■ Tacoma 1999 ■ Music Boxes ■ Michael Peterson ■ Turned Pencils ■

American Woodturner

The Journal of the American Association of Woodturners Fall 1999 $5.00 Vol. 14, No3

North Texas Turn Of The Century

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

THE SPIRT OF OUR MEMBERS MAKES THE AAW FLOURISH

HAVING JUST RETURNED FROM THE legendary home of Sasquatch (big foot), I am made more aware of the big shoes I am asked to fill. The leadership of the past presidents has been tremendous.

I have had the pleasure of serving on the board while Charles Alvis and Dave Wahl were president. They are both outstanding leaders and like those before them, they did much to mold, and move forward, the AAW. We all owe them a great big thanks. Now with a very competent board of directors we shall continue to progress.

What a great organization this is! I have never seen any group of people work together to help one another like those of the AAW. I am sure some join for selfish reasons, but they are overwhelmed by those willing to help one another.

We know that volunteer work to help other turners and to teach young people to turn takes place in every successful chapter. We just can't see all the work done at the local level.

When you look at the articles in this journal, you realize a lot of members volunteer information to help the rest of us.

The recent symposium is a great example of unselfish contributions experienced and appreciated by all who attended. Although the demonstrators are paid we know it is more of an honorarium, not what they are actually worth.

They may do it for the exposure, but I like to think it is more for the pleasure of helping other turners and they deserve our applause.

Other contributions I would like to refer to are the articles and art pieces so graciously given for the auctions. These pieces, and the generosity of the bidders made approximately $43,000 available for educational opportunities.

As I see it, the persons on the list below are the ones who truly made the symposium possible.

Uncountable hours of volunteer labor were contributed to make things run smoothly. Sure, we had a few problems, but most of them were due to facility inadequacies. The local committees did a great job of organizing and carrying out the necessary functions.

What does all of this mean? It allows us to bring to you a symposium that is affordable for most of our membership. Next year in Charlotte should even be better.

Isn't this a great organization?

—Dave Barriger, President
American Association of Woodturners

Thanks to the 1999 Tacoma Symposium Volunteers

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Bob Agnew
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Jim Aliano
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LOCAL CHAPTERS

Northwest Woodturners, OR
Willamette Valley Woodturners, OR
Cascade Woodturners Assn., WA
Northwest Washington Woodturners, WA
Olympic Peninsula Chapter - AAW, WA
Seattle Chapter - AAW, WA
South Puget Sound Chapter, WA

American Woodturner

Vol. 14, No.3 Fall 1999

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

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

WWW: http://www.RTPnet.org/~aaw

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: *Woody Turner and his functioning lathe which won Best of Show for the Woodturners of North Texas at this year's AAW symposium in Tacoma, WA. The group project was aimed at creating a design that would be both a work of art and a model for a fully functional lathe. Read more about the chapter's work on Page 14. COVER PHOTO: Mike Wallace.*

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

American Woodturner is published quarterly, Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter, by the American Association of Woodturners. Yearly membership in the American Association of Woodturners is $25 U.S.A., $30 Canada, and $40 overseas and includes a subscription to *American Woodturner*. Send dues to Mary Lacer, AAW Administrator, 3499 Lexington Avenue N., Suite 103, Shoreview, MN 55126, U.S.A. Send articles and advertising to the Editor.

CPC IPM Product Sales Agreement No. 1580647. Canadian Mail Distributor Information: EMI, P.O. Box 25058, London BC, Ontario, Canada N6C 6A8 Printed in the U.S.A. by Ovid Bell Press, Inc., Fulton, MO, 65251.

Thanks from Alan Lacer 1999 Honorary Life Member

My thanks to the board for this fine honor, to David Ellsworth in making the presentation, and to the many comments from members. Funny what passion for a material and a process will get you into.

I have come to care deeply about virtually every aspect of the woodturning field – making turnings, wood in all its varieties, viewing fine work (from anywhere and from any time), talking, writing, and teaching woodturning, its history, learning something new (always), woodturners, and simply the lathe itself and its tools.

As I stated in my remarks the evening I received the award, there have been and there are so many other turners that never received such an award, but were profoundly deserving and equally passionate about woodturning.

I named three individuals that were virtually unknown outside of their geographical areas but left quite an impression upon me from their lives as turners.

The first was Don Bell of Anadarko, Oklahoma – known for turning baseball bats, especially for little league; Clay Compton of Gatlinburg, TN who turned for about fifty years and at one time had over 70 items in his line of work; and Bill Thule, who operated a turning shop in St. Paul, MN for about 35 years and created wonderful architectural turnings on an ancient lathe. I am so fortunate to have stumbled into this field, and will be forever grateful for the many rich experiences and friendships it has brought me.

— Alan Lacer
Shoreview, MN

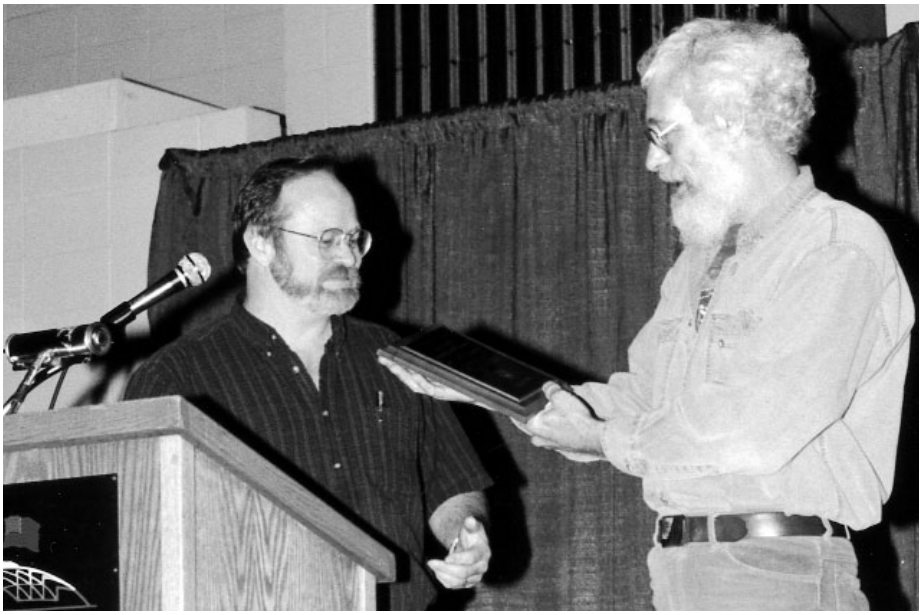
My first symposium

This is a note from a "civilian" outlining some thoughts about your Tacoma symposium.

We were not prepared for what we saw at the Tacoma exhibition. We had been told. Family members who are active woodturners had told us we would encounter some beautiful work, so we were warned. However, we were truly overwhelmed by a plethora of simply wonderful wood art. Incredible!

Hundreds of lovely, ingenious, intricate imaginative pieces representing thousands of hours of intense, dedicated artistry unfolded before us.

Incredible! Incredible was the term we kept saying and hearing others say as we moved along the exhibit. Searching for a common theme it seemed a sense of pride suffused every piece from the small and simple to the large and complex. There was an amalgam of pride of workmanship and execution with imagination and, above all, artistic vision. We sensed a connection to



David Ellsworth, first president of the AAW, reads the Honorary Life Member citation to this year's recipient, Alan Lacer, who succeeded Elllsworth as president.

New Address For AAW Office:

The AAW administrative offices now have a new mailing address:

3499 Lexington Ave. North, Suite 103
Shoreview MN 55126

The phone number remains the same 1-651-484-9094. The phone company already had changed the area code earlier last year.

The new office is in the same neighborhood as the old one, but is much larger. The extra space will make it possible for all the AAW records, merchandise and other equipment to be located in one location, where it can be accessed easily and efficiently. This should make for better member services and increased sanity for the staff. A small gallery will also be set up.

AAW members are always welcome to visit, so if you are in the area, please stop by.

Letters edited for clarity and space.

America's past, to the New England artisans, and to the American West and Native American art. It was just incredible. There was a spectrum from representational art to interpretive conceptual art - serious to whimsical - elegantly simple to seriously baroque.

The collaborative projects were just overwhelming in their imagination, ingenuity, and execution. The concept of the unity of the whole from the collaborative artistry of the parts is certainly unique in the art world. The represented clubs brought it off in spades. We could have spent the whole day enjoying those projects.

At Tacoma we were awestruck. We saw the best-kept secret of the art world; American wood turner art. Incredible!

–Wendell Roberts, Aransas Pass, TX

Congratulations from Chicago

A note of congratulations to all the chapters that participated in the Chapter's Collaborative Challenge this year. Several of our members attended the Tacoma Symposium and, although we were unable to attend I felt compelled to write this. First, and foremost, our hearty congratulations to the Woodturners of North Texas for winning "Best of Show" for their Y2K Treadle Lathe & "Woody". The pictures I have seen and the review I read from their newsletter truly showed the type of teamwork and creativity that this challenge was meant to inspire. Obviously their project was well done, but almost more importantly, they had 25 members who participated in the overall completion of it! You should be proud! How many other clubs can boast that kind of participation? Great Job.

Secondly, I would like to make it clear that although our project was withdrawn from the competition, all of us who participated were thrilled with the success of the Collaborative Challenge Project. Our goal from the beginning was to complete a project and donate it to the auction to hopefully raise a few more dollars for the education fund. Oh, don't get me wrong, we wanted to retain our "title", but who wouldn't? We set out to raise the participation percentage by throwing down the gauntlet last year. After hearing from many people that we had "set the standard" last year, we wanted to at least meet our "Rough Rider" level. We also hoped that other chapters would follow our lead and a few more pieces would be donated for the auction. All of these goals were not only reached, but from all reports, exceeded anything we could have hoped. More chapters actually participated. The quality was outstanding. Oh, and by the way, the auction raised a record amount this year. WELL DONE!

All in all, I'd say it was a very successful challenge. The AAW board, by continuing this challenge, forced us to reach in and find that extra little something. You asked us to be creative. You gave us a reason to work together for a common goal. You gave us a platform to "show our stuff" and that makes being a part of each individual chapter and thereby this organization a very nice place to be. So, to all who participated, congratulations on an excellent showing. To the AAW board and especially the Chapters Committee, Thanks! It was FUN! What is on the program for next year??!

—— Marie Anderson
Chicago Woodturners

More feedback from Chicago

I heard that the AAW made a special point to congratulate us on the wheel at the symposium. I am only speaking for myself but, I think everything was handled well by both the AAW and our Chicago woodturners leadership. Most of us are not into woodturning for the money or the prizes. The challenge is an extension of why most of us like woodturning in the first place. It is a creative (and technical) outlet for us.

The challenge lets many members be part of something large that they would otherwise never attempt or dare to dream about. Although the Chicago woodturners take the challenge seriously and intend to win, it is the journey that is important, not the destination. I am also proud to be a part of something that is in the Mason collection. I had not heard that Arthur Mason had purchased the piece. I was at the symposium last year and was a little disappointed with the overall level of items brought to the challenge. I have seen pictures of what was brought this year and see that the level has been greatly enhanced. The Chicago Woodturners are proud to have made a difference in that endeavor. It is highly unlikely that this incident will deter us from taking over our #1 spot next year. I plan on being at the NC symposium next year. At that time you can congratulate the Chicago Woodturners on winning the third collaborative challenge competition! (we hope).

One suggestion a couple of turners in the Chicago club had "wished" for was to get a little money back on the challenge if donated to the auction. The consensus was to kick back 10% of the donated pieces auction price to the club to help defray administrative costs that the club incurs. This came up mainly because we almost had to pay to ship the wheel to Tacoma, would have cost in excess of $100. Our treasury was sufficient to handle it now but what about in the future or for smaller clubs that don't quite have the resources. I submit this only as a suggestion and if no one else mentions (or has mentioned) it, please disregard. *—Jeff Pohl, Rockford, IL*

ON-LINE WOODTURNING RESOURCES

Editors Note: More and more, a computer terminal is becoming part of the essential tool kit of many turners. Some use it and the Internet for research; others purchase tools and supplies, and many use it as a way of keeping in touch with other turners.

Several of these on-line turners have been meeting with Roger Austin during the last two symposiums. Roger, officially vice president of the AAW, is a self-proclaimed computer geek. He's also the webmaster for the AAW and works very hard to ensure that the web site continues to be a good source for information and inspiration.

At the meeting with the Cyberturners in Tacoma, it was suggested that Roger do a regular column in the Journal to discuss On-line Woodturning Resources.

This is his first installment. We plan to run his columns on a regular basis in upcoming Journals.

— Dick Burrows, Editor

Cyberturners meeting

There was a good discussion on on-line woodturning resources at our cyberturners meeting during the Tacoma symposium. The consensus of the group was that education on on-line resources should be a part of American Woodturner. This is the first in a series of articles we will publish to educate our members about using the new on-line tools.

We recognize that many AAW members do not use computers or e-mail. We will not sacrifice our regular publications for on-line exposure. More AAW members have on-line access through their home, places of work, school, or local library as our membership grows. A very active woodturning culture has developed on-line which includes woodturners from all over the world. On-line tools such as the World-Wide Web, news groups, and e-mail allow quick and easy access to information. We in the AAW leadership hope to use these tools to provide service to the membership and further our mission.

What on-line resources are available now? E-mail communications and World-Wide Web access are the two main resources for woodturning information. Also available is the rec.crafts.woodturning news group which is very active.

Web Site:

The AAW web site has existed for several years which has been highly successful in recruitment, education and promotion in our organization.

This site has allowed prospective members to download and print an application which they mailed to the home office. No other advertising medium has been as successful in recruitment and it is very inexpensive.

The site has exposed the on-line community to local chapter information. We keep our list of chapters up to date so the public can see what local chapters are in their area. People have commented that they found their new chapter through the web site.

The web site allows real-time access to information on calendar items, symposium information, and other information as we can publish on-line immediately instead of quarterly.

E-mail:

Electronic mail (E-mail) has been available so members can e-mail the board of directors or staff about issues of the AAW. This has meant an increase in exposure to the AAW and brought members in closer contact with the organization.

An e-mail list for the local chapter representatives (AAW-L) is also available so that representatives can share experiences and ask questions to everyone who is a subscriber to the list. This is restricted to two chapter representatives and has been quite successful. Eighty percent of all chapters are represented on the list and our goal is to have someone from each chapter on the list.

What is the future?

The AAW has made our on-line presence part of our long term strategic plan. We hope to increase our on-line presence as well as improve our education and organization resources. On-line membership applications, merchandise sales, and conference registrations are one way to increase our reach at modest cost. We can reach people at lower costs as more people are comfortable with on-line purchasing and registrations.

There will be announcements later in 1999 on changes to be made to the AAW web site. More information will be coming in future issues about AAW and general woodturning resources on-line.

