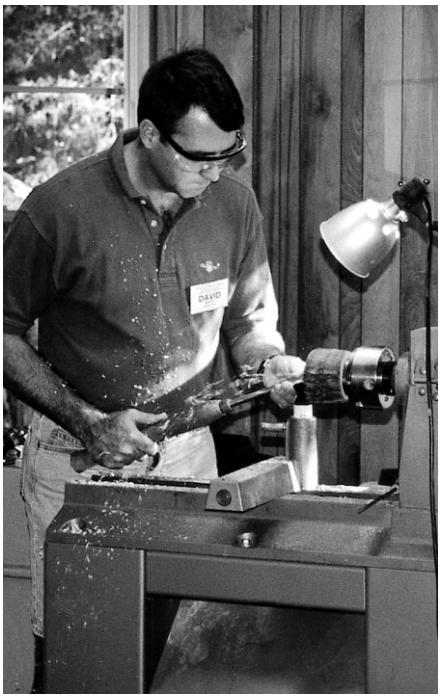
This years feature demonstrators were Alan Lacer (MN) and John Jordan (TN).

Alan demonstrated the making and use of an inexpensive and useful hook tool as well as the proper application of finishes. John did what John does best and demonstrated the making and texturing of elegant hollow vessels. The local talent put on a wide range of demonstrations with subjects like turning a hat, lidded boxes, vacuum and reverse chucking, to technique classes such as spindle turning, turning with voids, Stewart tool usage, and project classes such as pepper mills, Christmas gifts, and split turned vessels. This made for a very full event which was capped off with a relaxing and entertaining slide show under the stars and an action filled auction which goes to offset the costs of the event and gives people a chance to walk away with a turning from their favorite artists. And as is always the case, TTT even had a special guest. AAW's own Mary Lacer was able to accompany Alan and was relieved to be able to actually enjoy a symposium rather than work it.

Working under the big top, Gary Sanders applies his magic to create wobble bowls.

Good work was everywhere, and our instant gallery filled six tables with outstanding work from participants and demonstrators alike. What was found in even more abundance was the good cheer had by all. The planning committee is already underway getting ready for TTT.VIII, Oct. 9-10, which promises to be bigger and better, if such a thing is even possible. For information call Pat Titus (210-649-2166) or e-mail btitus@sprint mail.com

—Nick Silva, President, Dallas Area Woodturners



David Berry demonstrates mushroom boxes

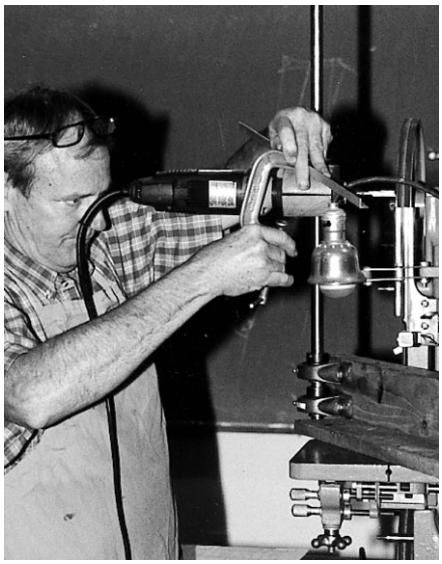
Credit and thanks for help with The Journal

In the Fall issue of *American Woodturner*, we inadvertently neglected to thank some of the people who had helped us with the issue.

First of all, the photo on the cover of the Chicago Woodturners bike was taken by John Cascarano. Also, thanks to Marie Anderson for getting it.

The illustrations for Jim Bliss' article on Christmas ornaments were done by John and April Wengren. They braved my carpenter sketches and several electronic traps to get the job done. *—Editor.*

To Tennessee



Bob Vaughan puts the crowning touch on a bandsaw wheel, while Alan Stirt makes shavings at Arrowmont Symposium..

The Tennessee Association of Woodturners' 11th Symposium attracted 75 enthusiasts from 11 states to Arrowmont School of Crafts last August for a weekend immersion into some of our favorite activities: watching top notch turners at work, messing with machinery, and talking about turning and turners.

Chapter president Mike Zinser described the symposium as the group's only fund raiser and a major part of chapter efforts for scholarships and for programs at the Nashville Baptist Childrens Home. It also turned out to be a major way to have fun and learn about turning. Plus more than $1,400 was raised at an energetic auction conducted by Willard Baxter, a demonstrator.

In addition to Willard, the chapter's second symposium in Gatlinburg, TN, featured Larry Hasiak, Rude Osolnik, Alan Stirt and Bob Vaughan. By taking advantage of the school's expansive facilities, the group ran several demonstrations simultaneously, so there was always something interesting to see and plenty of good seats with a view.

Plus, the Great State of Tennessee rolled out some pretty good weather. And most of the attendees are sort of my neighbors and didn't mention my accent.

I first started going to mini-symposiums because I felt that it would make up for what I missed by not having the time or money for concentrated courses at Arrowmont or similar places. Gradually I began to realize that the mini-symposiums offer something special and fairly unique — painless learning delivered in little doses, so you have plenty of time to assimilate everything and the leisurely pace makes it possible to talk with a lot of people, which helps temper the feeling of isolation that can put a dank cloud on a one-person shop.

Here are a few random thoughts that I found valuable at this year's mini-symposium.

Al Stirt, who always excels at demonstrating and explaining the why of his work, reminded me that even someone with as deft a touch as his should wear a faceshield all the time. He didn't until he got hit above the safety glasses.

I sometimes sketch things out on a block, then have stray pencil marks that didn't erase appearing magically in the finish. Al draws with watercolor pencils. He can wipe off any extraneous lines with a damp paper towel.

Willard Baxter pointed out there are few places where you can start a cut with the point of a spindle gouge, without getting a catch. Start a little to the left or right of the point. As for resourcefulness, try finishing the demonstration turning with WD-40, when no other finish is available.

Rude Osolnik and Larry Hasiak reminded me that skill and practice are more important than my tool inventory They made their work look effortless. The technique was servant to the joy of creation.

Bob Vaughan offered a good way to learn how to twist a bandsaw blade into coil without ending up wearing the thing. Practice the motion with a fan belt.

Al and Willard ended the weekend with a critique that encouraged individuality.

Al pointed out that he often feared no one was listening to his critiques, but he also was worried that some people listened too much. "There is some common ground in aesthetics, but there is lots of room for personal interpretations. Feel free to disagree."

— Dick Burrows, Knoxville, TN

Editor's Note:

One of the great things about being an editor for the AAW is reading the newsletters from local chapters. I know from the social events that members have a great capacity for a good time, but they also are amazingly clever and resourceful in coming up with neat ways to handle the chores and delights of woodturning. Here's a sampling of some tips that I've gleaned lately from chapter newsletters. Hope you find them useful, and that they stimulate you to send tips to the EDITORS: both your local editor and me.-- Dick Burrows

Imagine a perfect curve

Hold a limber chain by both hands and let it hang naturally. The resulting curve at the bottom will be a perfect curve. Separate your hands more or less to make adjustments in the curve you desire.

—Tommy Keeton, Pikes Peak Woodturners

Old Freezer Drying Cabinets

Last summer I built a dryer cabinet out of an old freezer and does it work! It took several hours to convert the freezer into a kiln but was well worth the hassle. Here's what I did. I removed the cooling unit and all the wiring (makes it lighter). I removed all the internal shelving (trash). I removed the junk from the doors (gives more space inside), and drilled 25 to 30 $^1/_2$-in. holes in the top, as well as the bottom. Then I built several wood-frame, hardware cloth covered shelves and installed cleats for the shelves. I put a ceramic light fixture in bottom of box and installed an electrical box on outside in which I put a regular household dimmer switch. This enables you to regulate the temp: I also installed a thermometer inside (90 degrees seemed to be a good temperature to maintain). Make sure the door seals stay intact, as you want the kiln to remain sealed. The theory is: as the air heats, it rises, drawing dry cold (not so cold these days) air into the bottom and allowing warmer moist air to vent out the top. Rough turned bowls, 45 to 60 days and ...dry.

—Randy Shelton, Glendale Woodturners Guild

Hot Tip

One of the biggest hassles in faceplate turning is how to mount a small piece of wood to the lathe without using a screw chuck or screws and a faceplate. One good example of a project like this is the base for a candlestick or bud vase. Even if you plan to use your scroll chuck to hold the work for the final turning, you still need to put the recess into the bottom of the wood to accept the chuck.

I have found hot melt glue to be an excellent solution to this problem. Three drops of hot melt glue on the work will hold it to an auxiliary faceplate (a scrap piece of wood screwed onto your metal faceplate). I used to use too much glue and it made it hard to get the work off and made the wood sit unevenly on the auxiliary block. Three drops is the perfect amount.

This works well because hot melt glue has strength against lateral shear but will fail if pulled apart. Thus you can use a chisel knife or thin metal shive to separate the work when you are done. I have used this technique to hold everything from $^1/_2$-in. buttons to 14-in. clock bezels. Just be sure to listen to the work while you turn. Hot melt glue rarely fails all at once. You may notice a change in the sound, or feel of the cut, indicating it is time to check your gluing job and repair it if necessary.

—Steve LeGrue, Gulf Coast Woodturners Association

The Silver Fox Says

If you turn green wood and wear a face mask (which you know you should), you're aware that by the time you get ready to clean the spatters off the mask they're already dry. Dried spatters can be a bear to clean off! Next time, while the mask is still clean and dry, cover it with a smoothed layer of Saran Wrap, or any of the "cling" wrap products. When the surface gets "gunked up" just peel off the wrap and replace with new! VOILA!

—The Silver Fox Also says--

If you don't have a grinding wheel dresser (or can't find it!) use a carbide-tip masonry bit.

--AND--

A conclusion is the place you ended up when you got tired of thinking!

—Ohio Valley Woodturners Guild

Handy Dispenser

For sealing green wood with Sealite 60 try replacing the lid with one from a Dawn detergent bottle. It makes a handy dispenser squirt bottle.

—John Buehrer, Woodturners of St Louis

Forced Spalting

Rob brought in a lovely spalted maple bowl for the gallery this month. He told us that he had forced the wood to spalt in just a few short weeks. How'd he do that? Here is his recipe for "spalting sauce".

1 can beer (your choice of brands)

1 $^1/_2$ TBSP ammonia

1 cup "Miracle Grow" (mixed double strength)

Oak leaves with grass clippings

Chop all ingredients in a food processor to create a paste-like consistency. Cover the entire surface of the roughed out bowl with this paste. Place the paste-covered bowl into a plastic bag and place in a

warm place for several weeks.

—Rob Ketchmark, Chicago Woodturners

Super Glue Clogging?

Do you have trouble with the spout on your Hot Stuff super glue clogging?

Solution: Leave the cap off. Cut only enough of the tip off to allow the glue to flow as desired. The glue will not accelerate drying if you leave the cap off a minimum of one hour to allow the glue in the spout to drain down. I have left the cap off for as long as four months until I have used the entire contents with no adverse effects.

—Steve DeJong, Pikes Peak Woodturners

Organizing With Velcro Strips

Bowl turners use a lot of hook and loop sanding discs and sometimes it is difficult to keep them organized. Partially used discs strewn around the lathe become fouled with shavings and the grit designation on the back becomes unreadable. Buy 1" strips of Velcro at a hardware store and attach the hook side to a piece of scrap plywood. Arrange the strips such that discs of the same size and grit can be grouped together and use a marker to identify the grit near each strip, then hang the plywood near your lathe. When you are finished with one grit, remove the disc from the sander and attach it to the appropriate Velcro strip. The next time you need that grit, it will be handy, easily identifiable and you won't have to pick the shavings out of the felt backing.

—Central Connecticut Woodturners

Chuck Protection

Adjustable chucks increase the flexibility of the lathe, but they can be hard on hands that get too close. Here are a couple of protective techniques to save your knuckles:

— Stick a piece of stiff tape to the side of one or more jaws. When you get too close the tape will slap your hand before the jaws do. It blows the dust and chips away too.

— Buy an elastic wrist or ankle sweat band at a sporting goods store and wrap it over the protruding jaws of the chuck. These bands are brightly colored making the spinning jaws more visible and offer some cushion in the event of contact. If you still hit your knuckle, the mishap will be less likely to damage the chuck and a red band won't show the blood so readily!

—Bob VanDyke, Central Connecticut Woodturners

Benefits of Drawing

By drawing everything, you will learn from the shapes around you and get new ideas. Try drawing a vessel and refining the shape on paper before turning.

You can also duplicate the shape of a found object. Use a spotlight or bare bulb to cast a shadow of the piece onto some paper. Then move it back and forth to size the shadow for your piece. Then trace the shadow.

—John Lucas, from a presentation by Tom Cowan, Tennessee Association of Woodturners

Reverse Chucking Hints

You don't have to have a perfect fit for the jam chuck. A padded cylinder that hits the bottom of the bowl is all you really need. Rodger Jacobs showed a series of padded, fist shaped, cylinders at a NCW meeting that he uses for his "sneaky bowls" that only hit the bottom 6-to-8-in. of a 24-in. bowl.

You don't need to tighten the heck out of the tail-stock. A firm fit is all that is necessary to turn away the bottom.

Your jam chuck for bowls can be made into jam chucks for hollow forms by hollowing a crater in the chuck. This part doesn't usually touch the bowl anyway and you have two chucks in one. I use plywood circles padded with carpet backing for bowls with flat tops. I mark concentric circles on the spinning chuck, then mount the bowl on the best circle. This is very quick.

Always mark with a pencil the inside depth of your piece BEFORE mounting on the jam chuck. Not doing this (as I have found out a number of times) will cause one of four situations: you turn through the bottom of your piece and feel totally disgusted; you leave a very noticeably thick bottom (which you claim was intentional); you hit it just right (yeah right!) and keep your mouth shut; or you dismount the piece, mark the depth, and try to get the piece back on the same way.

--And valuable turning hints before reverse chucking

Always turn the stub that attaches your piece to the faceplate cylindrical before dismounting your piece.

It is valuable to finish sand the piece down to the bottom before dismounting the piece. This way you don't have to turn the side of the vessel where a wobble would matter. You will only have to turn on the bottom of the piece where a wobble will be turned away anyway.

Leave yourself plenty of wood on the bottom of your piece, or attach a waste block on the piece and attach the faceplate to it.

—Excerpts from an article by Roger Austin , Triangle Woodturners of North Carolina, printed in the Woodturners of North Texas Newsletter.

Send Tips to AAW editor, 929 Maynard Ave., Knoxville, TN 37917:
E-mail: Sharpridge @earthlink.net

A Spalted Maple Vessel

Hollowing A Tall Vessel From Solid Wood

LARRY HASIAK

TURNING A TALL VESSEL from wormy spalted maple is a real challenge. The wood tears easily, and it's very difficult to cut cleanly because of variations between the hard and soft, dry and wet areas of the partially decayed lumber. But these vessels can be extremely beautiful and are well worth the effort.

One way to improve the odds of getting sharp cuts on this difficult wood is to turn on a variable speed lathe. Sometimes when the turning vibrates, just increasing the speed a little, perhaps no more than 15 to 20 rpms, will smooth out everything. Another essential is good sharp tools.

I begin each vessel by turning the top, which is on the tailstock end. The bottom is attached to the faceplate with lots of #14 screws. I shape enough of the top to see where the sound stock begins. You don't want a punky rim. Once I know what I have to work with, I can decide on a shape.

Lately I've been putting sweeping rims on my vessels. I find I get a shape in my head -- longer neck, shorter neck, a certain rim and so on, and just get stuck in that mode for a while. If I was world-famous, I could say I was doing a series, but for now I just get a shape in my head.

Project Where Bottom Will Be

When I shape the outside of the vessel, I don't immediately make a cut to locate the the bottom and define the base. For one thing the wood may not be as solid as it looks and I'll have to change my plans as I go along. Also, reducing the base diameter too much increases the chances of vibration, making smooth cuts impossible.

Instead I just mentally locate the bottom, and keep that in mind as I refine the shape.

As the shape develops, it's a good idea to avoid straight lines as much as possible. As you continue down from the top toward the bottom, the line wants to change. You want a nice, pleasing, definite curve with a sense of energy to it. You can see this best as you cut by watching the top edge of the vessel. Beginners sometimes are tempted to concentrate on the cutting tool and lose a sense of the line. Once you learn to use the tool, you don't have to look at the tool. Concentrate on the evolving form.

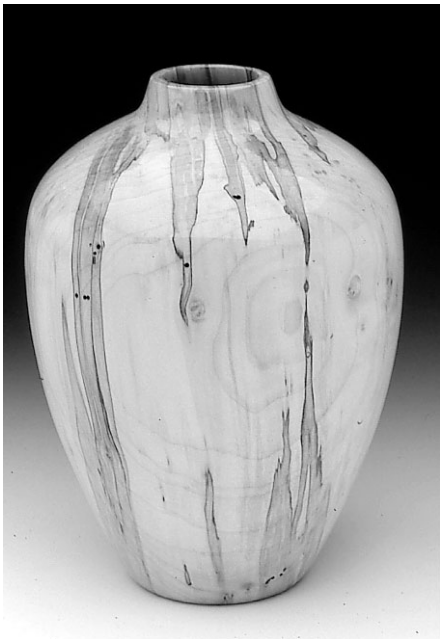
I like to make shear scraping cuts, using a gouge with the long shoulder ground on one side. It's almost lop sided, but cuts very well, especially if you work close to the tool rest for maximum support. You don't want the tool to bounce around. That's why I prefer a short tool rest, or always work close to the supporting post on longer rests.

For hollowing I prefer the Stewart System, which is available from many turning tool dealers. I use both a straight cutter and the tear-shaped scraper cutters, but rely most heavily on the scraper cutters.

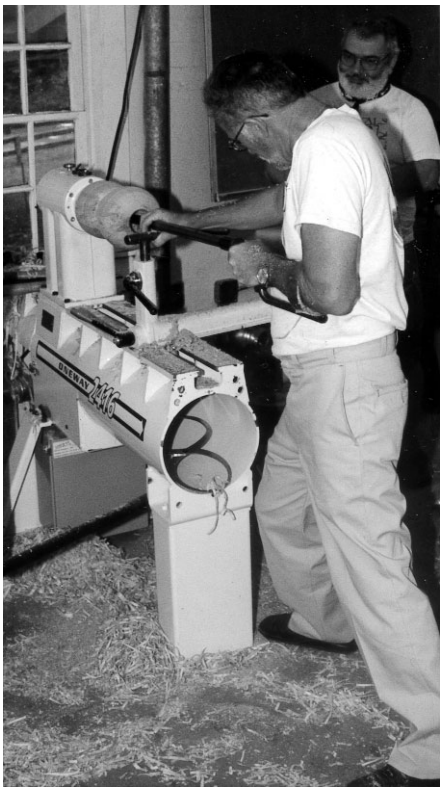
Begin to Hollow

I first excavate an area at the rim using a Jacobs chuck and a 1 $^{1}/_{2}$-in. dia. bit. Drill to just the narrow part of the neck to establish a place to start the hollowing.

Don't drill all the way to the bottom. I work with lots of burls and it's not unusual to find a bark inclusion that prevents you from going as deep as you had originally planned. If you've already drilled to the vessel's full depth, your options for salvaging the piece are very limited. Usually you can't fix the problem by going deeper than planned because



Elegant, tall spalted maple vessel by Larry Hasiak, a left-hander, who hollows out the vessel while working on the "wrong" side of the lathe.



you'll ruin the shape altogether or hit the faceplate screws.

I prefer to bore, then hollow gradually. This also lets me modify the shape as I go along. You have to do what is best for you every step of the way. All woodturning is a bunch of options.

If you don't have a Jacobs chuck for boring with a drill, you can form the hole with a gouge, going in straight down the center with the flute up. If you are trying to bore the center and hear bang, bang, bang, you are probably going in off center.

End grain turning

It might seem as if hollowing a tall vessel involves mainly end grain turning, but actually the only time you are cutting endgrain is at the center hole. After that you're just cutting off more of the side grain, so you can get good shavings.

At first the piece is so massive that it will bounce a bit, so the sooner you can reduce the mass of the wood the better.

I prefer the Stewart system with a scraper blade for most of this hollowing. Turn the cutting edge up for a more aggressive cut till you get rid of most of the mass, then go back to improve the surface. For fine cuts or as the wall gets thin, hold the cutting edge down slightly.