If you have suggestions or comments, please e-mail aaw@rtpnet.org and let us know.

Contact Information

AAW Web Site:

http://rtpnet.org/aaw/

AAW-L description:

http://rtpnet.org/locals/aaw-l.html

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Webmaster e-mail:

aaw@rtpnet.org

ELLSWORTH AWARDED MAJOR FELLOWSHIP GRANT

David Ellsworth of Quakertown, PA, one of the world's foremost turners and the first president of the AAW, has been selected to be one of twelve recipients of a $50,000 Fellowship Grant from the PEW Foundation in Philadelphia.

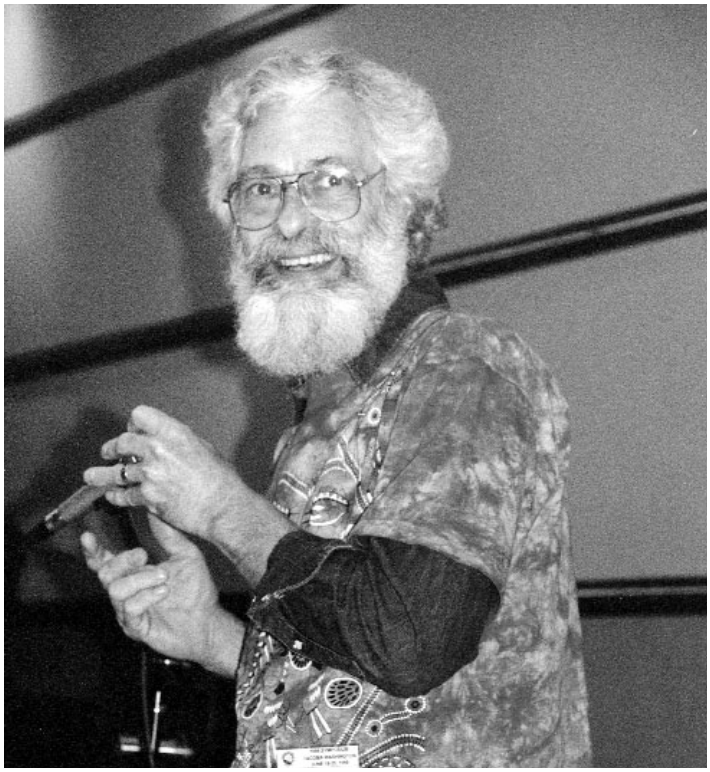
Ellsworth says he will use the grant to further explore the idea of self in Self-expression. He plans to work in both New Zealand and Australia as part of this effort. PEW Fellowship Grants are awarded with the intent of helping artists pursue career objectives, unencumbered by financial concerns for a period of up to two years.

The other PEW recipients include five composers, a choreographer and five craft artists. Approximately 300 applications were reviewed by two separate panels of judges before the finalists were selected.

"Part of my thrill in receiving this honor is that my work was reviewed with the same values and concerns afforded artists in all craft media, including those of music composition, performance and theater. And because the selection committees included several prominent museum curators, the award represents a validation not only of my work, but the field of woodturning as a whole."

"I consider myself primarily a "maker", and that the years I have spent developing hollow forms in wood have been very much a journey in discovering the "self, of self-expression." I would now like to extend that journey beyond myself. As such, I wish to use the fellowship time to explore the foundations of ideas, attitudes, methods, motivations, and spiritual connections in the art work of the Aboriginals of Australia and the Maori of New Zealand. I have visited both countries and experienced a limited, but meaningful amount of time with these people and their respective cultures and heritages. I have no idea what, or if, any direct influences might be absorbed that would impact on my current work, but I am certainly open to that possibility. What I am searching for is the connection between individuals and their respective art forms, and to discover how this experience might relate to my own connections as an artist and craftsperson within this culture. In effect, I would pursue this goal with the intent to observe, participate and reflect."

Ellsworth said his plans include traveling to New Zealand for two months this fall, and then spending two months in Australia in 2000.



David Ellsworth enjoying the 1999 Tacoma Symposium.

Welcome to new AAW Chapters

The AAW continues to grow.

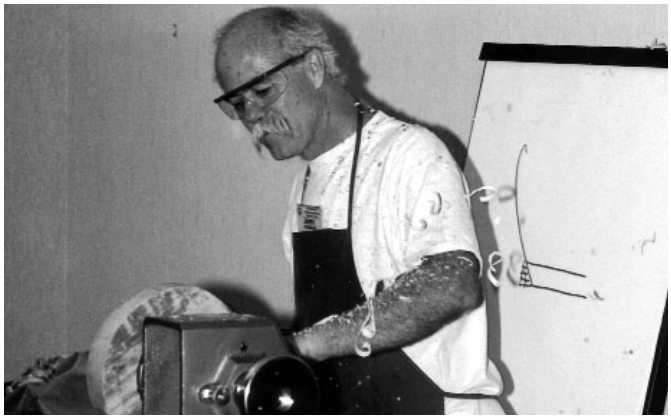
We now have 132 chapters. The following chapters that have been approved since last Sept.:

120 Woodturners of Southwest Florida FL
121 Central NY Woodturners NY
122 Lehigh Valley Woodturners PA
123 Spokane Lathe Artists WA
124 Wichita Falls Wood Turners TX
125 Nevada Woodchucks INC
126 South Central PA Turners PA
127 Bayou Woodturners LA
128 Suburban Woodturners IL
129 Calgary Woodturners Canada
130 Greater Vancouver Woodturners Guild Canada
131 Peach State Woodturners GA
132. Northeast Florida Woodturners FL

If you would like help forming a new chapter in your area, contact the Administrator's office or the board member liaison, listed on Page 49, for your region.

– Clay Foster, Chapters Committee

DEMONSTRATORS TEACH, TALK AND INSPIRE



Want to Demonstrate in Charlotte?

The AAW Symposium Committee is looking for top-notch demonstrators for the next annual symposium, June 30-July 2, in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Featured demonstrators, who will do six rotations during the Charlotte Symposium, have already been selected, but there are plenty of openings for those who would like to do two to five rotations. If you have a new idea or a unique approach to design or a great technique, Charlotte might be just the place for you.

Featured national demonstrators will be: Trent Bosch, Fort Collins, CO; Ron Fleming, Tulsa, OK and David Ellsworth, Quakertown, PA. International exhibitors will be Allan Batty, England, Kurt Johansson, Sweden and Irene Gafert, Denmark.

For an application, contact the administrator's office in Shoreview, MN. The application must be returned by Oct. 31st. Don't delay. Apply today.

If you have any questions, please contact the following:

Mary Lacer, Administrator, 651-484-9094
Dave Wahl, Conference Committee, 505-982-9242
Clay Foster, Conference Committee, 940-482-3461

Demonstrators are an essential part of any symposium. In Tacoma many of the sessions were standing room only, and the mad rush between sessions was reminiscent of school days.

And the demonstrator's work wasn't limited to the formal sessions. Above, left, finishing expert Bob Flexner, from Norman, OK, brings his expertise to the Instant Gallery. Angus Hoban of the Isle of Man, above right, also jazzed up the Instant Gallery with bag pipes and full dress.

A more familiar sight was virtually non-stop action at the lathe, center stage for most of the demonstrations. Jerry Kermode of Hauula HI, middle left, makes the shavings fly during his rotation.

Like many of the demonstrators Kermode enriched his technical presentations with information on design, marketing and other topics.

Chainsawing Aid

To avoid checking in freshly harvested wood, you need to remove a slab containing the pith. For years I have done this by chain sawing with the log lying or standing on the ground. Both are hard on the blade and uncomfortable.

When I ask my wife to hold the piece, it's hard on her nerves as well.

I built a simple, portable cutting table which is supported by sawhorses. The table is constructed from three pieces of 2x10 stock approximately 30" long, supported by two 2x4's on the back side. Next I drilled holes at regular intervals in the top to accommodate four 18" lengths of threaded rod.

The table has several advantages, stooping to cut is eliminated, yields a straighter cut, keeps cut pieces from rolling about, and provides a nice surface to coat end grain again without stooping. Did I mention my wife is happier now?

Bruce Bower, Topeka Kansas

2 Follow ups

I enjoyed Dave Hardy's tip on using collars to reposition the tool rest while saving its height. I have also used collars for the same purpose, I made mine out of PVC water pipe. The stuff you use to pipe water for sprinkler systems that is available at any home improvement store. A 10' length only costs about $1.00 and you can easily cut off whatever length you need. In addition they are relatively soft, so they won't hurt your tools, tool rest, or workpiece. I have not needed a set screw to keep them in position, just slip the size you need on the post and you are set to go. The plastic pipes come in various inside diameters, just be sure to choose a size that will slip easily over your tool rest post. (Funny, I never thought this little shortcut was worth sending in as a tip until I read it from David, then it seemed to make sense!)

Jim Hatcher, Kirkland, WA.

David Hardy refers in the summer issue of *American Woodturner* to a method of controlling the height of his tool rest by using a "Shaft Collar". I have been using the same principle for years but in a much simpler, cheaper and easily adjusted method. A stainless steel worm drive hose clamp purchased for about $.60 at your local hardware store and adjusted with a nut driver works beautifully.

William T. Davin, M.D. , Tryon, NC.

From the Optical Department

Here is a tip which has many applications. Lightly mist a piece of clean soft cotton cloth with Armor All Protectant. ™ Allow the moisture to evaporate, then store in a plastic zip-type bag between uses. As a photographer and camera repairman I have cleaned lenses, mirrors, filters etc. and when used on your eyeglasses (or safety glasses) so super glue spots will not be so hard to remove the next time. It also does wonders for cleaning and reducing static charge on face shields. It clears fog and film from interior car windows, TV screens, and most importantly it removes fingerprints from your next gallery piece!

Jaime Donaldson, Georgetown, KY

...Affirmation

A quick spray with Armor-All Protectant ™ on your face shield or safety glasses will keep them scratch and dust free. Other brands of similar product do not seem to work as well. Just a small squirt on each side and a wipe with a paper towel does the trick.

Phil Wall, Feasterville, PA

Another One From The Frugal Turner File…

Tool Caddy

Heavy canvas nail aprons, are often available as a free promotion at building material suppliers, or at nominal cost. These make an acceptable turning tool caddy if the two compartments are further divided by sewing them (try an upholstery shop) into a total of 8 narrower compartments, each about 2" wide.

This tool wrap can come in handy when carrying smaller tools (rather than superflutes and such) to club meetings, etc.

Ike Behar, Enterprise, Alabama

Scraping Helper

Many turners recommend a shear scraping finishing cut on surfaces that can't easily be smoothed by a skew. (That's most surfaces for some of us.) Unfortunately, it is often difficult to hold the proper angle and to avoid slight catches of the scraper corner in tool rest

Editor's Note: *I feel there are many turners, beginner and more experienced, who are suffering with problems like Russell's. While I can see where angled wooden blocks solve the immediate problem, two underlying (literally) problems are easy to fix.*

First, use a sharp bastard file (for deep nicks) then use a 2nd cut, then a mill smooth file to prepare your tool rest. Wet sand to 600 grit and wax your tool rest. Your tools will literally glide on this surface provided you do the next operation.

Second, use a belt sander, either portable or stationary (make sure it is aluminum oxide or silicon carbide and clear of wood dust) and grind radiuses on the back edges of every tool which comes in contact with your newly polished tool rest. (New tools have notoriously sharp edges.) I also wet sand the radiused edges after grinding.

Thanks to Bonnie Klein and John Jordan who taught me those principles many years back.

— Mark Krick, Tips Editor

imperfections. An effective solution is to bandsaw a slot in a small rectangular block of wood just wide enough to accept the scraper. The slot will hold the proper angle and the block slides smoothly along the tool rest. Of course, it is a simple matter to make several such blocks with different slot angles to meet varying requirements.

Russell E. Duff, LaJolla, CA

Small Work Centering

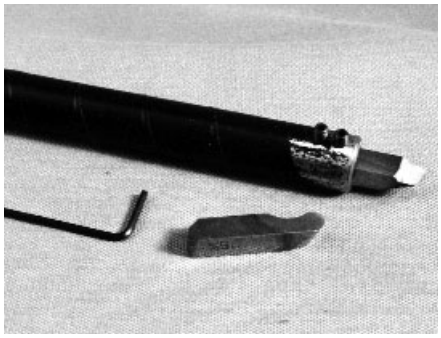
In order to get a small work piece centered on a glue-block mounted on the lathe, I drill a 3/8" hole in the center of the glue block using a tailstock mounted drill. I have a 24" length of 3/8" dowel that is turned to a point on one end which I insert through the headstock and glue block and extend about 6"-8" beyond the block. After applying CA glue to the working piece and a little activator to the glue block I hold the outboard end of the dowel in one hand, align the center of the work piece on the point of the dowel and press it in place for a perfectly centered workpiece.

Phil Wall, Feasterville, PA

Grinding Safely

Some turning tools utilize standard HSS square blanks as their cutting or scraping edge. Shaping and sharpening these can be difficult and dangerous.

Should a small cutter become wedged between the hand rest and wheel, the wheel can fracture and send wheel fragments towards you. (quickly)



To solve this problem I Made a holder from a 6" length of " steel pipe. (schedule 40) Drill and tap for 2, 6/32 (#36 bit) set screws near the end of the pipe. Slip the bit into the end of the pipe, tighten the set screws and grind much safer.

Charles Brownold, Davis CA

Pungent Reminders

When someone offers a "free" yard tree, one should as politely as possible inquire as to the reason for the tree's removal…While looking a gift horse in the mouth is rarely good form, a tree being removed because of its roots clogging a sewer line… The tree's shavings from just such a source will soon offer a pungent reminder of its food supply. GIGO! (for non-computer types: Garbage In Garbage Out)

Robert M. Vaughan, Roanoke, VA

Birdfeeder Fun

If you like birds and dislike squirrels you'll like this. If you've got unwelcome squirrels raiding your birdfeeder, paint their foothold areas with green wood sealer. This paraffin based stuff will provide the vermin with endless difficulty and the observer with endless delight!

Robert M Vaughan, Roanoke, VA

Send tips to AAW Tips Editor MARK KRICK, 169 Mechanic St., Doylestown, PA 18901:

E-mail: mgkrick@worldnet.att.net

If I only had the 4th Jaw!

You will not need to say this if you turn these simple trivets. I keep my step jaws and long nose jaws on turned trays. This prevents dings on their surfaces and keeps them in sets ready to go.

The tray is recessed appropriately to fit the jaws and spare allen screws and wrench are kept in a plastic film canister.

Charles Brownold, Davis CA

SYMPOSIUM 99

Showcasing the best in turning, and in people

DICK BURROWS

THE 1999 AAW SYMPOSIUM IN Tacoma, WA was a delight to the eye, and a boost to heart and spirit.