A shearing cut with a gouge cuts the outside curve cleanly.

To avoid errors in judging the depth of cut, Hasiak uses a T-square set on the bed of the lathe and a metal ruler to accurately measure how deep he's gone in the maple blank.

With vessels like this a consistent wall thickness is important, both so the piece feels right and so that it can withstand the changes in the wood as it dries out.

You can gauge the wall thickness pretty well by looking at the cutter and the wall opening. Also, you'll hear the sound change as you cut — a higher tone is a good indication that the walls are getting thinner.

You can also use a gauge to find lumps. Set the tool rest so that the supporting part of the handle is in line with the cutting edge. Find the spot where you want to cut, so you can gauge where the tool must go.

Some turners start the lathe with the tool in the vessel to help locate the area to cut, others insert it after starting. Either way be very careful you don't insert it in such as way that it will catch. Once you get a good cut, the trick is to carry the line down so it mirrors the outside form.

When I'm ready to finish the bottom, I locate it with a parting tool, then curve the wall under slightly, so the piece appears to float a little. Generally, I leave the bottom a little thicker than the walls. This provides a margin of safety.

Applying a Finish

I do all of my finishing off the lathe. After sanding with a series of random orbital sanders — I keep one for each grit of paper — I spray on about six coats of automotive ClearKote lacquer. If you don't have spraying equipment, you can use Deft aerosol lacquers, but Deft doesn't get as hard as the ClearKote.

I use a 50-50 mixture of medium speed thinner and finish, sprayed with a small touch up gun at 40 lbs pressure. I rub out between each of the first three or four coats with 0000 steel wool to take off the fuzz and smooth the finish.

Sometimes I get a little blush in the lacquer, caused by moisture in the wood. I've found spraying a coat of lacquer thinner over the piece eliminates the blush.

I use gloss lacquer. I don't particularly like gloss finish, but it sells. And I've never thought it was a good business practice to ignore what customers want. After the lacquer cures, I buff the finish with beeswax.

Larry Hasiak is a professional turner in Tarpon Springs, FL. He is also a member of the AAW Board of Directors.

Life on the Craft Fair Circuit

I HAVE BEEN PARTICIPATING in juried art shows for over 12 years selling my woodturnings. During most shows I talk to hundreds of people and have thousands of people go through my booth. If you don't like meeting strangers or don't like people handling your turnings, don't even think about doing art shows. Some of the questions I have been asked over the years are amazing. I remember all the way back to the very first show I did in 1986 when a man came into my booth and looked at every single hollow vessel. He picked them all up and looked at the bottom, the top and the inside. He left after I tried to start a conversation and didn't go far. He stood two or three booth spaces away for a while then he came back and looked at all the vessels again. This time I decided I was not going to let him get away without a conversation. That's when he asked "Where in the world do you find these pieces of wood with such perfectly round holes in them?" He was serious!

Larry Hasiak in his booth last summer at the Columbus, OH, Art Festival.

Of course, at every show there is the question "Are these gourds?" or "What kind of bulbs are these?" or "These are made from bone, right?" Most of the shows I do are in Florida and most Floridians think that cypress is the king of wood so all day long I hear "This is cypress, right?" or "Are these made from cypress knees?" By the way, cypress is one of last woods that any turner would want. I don't know how many times I've been asked if the hollow vessels will hold water or wine or if they are dishwasher safe. I usually answer with "just once." Then there are the men who know nothing about turning or lathes, who explain the process to their wives. More than once I heard a man go into great detail explaining that "first the wood is ground up into very fine pieces and mixed with water and glue. It is then put into a mold and dried in a kiln." Another common explanation is "the wood is cut very thin on a bandsaw, soaked in boiling water and then molded into these vessels." Many times, the wife not being taken in, will look at me for verification. I just say "not exactly." Once a lady told me her husband was a woodpicker also.

I turn quite a few banksia pods and always have one or two out. I leave some of the fur on the turning to show the different textures of the pod. One time a teenage girl picked one up, touched the fur, threw it down and screamed "It's alive!" Then there is spalting. I explain spalting dozens of times a day, which is understandable. One time after a lengthy explanation of fungus and moisture a lady said to me "Oh, my laundry gets that way sometimes." Another time a man explained to his wife that to get the wood to spalt you put it under water for several years. "Looks like worms got to this one" he said.

Once a lady picked up a maple burl vessel and asked "Is this peanut brittle?" Then a man who was looking at a ball point pen asked "if I bought this, could I write with it?"

The most frustrating time was when a man came in the booth and simply asked "Is this wood?" Yes, I answered. "Do you mean the kind of wood that grows on trees?" Yes, I answered, thinking to myself, "Is there any other kind of wood?" Do you mean a tree like that (pointing to a small pine tree in the park)?" Well, not exactly like that, but a hardwood tree, I responded. "Well, if I put a match to it would it burn?" Yes. "Are you sure?" "Yes, I'm sure, would you like to buy one of these and burn it," I asked. He finally left.

I have been making hollow Christmas ornaments since I started turning and used to display them on a two dimensional laminated oak tree. Once during a very crowded show as people were just going by en masse, over the din of the crowd, I heard a woman say loudly "Oh look, there's a wooden tree!"

Instead of pasting price tags on my work, I have made some nice rectangular blocks of cherry about $^{3}/_{4}$-in. square by $1\ ^{1}/_{4}$-in. long with a slot in the top for a small sign noting the price and other information. At every show somebody picks one of these up and asks "Why is this little piece of wood so expensive?" My answer is always, with a smile, that I will throw in the turning behind the little piece of wood when they buy it. Most people get a little embarrassed then but some still don't understand.

I'm still trying to figure this one out. A woman picked up a vase that had flowers in a water-filled test tube. As she started to turn it over my wife said "be careful or you'll spill water on yourself." The lady responded with "Oh, I guess you don't need a lampshade anymore." Don't ask me what she meant.—L.H.

TALL SEGMENTED VESSELS

A light touch and a steady rest

DAVE RAMSEY

TURNING A TALL VESSEL brings a new challenge to a woodturner. To cut the shape properly, the turner must be skilled enough to apply just the right amount of pressure to the tool. The chances for success can be enhanced by the judicious use of steady rests, which requires a little practice. And tall segmented vessels involve many levels of construction, and so tight joints are a must.

Also, the flexibility of segmented vessel construction allows great design freedom, as shown by the surge in the quality and complexity of segmented vessels in the past decade.

Many turners still avoid tall pieces, fearing a chisel catch will tear the vessel from the face plate and destroy the work. The taller the vessel, the greater the chance of a disastrous catch due as the distance between cutting tool and faceplate increases, but in this article, I'll show how to reduce this risk.

Segmented vessels require many wedge shaped pieces of wood in perfect alignment. Some turnings shown in galleries have in excess of 2,000 pieces. You can use any method you like for cutting the segments. One method is shown in Summer 1998 *American Woodturner*.

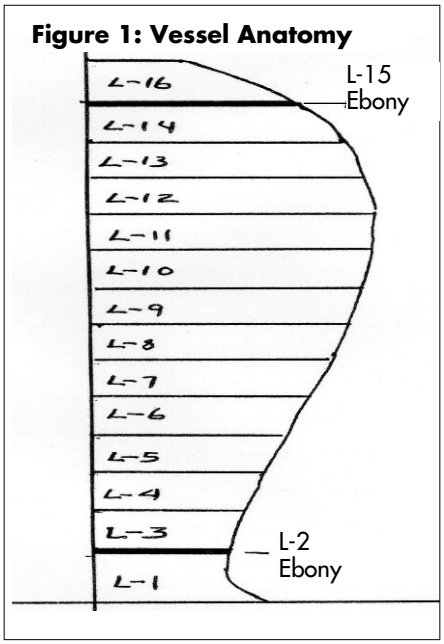
You can also accent the main segments with veneer as I've done on the piece shown here. I used segments of $^{1}/_{28}$-in. thick black dyed veneer (available from Constantine 1-800-223-8087) between each segment and between each layer. Just remember whatever approach you take — accuracy is essential. Even a slight gap in joining segmented pieces will greatly reduce the beauty and value of the finished piece.

Let's start at the base and work to the top of a 29 inch tall segmented vessel. After drawing a full sized plan for the turning, I prepare a 6-in.-dia. hard maple disk, which I attach to the faceplate with $^{3}/_{4}$-in.- long lag screws. My steel faceplate has 12 screw holes for a secure connection.

Good lighting, a dust collection system, steady rest, as well as ear and nose protection, are standard equipment for power sanding a tall vessel.

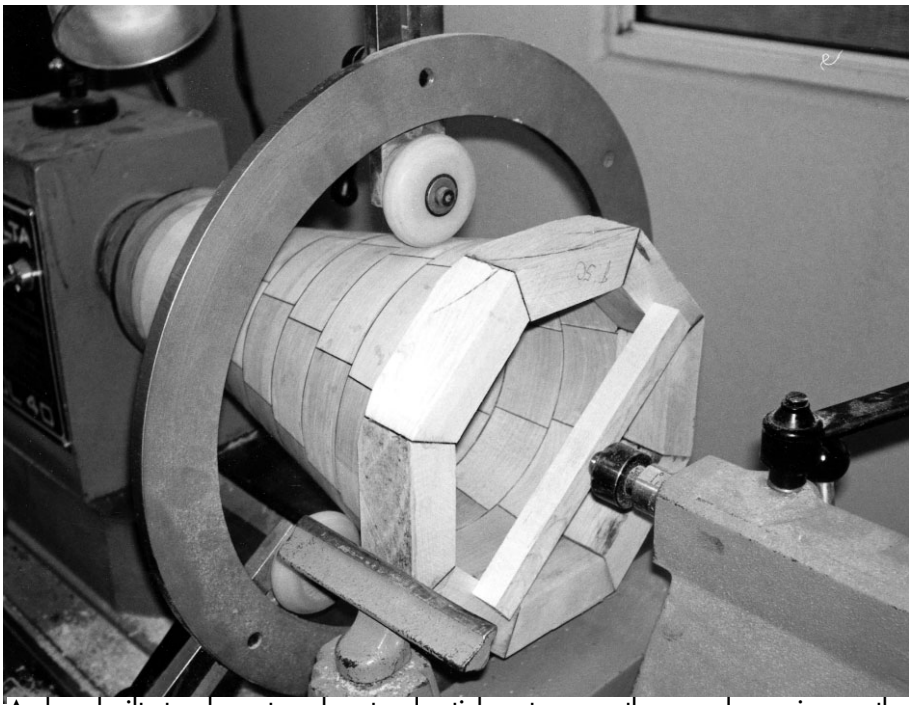
When attaching a faceplate to the headstock, be sure to use a wrench to tighten the faceplate to the headstock. This prevents any slight flexing of the faceplate on the headstock threads. If your lathe's faceplate does not pull up against the headstock nut, fill the gap with washers. The importance of a solid contact between the faceplate and the headstock cannot be overemphasized.

Figure 1: Vessel Anatomy



The first level (L-1) is 6-in.-dia. X 1 $^{3}/_{4}$-in. thick and glued to the faceplate's maple disk. Then L-1 is turned round, scooped out slightly and then flat turned on its joining surface to produce a micro fine joint, to mate with the next layer.

L-2 is the first segmented layer to be glued to the turning and consists of eight segments of $^{1}/_{4}$-in.-thick ebony glued at the mitered ends and clamped to dry with hose clamps. You could use any contrasting wood. Before L-2 is glued to L-1, it must be flat turned on the joining surface. I do this with a remount wheel, a 14 in.-dia. X 1 $^{1}/_{2}$-in.-thick disk of hard maple, which is permanently attached to a spare 5-in. faceplate. The remount wheel, which I use with each of the subsequent layers, is made by laminating two layers of



A shop-built steady rest and a steady stick, set across the vessel opening so the tailstock can be brought up, support the tall turning.

maple with the grain at right angles for warp resistance. The face of the wheel is turned flat and sanded smooth. While the remount wheel is spinning at 300 rpm, I place a pencil tip at $^1/_2$-in intervals to draw a series of concentric circles. These circles make it possible to center the different diameter segmented pieces on the disk for flat turning. In this situation, L-2 is hot-melt glued to the remount wheel for flat turning. Flat turning is done at about 700 rpm.

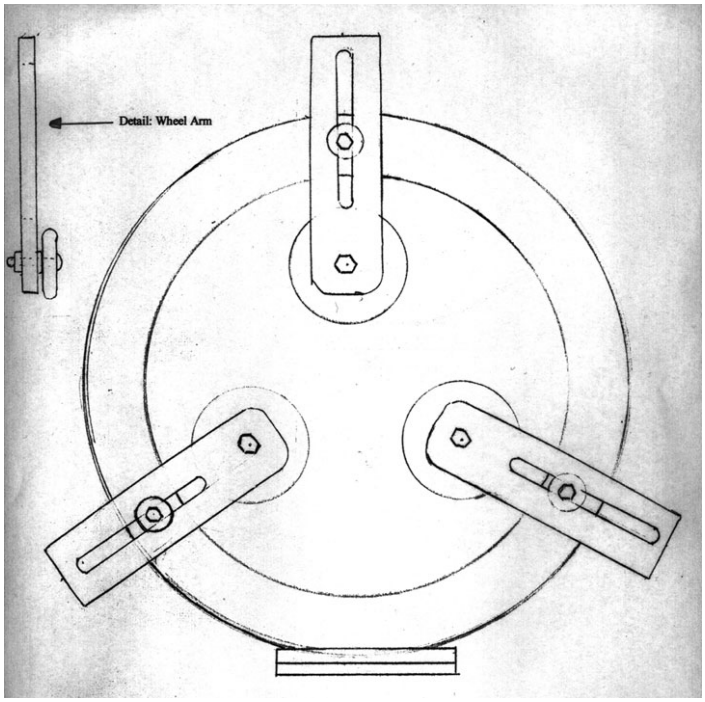
After L-2 is flat turned, it is popped loose from the hot-melt glue with a putty knife and joined to L-1 with Titebond or similar glue. L-1 and L-2 are clamped in a veneer press to assure even pressure on the joining surfaces. In two hours, after the glue has set, I turn L-2 both inside and outside to conform to the planned dimensions using a speed of 800 to 1000 rpm. At this rough state, I turn the wall thickness to $^3/_8$ in. or less. Again the top surface is flat turned to receive the next level, L-3.

Those not experienced in segmented turning might be surprised that segmented turning is easier than solid wood turning in one respect. Most segmented layers have no end grain which can be difficult to cut cleanly. Using a sharp bowl scraper, you'll find the wood cuts with amazing ease. It is very important to keep the lathe's chisel rest about $^1/_8$ inch from the rotating wood to minimize the catch potential and chisel chatter. Also, keep in mind that very light pressure is used to begin the cut. As the segmented piece "rounds out" the turner will become more confident with a firmer cut. Never "horse" the cut as you might do when turning a solid piece of green wood. Even with the roller steady rest and steady stick shown at left, light pressure on the chisel is in order.

After completing L-2, cut layers L-3 through L-16 from the same maple stock to conform to the plan. Repeat the process of truing up the top layer and the next segmented disc, then joining them until you have 16 layers. As the vessel increases in height, make sure the joints are level with one another. I find that heavy bowl scrapers are best for truing up the layers. The domed and full round scrapers are

Shop-built Steady Rest

Design the steady rest to fit the tool post system on your lathe. The key is to make a stable mounting system for supporting skateboard wheels, so they can run against the spinning vessel and prevent wobbling.

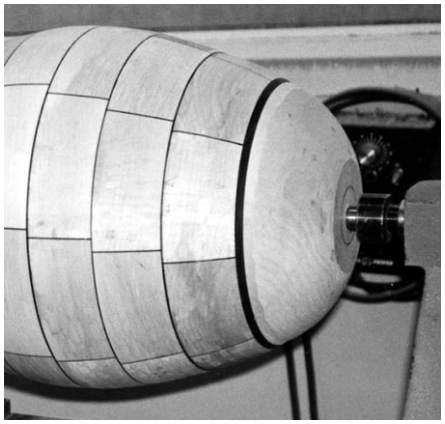


used most often.

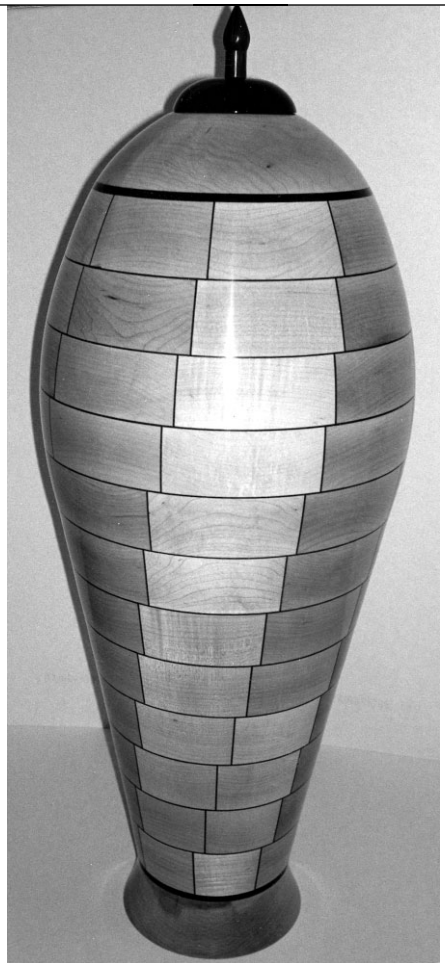
As the height of the vessel increases past 10 in., the danger of a disastrous chisel catch also increases. I use two devices to steady the increasingly tall vessel. The first is a roller steady rest as shown in the photo on the previous page. Its three wheels fit around the vessel at a distance from the faceplate, keeping it turning on its true axis. I've never experienced a bowl-wrecking catch when using a roller steady rest. A safety point for this device is important. Keep fingers away from the pinch point where the wheel contacts the wood turning. Getting caught there can be painful and dangerous.

If your lathe does not have a roller steady rest, you can build one from Baltic Birch plywood and wheels from in-line skates. A custom roller steady rest can also be obtained from John Nichols Workshop in Oregon. Call John at (541) 449-1464.

A second steadying device is simple. A "steady stick" as shown in the photo, is a piece of hard wood, 1-in. square and cut just $^1/_2$-in less than the diameter of the piece being turned, and held against the top of the vessel by the live center in the tailstock. There is no need to glue the stick in position since the pressure transmitted through the live center will hold it in place. I have found a steady stick will dampen the vibration of the rotating vessel and reduce the chances of a chisel catch as you round the outside. Using both the roller steady rest and the steady stick will produce a very solid foundation for turning. After rounding the outside of the vessel, remove the steady stick and round the inside. I have found the likelihood of a chisel catch while turning the inside is much less than the outside, so the absence of a steady stick is less critical. My choice of cutting tool for the inside is a very sharp left hand rounded bowl scraper. These chisels are available from Craft Supplies USA in Provo, Utah. Phone (800) 551-8876.



Domed top helps align nearly finished vessel



Veneer highlights joints of author's laminated vessel

I don't apply a finish to the inside, but make certain the surface is sanded smooth to the touch. If the finished vessel has an opening large enough for a person's hand, it is certain the inside will be explored by the curious.

L-16, the top section, is solid wood, turned from an 8 inch by $1\ ^3/_4$-in.-thick disk of hard maple. I turn mine by placing it on a screw chuck, rounding the outside and scooping out the inside. I use calipers to make certain the outside and inside dimensions of the surface to be glued to L-15 are identical. When this is done, sand smooth the inside surface of L-16, remove it from the screw chuck and glue to L-15. The gluing is accomplished by attaching the vessel to the headstock and applying pressure to L-16 with the live center of the tailstock. By doing this, L-16 can be precisely aligned on the vessel's axis, as shown, below left.

When the glue dries, the vessel is ready for final sanding and a finish coating. The roller steady rest is not necessary for this process since the live center in the tailstock and the headstock provide rigid support.

I sand the vessel with a three inch disk sander mounted in an electric drill. Starting with 80 grit sandpaper, I work to 120 grit then use sheet paper to go from 150 to 400 grit. My finish consists of 8 to 15 coats of water base urethane. I have found General Finish's High Gloss Urethane to be very satisfactory. It's clear and dries fast. This finish is available from the Woodsmith Shop, Des Moines, IA (515) 255-8979.