This symposium, our 13'th, was in many ways like its predecessors: an enthusiastic audience; highly skilled demonstrators; and a superb trade show brimming with turners' gear.

For most the mission of the day seemed to be getting to as many demonstrations as possible: to observe, photograph and fill notebooks with sketches, procedures and inspiring ideas. One guy sitting next to me in one session showed me his abundant notes and added that it would probably take him a couple of years to try, let alone master everything.

When you stepped out of the hustle, there was always the intriguing Instant Gallery, which continues to convey a lot about what we are as turners, and what we are becoming. I noticed people being drawn back to the Gallery time-and-time again. No, not every piece knocked me off my feet with its presence. But there was a lesson in every piece. Sometimes I would try to figure out how the maker had worked, other times I would just be fascinated with a particular line or texture. A couple of pieces were so beautiful that they reminded me of why I turn.

Yoshinobu Kakizawa, a featured demonstrator from Japan, was fascinated by the turned ball caps in the East-West show.

Bill Moore, who was one of the persons conducting the critique on Sunday morning, often used a phrase that captures the feeling for me. He would pick up a piece and remark how much he had been enjoying it. For me, I could see what feeling and personality the maker put into the piece. I examined it from the unique point of view that is me. Somewhere in between the efforts of maker and viewer blossoms the enjoyment.

As if the Instant Gallery wasn't enough, other local turning events drew enthusiastic crowds.

Just down the street from the Symposium, the American Art Company had a truly fine show of work by some of the best. The spacious, well-lighted gallery, as board member Clay Foster put it "really honored the work."

A couple of blocks up the hill, which after a few trips took on Himalayan proportions, was the *East Meets West* show. The Japanese part of the show offered a nice glimpse of another culture with an ancient craft tradition. And it was a delight to see the more traditional Japanese turners respond to the exuberance of western turners.

And, this year, undoubtedly stimulated by the magnificent Chapter Collaborative efforts and high-wheeler bicycle of the Chicago chapter last year, 29 Chapters jumped in this year to dazzle the crowd.

After seeing these extraordinary exhibits, I began thinking about how unusual the cooperative efforts that created them must have been. In an age when it's often difficult even to get a friend to help you with a backyard chore, it's amazing that so many people could excel together together. The Chicago chapter, for example — always a major presence (some people aren't shy about substituting the word Dynasty) in the competition, had more than 50 percent member participation in their entry.

More Symposium Articles

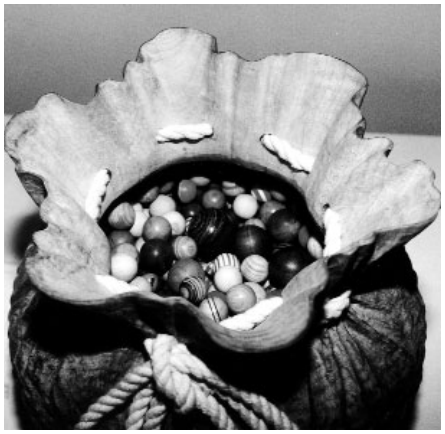
- Full list of awards and entries in the Chapter Collaborative, Page 56.
- Woodturners of North Texas: Winning Best of Show, Page 14.
- Northwestern Michigan Woodturners: Creativity in a world-class train, Page 16.
- Glendale Woodturners Guild: Everyone is a winner. Page 17.
- Instant Gallery critique with Jack Vesery, Page 22.
- Assistant Editor Gary Dickey observes Japanese turning techniques, Page 36.

This theme was a constant throughout the competition. For some chapters it was perhaps the most important. Dick Tuttle of the Keystone turners that did the Marble bag shown below said : "One of the benefits of the Marble Bag which goes way beyond the obvious is that we were able to involve every single member who wished to participate in the undirected production of the piece. We gave general guidelines and tips on how to produce small spheres but each member went home to execute their contribution without further direction.

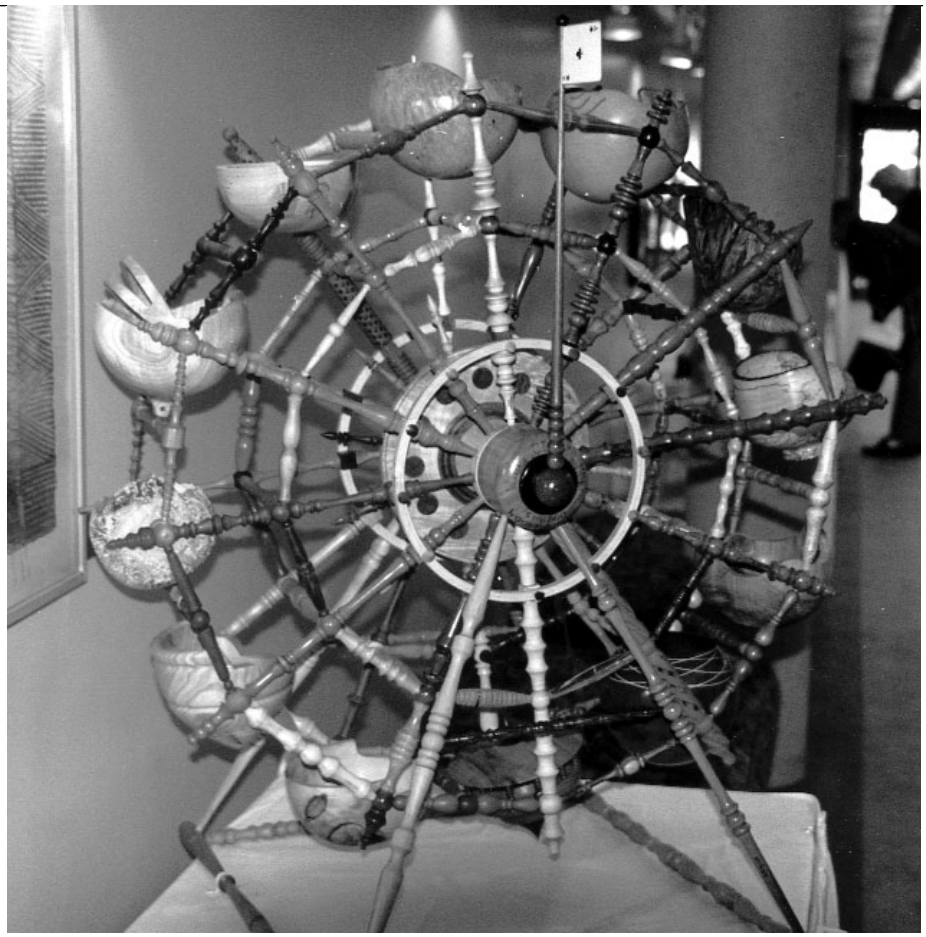
"That's what made the project so much fun. It was made much as we all work by ourselves in our own shops. We then came together to show and combine."

Not that the event wasn't without glitches. The Chicago project, shown at right, was larger than allowed under the Chapter Collaborative rules, and the group graciously withdrew it from the competition. Then they still decided to donate the piece to the auction to raise money for the the AAW Educational Opportunity Grants program.

That auction raised about $43,000 for the Educational Program, a new record. Several of the projects went for top dollar: The Northwestern Michigan chapter's train brought in $5,000. **(There is an application for Educational Opportunity Grants in the back of this Journal.- Ed.)**



Every member of the Keystone Turners had a chance to contribute marbles to the chapter entry, which sold for $500 at auction.



Ferris wheel by the Chicago Woodturners was a hit in the Chapter Collaborative exhibit and was auctioned off to benefit the AAW educational fund.

The whole extravaganza was constantly reinforced by the good feelings created by seeing old friends again, hearing about their work, perhaps sharing an idea or two. Plus the generosity of the demonstrators, for whom the task of passing on their skills has to be a labor of love. And there were red-shirted volunteers everywhere to keep everything running on rails.

Much of the information in the next few pages also was provided by people who took the time to write about the symposium activities without recompense. We invite you to enjoy their efforts here, and hope to present more of what they did, perhaps even a technique or two, in coming issues of the Journal.

The symposium was our biggest event to date, with more than 920 attendees and about 50 demonstrators. People are already talking about the next one in Charlotte, NC.

The Charlotte Symposium will be held June 30 - July 2. Those of you who are part of the AAW cyberturners already know there has been a fair amount of talk about planning entries, methods of judging and other concerns for next year's Chapter Collaborative. Please note the rules for the Challenge are at the front of this Journal. There have been changes; please check them carefully.

Dick Burrows lives in Knoxville, TN, and is Editor of American Woodturner.

Y2K Treadle Lathe

Turn of the Century

WOODTURNERS OF NORTH TEXAS

One of the most interesting entries in the 1999 Chapter Collaborative fascinated people, then pleased both the crowd and the members of the North Texas Woodturners when it was named best of show winner.

Here, members of the group describe how they did it; and what it means to them.-- Editor

How we did It

— By Devore Burch

We started work on our Chapter collaborative project long before we even went to the shop. In fact we invested a lot of brainstorming before the treadle lathe was selected. Our current president, John Horn, began studying ideas and discussing them with various members as far back as October 1998.

At the February 25, 1999 chapter meeting, we announced that we would participate in the collaborative project in Tacoma and asked for volunteers: 15 members responded. By the time the project was under way, 25 people had volunteered their services. The volunteers met at Bill DeLorme's immaculate shop to discuss assignments for building the project.

By this time, we had decided on a treadle lathe as our collaborative project. The idea came from a suggestion from our present newsletter editor, Mike Wallace.

One of our members, Louis Oberheu, already had built a full-size treadle lathe that he uses for demonstrations, fairs and historical events. So, the idea of a treadle lathe seemed perfect for us —— it was very appropriate for the theme and offered an opportunity for many people to participate.

Our club is loaded with talent. We have engineers, professors, machinists, a real estate tycoon, two nationally known wood turners, cabinet makers, artists, musicians, band directors, doctors, lawyers, airline technicians, to mention a few. We even have two members with Ph.D. degrees and one with a master's degree in music.

I knew this group could form a "think tank" or a "brain trust." One of our members, Bill DeLorme, is a retired aerospace engineer with 40 years experience in project management, as well as being a grass roots engineer. Bill was selected to head up the project. He is a creative designer and designed our lathe project where almost every part was a "turning". Even "Woody Turner" and all of his parts were made on a lathe. Woody features ball-and-socket joints.

At first Bill was reluctant to be the project leader, but eventually agreed. Bill is a man of tireless energy and wholehearted enthusiasm for whatever he takes on.

Early in April a special meeting was held in Bill DeLorme's workshop to assign the various parts to the team members. We had already decided to embellish the lathe with a working marionette, a wooden man sized in appropriate scale to the lathe.

The component leaders were:
Project Leader — Bill DeLorme
Base Structure — Jimmie Arledge
Bed Rails — Bill DeLorme
Head Stock.— Bob Davis
Tail Stock.—. Louis Oberheu
Fly Wheel, Pulleys — Devore Burch
Treadle – Raymond Pierce
Marionette — John Horn
Tool Rest — Blake Hickerson
Turning Tools — Larry Roberts
Others who contributed: Larry Genender; Jane Siebenthall; John Haddock; Stephen Smith; Bill Hancock; Mike Wallace; Keith Harper; Lorene Harper; Del Hooper.

Also, Louis Oberheu; Chase Roberts; Bill Shadle; Alan Siebenthall; Wayne Clowers; and Sue Horn.

Ground Rules For Turners

Each turner was allowed to select what wood to use for his assigned part. Also, the design of each part was up to the turner, as long as he stayed within the dimensional requirements of the drawing. It was stressed that each part should involve turning.

We had no difficulty making the assignments, except for the little wooden man, the marionette known as "Woody Turner". No one would volunteer for this detail, so our valiant president, John Horn, heroically volunteered to take him on.

After the meeting, Bill DeLorme burned the midnight oil and did the design work and issued the drawings on April 4, 1999.

We all met on May 15, 1999, at Mike Wallace's shop for a trial fit of the components. Everything was there except the little man. John Horn was experiencing serious production problems. Some of the pessimists predicted that we might have to ship the lathe without the little man.

But at the final assembly a week later about 12 members showed up at Mike's shop with all the components, and everything went together with minimum adjustments. Woody Turner, the marionette, arrived completely assembled, but, alas, his arms were a bit long and had to be altered before the artist could paint it.

Right on schedule, the completed project was presented to the members May 28, 1999 at the regular meeting in Mike Wallace's shop. The treadle lathe performed beautifully; even Woody the marionette, was at his position at the lathe, faithfully pedaling away on the treadle of the lathe.

Our intrepid president had labored valiantly and burned three barrels of

midnight oil to complete the little man in time for the artist, Jane Siebenthall, to decorate him.

A work of art and good design

—By Bill DeLorme, Project Manager

Our goal was to engineer and produce a truly functional prototype, with most of its parts produced on a lathe. The end result would be both a work of art and a well-thought out design that could be a model for a full-size , fully functioning lathe for turners desiring to reproduce truly nostalgic turning.

With a combined experience of over 150 years of woodturning, ideas flowed quick and fast during early brain storming sessions to optimize the design. Suggestions were made to change the design of the bed rails, providing a hand powered "display drive system" and other ideas to enhance the lathe's appearance and function.

Design factors considered included things such as the ratio between the flywheel and the live spindle so as to provide adequate rotational speed for optimal turning. Other factors such as swing over the bed and the distance between centers were considered. The radius for the treadle and the connecting rod was determined to assure adequate travel for the necessary power. Machined parts and low friction bearings were incorporated to reduce friction and provide a durable design. Classic type wedges were utilized to lock the position of the headstock, tailstock and the tool rest.

Once the design was finalized we made a schedule for fabrication of the parts, assembly of the subcomponents and final assembly of the lathe. To the credit and dedication of the team leaders and the turners, we were on schedule all the way. The project was divided into ten major categories, with ten team leaders. Operation sheets were prepared for each team captain, listing step-by-step procedures for each subcomponent.

"Woody Turner"

During every stage of the operation, we constantly worked to coordinate each stage, to assure any problems were worked out. We needed to manage all of the details in order to have a smoothly operating machine of top quality, completed on schedule. And we did it!

In retrospect, many members of our club gained a great deal of awareness of the talents of our fellow woodturners. Even if there were no competition involved, this project has served a most useful purpose, increasing enthusiasm among all of our members.

This is not to say that we did not run into a few snags! We dealt with the three-foot-cube rule, designing "Woody" to fit both the lathe and the "cube", and then how to pivot Woody's arms and legs to hold the tools at the proper position and allow his foot to pump the treadle in the appropriate manner.

John Horn spent an enormous number of hours on the figure – turnings, the fit and finish, and the appropriate attire, including the leather apron. John will surely remember Woody before he volunteers for anything again!