For a final gloss I power buff with rouge, followed by Tripoli and Carnuba wax. If you wish, give your vessel a lid turned from a contrasting wood. Many tall segmented vessels from my shop are now in collections around the world!

David Ramsey is a part-time professional turner. He turns many styles of wooden bowls, but prefers segmented turning for its versatility and flexibility. He lives in Rio Verde, AZ.

SQUARE TURNINGS

Beautiful to view; rewarding to do

STEVE WORCESTER

CREATING SQUARE TURNings seems only logical. The lumber starts square, so why round off all that perfectly good surface. The concept is simple: start square, and cut only on the face and back. In reality, round is easier to work with, but in many instances, not nearly as striking.

A square turning is as beautiful to view as it is rewarding to complete. The techniques in this article can be applied toward any square turnings, closed or open form, not just the oil lamps presented here.

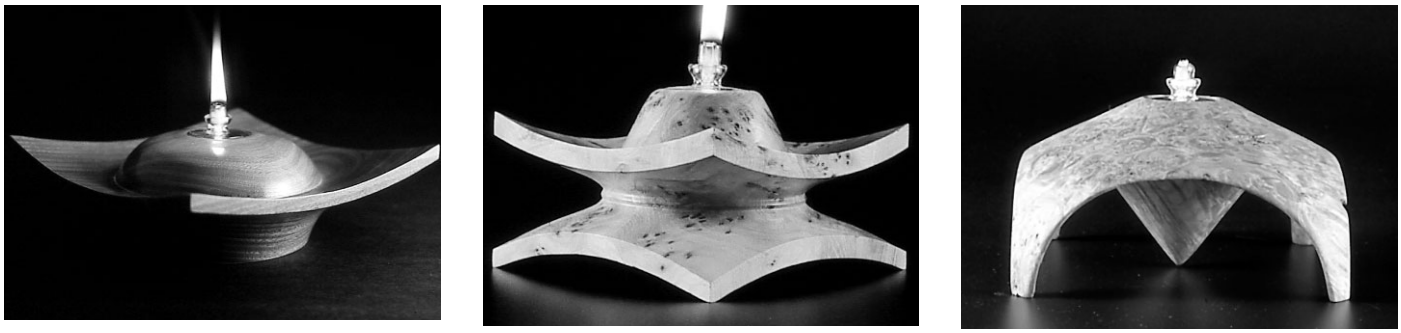
I started doing square turnings to differentiate my particular art — oil lamps — from that of other wood turners at the art shows where I sell. The square turnings are very eye catching, always commanding a second glance and frequent questions about whether they are turned that way, or turned round and cut off.

Often people don't think it's safe to turn square slabs. Turning square does require considerably more care in placing the turning tool and , most especially, your hands. It is one matter to dangle your fingers onto a cylinder with no sharp edges to catch. It's drastically different with a square. Turning at 1000 RPMs, that's 66 corners per second to slam your hands and knuckles. At the very least, you get an instant reminder to keep your hands out of the way; I don't want to think about the other end of the spectrum! Always be very alert, and give the wood the respect and concentration it deserves.

To begin, choose a suitable piece of tight, relatively straight grained wood, about 6-in. square and at least 2-in. thick. My oil lamp insert is 1 $^{3}/_{8}$ in. tall at the shoulder (I buy mine from Craft Supplies USA in Utah 800-551-8876), and we need the strength of extra thickness at the bottom. I have used many exotics such as Bocote, Cocobolo,Verawood, and I have seen Redheart, Ebonies, Maple and Maple burl used for square turning. When you're starting out, use something not too figured or expensive. Flatten one side with a planer or sander. To mount the piece I use a waste block attached to the flat side. While you can glue the waste block directly to the wood, reverse chuck and turn it off later, I prefer a paper/glue joint and faceplate attachment, which avoids needing extra thickness on the bottom of the turning block for chucking a tenon. For a waste block, I prefer a 1-in. thick or so square of Poplar cut about 1-in. smaller all the way around than the turning stock. Poplar is a good choice because it is hard enough to hold the faceplate screws, but soft enough to cut easily when working the bottom.

It looks like a normal turning, but the blur outside the ink line is actually the squared edges of the blank

The glue joint is quite simple: glue the waste block to the turning with a sheet of brown grocery bag glued in between. (A good reason to choose paper at the market). Cut a square out of the grocery bag a little larger than the waste block. Decide which side of the turning block is going to be the top and lay it face down. Apply enough regular yellow wood glue, NOT WATERPROOF, to cover where the paper will be centered and to allow for squeeze out. Now place the paper square on the center of the work piece and flatten it down a bit. Apply more glue as before and lay the Poplar backing wood over the grocery bag square. You now have two pieces of wood with grocery bag in-between and glue on both sides of the bag. Clamp the whole shebang together and position four clamps, one on each side, all facing toward the center. You may have to vary pressure on clamps to keep the waste block somewhat centered. While it isn't critical that it is in the center, it is important that there is enough material for the faceplate to seat all around, and that the backing board is not hanging over the edge of the work piece. Once all the clamps are in place, turn the piece over, so it is rest-



A gallery of oil lamps by the author offers a glimpse of the design possibilities of turning in the square.

ing on the four clamps, and the glue squeeze out runs down the edges of the backing board, not the turning block , and down onto the newspaper you set down before. Wipe any glue off the sides of the work piece now, as we will need these edges flat later.

Once the glue has dried (don't rush), undo the clamps. If there is some dried glue on the turning block, scrape it off with a chisel, running the chisel's flat bottom along the sides.

To find the center of the work piece, lay the block on a table with the backing board facing up. Mark all four sides with a marking gauge, letting the edge ride against the work piece, not the waste block. You will have four lines that form a box in the middle. The reason we didn't draw diagonal lines from each corner is your block may not be truly square. It may be more parallelogram shaped or even a little trapezoidal, but this way we find the center in relation to the sides. Now take a little punch and put an indent in the middle of the box drawn in the center.

The indent helps locate my shop-made center finder for the faceplate. I made mine by turning down a large dowel to form a tenon that fits through the faceplate's center hole. In the center of this tenon, glue in a short piece of a nail. The portion of the dowel that extends through the faceplate must be snug, so it doesn't flop around, but not fit so tightly that it binds and must be hammered out.

Position your faceplate center finder in the faceplate and lower it down into the indent to line up the faceplate with the center of the turning block. Hold down the faceplate and center finder and affix the faceplate to the waste block with good size (#12) wood screws. Your faceplate usually will take at least 3 or 4 screws. Don't scrimp, you don't want it flying off later.

Remove the center finder and screw the block and faceplate onto the lathe now. With the lathe power off snug up the tail stock and spin the block with your hand to create an impression in the center of the block with the live center point. Using a compass, draw a dark circle all the way around the edges, making sure not to go off the side. We want a good, dark circle so when the wood is spinning, we can tell where the edges and corners are.

Most all the cutting will be with a fingernail ground gouge, with at least a $^{5}/_{8}$-in. flute and a long handle, sized comfortably for your proportions. You will always work the gouge from center out. If you work from the outside in, you risk hitting the flying corners with the gouge tip and either damaging the edges, or violently knocking the gouge against the tool rest. Your control hand should be stationary, with your fingers pushing the tool down against the rest. (An overhand grip as described in AAW Journal Summer 98) Your other hand is at the rear of the tool handle. Your rear hand will be used to twist the handle to expose more tool surface to the wood thus adjusting the amount of cutting action. It will also be used to vary the angle of the cutting area in relation to the wood. The handle will rest against the side of your body, which will assist in dampening the vibration. By moving your rear hand and hip away from the wood, you are varying one of the cutting angles.

Let's take a minute to talk about design. Since your finished piece will encapsulate a vial of burning oil, we need a stable piece. The bottom, proportionately, needs to be wide, to prevent tipping, and to provide a solid surface. Also, if the wings are low in the design, they also provide an additional surface to help keep the lamp upright if tipped. Also keep the filled and/or lit lamps out of reach of children. The fire hazard is obvious, but also the petroleum-based lamp oil is toxic if ingested.

Cutting the Top

Start the lathe at about 500 RPMs. This is a good speed to start with until you are more comfortable with where the square edges are revolving. Use the side of the gouge to make shear cuts, drawing the gouge across the front of the wood from the inside to the outside. The cutting action should be centered at about the middle of the gouge's cutting area. As you look straight over the top side of the gouge, as it is being drawn across the wood's surface, you should see the inside of the flute. You don't want both

edges of the tool against the wood, just the bottom surface. Your rear hand can twist the gouge's handle and open up that gap and give more aggressive cutting, or close it and you get more of a shear scraping action.

As you are cutting and drawing the gouge out from the center, you will feel and hear where your gouge is in relation to the square edges. When it is clear of the full circle, the cutting action is less and you will hear it ticking away at the wood, with the ticking less and less frequent as you get out to the corners. Think of the circle you initially drew on the wood. Anywhere outside of that circle, you are on the four corners, and, in effect turning air, and thus not always fully supporting the cutting surface.

For this oil lamp, we drill a 1 $^{1}/_{2}$-in. hole in the center for the insert. A good start is to drill a hole about $^{3}/_{8}$-in. deep using a Forstner bit in a tailstock-mounted drill chuck. This will give you the guideline to work your design around. Cut a dome on what will be the top by resting the edge of your hand on the tool rest with your fingers over the tool (but not wrapping around it) and pulling the gouge in toward your palm, like making a fist. This brings the tip in and starts to scoop out the inside. By pulling it in and then drawing it out at an arc, you start to shape the wings to be swept up. Keep using the same cutting action, bringing the gouge all the way across the face each time. Stop the lathe occasionally to check your progress. Look for a smooth wing surface and a nice transition from the base of the dome to the wings. Tear out at the base is difficult to sand out, so you want to have a good clean cut.

The turning shown here is essentially two cutting strokes. One cut from the top of the dome to the base, in which you bring the gouge across the face and then push the tip in toward the headstock. This cut rubs the front bevel as you would in cutting the inside of a bowl, but the cut goes from the inside toward you. The other cut is a shear scrape of sorts, from the base of the dome to the ends of the "wings" and is scraping with the bottom edge of the gouge tip. Again you will hear the tone change from a deep cut to a ticking sound becoming less frequent as the gouge nears the outer edge. Do not get impatient and try to remove too much stock at one time. Patience is needed to avoid vibration, which will create circular rings that are difficult to remove. The idea is to make a smooth line from the dome edge to the ends of the wings.

Once you have the top of the wings done, stop the lathe and move the tool rest around behind the work, setting it parallel to the waste block. You can remove the wasted wood fairly quickly and you will now have a round waste block on the faceplate and the exposed bottom of the wood. Stop the lathe and move the tool rest about half the thickness of the waste block toward the wood. Now use a similar action as before to cut away the underside. Hand placement is a little different because you don't have as much room behind the work.

The cutting can be more aggressive in the supported area, but must be less as you get out of the circle and on the tips of the wood. Regulate the action with your rear wrist. If you try to be too aggressive in the less supported areas, you run the risk of tearing out the grain and ruining the square edge. (If this happens, flood the edges with water thin cyanoacrylate glue and let it soak in, but don't breathe the fumes! This will help to cut down on the edges chipping out).

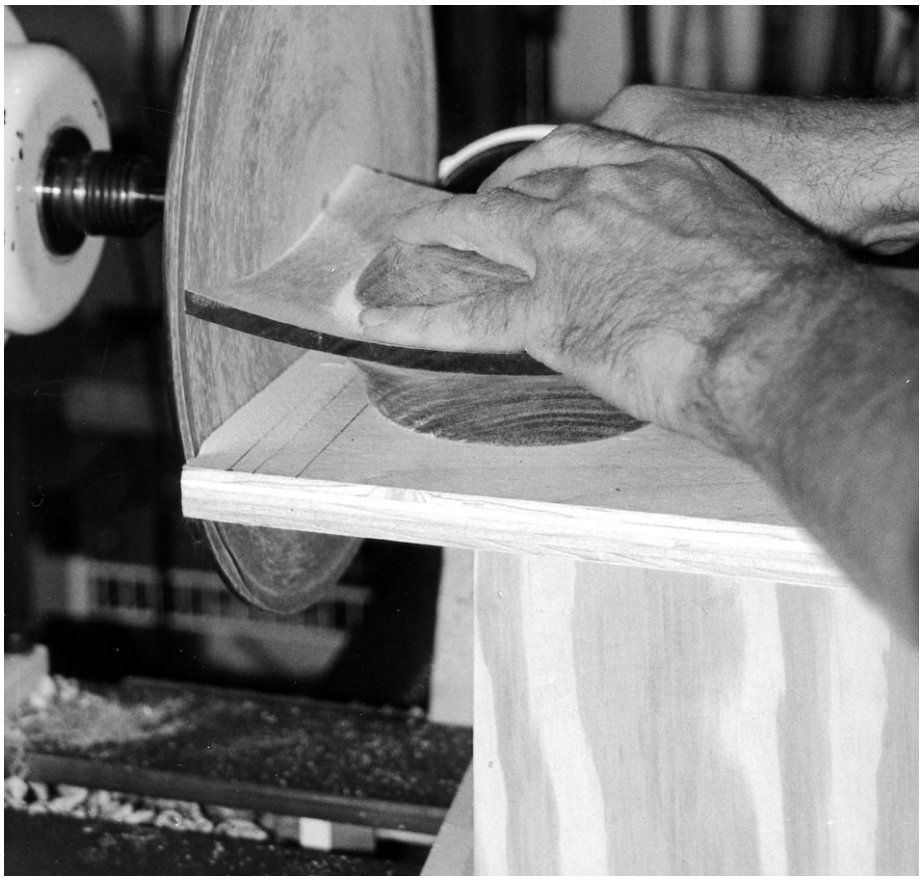
Stop the lathe and move the tool rest as needed to give as much support to the gouge as possible. Do not attempt to move the tool rest while the lathe is running! This is always a dangerous practice, but it's especially so when working with squares. Occasionally stop to feel the curve of the wings. They should have a smooth feel to them, no bumps. If they have bumps, this is usually a ring that runs all the way around the circle. To correct this, make real light cuts passing the gouge over that area. Usually I find it best to make a full pass, from the inside of the piece, working the gouge out across the surface to smooth it out. Occasionally, if it is very noticeable, with the lathe stopped and turning it with my hand, I will mark the circle with a pencil to mark the high spot so I know where it is when the lathe is running. I then pass the gouge across the surface, paying extra attention to that spot, repeating as necessary.

OK, let's say you have a profile that satisfies you: smooth sweeping curves that don't end abruptly and the wings are of even thickness and $^{3}/_{8}$-in. thick for this piece. Any thicker and you will not get the full effect. Any thinner and they may be too brittle for a first attempt.

Now to complete the hole for the oil lamp insert. Use a 1 $^{1}/_{2}$-in. dia. Forstner bit in a drill chuck that fits into the tailstock. It may be helpful to use a piece of masking tape wrapped around the bit shaft to mark the approximate height of the insert. You may want to experiment with the right depth to get the look you want. With the lathe off, move the tailstock and drill bit up to the wood, without actually touching it. Turn on the lathe and gradually but firmly, drill your hole. When you reach the desired depth, back out the bit and when clear, then turnoff the lathe. Check for tear out. If there is any , give it a quick sanding with 220 grit.

Finishing the lamp

Most of the finish work is done with the lathe off and using power sanding disks. Usually a 2-in.-dia. disk works great, but occasionally, I



Box sized to fit on the lathe bed enables author to sand square edges of turning with a sanding disc mounted in the headstock.

will have to go to the 1-in. size for the tighter details. When power sanding keep the disk fairly parallel to the work, too much angle and you will be adding rings to it. Start with as light a grit as possible to smooth out the surface. If you can start with a 120 instead of 60, that's great. Starting with 220 grit is even better. Work your way up to 400 grit. When sanding, don't remove too much material at the edge of the imaginary circle. The wood thickness in the center of the wing can be easily altered with an over zealous drill and sanding disk. If the wing is level all the way across, no corners swept up or down, you will want a fairly even thickness across the wing. If the corners swoop up or down, the wing will be slightly thicker in the middle. If you are uncertain whether to power sand or not, don't. You can easily lock the headstock and use both hands to sand.

When sanding is finished, insert the tailstock into the center hole you previously drilled, so if the joint parts too soon, the work piece won't fall onto the floor and waste all that work. Lock the headstock if you can and using a chisel with the bevel away from the lamp, you can now separate the glue joint. Move the tip of the chisel just a few mm. away from the lamp onto the waste block. You will probably have to tap the chisel in in several places around the turning to free up the joint. Once free of the waste block, grasp the turning in one hand and back off the tail stock with the other. Your turning will have some glue and paper bag stuck to it that can easily be removed by using a large disk sander that you can lay it flat against or by simply laying out some sheet sandpaper and sliding the work over it until the bottom is clean.

You can leave the bottom completely flat, but if the wood isn't kiln dried, it might crack and warp because it's much thicker that the rest of the surfaces. You can shape the bottom by reverse chucking the piece. Fasten a section of 1 $^{1}/_{2}$-in. dia. dowel in the chuck, and mount the work on the dowel, inserting it until it bottoms out in the hole. If it turns freely, insert a little paper to snug it up. Bring up a live tailstock center until it presses lightly against the bottom and rotate it to make sure it's running true. If not back off the center and tap the piece until it runs true. Turn the concavity and sand smooth.

The last step in sanding is to clean up the edges. You can use the same sheet of sandpaper laid out on the workbench to get the edges nice and flat and square or set up a sanding table. I have found that the Shopsmith 12-in. sanding disk, which just happens to have #2 Morris taper and uses Velcro disks, works like a dream. Use a light grit and just barely touch the edges with the sanding disk.

When the sanding is done, I usually put a 6-in. section of dowel in the work and let it dry for a week or so in case the wood has more drying to do; then, at least my lamp insert will still fit. At the drying period, if the dowel fits too snugly, I hold it in the jaws of my lathe chuck and lock the headstock, so I can twist the work off.

On the completed lamp, I like the higher gloss of a buffed finish. Hut Pen Wax (brown) applied with a buffing wheel works well. I've also been experimenting with applying French polish first, then buffing with Hut wax. These lamps make awesome gifts that will amaze your friends.

Steve Worcester is an amateur woodturner and a systems engineer in Texas.

CLAY FOSTER

A Journey marked by Beauty and Mystique

NORM HINMAN

THE MID 50's AUSTIN, TX A new boy takes his place in the world, beginning the journey that would lead to stardom on the stage of woodturning. With a shiny new saw his dad gave him when he was five, encouragement from both parents and the example of his dad who had a knack for solving problems, he set out to add a touch of beauty to that world. After a few years that magic saw became a wood lathe. Many years later a small sampling of the beauty he created sparkled at the Del Mano Gallery in West Los Angeles, which last October showcased a collection of works by Clay Foster, woodturner and artist extraordinaire. Examples of the beauty and mystique that have risen from his lathe with the help of nimble fingers and an agile mind racing in high gear, these pieces follow the continually evolving path that Clay's work has taken from 1988-1998. Each has a story to tell, a bit of history to describe, or maybe a little mystery to uncover. "Painted Cave", from the Painted Cave series, on the surface depicts an ancient cave dwelling. Further investigation reveals sand from an anthill and broken bits of previous turnings representing period pottery shards inside, both used in dating archeological sites. The vessel itself, of silver leaf maple, is meant to provide a window into the tree. The rock art in this piece is like that done in caves and grottos by ancient artists, who provided a window into the lives of the early people who lived there. "Santo de Calmazo," an open-fronted urn shaped vessel with a bobcat skull mounted above the open front and a dry branch inside was a part of an investigation into the humanness of turned objects. In doing this series, Clay enlarged upon a comment he had heard from Giles Gilson relating

"Painted Cave" seems like an ancient cave dwelling, but the silver leaf maple vessel is also a window into the tree, as well as a glimpse into an ancient archeological mystery

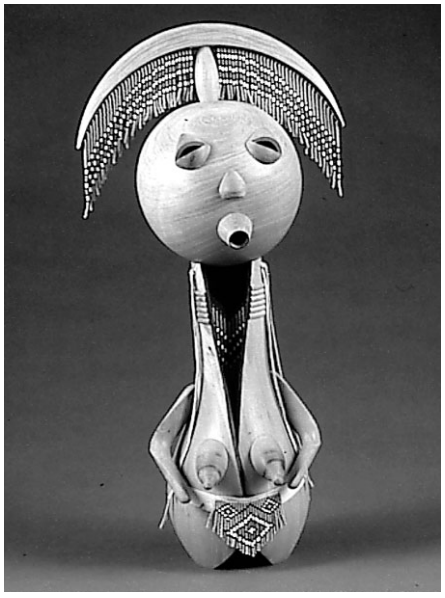
parts of Greek urns and turned objects to body parts of humans. The first piece of this series actually came about when he dropped a tall vase and it cracked. He decided to cut out the broken area, then had to put something inside to be viewed. A dried Hackberry branch gave a general appearance of human ribs.