Should you have the chance to meet Woody in person, note that all of the turners that helped to make this project a success have their signatures laser-engraved on the backside of the tool rack. Then, fellow, woodturners, rotate the crank and watch Woody Turner pump the treadle and turn out another wonderful work of art on his Y2K Treadle Lathe.

For the statisticians:

The completed lathe used 24 different woods and other materials:

Hard Maple; Zebra Wood; Soft Maple; Bois D'Arc; Red Oak; Gaboon Ebony; Poplar; Birch; Walnut; Juisachez; Mesquite; Corian(plastic); Purple Heart; Merida; White Pine; Hemlock; Goncolo Alves; Basswood; Padouck; Blood Wood; Mahogany; Cherry; Luan; and Bocote.

Counting the parts:

Pieces turned	113
Other components	63
Number of parts made	196
Number of jigs needed	12

Man hours:

Members involved	22
Design and planning	170
Project Coordination	126
Turning	464
Mechanical parts	125
Assembly and finishing	186
Final assembly/testing	60
Total Man-hours	1131

The greatest honor

— By John Horn

In Tacoma, when we started setting up our lathe on the table along side of the other chapters' projects, it was obvious that the competition was going to be fierce. All the projects evidenced the hours of planning and creative ideas that far exceeded the caliber of projects that were presented at Akron in 1998.

We all agreed that it would be a great honor just to win anything in the collaborative competition. You cannot imagine how thrilled we were when it was announced at the banquet that we had won the "Best of Show."All the hard work and long hours spent in planning, turning, and refining had finally paid off.

POWERED BY CREATIVITY

Northwestern Michigan turners running on rails

LYLE JAMIESON

ONCE UPON A TIME IN A LAND far, far away, there was a local chapter of the AAW... and the challenge was sent out across the land. It was soon after the collaborative challenge rules were issued almost a year ago that the Northwestern Michigan Woodturners voted to participate. After that vote, it was hang on for the ride of your life with efforts, cooperation, collaboration, instigation, indigestion, creativity, expert execution, stretched abilities, fun, excitement, encouragement and sacrifice and a totally wonderful experience!

Our first meeting was a brainstorming session. What can we make? We needed something good. The Chicago club set the standard last year with their bike, a hard act to follow. We started writing down all the wonderful ideas. We were in this to win not to just show up. There were many, many ideas so we voted on three possible projects. From this list of three we sent out three committees to research the possibilities and investigate any resources. They responded with a wealth of information, drawings, photos, and schematics from many sources including libraries, the Internet and personal leads. As you can see, the collaborative spirit was in place a long time before any turning started.

At our next meeting, with detailed data in hand, we voted on which project to tackle and the train was selected. It was a representation of a Civil War era locomotive called "The General" built around 1850-1860. The consensus was not to try to make an exact replica of that particular train but to allow each turner to interpret their individual contribution. There were many, many different trains built around that period. Lots of companies made their own trains but did not make very many of the same model. Our file of pictures gave us many different trains and types of components to create from. The idea was to allow the creativity and technical abilities of each woodturner to surface. We could only imagine, if each segment of the collaborative was spectacular, what the sum of the parts could become?

At our December meeting with literally hundreds of photos, pictures and prints in hand we sent around a sign up sheet with a parts list for each woodturner to choose from. All but a few components were selected at that time. We decided on a two month deadline for construction of the individual parts. We used a blown-up drawing 42 inches long to get measurements and let the creativity begin.

So we scattered across northern Michigan to our workshops. A few of the more interdependent pieces were worked on with teams of two or three members, but most of the work was done individually.

Lots of "oh no's

The collaborating and technical support between members started while making the individual parts. There were phone calls with questions such as: "How would you do this?" or "What wood would look good for that?". There were thoughts of: "OH NO!, What did I get myself into?". The expectations for the train were VERY HIGH, yet everyone put their fears aside. Most parts were done more than once to get the right effect. Many stretched their abilities and tried something new. Of course, none of us had made train parts before.

In March, we started the assembly stage and it was easier said than done! A framework had to be built and each part had to be engineered to fit on the boiler/cab/frame sections. The assembling was done in my shop so all the parts converged at Traverse City. Many, many evenings three or four members would come over to play and create the connective components. Many hands made light work of it. It was fun and rewarding to see the efforts of sixteen members bring the locomotive to life. I had a birdseye view of each contribution and there were no small efforts. There was no judging. Everyone did their best and that effort was appreciated. Many times I would stand back and watch the interaction. A problem would emerge, ideas would get bounced around, and a solution would surface. Then another idea would come alive and not only solve the problem but create something special at the same time. The true meaning of collaboration happened before my eyes, in my shop, repeatedly and I was having a ball. It was not only a collaborative of labor but a joint effort in an intellectual endeavor and a creative endeavor. The first weekend of May we had a weekend work bee and shifts of 5 to 7 woodturners at a time put the finishing details into place. As it took shape everyone involved was walking a little taller and feeling very proud of what we had accomplished.

The over 900 parts were made of Northern Michigan hardwoods with a few exotic woods added. The headlight works, and the boiler is lit by simulated wood fire coals. The front of the boiler section is attached with a magnetic clasp and a battery pack is inside the boiler to power the lights. The doors on the headlight and the boiler are operable with hand made brass hinges. The metal parts, hinges, handles, railings, gauges, rivets, etc. are all solid brass, and many were turned. The locomotive also has

a custom built carrying box. It weighs 37.5 lbs and is 42 inches long and 27 inches high. It fit inside a three foot cube diagonally. The self imposed deadline for completion of the entire project was April 15. We wanted to exhibit the "amazing", "awesome", "spectacular" creation locally before it was sent to Tacoma. We had local TV coverage, we offered to show it to service clubs in the community, and the local newspaper wrote an article about the project, pictures and all. We had a group photo taken with the locomotive.

The experience was well worth the effort. We grew as club members, as teammates, as individuals, as turners and as members of the AAW. The group was talking about what to do for next year before the locomotive was completed.

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

Everybody wins when we all work together and learn from each other

The Glendale Woodturners Guild, an AAW chapter in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area, began working on its collaboration entry in January. It took six months to complete the project. An undertaking of this magnitude is not something done in a short period of time, and it was no small challenge.

Several candidates for a project were considered, but the idea of a lathe was quickly agreed upon. We thought that designing and producing a lathe, all out of turned wood, would be a unique eye-catching piece.

The end product was more amazing than had ever been anticipated. Thirty-two craftsmen had used thirty-one fine hardwoods and a wealth of experience and craftsmanship, and a good measure of enthusiasm, to create a product we felt was visually a jewel, mechanically true, and technically a masterpiece.

In addition to the great sense of accomplishment and satisfaction the participants felt, they learned a number of things from the collaborative process:

- When a group bounces a number of ideas around, positive participation will tend to produce better ideas and creative solutions than separate individuals achieve.
- In working together, new techniques and methods are learned from fellow team members.
- In dealing with challenging and untried tasks, team members backstop each other during the process to think out steps that will prevent mistakes and disastrous errors.

What a satisfying and rewarding experience.

Did we win? Oh my, the competition exceeded what anyone anticipated. No, we didn't place, but we still feel like a winner.

— Bill Haskell, Placentia, CA

Detail of GWG lathe

Music Box Whimsy

Inventive mechanisms sing and dance

S. GARY ROBERTS

Music boxes, like many other seemingly simple devices, have done much to add to the joy of life and provide a fascinating way for turners and other skilled workers to showcase their art.

Before the evolution of the mechanical music box, as described later in this article, music in the home was produced only by the members of the family that had both musical instruments and the skills to use them. Mechanical boxes allowed the luxury of having music at any time.

Examples of the 17th and 18th century music mechanisms that have been preserved are astounding in their complexity.

Admiration for the masters

When you consider the antique lathes and drills that produced these works of art to an extremely high degree of precision were, of themselves, rather crude by today's standards, you must be impressed with their personal skills with these tools.

Now we can purchase high-quality music mechanisms at economical prices from a number of sources. Designs vary from push-button electronic, as shown below, to impressively well-made, mechanical spring-powered units that rival those found in museums. All these can be adapted to our own designs by using drive belts and other accessories.

A push-button music box is inlaid in the lid of the author's turned box.

"IZZY A Turner" – Gary Roberts with one of his creations, a funny creature who rolls his eyes and spins his propeller as he plays music when you wind his nose.

The music itself is the most obvious part of these mechanisms. Many people doing music boxes just make a nice container, which provides both a case for show and a soundboard for amplifying the tune. The tunes are available in an amazing variety. Enjoy browsing the catalogs listed on the next page.

Music of movement

Look a little closer at the source of music, however, and you'll note that it is also a source of mechanical movement. It's a little engine with several kinds of power take offs that can be utilized to animate your musical production.

As you can see from the photos of my creations shown in this article, that aspect of the work especially fascinates me, and I find it delights those who see them work. Each piece is alive, powered by simple mechanical movements and a touch of humor and whimsy from the creator.

Because of the unlimited possibilities for designing the boxes and the variety of ways that you can harness the energy of a music movement, I can't go into all the details. Instead I'll show you some of my ideas and point out some guidelines for designing objects to bring your ideas to life. Here, as in most of the projects, the rule really is "Enjoy turning."

Push button tunes

You can turn a nice lidded box and install a push button music box in the top of the lid as shown at left. The traditional lidded box also can be modified to control the music box mechanism that has a lever and a wire to turn the box on when the lid is removed. The look of surprise and delight on a child's face when the music starts is more than ample com-

A turned, lidded box with light activated mechanism inside.

Interior view of the light-activated mechanism inside the box at left.

"Let The Good Times Roll"-- turned balls roll inside cage as music plays.

pensation for the invested time and effort.

Light activated tones

A light activated electronic music mechanism attached to the inside of an ordinary box, as shown above, turns the piece into a delightful surprise. The mechanism can be secured by glue or double-stick carpet tape. Or, you could use tiny brass screws sold at most hobby supply stores.

Once you start experimenting, you'll be surprised by how your inventiveness and freedom of expression can be expanded by incorporating music in your turnings.

There are as many applications as your imagination can conjure up. In the piece "Let The Good Times Roll," above right, the finial was extended and used as the winding key by grinding the key down, so it could be glued into a drilled hole in the bottom of the finial shaft. The shaft was pierced with a brass rod that extends either side to push the turned spheres around the track as the music plays.

Peeking inside

Carved holes let the admirer watch with fascination as the balls roll around inside the cage. The cover can be removed to reveal the mechanism as it turns.

The Sankyo 18-note mechanism with the clear cover has a hole in the end of the peg drum that will accommodate a $^1/_8$-in. dowel. Now we have a right-angle, gear box that can be wound from one direction and deliver a power source at 90 degrees. This is the system used in "Izzy A Turner" on the first page of this article.

The winding key can be used as a power source as well as can the hollow shaft on the peg drum. The winding key rotates rather slowly as the spring unwinds, but can deliver an amazing amount of energy provided friction is minimized.

The miniature spinning wheel, shown on the last page of this article, is an excellent example of movement that can be created with a belt sheave attached to the peg drum shaft. The belt drives the big wheel, which in turn drives the spinning shaft and even raises and lowers the treadle as the music plays.

Rotating shafts

The peg drum shaft rotates at a slightly higher rate than the winding key shaft and is another good power source. By inserting an $^1/_8$-in. dowel that will fit snugly into the drum shaft, you can create a myriad of de-

Sources of Supplies

Lou Davis Wholesale
P.O. Box 21
Lake Geneva, WI 53147
1-800-748-7991

Klockit
P.O. Box 636
Lake Geneva, WI 53147
1-800-556-2548

Music box mechanisms – clockwise, from top left: Coin-operated movement; Light-activated movement; a 10-note mechanical music mechanism; Push button music unit.

A Brief Look At The Rhythms Of Time

EARLY MAN NOTICED THAT PIECES OF wood, when struck against each other, made a pleasant sound. This lead to the belief that magical spirits lived within the wood. Among these spirits were those that made music and amplified those sounds. In the Dark Ages wood was believed to contain many kinds of spirits, both good and evil. The superstition of knocking on wood for good luck is, today, from these ancient beliefs. The resonance properties of wood were revered to the point, in some societies, of worship. In South America, some ancient person with creative skills lined up different sized blocks of wood and struck them with a stick having a knot on one end that formed a hammer. This created different sounds or "notes" and when struck or "played" in a repeated order produced a "tune." Thus was created the xylophone, a wonderful wooden musical instrument and a great word for crossword puzzles.

A unique resonance

The unique quality of wood to resonate and thus magnify the volume of sound was universally utilized by all cultures around the world. History makes reference to wooden musical instruments in many forms from nearly every culture.

Oriental societies made early use of bamboo sticks of different lengths, hung independently, with a striker in the middle, to produce a pleasant music like sound when blown by the wind. It was inevitable that someone decided to strike the bamboo tubes in an orderly fashion to produce a melody.

Many ancient civilizations utilized wooden drums to produce rhythmic sound for ceremonial purposes as well as communicate over vast distances. Someone noticed that certain trees with dense wood produced a better resonance or sound than soft woods. Hollowing the more resonant logs magnified the sound and extended the range of audible distance. Animal skins combined with resonant woods produced an even better sound.

Bring on the metal

As metals were improved by combining different types to produce a variety of alloys, they too, began to be utilized to produce music. Early on it was noticed that by attaching metal strips to a hardwood base a natural magnification occurred.

Some of the first music mechanisms were designed and installed in wooden clock towers to relate the time to the surrounding community. In that time, clocks were expensive and rare. The village clock was often the only one in the community. Tall wooden towers were used for both visibility and transmission of sound. During the daylight hours the tower was visible, but during the night the only way to indicate the time was by sound. Elaborate systems of bells and chimes were combined to mark the passage of the hours, both day and night.

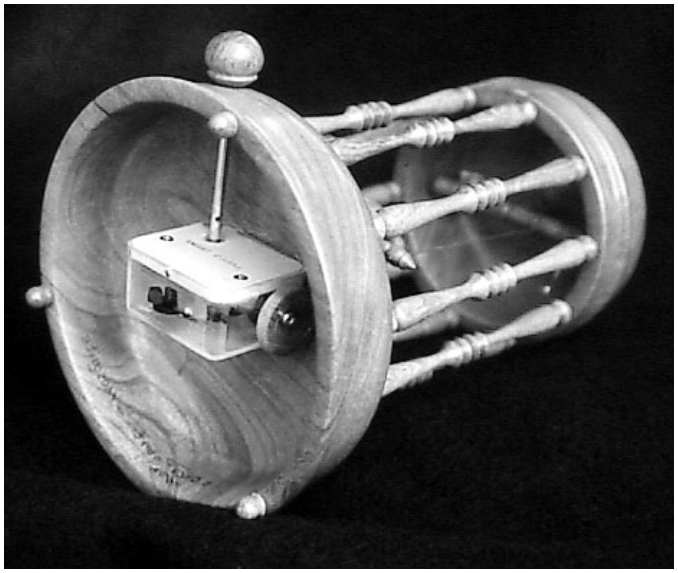
As early as the 14th century, weight powered clocks were combined with different kinds of metal bells and wooden frames to indicate the time of day. Long before that, Greeks had referred to water powered mechanisms to indicate time, accompanied by sounds to mark the hours.

It is interesting to observe that as man innovated methods of keeping track of time, he immediately utilized these same methods to produce sounds and thus music.

Spring wound clocks and watches were the perfect source to also produce sounds that indicate the time. Necessity to audibly differentiate between the hours created the utilization of music to do so.

Exquisitely crafted gentleman's pocket watches were designed to play music to indicate the time without the owner taking the watch from his pocket. Ladies lapel watches were much smaller and an even greater challenge for the watch maker to include a music mechanism. Wonderful examples of these masterpieces now exist only in rare collections and museums.

Evolution of the spring mechanism produced the next generation, which was not a utilitarian time piece, but was made solely for entertainment purposes. — S.G.R.



The 11-in. high "Spinning Memories" wheel, above left, can challenge any turner. Its base conceals a music mechanism fitted with a pulley and drive belt that turns the wheel as the music plays. A similar pulley / music mechanism system animates the 12-in. high "Bird On A Swing."

vices to animate your project.

Note that the mechanism may eventually need to be changed or replaced. Use brass or stainless steel rods or screws from the hobby shop to prevent rust.

Using Belt drives

Belt drives are wonderful. Sheaves can be turned in any diameter from any good hardwood. Multiple drives can increase or decrease shaft. speeds. They can also drive multiple shafts or figures attached to the shafts.

Belts of different sizes, diameters, and strengths are available at electronic repair parts stores. These belts were originally designed for computers, video cassette recorders or other equipment. There are relatively inexpensive and durable.

The tiny wind-up music mechanism is an intriguing source of music and energy, but it only takes a small amount of friction to stop it. Dry lubricants such as graphite on friction points are recommended. Although liquid lubricants and oils may reduce friction temporarily, they become the enemy as they dry and harden over a period of time. They also will eventually stain and discolor the wood beyond repair. Stick with, ah, dry lubricants, no pun intended.

It is important to remember that the piece will be enjoyed and used by many future generations. That extra effort to produce a high quality piece will say volumes about your skill and caring to those future admirers that you may never meet. Take my advice and add music to your work.

S. Gary Roberts turns wood in Austin TX, and was honored last year during the Akron, OH, symposium with the AAW's 1998 Honorary Lifetime Membership Award.

INSTANT GALLEY - TACOMA '99

A celebration of creative thinking

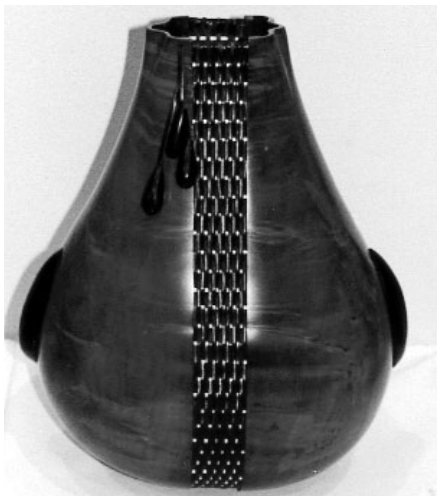
JACQUES VESERY

SOMETHING UNIQUE INSIDE MOST OF us greatly affects how we perceive things. The crucial factor might be a fondness for a particular color, texture or form, or the outgrowth of all manner of life experiences. It's just human nature to interpret things in a particularly personal or subjective way.

Overriding this tendency, so you can critique other people's work without being constrained by these subjective reactions is no easy task, yet this is what happened on Sunday morning during the 1999 AAW Symposium in Tacoma, WA.

Bill Moore, well-known artist, and Chairman of the Sculpture Department at Pacific Northwest College of Art, lead the critique. along with David and Ruth Waterbury of Minneapolis, MN, who have a prominent collection of wood art. Bill called the event "a celebration of creative thinking" – it was a celebration we could all learn from, as we try to make our work more refined and expressive.

Plus, the presence of the Waterburys, and many other collectors, at the symposium, emphasized the ever growing response to turned objects as an art form. Interestingly, the evaluation of the artist and the favorable reaction of the collectors frequently went hand in hand. Even more so, it was apparent that the opinion of husband and wife, though joined, can be so diverse, as black and white.



Work of James Johnson of Texas was cited for its strong graphic image.

Artist and collectors look at turning: Bill Moore holds up piece as Ruth Waterbury discusses it.

From a roar to a hush

In spaces lined with white tables, both on the main floor and on two balcony levels, lay turned objects to delight the eye and stretch the imagination. More than a thousand pieces by about 900 makers were on display and about 300 people showed up for this annual event. A low thunderous roar of conversation and fellowship quickly fell silent as Bill, Ruth and David began to lead us on a journey. The emphasis was continually on how pieces exhibit and on the creative process that an artist utilizes. Bill started with a wonderful piece by James R. Johnson of Kerrville, TX, calling our attention to the beautiful use of space and strong graphic image. "When we create a vessel, it's different than creating a solid sculpture. We're not just talking about the exterior of the form but the interior as well" he said in describing James' interesting way of revealing interior space.

If you know Bill Moore's work, especially as metal spinner, then it becomes evident that he is "Partial to Pitchers" in referring to a piece by Peter Oliver. "Beautifully resolved" describes the shape of the lip, the relation of the lip to the handle, and how the handle is integrated into the de-

sign. The handle appears at first to be metal, but at closer examination, is a bent-wood laminate. David Waterbury mentioned the relationship of the wood to the form and the artist's use of grain or figure to enhance the piece and how he has made it part of the design.

Dave Wahl's brightly colored "Giraffe" drew the attention of many, including the Waterburys. Dave created this fun piece during a class at Arrowmont in Gatlinburg, TN, where an instructor's challenges end up telling a story of creating something never tried before.

An attentive audience of about 300 crowded around Bill Moore and Ruth and David Waterbury as they critiqued the Instant Gallery at the Tacoma Symposium.

What's in a face

When talking about Linda Fifield's work, a turned form encased in beads (see photo below), Bill admitted his own nervousness about using color, other than natural colors of materials. (There is need to mention the nervous look on Linda's face as she stood in the crowd listening to the critique, but we'll get back to that.) "Linda is not afraid of color or intimidated by it." It is obvious she revels in it. Her use of color and texture to envelop a vessel, combined with the flowing "Ruffled" rim were a feast for the eyes. "It is striking just to look at this work for its visual texture and the size of the beads in relation to the vessel. There is wonderful play of scale in these pieces."

Linda Fifield's pieces were a delight of golds, reds and blues.

I remember standing next to Linda in Akron during the critique and feeling her slight sense of disappointment when her work was passed by without mention; I had felt the same way only minutes before when my work was passed over. Nervousness seemed to turn to pride and joy in Tacoma. Many people around her were watching her reaction, rather than looking at the work, and you could see they shared her feelings.

It was a treat to see the glow on the face of Chase Roberts, from Arlington TX when his piece was critiqued. Chase is one of AAW's younger members (9-yrs. old) and has already had his work picked out of thousands from the Instant Gallery at the past two symposiums. Chase invented a horizontal form using two turned elements to create a beautiful sculptural space. I think Chase has nerves of steel. {Ah to be young again.}

For my own work to be in the critique brought me great pride, and I was not a bit unnerved {yea right!}. John Jordan stood next to me interjecting a comment or complement here and there, and higher on the balcony, I could see Christian Burchard and Suzi Wahl watching me, sort of giggling to themselves. I later found out they were observing the different shades of red my face was turning.

Presentation can be everything

The emphasis on how an artist pre-

sents a piece was a prominent topic when viewing the work of Craig Lossing and Michael Peterson (More about Peterson on Page 28 of this Journal). Craig's lidded vessel, with his signature handle, was a footless form resting in a base, making the base one more element of the sculpture.

Bill and Ruth showed us the narrow parameters that Michael had put on his wood sculpture, which had two forms sitting freely on the base. "The artist tells you that the pieces conform to a certain space" yet gives the option of viewing the piece in many different aspects. Also, Ruth drew our attention to the elegant stands which Johannes Michelsen had made for his wooden hats, showing a better way to exhibit certain work. Gary Sanders gives his work a sense of levitation. Making a piece seem to float is something many have tried, but with not as much success.

Man-made Inspiration

Bill referred to Michael Mocho's pieces as "Simple box forms with a strong statement."

The architectural influence seen in his work shows a sense of balance in detail and texture. The discovery of texturing within the pieces was a pleasant surprise, adding just the right touch. A great understanding of scale was apparent in Michael's work.

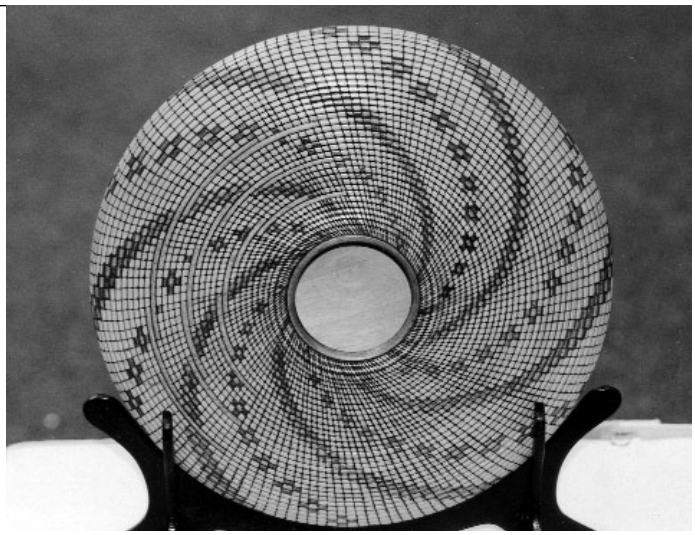
"Beautiful balance between detail and form to make a sculptural statement" were Bill's words for the work of Gorst Duplessis.

Gorst, an ornamental turner, uses the ability of the machine to create other than round forms and just the right amount of visual textures to achieve this balance.

Bill pointed out " There should be a reason to do things. Just because you can do something doesn't mean you need to." The long, towering handles on his "Seattle Series" attests to an architectural inspiration.

Visual language

Something Bill said really stuck with me, "Visual artists have a visual language," which seems very true with Max Krimmel, Steve Sinner, and David Nittmann.



An example of the visual language of David Nittmann.

"Elegance that begs to be looked at and held" were David Waterbury's words describing one of the alabaster bowls of Max Krimmel. Yet Bill put in another view. "There's poetic dialog between the form and the material allowing the beauty of the material to speak." Two opinions both well voiced.

A piece by Steve Sinner stood out to all, but not for its size. This small open vessel, was detailed with a pierced design so fine, it gave the illusion of surface texturing, and a relative scale that is complementary.

David Nittmann's vessels have the look of basketry, with a wonderful use of color and patterns. His work is inventive and shows great rhythm in his shapes.

Rich textures

It was obvious that surface treatments abound in the world of turning. "An artist's work defines a voice to articulate their own personal statement. Jack has seen an organic sense of order vs. ridged geometry" were Bill's words of wisdom about my work. That probably explains my blushing in various shades of red, as was mentioned before. Yet to be included with the likes of artists such as Gael Montgomerie and Mark Gardner, two of my favorites, was beyond a dream.

Gael's large textured platters were simply amazing. The wonderful organic detail of the rim, combined with natural cracks and copper celebrate a greater sense of nature. Even though these pieces were meant to hang on the wall, there was still a fine detail on the back, sort of a hidden treasure.

Mark Gardner of Cincinnati, OH, has accomplished some of the sharpest, crisp textures I have ever seen. "A beautiful play of textures and shapes that peak curiosity. It's like they came from an ancient culture that I didn't know," stated Bill describing Mark's small black vessels.

I can't leave out this classic comment "Textures that evoke a sense of timelessness" Bill Moore made when talking about Michael Peterson's pieces. Michael, I think this should be on your business card.

As in any event of this size, not all the work could be critiqued and not all pieces critiqued could be mentioned in this article, but it was all wonderful work with a story to be told. Bill, Ruth and David all did a tremendous job leading us on a tour of their views of some amazing work. Not only did we hear an artistic viewpoint but personal ones as well, a task I don't think I ever want to try.

Jacques Vesery is a full-time turner and teacher in Damariscotta, ME. Ken Keoughan wrote a profile of him in the June 1999 Journal.

TURNED PULLS

A nice project, and a production trick or two

ART JENSON

IT'S A VERY FORTUNATE STUDENT who finds a teacher with that very special combination of skill, experience, charisma and wit to make a real difference in his or her life. Many meet the perfect instructor when they are young, but it took me a little longer to find my mentor, Martin Pidgen, the turner whose work is shown here.

Martin is a British production turner who markets his work through more than 40 galleries. And I didn't even have to travel overseas to find him -- I ran into him in Utah.

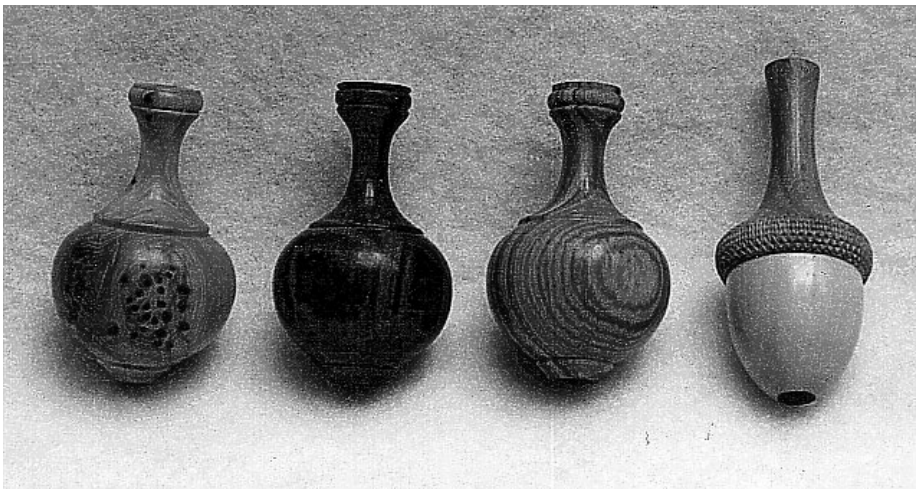
It seems as if I've always been interested in woodworking. I've had a fairly well-equipped workshop for most of my life, but never had a lathe. Last year my nephew Dean loaned me his. I started with small projects and became hooked. Since my first bowl, I've been watching VCR tapes and attending woodturning classes.

I've been known to be out in the woodshop by 4:30 a.m. to try a new technique I'd seen the night before on some video.