"Timshel" is somewhat reminiscent, to me anyway, of a shaman with Hispanic overtones. A split-open vessel decorated with carved painted stripes, as a tunic might be, forms the body. A spherical hollow turning forms the head with the lipped opening serving as the mouth. A cut sheet brass hairdo adorns the top. Forked branch arms, upraised as in a gesture of welcome, might be interpreted as offering a choice, like saying 'you may', or as stated in John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*, "Timshel." Clay related that passages from this book impressed him as he worked, as a result "Timshel" was born.

"Hospitality" shows a design shift away from the southwestern U.S. toward African cultures. After viewing an exhibit of African art at the SUNY, Purchase campus, Clay decided he wanted to incorporate some of the characteristics of those pieces into his own work. This piece, patterned after little household icons found in African homes, would indicate that the family living there wanted to be friendly and hospitable as shown by the woman offering the bowl. Clay was impressed by the warm, "wonderful black patina" on the figurines he saw. Most of them were ceremonial objects and had been anointed with various fluids like "chicken blood and palm oil."

"La Santa de las Viejas," a figurine

about two feet tall has an internal necklace of blue and yellow beadwork and is wearing what might be considered a loincloth with matching beadwork. The body itself, including the neck, is a vase-like vessel split open from top to bottom, with breasts and multi axis turned arms added. Atop is mounted a spherical head with turned pieces for the facial features. Crowning the head is a long, narrow crescent from which hangs a regiment of beaded strings. This represents a mantilla as worn by mature ladies of Hispanic cultures. (All of the wood portions of this piece, including the bent arms, are lathe turned, as is also the case with "Hospitality".) "Black and White Sailboats" is a tall vessel of pecan wood entirely covered by repeating patterns of black diamonds and triangles intermingled with rectangles and triangles filled with white striping. When asked about the procedure for laying out the pattern, Clay explained that it was borrowed from a quilt pattern called "Sailboats". The black ink, rather than being the background color, was applied using a rubber roller, much like a printer would do. Clay emphasized that "the contrast of black and white multiplies the visual impact of the pattern." A sensitivity not often accorded favor from turned art has been struck by "Untitled Vessel." This piece could also be considered, along with "Hospitality," as having something of an African flavor. A vase-like cylindraceous piece, nearly covered by a mosaic of matching pairs of carved triangles containing parallel grooves, it is finished with a graphite coating. From sets of white beads near the top are suspended black cords having, at intervals, smaller beads fastened to them. When the piece is shaken gently, the suspended beads impart tones reminiscent of childhood days. It sounds like a baby rattle. Sometimes simple pleasures can be derived from complex art as well as the other way around. "Black, Purple and Green Pot" returns us to the North American continent with patterns similar to some found on Native American pottery. The vessel surface has been solidly blackened with lithographic ink. The designs were then carved into the wood and painted. Above and below, patterns of green triangles and straight intersecting lines forming smaller triangles reach toward each other. They are thwarted by a series of wide purple lines whose ends fold around each other like the hands of young lovers strolling through the park on a Spring day. Clay chose these two colors because they match the ones that are found on a favored possession that has been in his family for some time, offering warmth and comfort when skies seem dark and forbidding and often accompanies him on journeys away from home.



"La Santa de la Viejas" seems like a figure carving, but actually each of the components is lathe turned.

Clay and Penny Foster collaborating at a recent Emma Lake Conference

Clay, either inadvertently or, being quite a humorist, purposely, imparted a bit of visual fantasy into "Fine Line Vessel." This piece conspires to join the shapes of South African baskets with the decoration patterns of pottery from the Southwestern United States. Above and below, solid color is surrounded by a series of colored rings. However, these rings do not go around the top and bottom centers of

the vessel, but are offset, thereby taking on a tilted attitude. Between these, covering the central area, is a mosaic pattern of triangles and diamonds formed by longitudinal white lines on a background of black. When asked about the offset pattern, Clay revealed his intent to bring something of nature's patterns to the piece, for example the tilt of the earth on its axis. The single lines that ultimately form a triangle or a diamond which then, when placed next to other triangles or diamonds similarly formed, compose a mosaic pattern that continues on around the piece until it is complete. As Clay expressed it, "It can be hard to understand the meaning of one event in life. When seen in the context of a lifetime, an understanding of why things happen the way they do can develop." (Everything about this piece was done purposely. Clay does very few things inadvertently.)

Another vessel, done in 1998, is "Iron Clad". That is not just its title. A very gentle curve graces this vase-form piece, starting from a base not set apart from the body and culminating in a smooth, soft lip. The satin finished oak wood appears soft and comfortable like old leather. This likeness is given credibility by four carved rings around the neck near the top with short 'nick' carvings at a right angle to the rings extending above and below them. It appears that a dark stain, perhaps more deeply absorbed into the carved surfaces, may have been applied. The darkened lines thus take on something of a 'branded' appearance like a patina on an old surface. The body of the vessel is crisscrossed with carved lines running diagonally over the surface defining diamond shaped 'fields.' Alternate fields are carved with furrows running parallel to the long lines. The remaining fields are each covered with a piece of galvanized sheet iron fastened along its periphery by brass brads. Each of the pieces

"Iron Clad" with its leathery appearance and brass bindings creates a feeling of strength and longevity

of iron has words written on it as befitting a written agreement. Here Clay has likened the turned vessel to "a contract being a legal container for agreements and promises." The oak wood with its old leather appearance and the brass bound iron pieces give rise to a feeling of strength and longevity. But this feeling of security may be false. As Clay expressed, "Unless all parties of a contract are honorable people, the words of the contract are merely decorations tacked on to the surface, like the iron clad words on this vessel."

A piece that might seem to combine Clay's work in vessels with that of his masks while bringing into play his talent for appropriate use of decoration is the 'Face Vase." The vessel itself, very gracefully formed of Mulberry wood with a soft pattern carved into it and wrapped with two courses of red cord, is closed with a stopper rather than simply being open. Surprise! The stopper, a curving inverted cone, becomes the neck for a mask face and head sitting on top. At the top of the head, looking like a small skullcap, is a lid. The head is actually a box. The face, rather long as faces go, is turned with very graceful lines and might remind the viewer of an African ceremonial mask. The neck with concentric beading and ring-like features and the 'shoulders' of the vessel itself reinforce this impression.

To peruse a display of Clay's work, such as this one, in a couple of hours is akin to watching a video movie in fast forward. You can say you have seen it. I can also say I can fly since I have traveled across the country in the air. Time. Much time and thought, along with an absorbent imagination, are necessary to truly 'see' pieces like this. Clay does not simply turn wood into wooden objects. He creates classical arrangements much like a playwright might bring an opera to life. Each piece comes from study as well as labor, and each detail has a lesson to be learned and a reason for being.

[*I wish to express my appreciation to Ms. Chris Drosse of Del Mano Gallery for making photographs of each of the pieces available to me, despite her already harried schedule. Thanks also to Kevin Wallace of Del Mano Gallery.*

Norm Hinman is a retired researcher and woodturner in Yuba City, CA. He is also a member of the AAW Board of Directors.

SHARPENING JIGS

Getting an edge on grinding techniques

AAW MEMBERS

MOST TURNERS KNOW the value of sharp tools, but I don't remember meeting many who liked sharpening more than lathe work. For most it's a necessary chore. Many turners, as Clay Foster writes here, still prefer working freehand. But there is now an amazing variety of sharpening jigs on the market, and more and more turners are using them. Many of the turning teachers I've seen this year rely on them in their classes to help beginners get over the sharpening blues.

In recent months we asked some of our readers to write about the sharpening jigs they liked best. We present three views here, along with a discussion of the value of freehand grinding. We'll discuss more jigs in upcoming issues. If you have a favorite jig or a trick you'd like to share, please let us know—Dick Burrows, editor

Sorby Fingernail Grinding Jig

In August 1997 I attended a Robert Sorby demonstration at the Woodcraft store in Seattle. I was impressed with the fingernail grind on their new tools and ordered one of their Fingernail Grinding Jigs the next day. When it arrived, I mounted it on the left wheel of my grinder (I have a Veritas jig mounted on the right hand wheel). I carefully set it up to the dimensions given on the instruction sheet that came with the jig and started to grind one of my $^3/_8$-in. spindle gouges. I immediately had problems getting the long sweep back that I wanted.

Roger, my woodturning friend down the road who had attended the Sorby demonstration with me and also purchased one of the jigs, wasn't having any problems with his. A visit to Roger's shop, immediately showed why. I had a $^3/_4$-in.-wide wheel, Roger had a $1^1/_2$-in wheel. So, I asked where he bought the wider wheel. "Grizzly," he said. I called in an order to Grizzly and in a few days had a new $1^1/_2$-in. wheel on my grinder. That wider wheel made all of the difference in the world. The jig worked just the way I thought it should.

The gouge must stick out of the tool holder approximately two inches for the jig to work properly. It is pretty hard to measure this while holding the tool holder, trying to secure the tool in place in the holder, and at the same time tightening an Allen screw. I quickly made a mark on my workbench two inches in from the edge. Now, I slip the gouge into the tool holder, press the tool holder against the edge of the bench, push the gouge through until it lines up with the mark on the bench, and tighten the set screw. Then I screw the little wheel down to check that the tool is properly oriented in the tool holder. The wheel should touch both edges of the flute.

The jig comes from the factory set to replicate the medium fingernail grind that Sorby puts on their fingernail grind gouges. I believe that angle of grind is about 65 degrees, if I heard right at the demonstration, and it looks to be about that angle. With this angle of grind, my spindle gouge required a slightly different hold than with the grind that I had been using on it. It was a bit too steep for good spindle work, but boy did it work great for bowls. You could start at the rim and cut in one continuous sweep to the center without a problem, just like the professionals. The factory setting worked great for my bowl gouges, but I finally modified the angle for my spindle gouges, they seem to work better with a longer angle.

I've been hand grinding a fingernail grind on my bowl and spindle gouges for several years, but each sharpening left me with a slightly different grind that required me to adjust my cutting angle. The Sorby jig eliminates this problem. The grind is repeatable and smooth from side to side, one continuous grind, no facets.

Robert Sorby Fingernail Grinding Jig

— Fred Holder, Camano Island, WA

OneWay Wolverine System

I was introduced to the Wolverine Grinding System by Nick Cook while I was visiting the Georgia Association of Woodturners. Prior to that I had always sharpened by hand.

At present, I use the OneWay system in conjunction with sharpening by hand and I really like to use the system with students for the same reason Nick does. At a workshop, I don't have to spend all my time at the grinding wheel and can spend more time with my students.

As Nick showed me, the system is based on two mounts which attach permanently to the base under your grinder. Once the system is setup, it's simple to install two separate tool supports.

The first support or tool rest is a large flat adjustable platform fitted

with a locking lever, making it easy to adjust. The large (3-in. X 5-in.) flat surface is ideal for scrapers and parting tools.

The second support is a sliding V-block fixture, which supports the base of your tool, allowing you to maintain a consistent bevel as the tool is rolled against the wheel of the grinder. It's good for roughing gouges and deep fluted bowl gouges. The optional Vari-grind jig, made to fit the sliding V-block fixture enables you to create a fingernail grind on spindle gouges or the modified British grind on deep fluted bowl gouges.

Personally, I would purchase the Wolverine Grinding System because of one other attachment, the Dressing Attachment! I've used everything from the star wheel dresser to dressing sticks and I like the Wolverine dressing attachment best by far. Now,I true and clean my wheels two or three times a day rather than waiting until they are totally loaded up and ineffective. The attachment consists of a support arm, a holder for the diamond tip and the diamond tip which does the dressing. The support arm slides into the grinding jig base and dressing is accomplished by sliding the diamond tip holder back and forth across the support arm. Fine adjustments are accomplished via a knob on the diamond tip holder. I found it useful to apply a bit of wax on the support arm to allow the holder to move more freely.

The only attachment that I do not use is the skew grinding attachment. It works fine, but I prefer a more radical angle on my skews. I also grind a radius that I am not able to obtain with a jig.

The Vari-grind attachment will allow you to obtain both a fingernail grind as well as a side grind. It works beautifully. However, you might consider grinding the base of the support to allow it to pivot in the vee-arm a little better. This just allows for a little smoother operation.

The gouge is held in place in the Vari-grind jig via a screw-and-leaf-spring clamp that puts pressure on the flute of the tool and keeps it from rotating while sharpening. At a certain point, after numerous grindings you will probably run out of flute and the leaf spring will no longer seat on the flute. Not to worry. You can "eye ball" the position of the gouge, lock it in position and extend the life of the tool

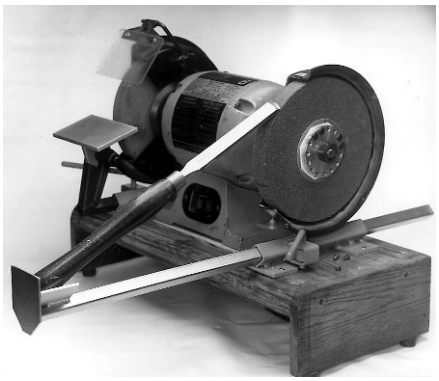
Probably the biggest disadvantage of the Wolverine system is that if you are organizationally challenged as I am, you end up with a lot of accessories laying around the shop getting in your way. The solution is really very simple. Hang them up! A few spare minutes, a bit of pegboard and the disaster area becomes manageable.

I would caution that the Wolverine Grinding System or any grinding system is not a panacea for all your sharpening problems, but they can help. When I first set up the system and introduced it to our turning group, I gave them a bowl gouge and turned them loose on it. That gouge still sits in the corner waiting until I have the time to make it useful again. Ultimately, you still need to know what you want that tool to look like and what you want it to do after you have finished grinding it. A jig will help, but it will not do it all.

— Bob Rosand, Bloomsburg, PA, with Nick Cook, Atlanta, GA

The "Mighty Mite" Grinding Jig

The Mighty-Mite is a fingernail grinding jig similar in operation to the sharpening jig of Tobias Kay. Unlike the other fingernail grinding jigs on the market, The Mighty-Mite is constructed largely of wood, but I see no reason why it would not last for years. The jig consists of two pieces: the part that holds the tool and a base



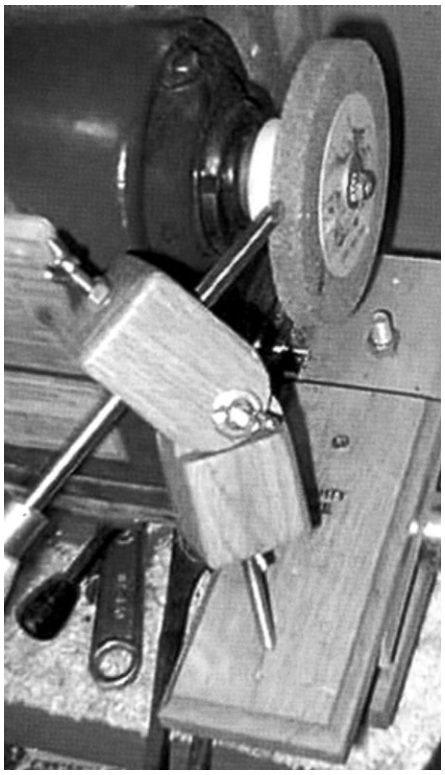
Wolverine Jig by OneWay

plate with a number of $^1/_8$-in. holes drilled in a row.

The part that holds the tool consists of an upper piece with a hole drilled to take the gouge (I believe it will handle a $^3/_4$-in. gouge, although I haven't tried anything bigger than my $^1/_2$-in. bowl gouge). This piece is hinged to a lower piece which has a threaded extension with a point on the end. The hinged area allows you to adjust the angle at which the tool is held. The pointed extension fits into one of the holes in the base plate.

With the threaded extension fitted into a hole in the baseplate and a gouge mounted into the holder and allowed to extend $2^1/_2$-to-3 inches, one places the tool bevel on the stone and swings the handle while maintaining pressure against the wheel. If the bevel isn't quite right on the stone, try another one of the holes. If moving to another hole doesn't fix it, you can change the amount of extension of the gouge through the tool holder or change the angle between the two pieces of the tool holder. This makes it easy and fast to set up.

Tom, the Mighty Mite dealer, says: start at center, and first swing the handle to the right and grind the right side of the gouge. Then starting at center, you swing the handle to the left to grind the left side of the gouge. Finally, you start at center and swing the handle back and forth to blend the two side grinds with the end grind.



The Mighty Mite Jig

Actually, I like to finish by starting at one side and grinding a continuous bevel from that side to the other.

This jig is easy to use and does a good job. There is no method of ensuring that the flute is straight up and down in the jig. Actually, this is not really much of a problem because you can generally tell by eye if it is cocked very much. Tom did tell me that he has been putting a small "L" bracket, about $^1/_2$-in-wide, in the hole over the gouge. He says this helps align the flutes in the upright position.

Since this jig is lightweight and would therefore be suitable for transporting to a craft fair or on your winter journey south, I considered it for a grinding jig for a lathe mounted grinding stone. When I go to craft fairs, I have a grinding stone mounted on a mandrel that screws onto the nose of my headstock spindle. This way I can sharpen dull chisels when needed. Of course, grinding the fingernail profile by hand is not the easiest thing in the world, but I suspected Tom's jig could work here, too. I took two boards, drilled a $^3/_8$-in. hole through them so they could be clamped to the bed bars of my CL-3. I then screwed the baseboard of the jig to the top board at a position that seemed reasonable for the 4-in. grinding wheel that I had mounted on my mandrel. I now had a fingernail grinding set up without having a grinder. This is also a possibility for new woodturners who do not yet have a grinder. A grinding wheel mounted on the lathe with one of Tom's jigs would give a newcomer a fine gouge grinding set up for very little outlay of funds.

This jig costs about $40.00 plus $5.00 shipping and handling; it is lightweight, weighing only about 8 ounces; simple and easy to use; and it can be rigged up to use your lathe as a grinder. You can order the Mighty Mite from Thomas Kabelitz, MightyMite, 3677 Hackett Avenue, Long Beach, Ca 90808. TEL: (562) 420-3502.

—Fred Holder, Camano Island, WA

In Praise Of Jiglessness

In the beginning, there were no jigs for grinding a deep fluted bowl gouge with a long cutting edge. My first attempts at freehand grinding produced a bevel that looked like a plowed field. It had more facets than Liz Taylor's diamond collection. After a little practice and a few inches of gouge, I eventually got the hang of it. Grinding is now a reflexive action that takes very little time to produce a sharp tool with the exact profile I want. For the person desiring to grow beyond occasional turning, I think free hand grinding is the best option.

All of the sharpening jigs I have seen will do a good job of grinding a gouge, some with more alacrity than others, but none of them are as fast and convenient as freehand. Like most people, if something is quick and convenient, I am likely to do it more often. Obviously, this includes tool sharpening. I've never met anyone that I thought sharpened their gouge too often, but I've known a lot of turners who put it off until it was too late and made a mess at the lathe.

Learning to grind a gouge freehand develops graceful movements and a light touch of the hand. Can you think of another related activity where these skills would be desirable? Hint: if you don't know the correct answer to this question, it may explain why your work has that awkward, bludgeoned quality to it.

Freehand grinding is an acquired skill, just like any other aspect of woodturning. You learn it by doing it over and over again. In order to consume less tool while learning to grind, try practicing with the grinder turned off. You can feel the bevel matching up to the wheel and the correct arc of the tool through space without watching your expensive gouge being transported to the shop floor in a meteoric shower of steel.