I met Martin at the Provo, UT, Woodturning Symposium in the Spring of 1998. We became friends and he visited us at our home and the 10 days of private instruction I received from him sealed my destiny. Woodturning follows only my wife in priorities.

Production tips

It would be futile to try to sum up a person's work or his seminars in a single article, so here I'll concentrate on how he makes pulls, one of his best selling production items, and add a few comments on his techniques and philosophy. Although a great deal of his work consists of pulls, he also produces platters, plates, bowls, needle cases and other items for galleries.



Pidgen makes pulls in more than 100 different woods. The acorn pull of boxwood and oak is one of his best sellers. Photos by Art Jenson

Since he has to make a living from turning, efficient production is important to him and his seminars are loaded with practical tips for doing high-quality work quickly.

For instance, to save time, he clamps a rubber cleaning stick to the lathe where he just touches the sanding pad when needed. When he is on a run and uses one or two tools for most of his work, he simply cuts a piece of pipe the correct length for the tool post so he doesn't have to correct for height every time he adjusts the rest.

Cornering the market on pulls

In England the household voltage is 220 volts. Their electrical code says that every light in a bathroom must have a pull cord on it to help prevent electrical shocks. Martin has the corner on this market and to date has done approximately 200,000 of them, 50,000 just last year.

These pulls are not only for bathroom lights. They are used for fans, curtains and other tasks. His acorn pulls are especially in demand and he has developed a special patented knurling tool to do the crown.

The pull at the right in the picture above is made of English brown oak and boxwood, although any two contrasting woods would do just as well. Walnut and maple make an attractive combination.

Dimensions for the pull are shown on the following page, but you can size the piece to fit your needs. Martin sometimes shortens the stem and makes a smaller acorn to be sold for a key chain, for example.

First a glued up blank is prepared. Take a piece of the lighter wood $1^{1}/_{4}$-in. square by $1^{1}/_{2}$-in." long, then bore holes indicated. All the holes are bored prior to assembly.

Drill a $^{9}/_{64}$-in. hole through the center. Make a spigot on one end $^{3}/_{4}$-in. in diameter by $^{3}/_{16}$-in. long. Enlarge the hole in the other end to $^{5}/_{16}$-in." by $^{1}/_{2}$-in. deep as shown in Figure 1. We'll call this the "nut". Now take a piece of the darker wood $1^{3}/_{4}$-in. by 2" and drill a $^{9}/_{64}$-in. hole through the center. Drill a $^{3}/_{4}$-in. wide by $^{3}/_{16}$-in. deep hole in one end. We'll call this the stem. Now glue the spigot of the nut into the $^{3}/_{4}$-in. hole in end of the stem.

When the glue is dry, mount a 3/8-in. dowel into a Jacobs chuck and lightly taper the outer end. Push this tapered end into the 5/16-in. hole in the nut. This "driver" works well because the tapered dowel makes a friction fit and will hold tightly. A big advantage to this driver is that it also allows the tool to cut down to the dowel without any breakout or blunting of the tool. Now bring up the tail stock and live center, but use very little pressure as this would split the stem when it is turned down to finished size.

Turn the stem to shape with a short bevel 1/4-in. spindle gouge. Then turn the nut with a square ended chisel or wide parting tool. You can also customize the acorn for uses other than a lamp pull. Martin sometimes shortens the stem, so that the turning can be used as a key ring fob.

Apply friction polish or clear lacquer at high rpm. This will instantly dry and burnish the finish. Then apply carnuba wax directly to the piece and polish with a soft cloth to a high gloss.

Now comes texturing the crown of the stem. Martin has a special wood knurling tool, but a machinist's metal knurling tool would also work. Try to get a coarse cross hatch pattern. Apply the knurling wheel at about 20° left or right from the vertical and move it around the shape of the stem at this angle.

Martin Pidgen works on a large platter while visiting in the United States.

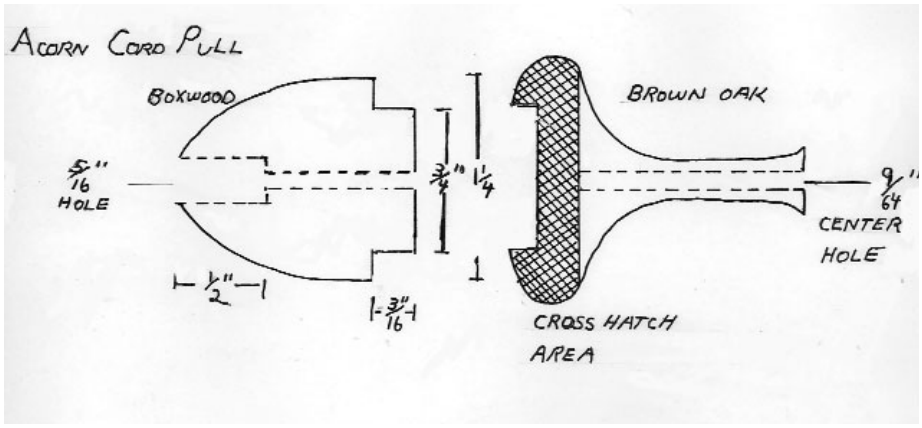
Versatile parting tool

Contrary to popular opinion, a parting tool isn't something you thoughtlessly jam into a turning to cut it off. Martin uses it very effectively as a shaping tool in its own right. First, make certain that it is very sharp and that each bevel is concave and the cutting edge square across. He finds the parting tool small enough to get into areas he can't reach with a larger tool. He uses it for spindle work, smoothing, making beads, etc.

It is used with the tool rest well below center and with the cutting edge slightly above the center line with the bevel rubbing! With practice you will be surprised what a fine, smooth finish can be achieved.

He also finds the parting tool very effective on end grain when preparing the chuck recess for bowls or platters. The tool can be rolled to the side to cut a perfect angle for the chuck jaws or to turn decorative beads and lines into the bottom for areas to sign the work.

Also try moving the handle horizontally to cut tiny coves with the sharp edge. When you start using the parting tool in ways other than cut-



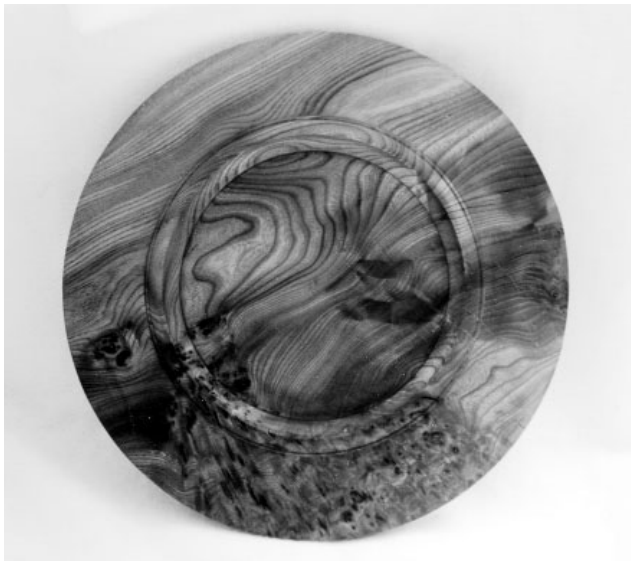
The author turns the acorn stalk from a 1 3/4-in. piece of stock about 2-in. long. The contrasting nut begins as a piece 1 1/4-in. X 1 1/2-in. long. All holes are bored prior to assembly.

ting things off you will find that you have a new, very versatile tool.

Another student Dr. Don Kaufmann of Del Mar, CA, shares my opinion of Martin's expertise with the parting tool: "I was amazed to see what you can do with a parting tool, and even more amazed that with several hours of practice, I am able to almost master the technique. I'm now doing spheres and beads like never before and with excellent control. No longer do I bugger them up with a skew as in the past. Just continually moving the tool rest close to the work has proven to be of great benefit; no more catches. What a simple thing, but I have never had anyone emphasize its importance like you do".

Art Jenson

Art Jenson is a retired printer and turns wood in Lively, VA, when he is not sailing or searching for record-breaking fish.



Turned platter by Martin Pidgen

Turner's Journey: From collecting wood at Normandy to trophy fish in North Carolina

Martin Pidgen originally was a trawler captain on the North Sea. Later he became an electrical engineer and then, being prodded by British turner John Hunnex to "go for it," decided to make his career full-time woodturning. Although very well known in the U.K. through his demonstrations and work in over 40 galleries there, last year was his first trip to the U.S.

Arborist for royal family

In addition to his turning and teaching work, he is also a professional arborist and is employed part-time by the royal family on their wooded estates.

Last year Martin bought 20+ tons of wood for another of his businesses, which is retailing wood to the turners of the U.K. He regularly stocks 200 varieties of wood, mostly exotics. One of his most recent purchases was the Normandy Yew that lined the famous invasion beaches during the 2nd World War. It has been well over 50 years since these trees absorbed the enormous shelling the morning of D-Day. Embedded in the wood are bullets, shrapnel, barbed wire and remnants of uniforms torn off by the scathing fire along that beach. Today the normally golden yew has been stained an unusual blue/gray by the metal. Martin has cut the timber carefully to preserve this historic coloring.

Martin Pidgen scores trophy-size fish on US turning tour.

While staying at my home in Virginia and teaching for 10 days last year, he took a break and we chartered a boat off Cape Hatteras. Martin hooked and landed a 9 ft. 6 inch 400 pound Blue Marlin. The monster fish took over an hour to boat, after which it was tagged and released. The state of North Carolina is sending him a citation for his record catch. – *A.J.*

MICHAEL PETERSON

The lathe is just a starting point

KEN KEOUGHAN

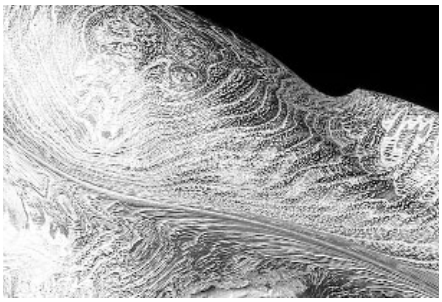
MICHAEL PETERSON IS A RETICENT, articulate, quiet man whose soul infuses his work. That, among other reasons is why his art stands alone. It is not at all "like" anyone else's. And no one else does work that resembles his. No one else has Michael's soul. And very few practicing woodturners or wood artists breathe their soul's life into their work to the same degree that Michael does.

There is an agelessness about Michael. He seems younger, more boyish than his 47 years. While he seems young, he also seems to be steeped in the experiences of the life he has lived. He is a paradox. He is slight, a light frame, but if you look closely it is well muscled. The veins are thick in his hands and wrists. There's a spark in his eye. Michael is as gentle as a soft Seattle rain. My guess is that he can also be as tough and hard as the locust wood he loves to work with. There is determination here, drive. But it is tempered by curiosity, an inquisitiveness. Each piece is a thorough exploration of the material from which it evolved. And when it emerges it appears to be straight from Nature, sculpted by the creative forces and energy of Nature's wind and wash and erosion. Each piece is pure and almost addictively tactile.

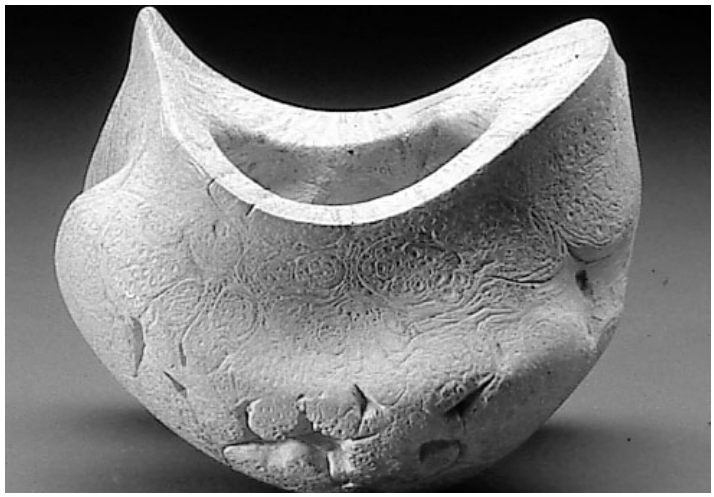
From the viewpoint of a woodturner, there could be a conflict here. Because there may not be any evidence of the work of the lathe. But usually the lathe has been involved. Frequently in the very early stages of creation, a piece will be hollowed or rounded in a bowl form. But often this is the point of departure for Michael's sculpting, not the point of arrival for the finished piece as is usually the case with turned work.

In 1979 Michael was studying art, working with wood, at Edmonds Community College in Edmonds Washington. He had been making carved bowls, bandsawed boxes and other craft items out of the burl that was readily available in the Pacific Northwest. While at Edmonds he saw the work of Ed Moulthrop featured on the cover of *American Craft* magazine. A light went on. He and his instructor found an old lathe at the school and Michael's affair with woodturning was underway.

He quickly became adept at turning wood. The opportunities for woodturning education were not as abundant then as they are now. Much of his skill was self-taught, developed in the isolation of his home on the coast of Washington. Articles in *Fine Woodworking* magazine featuring the work of David Ellsworth were a significant influence in the early years. Finally in 1985, Michael got his first exposure to the overall field of turned wood by attending a Woodturning Symposium at Brigham Young University. His work there was well accepted, and Michael was on his way to becoming a recognized participant in the community of wood turning.



Michael Peterson checks out his latest score – a large hunk of locust burl. Using lathe, carving, sandblasting, bleaching and other techniques he transforms this material into objects like one above right, embellished with luscious details, left.



This locust burl, above left, is part of Peterson's Coastal Objects series. The piece is 6 in. X 8 in., and characterizes what the artist calls sculpted turning. Above right, a vessel form which Peterson describes as turned, sawn, sandblasted and bleached. (Photo by Roger Schreiber)

In 1986 he became a "founding member" of the American Association of Woodturners and attended the first national AAW Symposium. Michael and his work were generating wide exposure within and without the woodturning community. Del Mano Gallery selected some of his work for one of its exhibitions. Dr. Irving Lipton, noted collector, began acquiring pieces of Michael's work. Michael was achieving serious recognition and success. He was only 35 years old at the time.

Success: burden or blessing

Thus the burdens or blessings of early success were facing him. Asked whether this early success was a blessing or a burden Michael quickly replied, "Oh definitely a blessing. I had experienced local and regional success already. And these earlier successes were indeed wonderful. Now with work appearing on the back covers of national magazines, acceptance into the Lipton collection … these kinds of recognition and acceptance and the encouragement that they provided certainly gave me a wonderful incentive to continue down the road that I was following. " There was no feeling of burden whatsoever. No concern over living up to the reputation already created.

Michael was creating beautifully proportioned hollow vessels with traditionally thin walls. The beauty of burl was an inherent part of his turning. He was torn between the beauty of the wood, the excitement of the admiration he was receiving for his technical prowess and his yearning to reflect Nature in his work. Because of this, he began to embellish and to explore techniques of embellishment. He even developed a technique for transferring photographs of beautiful landscapes onto turned vessels. But this was a way-stop on the path of exploration that Michael was following.

Influences of nature

Nature more than anything else influences the art that Michael creates today. In a way, that began when Michael was a Medic in the Navy based in Orlando, FL. He and a colleague did a lot of canoeing on the Suwanee River. There they found artifacts from the Native American tribes and pre-historic animals that once plied these crystal clear waters and their shores. The look and feel and timelessness of these artifacts seen 25 years ago emerge in Michael's

Another locust burl piece titled "Arroyo," above left, was sandblasted and extensively carved after being turned. The 12-in. diameter piece is part of the "Landscape Series." Another piece in the series, "Waterstone" (6-in. X 12 in.) is shown above, right.

The locust burl forms of the "Sculptured Vessels" are not only intriguing, but tempt the viewer to move them about and explore how they relate to each other. Each piece is about 8-in. high. Another Sculpted vessel is shown at right. The 8-in. Sea Grape piece also invites the viewer to touch and imagine how it took shape in the artist's mind. The piece seems ancient, weathered by time and stress.

art today, as evidenced in his "Tusk Series." The beauty of Bryce Canyon sculpted by the forces of wind and water had a profound influence on Michael's work "The Canyon Series." The lush forestation and sea life of the Pacific Northwest are evident in his "Landscape Series."

Michael has experienced a strong imperative to give something back. Teaching is a natural way to do that. So in 1991 when David Ellsworth invited Michael to be his assistant at the Arrowmont School of Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, Michael accepted. Ellsworth remains a strong supporter. At the 1999 AAW Symposium David Ellsworth said of Michael and his work, "It transcends the bowl into sculpture. Michael's is an intuitive response to the material and to the Nature he has seen. The interesting thing about Michael's intuitive response to Nature is that it is everywhere evident in his work but he has made no attempt to duplicate it. "

Michael has been an instructor on his own now for four years at Arrowmont. Some of the greatest satisfactions he has enjoyed in his career to date, have to do with teaching and the experiences involved in showing, sharing, and fostering growth in others. "What wonderful opportunities these kinds of professional experiences offer," Michael says.

He speaks with fondness of some of the people who have taken his classes. "Lyle Jamieson took my class at Arrowmont. We have become good friends and enjoy genuine respect for one another's work. I felt that my mission with Lyle was to encourage him to go right ahead with all of the explorations that he wanted to undertake. As we can see, he has been doing so to the betterment of us all. Lyle is showing us how to do things with the lathe that we all knew couldn't be done." (See June 1998 *American Woodturner* for insight into Lyle Jamieson's turned female forms.)

What are the techniques that have helped Michael achieve the results that we see today? The process breaks into three categories: 1) material selection/preparation; 2) shaping and forming; and 3) finishing.

Much of the current work is being done with dried Locust burl. After a lot of experience with green turning thin hollow vessels and enjoying the distortions that occurred as they dried, Michael decided to try working with dry wood, thus enabling him to control and define the "apparent" distortions that affected the ultimate shape of the pieces he was crafting. Within this context he feels that it's very important at the "chainsaw" stage to maximize the benefit to be derived from the shape, grain, and texture of the material. In short, "Take your time, study it to determine what it can give you, and then go about roughing out the piece. "

It is in the shaping and forming stages that the lathe comes into play. But here is where his use of the lathe differs from many of us. He is not looking to form a bowl or vessel. Rather, he is determining whether an exterior or interior bowl-type configuration is within the context of what he thinks the piece will evolve to; whether or not vessel hollowing or exterior treatments will contribute to the design. These are not necessarily easy decisions because Michael's pieces are intuitive and they evolve as the process goes forward. In the shaping and forming process Michael will use anything that he thinks will get him where he is going. Fundamental among his tools are the chainsaw, an Arbortech grinder, and wonderful bent carving knives that are made on Lopez Island, where Michael and his wife Jean live. (The actual knives are called Kestrel Crooked Knives from Kestrel Tool on Lopez Island, WA.)

He will use rasps, rifflers, power carvers, sandpaper and whatever else it takes to get the piece into the shape and form that its evolution demands. Remember in Michael's world it is the material, not the tool or the technique that is paramount. He is not looking to make the "perfect cut"; he is looking to make the most perfect representation of Nature that the material and his intuition permit.

It is during this stage too, that

Peterson's figurative pair are 12-in. high carved locust forms, which have been bleached and sandblasted. A stunning display of skill and feeling by the artist, waiting to reach out to the viewer.

Michael may or may not make use of sand blasting. If he uses sand blasting, he uses 70-mesh white silica sand, working inside a sand blasting cabinet. If you don't have a sandblaster, you can experiment with similar effects with a stiff wire brush. He cautions that sand blasting is not a substitute for sandpaper. He normally sands from about 80 grit up through about 220 grit before he begins the sand blasting process. If your surface contains scratches or blemishes that you don't want, you must sandpaper them out before you sand blast, otherwise the sand blaster will simply exaggerate the blemishes. What he is usually looking for is the appearance of the erosion made by sand, wind and water in Nature.

Finishing techniques

We can treat the "finishing" process here only briefly. Michael employs two-part bleaches, professional wood finishing bleaches. Here he cautions you must respect the caustic properties of these powerful bleaches. Wear rubber gloves and eye protection without fail. Understand and adhere to the directions on the package. Standard household bleach will not do the job. So do be careful with these powerful bleaching agents. Put the workpiece in a shallow plastic tub; give the bleach a little time to work; and then let it dry. He does not rinse the pieces off after they are bleached. Incidentally, CA glue and bleach are not compatible. Either the glue will prevent penetration by the bleach, or the bleach will break down the glue. After the bleach has dried a light sanding should smooth the grain that it has raised. This is a process that may need to be repeated, possibly several times. It depends on the effect you are looking for. Note too that it may be a good idea to put a coat of paste wax on the piece, because if it absorbs humidity and gets a little bit damp the bleach process may be reversed. It is also worth noting that the penetration depth of the bleach may not be much more than a 64th to a 32nd of an inch. Therefore sand only by hand using high grits and a light touch.

Pigmentation and coloration is another part of the seeming magic that Michael Peterson brings to his works. The most frequently used pigmentation is India ink. In truth we are looking at an "ebonizing" process. The India ink that Michael uses is waterproof. He applies it after he has applied a coat of wax which has been rubbed out. When he applies it he makes sure that the piece is far removed from anything that would suffer from being spattered with India ink. The ink is applied with an old toothbrush and then allowed to dry. After that he scuffs it with very fine sandpaper until he achieves the effect that he wants. If it doesn't work out, he is fully prepared to sand everything out and start over from the bleach on if necessary. It is this attention to detail, this willingness to do it over, this determination with these techniques that give Michael Peterson's work " a sense of the timelessness created by erosion," as William Moore so aptly put it in his critique at the "Instant Gallery" at the 1999 AAW Symposium in Tacoma, WA. To preserve the effects thus created, Michael hand rubs each piece with paste floor wax, which he buffs out with a soft lint-free cloth. "Usually three or four coats are enough," he says. "My pieces get handled a lot and they seem to hold up all right. "

Michael and his wife Jean live on Lopez Island, one of the San Juan Islands. They catch the ferry for Lopez two hours northwest of Seattle. The basic economy of Lopez Island is agrarian, mainly sheep, and fishing. The aura of the island is Nature in its pristine form. While Lopez is one of four of the San Juan's that are served by the state ferry service, it is still removed, a little remote, a little inconvenient … an island. They chose it with their eyes wide open and haven't looked back. Jean works raw fleece from the sheep into felt. She brings to her fabrics the same type of passion that Michael brings to his wood. It may be that they are both artists not only in what they create but also in how they live. They seem to have embraced and live those cherished words "To thine own self be true. "

Ken Keoughan is a turner and contributing editor to American Woodturner. *He lives in Mount Dora, FL during the winter and Friendship, ME in the summer.*

PENCIL PUSHER

Turner's tricks showcase ordinary mechanism

NICK COOK

I HAVE BEEN MAKING THIS PARTICULAR pencil, which is based on mechanisms removed from instruments available from any department or stationery stores, since 1987, long before the currently available commercial kits were introduced in this country. Over the years, I have made literally thousands of pens and pencils both from scratch, as described in this article, and from kits sold by various suppliers.

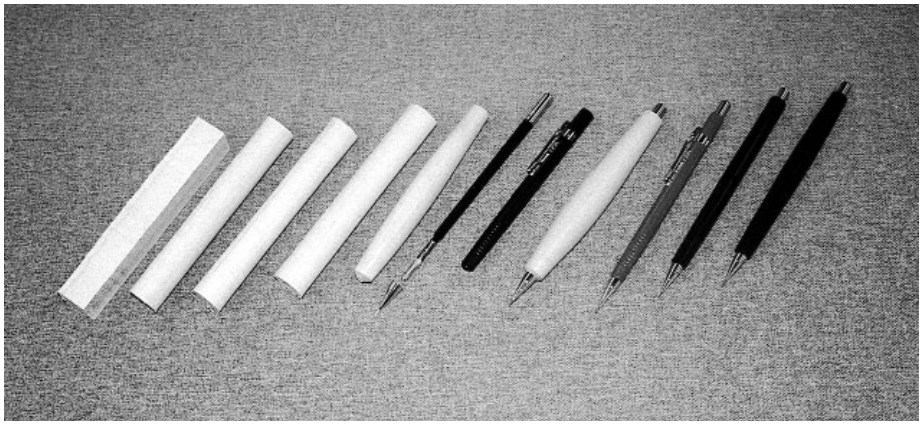
I started out making the old stick pens around 1986 or '87 using Bic pen inserts. They were very popular before the twist pen kits became readily available, first from suppliers in the UK and later from Craft Supplies USA. Kits can now be purchased most anywhere. Virtually everyone with a lathe is making pens. The market is just not what it was.

Originally, the kits were not the quality of what we have available today. The pencils in particular were inconsistent, to say the least. The kits also require the maker to work to the metal parts and the proverbial center ring is especially restrictive when it comes to designing the finished pencil. You are very limited in shape and design.

The author disassembles a Pentel pencil, so its mechanism can be fit into his turned case, which is oversized to provide an easy grip. All Photos by Cathy Wike-Cook

A pencil without a separating ring in the center allows for more creativity. It also makes the pencil more attractive and more comfortable to use.

This pencil will allow you a great deal more flexibility in shape and design of the finished product. For one thing, you can make the pencil from a single piece of wood, rather than using two separate pieces.



L to R: Square blank, rough turned blanks, drilled blank, finished wood barrel, mechanism, plastic barrel, finished pencil in hard maple, Pentel P-207 pencil, finished cocobolo pencils.

The mechanism is Pentel, the plastic-barreled pencil from Japan and is the standard of the industry. They are available in office supply, art supply and discount stores everywhere. You can select from four different lead sizes, .3 mm, .5 mm, .7 mm and .9 mm. The price ranges from $2.50 to just over $4.00, depending on where you purchase them and in what quantity.

The Pentel P-205 (.05 mm) is the choice of many accountants and architects. They can even recognize the mechanism after you place it into a wood barrel.

Special equipment

Unlike the methods outlined in most kits for making pens and pencils, you don't need special tools for turning these pencils. A step drill will make producing this pencil much faster, because you can drill two diameters at once, but using two sepa-

Stock preparation: Cook prefers a bandsaw over a tablesaw for stock preparation. He rips hard maple blanks to size using a shop-made fence and a long push stick. Once the strips are prepared, he cuts them to length using a shop-made sliding table.

rate drill bits will work, especially if you are making only a few pencils. You will need a long or taper-length, $^{17}/_{64}$-in. bit and a standard $^{5}/_{32}$-in. drill bit. The special step drill bit can be made locally by anyone who sharpens drill bits or ordered from Nick Cook Woodturner or Craft Supplies USA. The bit is 6-in.-long and $^{17}/_{64}$-in. diameter. The last $^{1}/_{2}$-in. is machined down to $^{5}/_{32}$-in. The mandrel is made from a piece of scrap maple or other hardwood mounted onto a faceplate or in a chuck.

Stock selection

Stock selection is easy; most anything will work. And, it takes very little of whatever you wish to use. This is a great way to use many of the bits and pieces left over from other projects. Straight, close-grained hardwoods are ideal. Most of the pencils I turn for sale are made from Cocobolo or Tulipwood. Both turn very well and have beautiful color and grain patterns when turned and properly finished. I use hard maple for demonstrations and hands-on instruction. It turns quite easily and finishes well with little effort. It is great for practice and set up before going on to the exotics and more expensive stock.

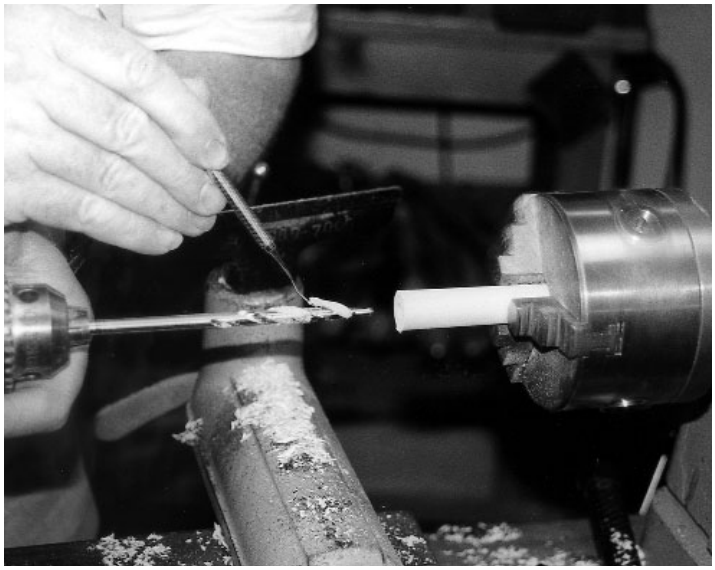
Stock preparation

Cut your turning stock to a size appropriate for the finished design you have in mind. I make many oversized pencils for individuals with arthritis in their hands and for them I start out with $^{5}/_{4}$-in. stock approximately 1-in. square and $4^{3}/_{4}$-in. long. I make standard sized pencils from $^{3}/_{4}$-in. stock cut to the same length. I do not have a table saw, and so everything I cut is on the bandsaw, as shown above. The bandsaw is much safer than a table saw and the thin kerf of the bandsaw blade eliminates a lot of wasted material. I use a shop-made fence to rip all my material to the proper dimensions. A shop-made sliding table with a permanent stop allows me to cut the materials to length without measuring for each piece. I have a sliding table for each of the products I make on a regular basis plus two additional ones with adjustable stops for limited production items. These fixtures save a great deal of time and effort not to mention the frustration of measuring incorrectly.