In the end, it comes down to what you choose to spend: your time or your money. You can spend your time developing a skill, or your money on a jig that will almost do it for you. Either choice is valid, and no proponent of either method has any right to feel superior. I have no regrets that I had to learn how to grind a gouge the old fashioned way when there was no choice. It's still the choice I would make now.

—Clay Foster, Krum, TX

This article was prepared with the help of the AAW members indicated. If you'd like to comment on your sharpening method or add to the discussion here, please contact us. Write Dick Burrows, editor, 929 Maynard Ave, Knoxville, TN 37917.

BREAKING THE BARRIERS

Emma Lake conjures a new way of thinking

TERRY MARTIN

WITH THE NEW MILLENNIUM almost upon us, it is a good time to reflect on where the woodturning movement is going.

For most of its long history woodturning has concentrated on the rapid production of simple, everyday items—furniture components, kitchen utensils, tool handles, etc. It has been a craft valued by how quickly and how cheaply a piece can be made, or a given design copied. With the postwar decline in production, hand turning had to undergo a renaissance to survive. It came, as we all now know, with the transformation of turning into both a hobby and a value-adding craft, which has subsequently evolved into lathe-based art.

Over the past 25 years or so, the criteria for judging woodturning have been turned upside-down. Now the most valued work is that which takes a long time, is most original and which defies the restrictions of the lathe. While traditional turning still proudly takes its place in the turning repertoire, innovation is the hallmark of late 20th Century woodturning.

However, with so many practitioners being influenced by the few real innovators, genuine originality is hard to find. Any display of woodturning is very likely to contain clones of most of the famous turners—an Ellsworth vessel here, a Stirt platter there. In a predominantly amateur field this is understandable and imitation is, after all, the best form of flattery. But for those with artistic ambitions the most common problem is still how to find new ideas.

Looking For Inspiration

For inspiration we often watch the great innovators and then return to our lathes recharged and ready to attempt the impossible. One of the most imitated turners over the last ten years has been Michael Hosaluk. From his home in Saskatchewan, Canada, Michael has travelled all over the world and planted seeds of irreverent innovation. His generous nature and sense of fun have allowed him to inspire a more open approach to woodturning than probably any other turner. It is hard to imagine anyone coming away from a session with Michael without being challenged. Of all the ideas and innovations that Michael has introduced, the one most remembered will probably be the Emma Lake series of camps.

Mike Hosaluk caught by the "woodturners trap." Simply place a bottle of beer in the end. When he grasps the bottle, he can not bring himself to let go, can't withdraw his hand and is trapped, as everyone else in the studio continues to work.

Michael was involved in organizing his first home-town woodturning conference in 1982 at a woodshop training facility in Saskatoon. Significantly, Michael has always been a furniture maker as well as a woodturner and in 1984 a furniture conference was held at the same venue. In 1986 the turning conference was repeated, and in 1989 it was the turn of furniture again. In 1984, perhaps inevitably, turning and furniture were combined for the first time. This was also the first year they departed from the conventional agenda of "I teach - you watch and learn".

A Collaborative Approach

A new approach was tried and, in Michael's words, "We had a really good conference. It turned into a collaborative event where instructors and students made pieces together. It really worked well. After doing so many conferences that are the same, I thought it was time to try something new." An auction was held at the end of the event to benefit the Saskatchewan Crafts Council, the sponsoring organization. It netted

$6,000 and Michael commented at the time, "That surprised us all." If only he had known what was to come!

With the trend towards a more collaborative event, it was decided to move to a venue more conducive to creativity. Many years before, an artists' camp had been built on the shores of Emma Lake a few hours north of Saskatoon. With log-cabin accommodation, pristine woods and a large studio, it was ideal.

Conservation & Collaboration

In 1996 the first Emma Lake camp was held under the theme "Conservation and Collaboration". The studio was converted into a woodshop filled with woodworking machinery and a metalworking area was set up under tents in the woods. Portable classrooms were arranged as a large art finishing room and a conference room for slide presentations and discussions. Many of the participants had been to Mike's previous conferences, so they were ready for the hands-on all-in-together approach. Others arrived not really sure what to expect and some were even more insecure when they realized that the whole idea of "agenda" had been thrown out of the window. The idea was that anybody could do whatever they liked, with anyone and however they wanted to. A high-risk strategy, but one which worked. Despite some initial milling-around in confusion, the participants turned that four-day event into a huge success. Again a final benefit auction was held and buyers appeared as if by magic to bid for the extraordinary pieces which had been made. The result was $16,500 for the Crafts Council and smiles all around. Those funds were going to benefit the craftspeople of Saskatchewan.

"Northern Lights" by Bruce Bell and Debbi Gola. Dyed Poplar bowl, acrylic paint and bronze patina, carved rim

In 1998 the camp was repeated over five days under the title **Breaking the Barriers**, and again the challenge was more than met. Collaboration is not necessarily an easy process and the way it is done at Emma Lake is extraordinary. There is an overwhelming feeling of momentum. With enthusiasm bubbling and energy high, it is hard not to be swept up in the creative process. There were over 120 turners, furniture makers, painters, glass artists, metalworkers, photographers, writers, papermakers, all thrown together to generate ideas and works of art.

A breathtaking arrival

For the turner arriving for the first time it can be a breathtaking experience. It might go like this: Arrive and register, find your log cabin tucked in the woods and greet old friends and new. Unpack your tools and check out the woodshop. Within minutes a billet of timber is thrust into your hand by - was that Todd Hoyer? "Hi! Could you turn a leg for the fish chest?" Fish chest? What's a fish chest? Further enquiry reveals that a chest is being carved, turned and painted on the theme of "fish." You look at the wood in your hand and start wondering how on earth you turn a "fish chest" leg. Before you can find an answer you notice Bonnie Klein turning an egg from acrylic for a collaborative egg project. She chats happily with you as she finishes the egg with a flourish of chatterwork, then goes off to talk to Remi Verchot about a piece he is working on. You

"Un Table" by Mike Hosaluk, Mark Sfirri, Jean-Francois Escoulen. One-legged table, turned, carved and painted.

notice a bowl full of eggs and a note from Betty Scarpino inviting you to add one. Soon you are turning to add your egg to the collection. When you are finished you reach for your fish-leg and find that it has gone. A quick look around the dozen or so lathes that fill the shop and you find Fabrice Micha is using it for an eccentric table leg. Oh well. After lunch you wander into the art room and Mark Sfirri shoves a brush into your hand. "Here, how'd you like to paint this for the bowling cabinet (photo on page 29)." But I don't… "Never mind, mix this and this and flick it on like this." You sit down next to Del Stubbs, who is teaching marbling to Alain Mailland and Dave Wahl, and try your hand at painting.

That is the most remarkable thing about Emma Lake. It is impossible not to be involved and it is done in such an unaffected, good-humored way that there is little pressure. Another wonderful feature of the event is that

Jean-Francois Escoulen, left above, shares his skills with members of the Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, chapter of the AAW. Del Stubbs, left, right photo, and Roman Scheidel in intensive discussion.

it is almost impossible to distinguish the "top" people from those who are mainly hoping to learn: everyone works together. If you find yourself unhappy with the way a piece is going, you can simply put it on the central table of partly finished pieces. It is usually grabbed up by someone looking for inspiration. The next time you see it, the piece has become a component in a collaborative work. You are suddenly a collaborator and your piece has been transformed in ways you never imagined!

Many pieces are worked on by several people and often some of them have no idea who the other collaborators are. A good example is "3-day Storm," which was worked on by at least six different people and possibly more whose names got lost in the mix.

Turning design upside down

Other artists sit down together and more seriously plan every stage of their collaboration, although there is a general lack of strictly drawn plans and dimensions. Many are more comfortable with this structured collaboration, but it is the open-ended collaboration that can surprise the most. Steve Loar takes a thin-walled hollow vessel turned by Andre Martel and turns it upside down. Marigold Cribb adds her ideas and it becomes a delightful birdhouse. Somebody throws out the challenge of an eccentric one-legged table and the result is "Un Table" (photo on page 27) turned by three of the greatest innovators in the field, Hosaluk, Sfirri and Escoulen.

If anyone is unsure how to proceed, there are a hundred people willing to help out.

"Two Forms", by Remi Verchot and Jo Stone. Turned and carved Oak, Birch, Copper and paint

Freewheeling Approach?

Of course this free-wheeling approach doesn't suit everyone. Most craftspeople normally work in isolation, so some find the hustle and noise too much, retreating to quiet corners of the woods to work alone or with a few others. A small number are initially afraid to join in for fear of embarrassing themselves in front of so many well-known artists, preferring to drift on the fringes and watch. The collaborative process does not necessarily suit everyone. But it was interesting to see that some artists who had been reserved on their first visit in `96, were much more willing to join in this time. Many limited themselves to doing what they do best and allowing others to incorporate that into collaborative projects. Others broke free of known territory and tried to learn all that they could.

The product of this intense collaboration is inevitably of mixed quality. Some pieces are quietly consigned to the central pile in the hope that someone can improve them. Others take on a new life, delighting everyone with their wit and quality. But the real product of Emma Lake is what the participants carry away with them

in their heads. It's as if they have been given permission to break rules and to introduce a new-found joy into their work. Probably few of them go home and continue this kind of collaboration. For most it would just not be possible. But the seeds of anarchy are sown in many fertile minds and the results filter into their work over the next few years. A turner who had never worked in materials other than wood before may find herself seeking out the local bronze foundry. A glass artist who always thought woodturning was boring ends up buying a lathe. A blacksmith phones a turner he met at Emma Lake and invites him to discuss a joint exhibition. It's good for the artists and it's good for what they make.

It would be impossible for all of this to happen without months of advance planning and work. The members of the Saskatchewan Crafts Council do an extraordinary job of providing materials and equipment. Even the most demanding of participants can find everything they need for the creative process. It is an enormous logistical effort which is even more amazing because it depends so much on volunteers and loaned equipment. The return benefit is when the creative world seemingly beats a path to the door of the Saskatchewan community. One of the best things about so many well-known turners visiting the area is the extra opportunity to invite them for a piggyback conference. This year the Prince Albert woodturning group held a pre-Emma conference at which four famous non-Canadian turners shared their skills (incidentally, the Prince Albert group was the first foreign chapter of the AAW). Jean-Francois Escoulen (France), Betty Scarpino (USA), Ernie Newman (Australia) and Melvyn Firmager (Britain) spent a weekend at an event that was, in many ways, the opposite of Emma Lake. They demonstrated and the participants watched, asked questions and sometimes tried their hand at new ideas. The following week many of them went on to Emma Lake to try out their new ideas and skills.

"Bowling Cabinet" by Richard Ford, Mark Sfirri, Terry Martin, Heather Cline, Andre Martel, Fabrice Micha, Merryll Saylan. Wooden chest with turned legs, painted.

Stretching the limits

Time seems to stretch at Emma Lake. The cool nights watching the Aurora Borealis, canoeing across the lake, drinking by the fire at the edge of the water, sharing meals under the trees, seeing great collaborative ideas evolve, stretching your own personal limits: it seems to go on forever and yet it also seems to end too soon. Again the event culminated in an auction at which 165 pieces went up for sale. This year the benefit to the Crafts Council was over $40,000!

Although this is a remarkable result, the main benefit is not the financial reward. Michael Hosaluk loves playing with the way people think by challenging them to try new ideas. It would be hard to imagine a more successful way of doing it. While the artistic products of those wonderful five days may not all bear intense scrutiny, the joy in their creation can't be questioned.

Many participants are already planning the next few years around making sure they can be at Emma Lake again to meet new friends and reforge old friendships. The T-shirts printed for the '98 event proudly displayed the words, "THIS IS THE BIG FUN". Few would deny that it is true and the next Emma Lake conference in August 2000 will surely confirm it.

Terry Martin turns wood and writes in Bardon, QN, Australia. Photos by Terry Martin and Grant Kernan.

A Southwestern Classic

Capturing the beauty of Native American pots

PHIL BRENNION

Exposure to Native American art is part of daily life for us in central Arizona. Wherever you travel in this land of sage and junipers, the beauty of the earth and its culture are always with you. Over a decade ago, I became enthralled with the idea of collecting Indian pottery. But, even the most inexpensive pieces of fine Native American pots were usually out of my price range. So I have perfected a technique of giving wood the same beautiful effects — for less expense.

One series of pots that has always inspired me is crafted by the Maria Martinez family. They have produced pottery for almost 100 years. The clean lines and perfected black patinas have made this family's San Ildefonso pueblo in New Mexico famous for pottery worldwide. Highly sought by collectors, these pots still represent some of the finest Native American pottery. Maria Martinez along with her husband Julian perfected many pottery techniques that were unknown to Native American potters of the Southwest. When Maria's husband passed away in the 1930s, she worked closely with other family members to continue their pottery-making ways. She worked advising on techniques until her death in 1980. Today, even though Maria and Julian are no longer alive, their techniques and traditions survive with their son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

The black burnished pots created today by the Martinez family sometimes show further innovations in design, but the patinas remain their most notable quality. Careful surface preparation and special firing methods are the key to this trademark patina. Slip — a moist thin clay coating — is applied to the pots and they are scraped and sanded smooth with tools made from gourds and stones.

The author's finishing technique captures the beautiful color and patina of Native American pottery.

Then, the pots are fired in hand -constructed kilns. The kilns appear to be crude mounds of wood and cow chips, covered with pieces of tin.

They actually are well designed and efficient. After the fire burns the right amount of time, the potter smothers the kiln with a mixture of powdered manure and ash. This cuts off oxygen to the fire and produces a heavy smoke that has a carbonizing effect, coloring the pots black.

My goal as a woodturner is to get the same deep black finish with just the right amount of sheen, on the Southwest-style bowls that I turn from juniper or cottonwood. If you look at a piece of Martinez family pottery, you immediately are drawn to the finish by the way it reflects light. The black surface seems to emit a kind of gray hue. The pots appear not shiny, but sometimes almost a dull silver and black. This patina is what separates it from just a high gloss black finished surface.

Unfortunately the process of firing and burnishing pottery with stones doesn't work too well on wood. To get this finish on wood, I start with turned pieces that have relatively few, if any, knots or defects that might require fillers or glues. I sand to 320 grit, while the piece is turning on the lathe. For pieces under 12-in.-dia., I sand around 600 rpm; larger pieces at about 400 rpm. The sandpaper works better at slower speeds and doesn't clog up as fast or burn. I sand the entire surface evenly as I move through the sanding grits to 320.

I could power sand on the lathe using an abrasive disc system with a drill, but I prefer using a small piece of neoprene rubber (old pieces of a wetsuit are great) as a pad and wrap the sandpaper around it. This way I can stop the lathe and inspect the surface, and if I have to give any spot extra attention, I already have a piece of sandpaper in my hand to do it.

Thoroughness is extremely important. If I miss an area, it will dye differently. Also, the dye will not work as well on areas where a glue or filler has been used.

The quickest and most consistent coloring method I've found for achieving the black Martinez finish is oil dye, the kind used on leather . I've had great results with black Fiebrings brand dye. I find it at leather shops that do custom work such as belts and saddles. The dye comes with its own applicator, penetrates deeply, and will dye almost anything. So, if you don't want darkly stained hands, I suggest wearing rubber gloves.

I apply two coats of dye. Try to find a well-lit area and lay some old newspaper down to cover any surfaces that might get accidentally dyed.

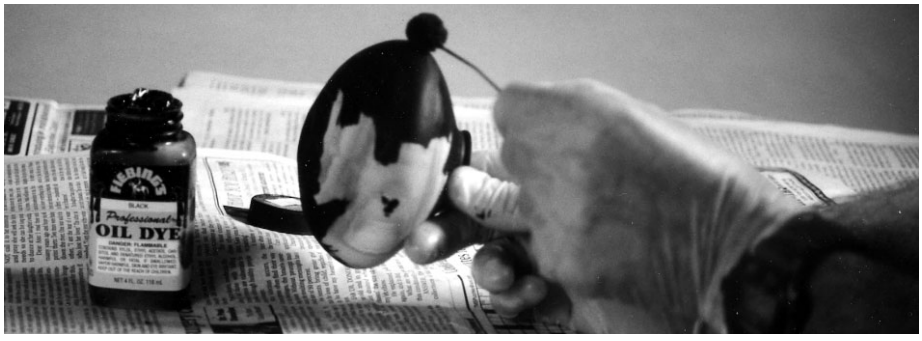
The first coat of dye is put on heavy. I use the brush applicator that comes with the dye, but a small disposable foam brush also works well.

Areas that might not seem to dye as dark with the first coat, like knots or tight grain, can usually be taken care of with a second coat. I always wait at least a full 24 hours before applying the second coat as oil dye dries slowly.

The dye usually raises the grain of the wood only slightly. But, I don't sand the vessel. I lightly rub the entire surface with 4/0 steel wool. This avoids removing too much of the dye, which happens if you try to smooth the raised grain with sandpaper. The steel wool almost has a burnishing effect. If I have to use wood with knots or areas with very tight grain, I don't apply too much pressure using the wool in those areas or it can remove the dye. If the dye is removed in spots, the whole piece needs to be redyed. Don't try to dye just these bare spots alone — you'll end up with an uneven-looking surface.

Krylon Matte spray provides a protective coat and a silvery like patina to the dye.

When I apply the second coat of dye, I make sure the entire surface is coated with about the same amount of dye. Pay close attention to areas where it might start to run or spots you've missed. Since the surface is already black, it can be difficult to see what you're doing when you dye the surface the second time. It's best to hold the piece so you can see if the entire surface is wet as you coat it. An extra-strong light can help. When the pot is totally and evenly covered with dye, I let it set for about 10 minutes, and wipe off the entire pot with a lint-free rag. This removes any excess dye, and you will see the texture of the wood through the black surface.



Dab on a heavy coat of dye. Wear gloves-- Dye wears off slowly.

When the entire pot has dried for a full 24 hours, I'm ready to put that silver hue in the finish. I use Krylon Matte finish. This is a protective finish that is used on paintings to cut down any gloss the paint might show.

This finish has a high percentage of solids in the coating, so multiple coats start to produce a whitish buildup. I usually put on about three or four coats. You can see the finish start to get the silvery hue after the second coat. This finish also prevents the dye from rubbing off.

After I've put the Matte finish on, I spray lacquer over the whole piece using semi-gloss Deft. The lacquer builds over the Matte finish and gives the piece sheen. Then I rub the entire surface again with 4/0 wool and finally a super fine grit, liquid buffing compound for lacquer finishes. The brand I use is Clean Bright, Liquid Ebony 27. It's usually available at auto paint stores. The results of this type of finish can be remarkable; most people can't tell the difference between a turned piece that's finished this way and a Martinez pot.

Phil Brennion has sculpted and turned wood for galleries for the last 15 years from his farm in Chino Valley, Az. Before woodturning, he built custom furniture.

VACUUM CHUCKS

A turning gizmo you can't afford to ignore

KEN KEOUGHAN

This article will not be the definitive utterance on vacuum chucks. It will be the best explanation that I can give of how we made mine, why I wanted it, what the pros and cons of a vacuum chuck are and some words of caution that you really can't afford to ignore if you use a vacuum chuck.

One day I walked into Dave Lancaster's shop (wood working shop not retail store) in Weeks Mills, ME. Dave, as many of you know, is a production bowl turner, possibly the best in the world today, a national demonstrator and an excellent woodturning instructor.

As I walked in he stopped the lathe, reached up, pulled a lever and took a big salad bowl off some sort of drum, almost in one motion. My eyes dilated and I asked what it was. "Vacuum chuck," he said.

Let me underscore this — he reached up, pulled on a lever that closed a ball valve and took this bowl off the lathe in the same time and with about as much effort as it takes to pick a bowl up off a table. And this was a big bowl.

He then turned it around, placed it against the padded drum, drew up the tail stock to center it, bottom out, using the center mark he'd left there from a previous turning step, threw the lever back and turned the lathe on slow. He checked his alignment to make sure the bowl was running true, removed the tail stock, and proceeded to finish turning the foot of the bowl. A little sanding while the piece was on the lathe and he was done. Done!! No nubbin to cut off, no hand sanding, no flattening on a belt sander. Nothing. He was done with the bowl. Flip the lever, take it off the lathe. No spanner, wrenches, chuck keys, little bars. No busted knuckles. No marks or mars from chuck jaws. No worry about the outside rim lining up with the rim on the jam chuck.

He put another bowl on, turned the vacuum on with the lever and said, "Put your hand right here," I did and jerked it back like I'd just touched a red hot stove. I was startled. "Put it back, it won't hurt you. That's just the vacuum drawing air in from the outside through the end grain."

I was really impressed. This chuck was fast, accurate, easy, didn't crush soft fibers on a tenon or bust the side out of a rabbet in expansion mode. And even more exciting, it eliminated that final step involving the tail stock and all the attendant follow-up steps: sanding out a hole and maybe the ring around it, cutting off and sanding the nubbin, never mind the possibility of turning the nubbin down a tad too small and seeing it collapse or break off just as the work piece begins to cartwheel against tool, tool rest, head stock, etc. I, of course, have never had to sand out the dents from such a wanton act of clumsiness, but I know several turners who have.

Dave Lancaster checking bowl held by vacuum system, before turning off the foot

Dave told me a bit about his trip to Ireland to visit Liam O'Neill. "I made him a working vacuum chuck; he taught me all the tricks he knew to speed up production turning without sacrificing quality. I worked with him for two weeks roughing bowls." There are no two ways about it for production work a vacuum chuck is invaluable.

Subsequently I talked to Nick Cook and got a copy of an article he had written about vacuum chucking.

He works on smaller lighter pieces than Lancaster and the article is excellent. Call Nick at (770) 421-1212 if you want a copy.

Vacuum chucks are truly quite remarkable and in fact they are not very hard to assemble and they don't have to be expensive. Here's how.

Your lathe must have a hole through the headstock spindle to feed the vacuum through the headstock to the work piece. Next you need these components most of which are readily available:

- Vacuum pump
- Vacuum gauge
- Electric motor for pump
- Drum chuck to mount on spindle to hold work piece
- Miscellaneous hardware
- Adapter to couple vacuum line to headstock

VACUUM PUMP

To start with you may want to look for a used vacuum pump. Mine cost $50. It was a pump that ran the milking machine on a dairy farm. A friend found one at the dump, another in a junk shop. Air conditioning contractors could be a good source. Otherwise you can buy one new, but they tend to be expensive. Smaller pumps range in price from $330 to about $2,200. More about that later. You probably want a pump that will draw a minimum of 3 cubic feet per minute (CFM) and is capable of pulling 20-28 inches of vacuum. Note: big vacuum pumps are very noisy, similar to a compressor. They also need to be vented outside, or in a manner compatible with an oil misty exhaust. Smaller oil free pumps are quieter and don't need to be vented out. There are also smaller oil immersion pumps that are quiet and efficient.

Look in the Yellow Pages under "Pneumatic" and "Compressors".

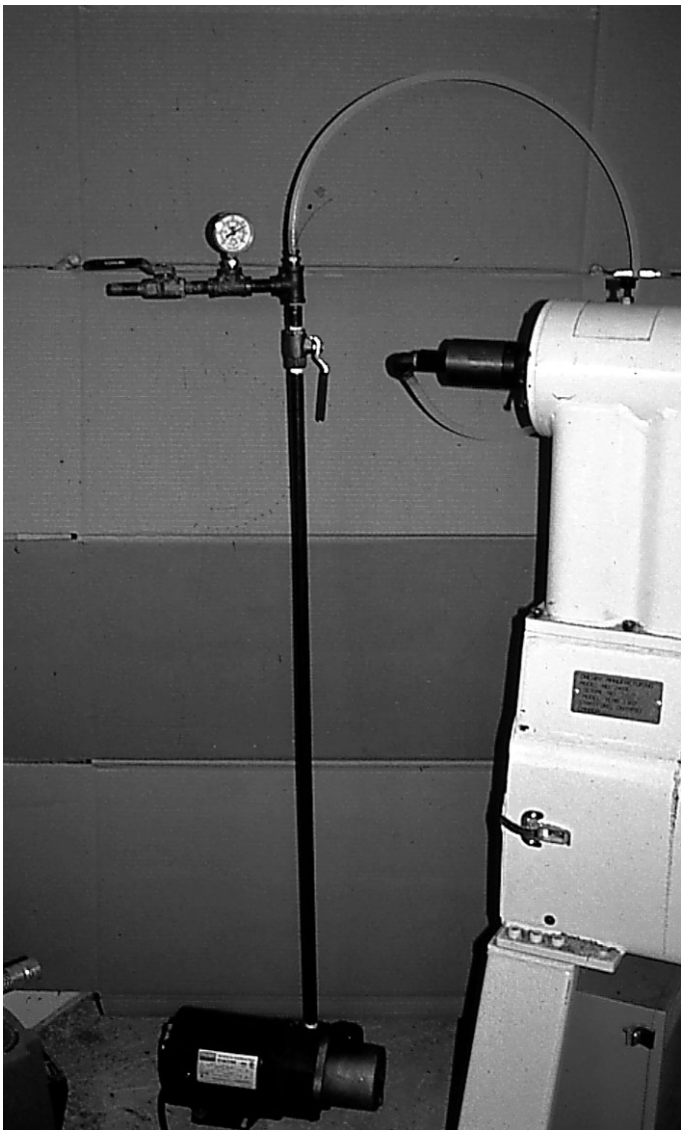
VACUUM GAUGE

I bought a 2-in. gauge, steel-cased with a $^1/_4$-in. male brass bottom, 0-30" HG (HG means hygrometer, which is how vacuum is measured). Mine cost about $11, shipped from McMaster-Carr Supply Company (908) 329-6666.

ELECTRIC MOTOR

Since my pump was big and heavy, I needed a 2-horsepower, 1725-RPM motor. It had to be set up to fit the frame on the pump and it had to be wired, in my case for 220V service, though that's not always necessary.

If you don't know how to wire it or what wire, switches, boxes, etc., to use, someone in the turning club probably or your friendly electrician does.



A small vacuum system based on a small, quiet, oil-bath pump.

In terms of HP and RPM levels, that will depend on the pump. Check the plate on it. A little further studying, talking and checking around should enable you to find the right speed and power. Lancaster has a small portable vacuum pump that he carries to shows and demonstrations that has a $^3/_4$ HP motor running on 110 volt power. It weighs about 100 pounds, so you can move it, but you don't want to often.

DRUM CHUCK

These can be made any number of ways. The most obvious is to use hard wood stave-construction. However, be aware that the fit must be airtight after glue-up. Part it off to insure squareness while truing up the cylinder on the lathe. Among the virtues of wooden staves is that they can be thick enough to be solid. They are easily trued up; they have a broad enough surface to hold the work piece well; the padded cover can be turned off and the surface either resurfaced or reshaped; they permit spray adhesive to be used for attach-

Lancaster adjusting lathe speed before working on the bowl. Coupling adapter, vacuum hose, valve and gauge are shown at right, where they in no way obstruct operation of the lathe.

ing the padding; they are neither delicate nor brittle.

Other materials can be used. I cannot recommend them because I have no experience with them. Among these are PVC and aluminum. You could also turn one from a solid block of dry wood. But you need to be sure that it is not too porous and remains true.

No matter how you do them, or with what material, they must be attached to a faceplate (dedicated to the drum chuck), must run true, must be airtight. In addition, the rim that accepts the work piece must be padded. Closed cell neoprene, $^1/_8$-in.-thick, works well in this application. Your local dive shop is a good source; it's used to repair wet suits. Another material that seems to work reasonably well is the plastic packing material, usually in sheet form, available at any place that does frequent packing, such as a U-haul dealer .

MISCELLANEOUS HARDWARE

See the photographs and diagram for a better understanding than I can spell out in words. I've included a parts list to give specifics. The diagram suggests a vacuum line from $^1/_2$-to-1-in. diameter. This and the orifices on pump will dictate sizing of the other components. Mine cost under $25 wholesale.

Hardware List:

Piping	Ball valves (2)
Nipples	Teflon tape
Tee joints	Reducing bushings
Bell bushings	Reinforced vacuum line

COUPLING ADAPTER

I have a OneWay lathe and they make a coupling adapter to hook-up onto the lathe. It costs around $100 and can be adapted to most commonly used lathes, just as chucks can, with inserts to match your lathe threads, (800) 565-7288. If you don't want to do that you can make your own with a bearing somehow attached to a faceplate that fits your threads etc. Also McMaster-Carr has a rotary joint, but it costs more than the OneWay adapter and is limited to an unsatisfactory 800 RPMs. There are other solutions, I'm sure, but the OneWay adapter is the one I use.

WHAT SIZE SYSTEM

I got Dave Lancaster to hook my system up. It took him less than half a day, including a trip to the store for wiring and other electrical materials. It would have taken me a day or two, but I think I could have gotten the job done. So I can honestly say, you can do it, especially if you are willing to ask for help. All joints were taped with Teflon tape. All wiring was in accord with all appropriate codes. How do you know how big a system to construct? That is a matter of individual choice. Here are some mathematical aides to your decision making.

CFM is the cubic feet of air per minute that your vacuum pump can evacuate. If you have a drum chuck 10-in.-dia. (inside dimension) and 3-in.-deep (inside) you have the following:

Surface area:	**$\pi R^2 = 3.1416 \times 5^2 = 78.5$ square inches**
Volume:	**area x depth = 78.5 x 3 = 235.5 cubic inches**
235.5÷(12 x 12 x 12)	**or 1728 cubic inches/cubic foot**
Volume:	**235.5 ÷ 1728.0 = 0.14 cubic feet**

So … if I have a pump with a 3.0 CFM rating and I have only 0.14 cubic feet to evacuate, it will take me 3.0 ÷ 60 = 0.05 cubic feet per second or 0.14 ÷.05 which is about 3-seconds to evacuate my drum; at a 5 CFM rating about 1.7 seconds.

HG Rating: 20-28 inches of mercury, usually estimated at 26" for most pumps.

Holding Power: Go back to my original drum premise, a 10-in inside diameter 78.5 square inch surface area. Rule of thumb, 26 in. of mercury is divided by 2.

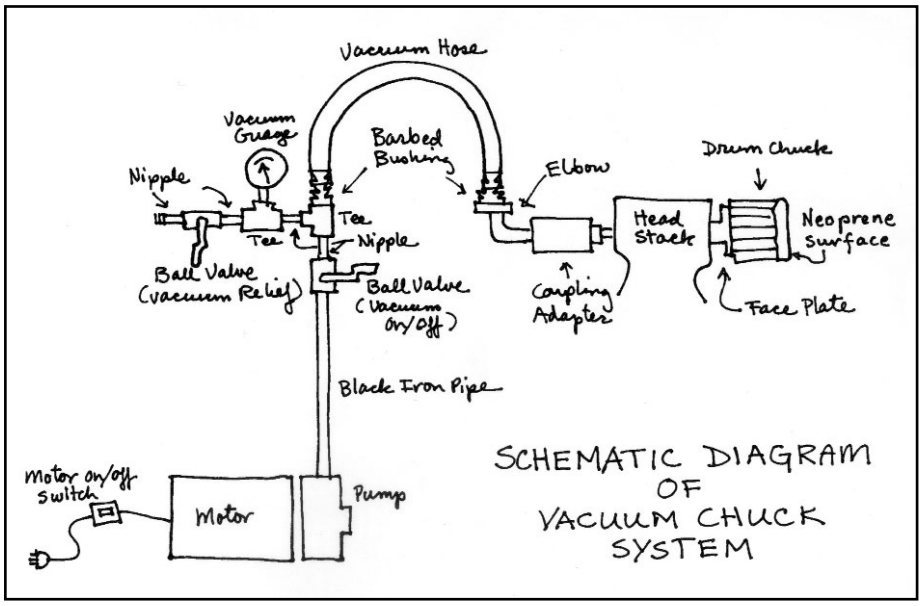
Now: 13 x 78.5 = 1020.0 pounds of vacuum pressure over the 78.5 square

inch surface area.

If I want to use from a 6:1 to a 10:1 safety factor, that vacuum level will hold 1020 ÷ 10 = 102 pounds or 1020 ÷6 = 170 pounds. Therefore, theoretically I can mount a piece weighing 100 to 170 pounds with this chuck system. However, this does not take into account:

- Surface compatibility drum / work piece
- Porosity of the work piece
- Centrifugal force of the lathe turning the piece
- Force of gouge or chisel against the turning motion
- Direction of that force, e.g. if direction of force is along lathe bed, and within the 5-in radius of the drum it helps hold the work piece; directly opposite and fighting against the vacuum if further away from the centerline than 5 inches.

At the risk of boring one and all to tears let us again look at holding forces. If my drum is 10-in., ± I have 1000 pounds of holding power. If my drum is 5 in., I have $\pi \times 2.5^2 = 19.6$ square inches of surface area. 19.6 x 13 = 255 pounds of holding power. So I've cut my diameter in half and have about $^1/_4$ of the holding power. Judicious caution is called for.



CAUTIONS ABOUT VACUUM CHUCKS

If you've never been hit in the face with a flying woodturning, count your blessings. I have. I was using a home-made disk and toggle type chuck at the time. It wasn't fun. Despite safety glasses, I had 28 stitches, a blowout fracture of the orbital bone and continue to have numbness in a part of my face. I'm lucky I didn't lose an eye. So I urge you to read what I have to say about being cautious with a vacuum chuck. You need to be a fairly experienced turner to use these chucks. The following possibilities exist which would cause failure and a flying work piece:

- A power outage to the motor
- Turning through the piece
- Sufficient pressure to the outside of the work piece to tip it off the drum chuck
- A severe catch
- Punky wood that is too porous to hold the vacuum (wood sealer can help eliminate this problem)
- Walls too thin that could collapse
- A breakout of a bark inclusion or other structural defect

If I had had my vacuum chuck that day, my plate would not have come off. If I had been wearing a faceshield I might not have been injured. I use my vacuum chuck with caution and judgement. I don't turn without a faceshield anymore.

Remember the smaller the piece, the more suction you need; there's less space to apply suction to; delicate hollow turnings can be mercilessly crushed when the vacuum relief valve is thrown to apply suction.

These are wonderful devices. They can do all I promised at the outset. And they are coming more and more into use. Perhaps this article will help you to get there.

Turning off the foot on a bowl held by vacuum chuck. Note the absence of a tailstock The entire area can be turned and sanded cleanly, so no handwork is required to complete the job.

Ken Keoughan, a retired advertising consultant, turns wood in Friendship, ME, summers, and in Mt. Dora, FL, winters.

PIERCED AND CARVED

New way to see the light in carving

RON HAMPTON

THE DENTAL DRILL IS FUN. It's your friend! Uh-huh! And I want to sell you some swamp land in Florida. But, actually the dental drill is fun when your are the driller instead of the drill-ee and also a turner. The drill excels at making beautiful carvings on your vases.

Frank Sudol of Saskatchewan, Canada, who to my mind is one of the best turners/carvers in the world, uses a dental drill extensively to carve intricate patterns in his very thin vases. Frank's professional background is in biology, and he holds university degrees in both that subject and education. His biology background is particularly apparent in his work.

Fellow Canadian Cam Merkle is from Martensville, Saskatchewan, and the founder and president of Razertip Industries, which manufactures pyrographic, or woodburning, tools. Cam has been creating realistic bird carvings since 1983. His professional training is in designing , installing, and maintaining commercial photofinishing equipment.

I was so impressed by the textures and patterns created by these two artists that I asked them to collaborate to create a very special carving for this article. The beautiful piece of art at right shows the results of their combined talents.

The turner and the carver joined forces to create a unique sculpture.

Cutting Tall Thin Vases:

Frank Sudol's vases are usually deep and narrow. They are often elegant classical shapes with patterns of nature carved through the thin walls. He uses an ultra high speed dental drill to do his carving. For the dental drill to be effective, the wood must be extremely thin. Frank cuts his vases to one-sixteenth of an inch thick. He used to find it difficult to cut this thin. Now, however, he uses various sizes of boring bars (with lights on the tips) to make the job much easier. The light shining through white wood is his thickness indicator. With his shop lights out, the light from the internal bulb can be seen through the thin walls. Frank works until the entire piece is even in color. Careful scraping removes any ridges which can be seen through the walls.

Frank first cuts the profile of the vase. He makes his vases smaller at the bottom and larger at the top. This is an attractive profile and one that is relatively easy to hollow out. He starts by using a two inch diameter Forstner bit. Next, he uses one of his boring bars. This bar may weigh from thirty-five to one hundred and eighty pounds and be from five to nine feet long. The front of the bar rests on the tool rest, and the rear rests on a wide roller. Since Frank is not holding the tool, his body is not taking a "beating" during the hollowing out process. Instead, the boring bar dampens out all the vibrations and catches, and he is able to manipulate it with just a little effort from one hand. The cutting tip is a tear-drop shaped piece of high speed steel. A small automotive light (powered by an inexpensive DC battery charger) is attached to the tip of the cutter. The heavy bar allows Frank to make deep vases without a lot of wear and tear on his body, while the light shining through the wood allows him to cut thin more easily. The boring bar system became very important to Frank after he broke both of his arms at the same time. (This technique does not work well on dark wood, since the light can not easily pass through the wood. Wet wood also allows the light to travel through it more easily than dry wood.)

The Dental Drill:

Frank uses a dental drill to cut out his nature patterns in the thin vases. The drill is air powered and is capable of about three hundred thousand revolutions per minute. The cutting is so rapid that very fine control is possible. Frank draws the design on the vase and then uses the drill to cut away the waste wood. The drill almost vaporizes the wood. If you decide to try this technique, there are now several companies selling high

speed dental drills for a fairly reasonable fee. I have been very pleased with the Paragraphics hand piece (1-800-624-7415).

The Woodburning:

After a little experimentation Frank and Cam decided that Frank would establish the feather layout and pierce the vase in the spaces between the feathers. Cam requested that Frank leave one fourth inch to one half inch extra thickness at the top and bottom of the turning to allow for additional carving.

Cam found the birch to be nice to work with but somewhat less friendly than the Basswood and Tupelo that he was used to. Carving the feathers and preparing them for burning took about six to eight hours. Woodburning the feathers was done with a Razertip SS-d and a #1 (large skew) and #12S (very small curved spear) pen. The feather barb lines were penciled in, along with any splits and splays in the feathers. The actual burning took approximately twenty to twenty five hours. Thousands and thousands of individual lines were necessary to give a realistic, soft feather look.

When burning feather shapes, it is important to remember that the lines being burned in are not the barbs, but they are the space between the barbs. The wood between each burn makes up the barb itself. For this reason, it is important to keep the burn line close together and parallel. The barbs also have a noticeable curve (usually an "S" curve) to them. Many pyrographers can burn lines close together and parallel, but burning close together, parallel, AND "S" curved takes a lot of practice.

Magpie tail feathers can have fifty to seventy barbs per inch, so the burning has to be quite fine. Because Cam has often burned in excess of one hundred and twenty barbs per inch with the Razertip tool, this was no problem. The burning was done with the tool set at the lowest setting that would leave a brown mark on the wood. This gave Cam pretty good comfort on the handpiece and allowed him to burn slowly where necessary without turning the wood to charcoal.

A pyrography tip deftly creates the texture and line of a natural feather.

Because Cam would be painting the finished surface, the darkness of the burn was not important. Once the burning was done, the entire surface was lightly sanded with dry six hundred grit paper and then vigorously brushed with a tooth brush. After being cleaned with compressed air, it was sealed with three coats of KT Super Sealer (available through bird carving suppliers). It is important to use a sealer that doesn't fill in all the fine detail. The sealer should not be water-based, as the water could cause the wood fibers to swell and all the hard work of burning would virtually disappear. Cam uses Ivory black oil paint and Grumbacher medium #1 for the basecoat of black. He then worked in a bit of Burnt Umber for color. Over the base coat he applied thin layers of dry iridescent powder (also available through bird carving suppliers), working them onto the wet Ivory black and blending them into each other. Cam used seven different shades of powder to give a realistic look to each feather. He also had several real magpie feathers on hand for reference. Finally, the quills were painted and given a layer of glossy varnish. Total painting time was probably around six hours. The piece was left to dry about five days. No further coating is necessary over the oil paint and iridescent powders.

Frank Sudol and Cam Merkle have made a collaborative effort to create a beautiful turned carving. Frank and Cam really enjoyed working together on this project and were very pleased with the results of their first joint effort. They expect that there will be more in the future. Speaking for the viewing public, I certainly hope so.

Ron Hampton turns and carves wood in Texarkana, TX. Photos by Cam Merkle

The Woodstock Woodshow

Turners Shine at Major Canadian Show

WILLIAM DUCE

The Woodstock Woodshow is the largest of its kind in Canada, and once again, it attracted a strong field of entries for its turning competition. While several of the competitors were familiar names at the show, there were also a few fresh faces that challenged the "old" guard for fame and glory. Well, if not exactly fame and glory, then a ribbon at the very least.

As always, the turning competition was divided between an amateur class (someone who turns for their own enjoyment, or has never won a best of show), and open class (someone who turns for a living, or has won a best of class). These two divisions covered seven categories: Bowls, Dishes and Containers; Lamps; Spindles and legs (unattached); Other; Miniatures; Seniors; Laminates; and Artistic design.

Most of the categories were well represented with a variety of finely turned objects. The only exception, was the spindle category, which once again failed to draw many entries.

If you're a bowl turner, though, it would be hard not to be impressed with the vast selection of faceplate work there to entertain and inspire you. The artistic design category (open division) had several nice pieces vying for the red ribbon. This year's winner was Don Martindale. His entry consisted of a large, masterful turning of a figured maple bowl that was a basic form, and yet worked well as a canvas for the inherent figure and muted color of the wood.

In the same category, was Doug Magrath's large, free-form box elder burl bowl. Once again, the design was kept simple, focusing upon the natural color and figure of the wood. While both of these pieces are solid, flawlessly executed turnings that compliment the properties of the wood to the max, I would have thought that they would have perhaps been more suited to the category of bowls, rather than artistic design (but then, we don't want to go opening up that old kettle of worms again, do we?)

Dan Braniff of Elmwood, Ontario, took first place, senior division with his Loon.

A third piece in this category, was Brian McIntosh's walnut platter with painted rim. In my not so always humble view, this piece was a little closer to what I would have expected to find in this category. The simple, painted treatment which he applied to the rim of the platter provided a nice compliment to the tone of the walnut. Rather than apply a smooth coat, McIntosh crackled the red paint which added a hint of texture, an immediate patina, and acted as a foil to the smooth surface of the walnut.

Gerhard Enns maintained his winning record at the show with six firsts, in addition to a best of show award. The best of show was awarded to a covered container Enns turned out of a piece of figured walnut, accentuated by a purpleheart finial and rim. While it was certainly a most deserving turning, I found a hollow vessel that he laminated out of wenge and yellow wood to be more to my liking. This piece won first place in the laminated division. The inset "port holes" that encircle the circumference of the vessel lend it an extra-terrestrial feel, and give it a slight hint of whimsy and charm, that would otherwise be

absent without the holes.

One of the interesting entries in the amateur division, "other" category, was Juan Montero's soccer balls. While they may not have received a ribbon, they were a definite hit with the crowd.

Dan Braniff, a first time competitor at Woodstock, walked off with four first place ribbons, and a best of show. His "Loon IV," is the culmination of several influences. The most recognizable, would have to be the two years that he spent living in aboriginal communities in Northern Canada. While there, he had the opportunity to absorb native culture first hand, and witness the relationship that the Natives share with their natural environment. In northern aboriginal designs, animals are depicted in a loose, animated format. With this turning, Braniff has captured that animation in a style that, while derivative of native art, avoids the trap of becoming a mere copy of it.

According to Braniff, in native lore the loon was a man who had offended his tribe, and so the gods turned him into the loon, which is why they make the soulful cry that they are known for.

The technical low-down on this platter, is that it is a solid parquetry composition of rosewood, figured maple, walnut, fiddleback maple, oak, and ash. The black color in the loon is pigmented epoxy.

Gerhard Enns picked up the first place ribbon in the open laminated division with this wenge and yellow wood hollow turning.

As an interesting aside, Braniff had taken slides of an earlier version of the Loon platter to the AAW symposium in Akron, where it was critiqued in a session conducted by Steve Loar and professor Gene Kangas, of the University of Cleveland art gallery. The early version of the loon was quite different from this one, and Loar and Kangas spent a good deal of time analyzing the work, suggesting that Braniff take the bird out of the picture and into the rim, and in Braniff's own words, "allowed me to take it to the next level."

In fact, Braniff credits this constructive criticism as one of the reasons that he was able to walk away with four firsts and a best of show (the best of show was for an end table, entitled "Fly away Home." It was stylistically similar to Loon IV, only featured a Canada Goose instead of the loon.)

In summation, while the Woodstock turning competition may only be a "woodshow competition" (as opposed to a gallery exhibition), and has a few minor quibbles that are almost unavoidable with this type of venue, it still remains one of the leading displays for high quality, competitive turning in all Ontario.

1ST place winner in the artistic design, open category, was this large figured maple bowl by Don Martindale of Jordan, Ontario.

William Duce, a turner and writer in Hamilton, Ontario, is the author of "The Fine Art of Small Scale Woodturning," Sterling Publishing Co., New York.

COLLECTORS OF WOOD ART

Strong kickoff for new organization

ALAN LACER

WHAT STARTED AS A "collector's weekend" last year at the Arkansas home of collectors Robyn and John Horn has evolved into a serious organization for those passionate about collecting art objects in wood.

With by-laws written, an application for non-profit status filed with the IRS, officers chosen and convention sites picked for 1999 and 2000, the Collectors of Wood Art (CWA) is off to a rocket start. Although it includes a strong woodturning component, group members are quick to point out that their interests extend far beyond lathe-turned objects to any object created in wood.

The organization's first formal conference happened last September in San Francisco. The CWA formalized much of the groundwork that had been done since the gathering in Arkansas. The conference drew about 240 artists, collectors, gallery operators, critics and museum curators for a visual feast of wooden objects and lively discussion.

Tribute to Bob Stocksdale

Besides the hundreds of pieces on display there were panel discussions, slide presentations, a banquet with keynote speaker, an exhibition of the work of Bob Stocksdale, a special benefit auction, and the grand finale of a sunset dinner overlooking the Napa Valley at the home of collectors Ron and Anita Wornick.

First, the work. All sales were handled through the ten galleries displaying pieces at the conference. Although the majority of pieces were turned, examples of furniture, sculpture, and carving were in abundance. What made this so different from the normal woodturning conferences that we have grown accustomed to, was the presence of outstanding woodworking created without the help of the lathe. Furniture by standouts like Wendell Castle, Fabiane Garcia, Paul Reiber, Michael Sterling, Gary Knox Bennet, and Art Carpenter, as well as sculpted bowls by Gary Stevens and Derek Bencomo, carved spoons by Norm Sartorius — just to name a few— made the event an exciting opportunity for anyone drawn to wooden objects. A special exhibition of 26 pieces of Bob Stocksdale from the collection of Forrest Merrill represented work from the 1960's through the '90's. Bob also received a lifetime achievement award from the CWA for a turning career spanning 60 years.

Turned objects set amid furniture and sculptural pieces created a visual feast for the first conference of Collectors of Wood Art. Piece in foreground by Wendell Castle.

One of the highlights of the conference was the slide presentations and talks by about 56 wood artists. Although this sounds overwhelming, there was such variety and enthusiasm that time passed quickly. A full gamut of wood objects was presented, past and current works of artists and works by "turners" that had nothing turned about it! Presenters discussed sources of inspiration, developments in their work and current directions and explorations.

There were three separate panel discussions that looked at different aspects of the woodworking field. The first of these was centered around woodworking and education, with panelists Gail Fredell of Anderson Ranch, Donald Fortescue of the California College of Arts and Crafts, and Frank Cummings profes-

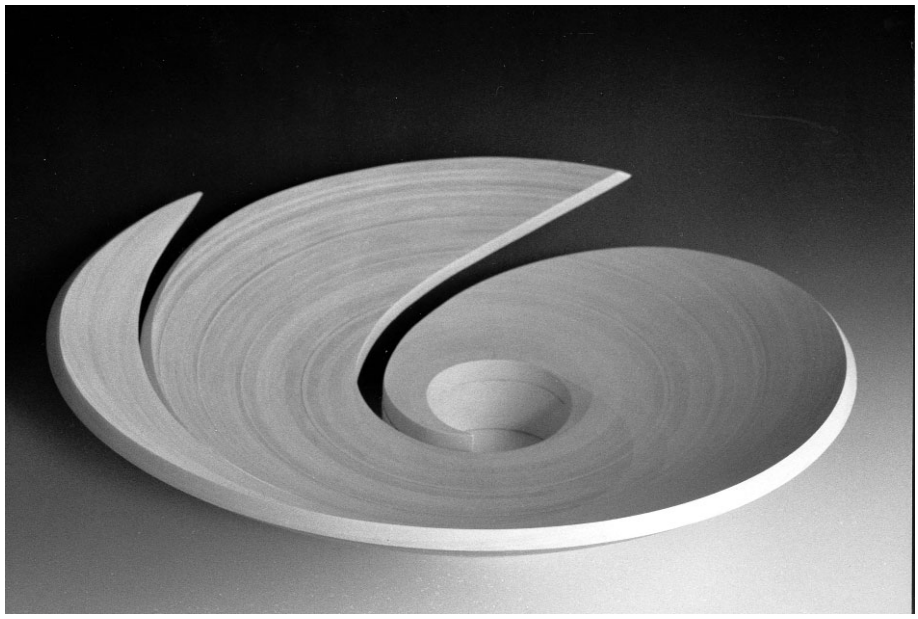
Internet Gallery

The Internet Show, *Impressions Expressions*, discussed on the following page can be viewed at:

http://www.woodartist.com

If you don't have Internet access at home or work, you might try your local public library--A.L.

sor at California State University in Fullerton. We had a close look at the current programs in wood at these three institutions, all different and all experiencing strong interest in what they were offering. However, the comments of Frank Cummings pointed to the bleak outlook for woodworking in the future in both the public school and college settings due to lack of administrative and financial support.



Elements Series #1, "Air," created by Virginia Dotson from Pau Marfim plywood was one of the pieces displayed at the collectors conference. (5-in. high and 17-in. diameter)

Going Beyond Technique

The next panel focused on current interests among artists that went beyond technique, material and the lathe. The panel members were Virginia Dotson, Stephen Hogbin, Mark Sfirri and Michael Hosaluk, with David Ellsworth giving an introductory overview of the evolution of the wooden vessel and the woodturning field in the last half century. Virginia Dotson with her husband David gave both a live demonstration and a discussion concerning the possibilities of virtual shows on the Internet. Having been involved in the *Out of Focus* exhibit that aired last year, they are key developers of a current show, *Impressions Expressions* that showcases the work of five artists: Todd Hoyer, Stoney Lamar, Virginia Dotson, Stephen Hogbin and Craig Nutt. The show is based on a powerful article written by Michelle Holzapfel and delivered at the World Turning Conference in 1997. Virginia pointed out the strengths of virtual shows: they can be viewed anywhere, at any time by anyone with access to the Internet; they will reach many different types of people, of all ages, and from vastly different locations; they provide an opportunity for feedback to the artist as well as to other viewers—and may really set a dialogue in motion; they are relatively inexpensive to establish and maintain; they are often artist based in their origins rather than a gallery, institution, or organization—which means the artists select and explain their work on their own terms. Virginia was followed by Stephen Hogbin detailing the possibilities and dynamics of community art projects.

Klingon War Spoon was carved from Amboyna burl by Norm Sartorius. (10-in. wide X 7-in. long X 1 1/2-in. deep)

Collaboration Relay

Next, Mark Sfirri discussed the many varieties of collaborative work. The notion of "relay collaboration" was fascinating. Work is brought to a level of completion and then handed on to one or more other individuals who build on the initial work—all done in isolation of one another. The session was concluded by Michael Hosaluk who conveyed the spirit and excitement of the unique conferences held at Emma Lake in Saskatchewan. (For a review of the Emma Lake event, see Page 26)

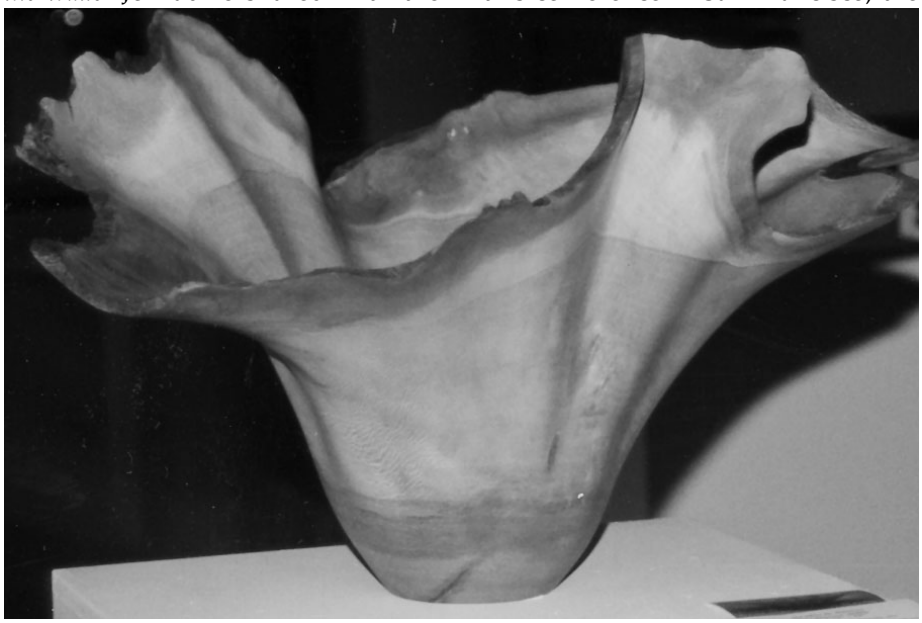
The final panel was titled "The Academic Forum," with Seattle art critic Matthew Kangas, furniture artist Wendell Castle, Jo Lauria, As-

sistant Curator of Decorative Arts at the LA County Museum of Art, and furniture artist Peter Michael Adams from Australia. Mr. Kangas pointed to the lowly position of woodturning in the art field—with the work suffering from rather bland reviews and little critical analysis. He offered several suggestions to help the field along: greater openness to critiques, commission of critical publications related to specific exhibitions that would contain more analysis than description, anticipate and benefit from negative reactions to artists' work and perhaps the entire field of woodturning as it matures.

Ten Adopted Rules of Thumb

Wendell Castle related the development of ideas in his own work and the role of private collectors and art museums. Wendell shared his idea development list called "My 10 Adopted Rules of Thumb." My two favorites were these: *If you are in love with an idea, you are no judge of its beauty or value*; and, *After learning the tricks of the trade, don't think you know the trade*. Jo Laurie shared with the group the art museum's side of building and displaying a collection of contemporary art made in wood. The final presentation of the conference was by Peter Michael Adams—perhaps one of the most unique and moving talks I have heard. Entitled "The Crafted Collectible In a Secular World," the focus was on the role of art to enrich and heal our lives. He stressed going beyond mere consumption of art as a luxury item or placing fine work in sterile displays— to surround ourselves with art, use it, make it a part of our day and the communities in which we live. His talk was filled with personal experiences, especially of tragedies of those around him—but always pointing to the role of art and beauty as an uplifting force. I gathered by the sustained applause at the end of this presentation that many were touched by his comments.

The capstone of the conference was the evening dinner overlooking Napa Valley at the Wornicks. Long time collectors, supporters of the arts, and the moving force behind this conference in San Francisco, the Wornicks have certainly been an important factor in contemporary woodworking. As part of this last event a silent auction was held to benefit victims of a car accident following the Emma Lake Conference last August. This auction raised more than $24,000 to benefit those suffering injury and property loss as a result of the accident. Such an evening closed the event with an extraordinary touch of class.



A highly sculpted bowl form by Californian Gary Stevens. (Work is about 20 X 20 in.). Several pieces from his Emerging Flower and Seaform Series were displayed.

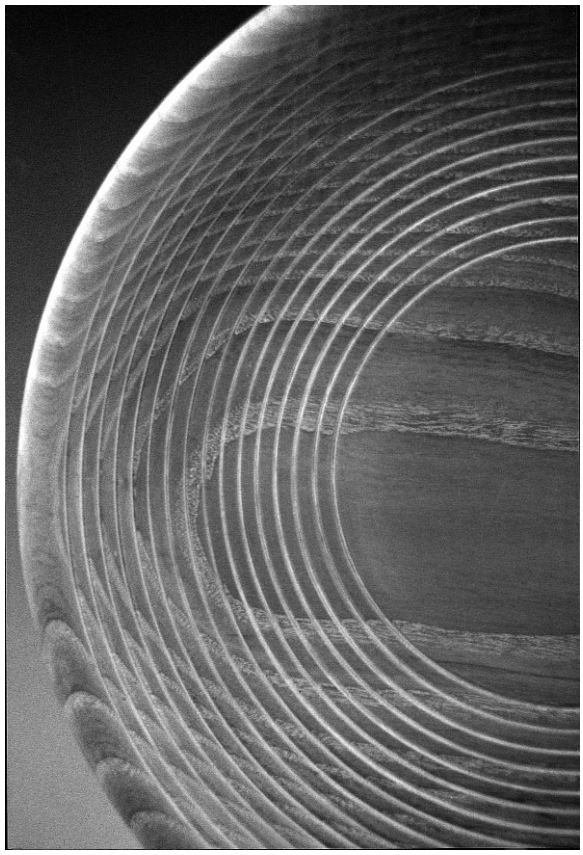
This vessel, one of Todd Hoyer's Ringed Series, is weathered elm which has been turned, carved and wire wrapped. (14-in. tall).

I came away from this conference feeling that something exciting was emerging with this new organization. The coalition of artists, collectors, gallery operators and museum curators will probably do much to stimulate the field of woodworking—not just with sales but through greater experimentation, criticism and events like this conference.

For membership information regarding the CWA, mail your request to: CWA, David and Ruth Waterbury, 4541 E. Lake Harriet Pkwy, Minneapolis, MN 55409.

Alan Lacer is a turner and contributing editor to American Woodturner living in Shoreview, MN.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM TRIANGLE WOODTURNERS OF NC



Spalted Elm vessel, above, 15-in.-dia. X 8-in.-high, by Tio Campanile, Raleigh, N.C. Right, Ash Platter, $14\frac{3}{4}$-in.-dia. X 3-in.-high, Bill Johnston, West End, NC

TRIANGLE WOODTURNERS
Of North Carolina

Walnut and sycamore jar, above, 7-in.-dia. X 7-in. high, John Evans, Mt. Olive, NC. Right, Maple burl vessel, 13-in.-dia. X $8\frac{1}{2}$-in.-high, Elvie Jackson, Raleigh, NC.

If you'd like your chapter gallery featured, send photos to AAW editor, Dick Burrows, 929 Maynard Ave., Knoxville, TN 37917

GETTING THE SPALT OUT

Several months back Patricia Frain showed our local chapter a new product called P.C. Petrifier, which was developed by the marine industry to alleviate wood rot in boat timbers. She had applied the product to spalted or "punky" wood with some success. Recently I tried this new product myself and this is what I learned.

The description printed on the label states "P.C. Petrifier is a single component adhesive formulated to fully penetrate and revitalize rotted wood. Modern technology has allowed us to develop a water base wood consolidate that is environmentally friendly.

"Petrifier's low viscosity allows deep penetration into soft rotted wood fiber - restoring old wood to near original structural integrity.

"Pour, brush or spray over area to be treated. Allow for an overnight cure before completing the job with P.C. Woody wood epoxy, by reforming or replacing missing wood.

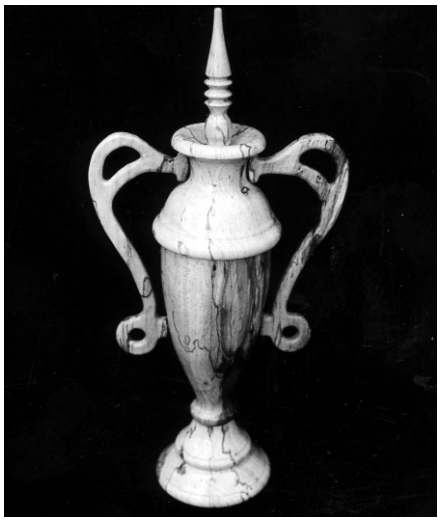
"Use Petrifier in both exterior and interior wood in a soft area or if spalted to the point of diminishing structural integrity."

I chose a 4-in.x8-in.x8-in. blank of spalted pecan that I had purchased from Mark Potter at the first Texas Turn or Two. This piece has been around: I traded it to the late Harvey Helmke and after he got sick he traded it back to me.

The piece had been sealed with Anchor Seal and put away in a cabinet. I cleaned away the seal and found some really great figuring in the wood, but it sure was soft.

I decided to do two projects out of the wood, to ensure that the product would thoroughly penetrate the wood. For the first project, a 4-in. dia. x 3-in. thick blank for a lidded box with an ebony inlay was cut to round on the band saw.

I placed the blank in a plastic container just larger than the blank and poured the Petrifier over the wood. The liquid looks and smells like watered down white carpenter's glue. The container was not quite deep enough to submerse the blank so I let it soak for two hours and turned the blank over to soak what had been the top.



Treated spalted pecan vessel

After a total of fours hours of soaking time, I removed the blank and set it out to dry overnight in a paper bag. The soaking time was arbitrarily chosen just by looking at the wood. After two hours on each side, the wood looked soaked.

The light colored wood turned dark while soaking, but when it dried, the original color returned. Shorter times could have been used, but this particular piece seemed ready in four hours.

Harder woods could require a different soaking period. The label only referred to pouring, spraying or brushing and this may work well. I just felt with small pieces, soaking would be worth a try.

After 24 hours drying, the box turned with a minimum end grain tear. To achieve the best spalting pattern, I turned the box with the lid and bottom being end grain, so this was a real test of the product.

I applied two coats of Deft clear satin liquid and buffed with the Beall Buffing System. The box turned out rather nice.

The second project was more complex. A vertical vessel made from parts was selected as an effort primarily to keep the parts small enough to soak in a pan of Petrifier.

The vessel was approximately 3 $^{1}/_{2}$-in. diameter with a separate turned base, a hollow body with a tenon to go in the base and a top that would fit onto the body and have a flared spout, A finial was fitted in the spout and handles were made for each side.

The only real problem was that the tenon to fit into the base was turned to $^{3}/_{4}$-in. diameter x $^{3}/_{4}$-in. long. I had already hollowed the body and prepared the joint for the top when the tenon shattered. I had used a cone in the open end for support and I am not sure whether it was a wood failure or too much pressure on the cone in the tailstock.

To save the piece, I turned the open end to the headstock and centered it in a Nova Chuck. I drilled a $^{3}/_{4}$-in hole in the base and inserted a $^{3}/_{4}$-in. mesquite dowel to connect the body to the base and allow me to finish sanding the piece.

Again, there was discoloration during the soaking period, but the original color returned upon drying. On one handle a spot appeared when I applied the Deft, but after a day it disappeared.

After soaking, the remaining liquid was poured back into the original container. After four uses there was no noticeable difference in the consistency or effectiveness.

I was impressed with the product and the convenience of application. The price was approximately $4.50 for 8 ounces and $9.00 for a pint at Stripling-Blake Lumber Co. in Austin, TX (512-456-4200). Contact the manufacturer, Protective Coatings at 1-800-220-2103 or at the web site: http:11www.pcepoxy.com.

—S. Gary Roberts, Austin, TX

A WEEK AT ARROWMONT

A Week with Johannes Rieber

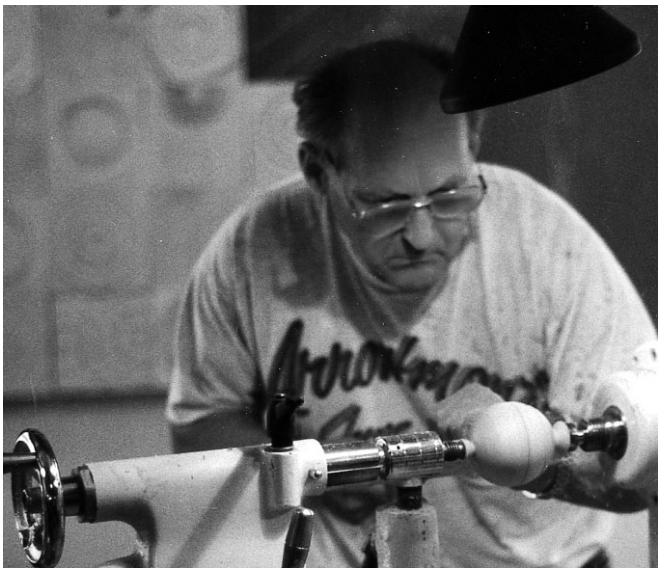
Last August I was just a burned out software developer in need of a woodturning fix to make life more interesting. A class at Arrowmont was exactly what I needed. I had applied for an AAW Educational Grant in late 1997, so I had almost a year to look forward to the event. I had been to Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts before, so I was familiar with the facilities and staff, but not the instructor, Johannes Rieber of Norway.

My main goal for the week was to reinforce my spindle gouge and hook tool techniques. I also thought that I would get some insight from this master craftsman that would take me years to discover on my own. I was very much rewarded with my goals and much more.

Johannes turned out to be a delightful craftsman who came through the apprentice system in Europe. He has been turning about 50 years, but was still able to relate to the students. The professionalism of his lathe work was always present. He took the work seriously, but understood that turning is not the only thing in life. He was careful to mix his ideas on philosophy of woodworking and conservation within our sessions.

Johannes is a production turner of useable items of the first degree. He didn't have much use for even natural edge and non-functional pieces. The Norwegians seem to purchase useable items and at much lower prices than those in the US. He scoffed at the prices listed in the gallery. His view is that the prices in Norway would be less than 10% of what was listed. The people there are still able to produce items for themselves and there isn't a market for the more exotic turnings.

You have to be around Johannes to understand some of what I will describe. His personality is complex as his mood goes from very impish and fun loving to quite serious. We met each morning and each evening to listen to a song before work, which helped cleanse our minds. Johannes also demonstrated more than I'd expected. I did not get a lot of personal work done. We had a lot of projects to learn in the class. Demonstrations included a two-hour demo one night of a wooden canteen, a reproduction of an ancient artifact unearthed by archeologists in a German grave yard, and shown on the AAW Akron Symposium tapes.



Johannes Rieber demonstrates at Arrowmont

He also demonstrated turning a small bowl with a glued on band, a sphere, salad set, salt shaker, and some others. I spent much time cutting beads using the spindle gouge, destroying them, and cutting some more. Just what I needed.

My goal of learning more about the spindle gouge began with pulling out my $^1/_2$-in. gouge. Johannes looked at it and screamed . "No, No, No!" I assumed he was subtly criticizing my grind. He then took me to the grinder and demonstrated his method of producing a wonderful fingernail grind. I thought I had learned his method, but about $^1/_4$ in. of high-speed steel later, I had reduced the end of the gouge to a nub which was not what he wanted. He took pity on me with eyes that showed less approval than irritation. (He had a way of doing this which didn't make you uncomfortable.) He then showed me the dance at the grinder again and I must have absorbed something the second time as the grind looked slightly like his. The third time that he saw my results, he just sighed and jammed the tool into the grinder to eliminate my damage. He rounded off the tip and formed it to his satisfaction. I was beyond embarrassment by this time as I had started to panic as the steel was being reduced significantly.

I took the tool and started damaging some wood. I did finally figure out how to sharpen it, and frankly, that was much of what I went to the class to understand. It is no longer suitable as a hollowing chisel using my old techniques so I will probably buy another $^1/_2$-in. gouge to do boxes and regrind it to my old grind. (I wouldn't dare change what Johannes had taught me on the old one.)

After I smugly thought I knew what I was doing, I went to the storeroom and purchased another, smaller, spindle gouge to sharpen from scratch. I went to the grinder and got started. Johannes seemed pleased that I was trying, but he still needed to lay his hands upon the chisel to get it just right. After another thousand hours of grinding, I hope that my grinding will meet his approval! Maybe I'll send him snapshots someday in the future. I think that would please him.

MINI-LATHES REACH OUT TO COMMUNITY

The second technique and tool I wanted to discover was the hook tool. Johannes' assistant, Mark St. Leger from Virginia, is a master of the tool and had demonstrated it at the June meeting of my chapter, the Triangle Woodturners of N.C. With Mark's instruction, I was able to get a much smoother cut on end grain than I can with scrapers. Much faster too. Sharpening the tools is challenging, but not overwhelming.

By the way, a good assistant makes a class like this so much easier and Mark was excellent. He was always there when you needed him. You could tell he had great experience in dealing with students in his role of school teacher.

Johannes had an accent which was enjoyable (being from the southern United States, I don't have one!) Some of the phrases he used over and over were infectious. A specific example was his use of "<insert phrase>, I tell you!" There was also "Ya, ya, ya!" and "No, No, No!" As you can tell, he didn't have many gray areas in his thinking.

I'm sorry to tell prospective students that Johannes will not be traveling much in the next few years. He wants to stay home and do his own work. I suspect he will be back so keep checking the school schedules.

As a woodturner, I can't think of anything that has influenced my work more than the classes I have taken from experienced turners. The only thing that comes close are local chapter events , and the national symposia. Hands-on work in a class helps me boost my work to another plateau and being with the other students from around the country adds to the learning. The AAW education fund allows woodturners to take advantage of a variety of learning experiences and I enthusiastically urge others to apply.

—Roger Austin, Raleigh, NC

A member of the Western New York Woodturners demonstrates to students

In the early 90's the Western New York Woodturners developed a major community outreach program providing: community education, teaching experience for our membership, and vital skill development and creative recreational opportunities for a growing number and variety of men and women in the region.

One major program is that the United Cerebral Palsy Assn. of Western New York (UCPA) was "adopted" by The Woodturners as the focus of an annual Christmas project. Each year since 1991 the turners have produced wooden toys for the enrollees of the UCPA Children's Program. The enthusiasm quickly spread so that the Christmas project yields hundreds of individually crafted toys and a year-round relationship with UCPA.

The recent AAW grant helped this type of activity expand rapidly. With the grant money we acquired two Jet mini lathes which we custom mounted as self-contained portable units for on-site operation.

This additional equipment helped launch an ongoing program with Gateway, a school and residential program for adolescents with behavioral and emotional problems. Based on the enthusiasm our initial visits received, we expect this project to have a growing impact on Gateway residents and our turners.

Receipt of this AAW award has further stimulated interest in more teaching and demonstration programs. The new lathes now travel to Erie County Fairgrounds, the East Aurora Cub Scout meetings, and a members workshop in Elma where demonstrators train.

Demonstrations benefit community groups both directly and indirectly. At the urging of UCPA staff and Board members, several of our members are working with UCPA staff to provide special-purpose toys and assistive devices as well as expanded training for adult agency clients. Various demonstrations in businesses and public settings raise money for Cradle Beach, a lakeshore summer camp for children with cancer.

Each appearance triggers follow-up invitations and our ability to respond is vastly improved by the new lathes and chisels. We cannot calculate the dollar value of time, materials, equipment, and talent contributed by our members but, without question, the AAW investment in the Western New York Woodturners has already been multiplied many times over.

— Ray Bissonette, Western New York Woodturners

Sharpening with Waterstones by Ian Kirby. *Cambium Press, 1998; distributed by The Lyons Press, 212/620-9580. Paperback. 112 Pages, $14.95*

Ian Kirby's book *Sharpening With Waterstones* does one thing, and does it extremely well. It teaches you how to sharpen tools quickly and easily. In very simple step-by-step procedures Ian takes you through the sharpening process. His book is well illustrated with black-and-white photographs and drawings. In addition to discussing details for numerous tools, he shows how to build a very effective sharpening jig and sharpening work station.

After reading this book I sharpened skews for several people in our club. The skews were so sharp that the hair on my arm seemed to jump off before the blade got to it.

Ian teaches, "A "skill" is nothing more than a learned habit, and that's what the art of sharpening amounts to: a set of habits you can learn."

By going through his simple step-by step-procedures you can re-sharpen your edges in sixty seconds. You learn how to have a razor sharp edge while saving time and precious metal. Since we buy expensive tools, it is nice that someone is teaching us how to get the most out of them.

In addition to the way he presents his methods in simple logical order, I liked the way he demonstrated how to make several inexpensive jigs to help create the proper bevel on each tool. After the bevel is ground on the grinder, he shows how to hone the edge on wet stones. Finally Ian shows how to strop the tool to bring out an amazingly razor sharp edge. There are several advantages to this system, one of which is that once you have the desired bevel it only takes sixty seconds to re-sharpen the tool.

I got several waterstones and slip stones from The Cutting Edge (1-800-790-7980) to try. I used them on a variety of turning tools and hand carving tools. The waterstones combined with the technique in Kirby's book give absolutely beautiful razor sharp edges.

There may be one disadvantage to this book. Everyone in your club might want you to sharpen their tools. If you have only one book to teach you sharpening, this is the book to have.

—Ron Hampton turns and carves wood in Texarkana, TX.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

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E. Total Distribution	8343	8627
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11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
Signature: Richard Burrows, Editor

Don't forget to renew your AAW membership. See the front of the Journal for membership application.

CORRECTION: Last issue we incorrectly listed the toll free number for Mylands. The prefix should be 888-3Myland. We regret any inconvenience we caused.

Visiting John Jordan's Shop

THE JUNE MEETING OF THE Tennessee Association of Woodturners was very special for me. John Jordan was the scheduled speaker. I met John three years ago at the TAW mini symposium. Even though I joined the TAW that year, I always managed to miss the meeting when John was the speaker. Needless to say I was looking forward to this meeting. I reread his articles in the AAW Journal to refresh my memory on his style and technique. After all, I didn't want to miss anything. As a beginning turner it was only important to see what tool someone uses. Now that I have some experience under my belt I realize it is more important to see how the tool is presented to the work and John is one of the best at teaching the techniques. His shop is quite roomy since he also teaches classes, however, it was standing room only that night. We were all anxious to see him turn one of his hollow vessels.

Belly button grip turns a curl for John Jordan,when the gouge rides the bevel.

John started the demo with a discussion on wood movement. The emphasis was on green turning and what happens when the grain runs in different directions through the piece. He feels you should always start the piece between centers so you can evaluate the figure, color and unusual characteristics of the wood and then reposition it on the lathe to show off its best features. He works the piece this way until it is close to the final shape. He then turns a tenon on the bottom for his One Way chuck. He stressed the importance of making the shoulder of the tenon square so the sides and face of the jaws make contact. This supports the piece better against the torque of hollowing the vessel.

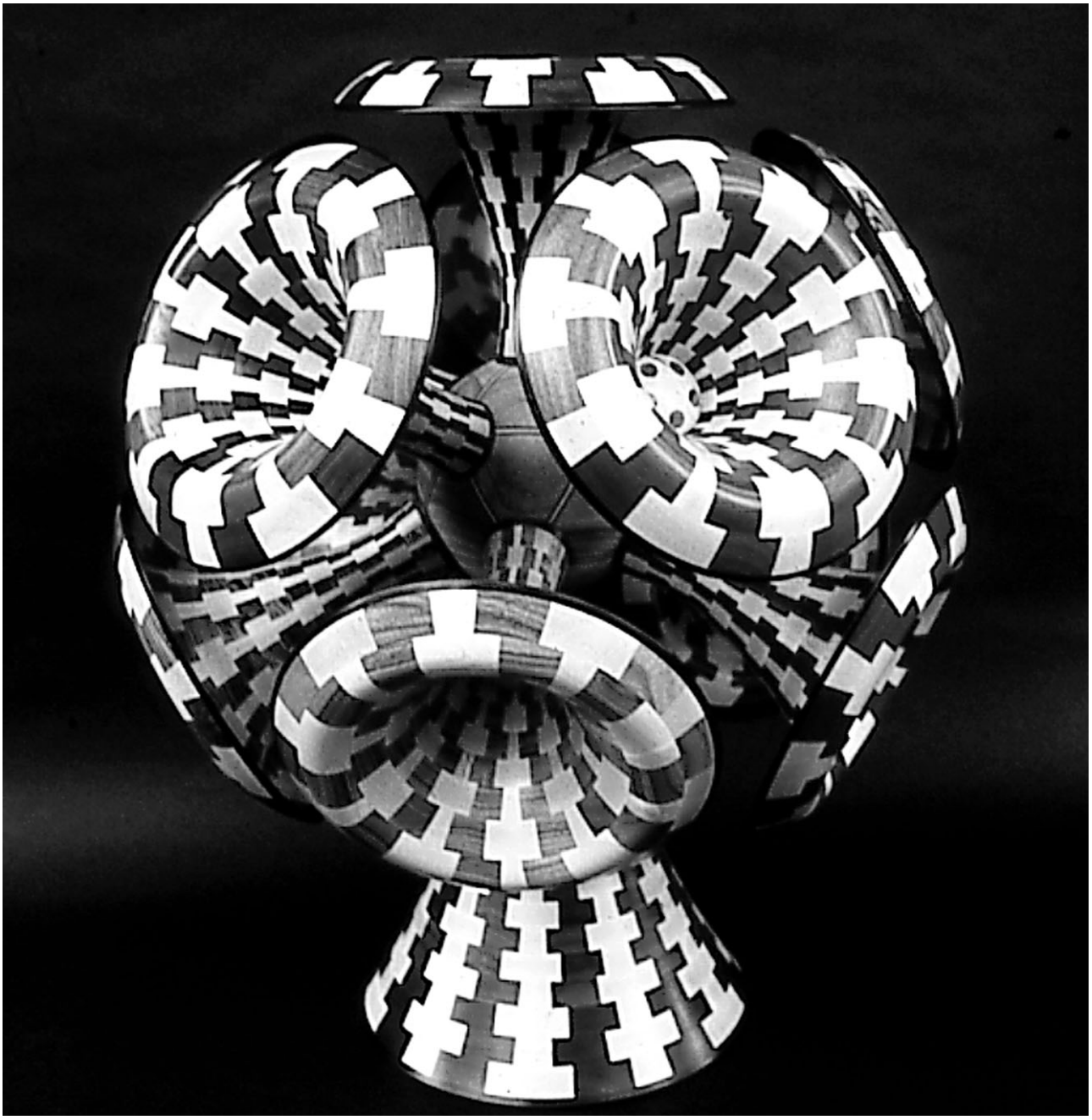
John uses a side ground bowl gouge to turn his pieces and is a master of the tool, using different areas of the cutting edge for roughing or final shaping. He discussed using the bevel of the cutting edge to control the cut. If done properly it requires very little effort and he demonstrated this by turning with no hands. He suggested turning off the lathe and rotating the piece by hand as you introduce the tool. This way you can safely see how effectively it is cutting and learn to ride the bevel for better control. To improve control of the tool, he recommends you polish the tool rest with sandpaper and WD-40 until it is perfectly smooth. Then each day before you turn just wipe the tool rest with WD-40 on a rag to make the tool glide very smoothly.

John uses a shear scraper for final shaping and finishing of the outside of the piece. He holds it at 45 degrees and pulls it across the piece to produce micro fine shavings. Done properly this method will remove the previous tool marks, refine the shape and eliminate almost all sanding.

To hollow the piece he drills a hole to the proper depth and then begins with a small tip mounted in a Stewart tool. Moving back and forth he hollows the middle followed by a hook tool to clean out the edges. He hollows from the middle out until the piece is twice the final thickness. The final shaping is done from the lip down by squeezing your hand against the tool to remove a very controlled bite each time and leaving a pronounced lip that you can easily locate each time you have to remove the tool to clean out the shavings. This allows you to maintain a uniform thickness of the walls of the piece to help prevent checking.

It's impossible to capture the humor and enthusiasm passed on in his demo and I barely touched all the tips I picked up during this lecture. His video is excellent and I plan on watching it some more. Anyone can show you a technique. A really good teacher shows why a technique works and leaves you with a desire to learn more. Now I can't wait to get back on my lathe.

John Lucas is a photographer and turner living in Cookeville, TN



Alice's Wondrous Trumpets

Alice's Garden is composed of more than 4,000 pieces of wood--maple, ebony, pau ferro, bocote, flamewood, bloodwood, canarywood and purpleheart. Artist Malcolm J. Tibbetts of South Lake Tahoe, CA, said he assembled the 30-in. high piece from 12 trumpet shapes connected to a central Geo-sphere. One trumpet was constructed slightly larger than the others to act as a base for the piece. *Alice's Garden* was one of the turnings exhibited recently at the Wood Collectors Conference in San Francisco, CA. The Collectors conference is described on Page 40. PHOTO: Courtesy of Artist.