Most drill presses do not allow for deep drilling operations. The $4^{3}/_{4}$-in. hole of this pencil is certainly beyond the capacity of most. The lathe is the obvious alternative. You may or may not wish to rough turn your blanks to cylinders before drilling. I prefer to make them round first. Place the blank between centers and turn to a cylinder. This allows the blank to be held in the old-style, three-jaw (knuckle buster) machinist's chuck for the drilling operation. Any of the standard scroll chucks will also work. The longer jaws allow you to align the blank faster and easier. I mount a Jacob's chuck and drill bit in the tailstock with a stop positioned to control the depth of the hole. Depending on which Jacob's chuck I use, I either adjust the depth of the bit in the chuck or use a stop on the bit itself.

The hole is drilled through the blank so that only the last $^{7}/_{16}$-in. of length is $^{5}/_{32}$-in. diameter. The remainder of the blank has a $^{17}/_{64}$-in. hole. The resulting shoulder or step allows the pencil mechanism to be locked into the barrel. A portion of this will be removed during the turning process. With the blank in the

The author roughs out a blank to a cylinder. He works between mini-spur drive center and tailstock-mounted live center using $1^{1}/_{4}$-in. oval skew.



As he drills the hole with blank mounted in either a three-jaw or scroll chuck with long jaws, he occasionally stops to remove shavings clogging the drill bit. This prevents overheating.

headstock and the drill in the tailstock, set the lathe speed at approximately 500 RPM. Most tailstock rams will not extend more than a couple of inches, and so I lock the ram in place and push the bit into the blank. Move the bit into the blank very slowly and withdraw the bit frequently and completely to clear chips from the hole. This will avoid excessive heat buildup that could result in splitting the wood. Exotics are more likely to split than most domestics. You may also need to use a pick to remove shavings from the drill bit with some woods. Be careful though, it can get extremely hot.

Making a chuck or mandrel

The next step is to make a wood chuck or mandrel for turning the pencil.

I prefer to use hard maple, but a scrap of most any hard wood will work fine. I use 2 x 2-in. squares (cutoff from other products). Length ranges from 2-to-4-in.

The mandrel stock is mounted in a chuck or screwed to a faceplate or screw chuck. Turn the blank to a cylinder and taper the end down to just under 1-in. diameter using a roughing gouge or skew.

Then use a $^{3}/_{8}$-in. bedan or parting tool to turn the last $^{3}/_{8}$ in. down to exactly $^{5}/_{32}$ in. and taper the end slightly. The resulting shoulder should be square to the small tenon. The mandrel is ready for use.

Mounting the stock

Use a few drops of thick CA glue on the end of the blank around the small hole. Be careful not to get any of the glue in the hole. Spray a little accelerator onto the mandrel and slip the blank onto the mandrel. Mount a cone-shaped live center in the tailstock and bring it up to support the opposite end of the blank. Use only light pressure to avoid splitting the blank. A little more accelerator can be sprayed on the exterior of the joint to set excess glue.

SOURCES OF SUPPLY

Craft Supplies USA
1287 E 1120 S
Provo, UT 84606
801 373-0918

Nick Cook Woodturner
585 Cobb Parkway So., Ste. I
Marietta, GA 30062
770 421-1212

Hut Products for Wood
15361 Hopper Rd
Sturgeon, MO 65284
314 875-0472

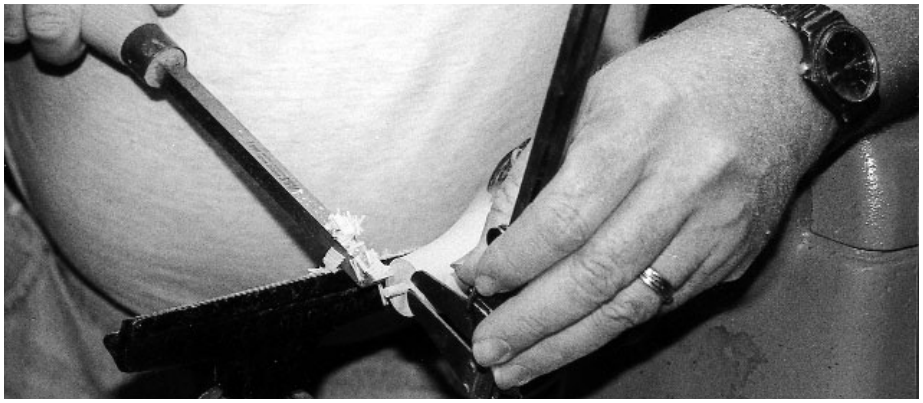
Turning the pencil

A 6-in. tool rest will allow you to get close to the workpiece. Adjust it to approximately $^{1}/_{4}$-in. below the center line and about $^{1}/_{4}$-in. away from the blank. Set the lathe speed at about 3000 RPM and start turning the pencil.

I use a $1^{1}/_{4}$-in. oval skew to do most of the turning. A $^{1}/_{2}$-in. skew is good for tight details and finishing cuts on each end. Work from the tailstock back toward the headstock.

You can be as creative and as decorative as you wish. I tend to keep my shapes as simple as possible.

The author makes a mandrel to hold the pencil by tapering hardwood scrap.



Next, he sizes the tenon to fit the pencil blank, using a bedan and calipers.

After trimming the nose of a pencil barrel with a $^1/_2$-in skew, the author separates the waste from the mandrel, leaving a center plug that can be elongated to accept the next pencil blank.

Once the primary shape is done, use the $^1/_2$-in. skew to trim the top (tailstock end) of the pencil. This will leave a good clean surface unlike that left by the bandsaw. Adjust the tailstock a bit to compensate for the $^1/_{32}$ in. or so removed.

The opposite end, or nose of the pencil needs to be trimmed approximately $^3/_{16}$ in. Start this cut with the $^1/_2$-in. skew pointed toward the headstock slightly to create a cone shaped end. Do not cut all the way through at this time.

Finishing

Remove the tool rest and start sanding with 220-grit sandpaper. Continue with 400-grit and finish up with 600-grit. Apply your favorite finish and buff to a sheen. A new product from Hut, Crystal Coat friction polish is easy to apply and holds up well in use.

Replace the tool rest and finish the cutting through the nose end of the pencil. Use care not to cut through the mandrel. Remove the mechanism from the Pentel pencil by unscrewing the ferule and pulling the works from the plastic barrel.

Insert the mechanism in the new wood barrel and reattach the ferule to lock it in place. Your pencil is ready to write.

A light cut across the end of the mandrel will remove the waste and leave a surface ready for the next pencil blank. I have made dozens of pencils without reshaping the mandrel.

I hope you enjoy making these attractive and functional pencils. They make great gifts and sell well at craft shows. Happy turning.

Nick Cook is a full-time professional turner, writer, teacher and demonstrator in Atlanta, GA.

EAST MEETS WEST IN TACOMA

Japanese share a different way of turning

GARY C. DICKEY

"Upside down with a can opener." That's the way one observer described the Japanese style of woodturning practiced by Yoshinobu Kakizawa, as he held the tool freehand underneath the rotating workpiece. He was putting the finishing cuts on his specialty, the kokeshi doll.

A star among turners from the land of the rising sun, Kakizawa was chosen by his peers to represent Japan at the Tacoma AAW Symposium and the "East Meets West" touring show of woodturned objects.

The 25-year-old turner won the hearts of symposium attendees as he demonstrated the art of turning and painting kokeshi dolls. The simple but colorful turnings are a mainstay of traditional Japanese folk crafts embodying the enigma of the female spirit.

"I have studied as an apprentice to my father since I was 18 years old. He once won the most prestigious woodturning award at the National Kokeshi Festival in Naruko held in September each year," Kakizawa explained through the help of two interpreters, Naoto Suzuki, president of JAWS, a western style turning club in Japan and Masanobu Yusa, the equivalent of a state legislator from the Naruko Prefecture.

The origin of the kokeshi is obscure, but several theories abound. Some say the dolls were first turned by apprentice woodturners in villages noted for their hot spring spas. Novice woodturners were said to have turned the dolls as practice pieces, later selling them to tourists at the hot springs. As their popularity grew, doll turning became a skilled art craft in itself. Believed to have started in the mid-1800s, kokeshi soon became popular souvenirs and prized for their gentle features embodying the ideal of feminine traits.

In the six prefectures of the Tohoku region, there are ten "kokeshi districts" each with its own particular style of doll, Yusa explained.

From the vantage point of western woodturners, the Japanese turning technique does seem "upside down." Rather than using off-the-shelf skews and gouges, the Japanese turner must make his own tools which are basically of two types.

Yoshinobu Kakizawa (above) displays a kokeshi turning fresh from the lathe. The Japanese "can opener" tool is shown below left on top of a sharpening stone. At right below is a collection of "hook tools," along with bundles of reeds used for abrasives.

The first, with handles, are often referred to as "hook tools." These are fashioned with a 90-degree angle at the cutting end and are sharpened on a water stone to yield a keen edge. These are used with a wooden toolrest, supported loose atop the lathe.

The free-hand "can opener" is another type of tool used to shear scrape and do minor shaping.

Contrary to western practice, both types of tools are presented underneath the workpiece at the six o'clock position if viewed in cross-section.

Kakizawa was quick to laugh when he recalled his arrival at the Seattle-Tacoma Airport.

"I waited and waited for my toolrest to arrive at the baggage claim, but it never came. When we searched for it, we discovered it in the trash. Someone thought it was a worthless piece of wood and threw it away," he said laughing.

Actually the kokeshi doll turners are a triple threat in the turning shop. Each must be equally adept at blacksmithing to make tools, turning to create the doll on the lathe, and painting to bring the doll to life with decorations.

"We usually try to keep the dolls' expression neutral, neither a smiley face nor a frowny face," he explained.

"It has become a part of the tradition that we often place the doll near the front door of our homes. When we leave our house, we look at the doll and the way we view it will reflect our inner feelings for that day. If we seem to detect that the doll is smiling a bit,

then it should be a good day. But, if we see a frown in the doll's expression, then it might be an unhappy day," he said. The meaning seems universal -- it all depends on your frame of mind.

Kakizawa turns and paints six days a week. A typical day begins at 7 a.m. in his father's shop sharpening tools and preparing turning blanks. Morning are devoted almost exclusively to turning and sanding, which requires a minimum of sandpaper coupled with abrasive reeds grown near his shop. Soft wax provides a flawless finish.

Following lunch he changes pace to concentrate on the gentler art of painting the kokeshi dolls. For those who master the kokeshi tradition, the painting is as important as the turning.

Kakizawa and other Japanese turners are involved in the production from the beginning. They select their trees from the forest --using Mizuki wood (dogwood) or maple almost exclusively for their turnings.

Historically, the trees were felled by ax and dragged from the forest by draft horses. Today the operation is mechanized. Kakizawa receives the wood in log form then air dries it for a year before it is used.

The shape and color coupled with the facial expressions of the kokeshi are unique to the region in which they are created.

In Naruko, Kakizawa continues the tradition of his district by producing a two-piece doll with an almost round head joined to a cylindrical body by a "bulb" tenon press fitted together. His dolls are known as the "crying dolls" from the squeaking sound emitted when the head is rotated against the body.

Kakizawa expressed concern for the life of his craft and the kokeshi tradition. He explained that the number of turners is decreasing along with the market for the souvenir dolls. Many of his customers collect the dolls out of a nostalgic longing for a lost part of their childhood.

"Today's youth would prefer electronic toys, video games, and computer-based activities," he said sadly.

—Gary Dickey is Assistant Editor of American Woodturner

Not as Easy as it Looks

Lacer gets lesson in Japanese kokeshi painting

No one was more surprised than 1999 AAW Lifetime Award recipient Alan Lacer as he found himself kneewalking in front of the crowd, watching Yoshinobu Kakizawa's demonstration of turning and painting kokeshi dolls.

Kakizawa appeared relaxed, an almost Zen-like calm, except for the mischievous twinkle in his eye as he motioned Lacer to the floor in front of the lathe. Lacer was neither calm nor relaxed.

"My legs don't fold up like that," he said, indicating Kakizawa's cross-legged pose.

The Japanese turner merely smiled and handed him a turned and sanded kokeshi doll and a paint brush. It was time to bring the dolls to life.

For Lacer, as well as most western turners, it was foreign territory. Most don't paint facial expressions on their turnings.

As Kakizawa pointed to each facial feature in turn, prior to painting it on his doll, it became almost a game of charades as turners in the audience provided encouragement and helped interpret the sign language.

Lacer observed as Kakizawa painted the eyes, then attempted to duplicate the technique on his piece. There were no words needed to interpret the 'you're hopeless' expression Lacer received for his efforts.

But he was quick to redeem himself, as he followed up with the placement of a small dot within each eye representing the pupil. Kakizawa smiled approvingly.

"He likes my dots," Lacer enthusiastically interpreted for the audience.

Upon finishing the painting, Lacer quipped, "Each year they have a kokeshi festival where they burn a lot of these. I think mine is destined for the burn pile.

"This should bring a lot at the auction, since it's probably the only one I'll ever do," he added.

And it did. At the banquet, Lacer donated the piece and it was auctioned for $180. One collector has a one-of-a-kind, and possibly a one-for-all-time kokeshi doll.

JIM HILBURGER

A friend to all in Western New York

RAY BISSONETTE

IN OUR INFANCY IN THE EARLY 1980S, the Western New York Woodturners could meet in the front of a canoe. One of our members, since deceased, brought a friend to one of those early meetings. He wasn't even a turner, just an interested observer.

That was our introduction to Jim Hilburger. And our small group quickly discovered that simply being an observer was not part of Jim's nature. He soon became one of our more valuable and intriguing non-turning colleagues.

One of the early signs of his talent was his habit of upstaging the marketers of specialty tools designed for turners. A new gadget would appear in a catalog and the following month, Jim would arrive at our meeting with a box full of homemade versions fresh from his shop, and available to us at less than the catalog shipping charge.

When we first met him, Jim had recently sold a retail hardware business that was for many residents of Buffalo, NY, not only an institution, but a legend.

Taking a problem to Jim

When you took a problem to Hilburger's, you went home without it. Fortunately for us, that same creativity and spirit of service came with him to the WNY Woodturners. And, predictably, he got a lathe and within months the observer was the teacher, a role that continues and expands each day.

To visit Jim's shop has become something of a rite of passage for the membership. No video-quality studio, his "laboratory" is a damp, cluttered, barn-like structure behind his home in a semi-rural community near Buffalo. In the winter months, of which we have plenty, whatever heat there is seems generated by the energy and speed of the shop's master.

Jim Hilburger combining two of his favorite activities – woodturning and delighting youngsters with his skills. Photos: Brian McIntosh

You leave with at least one or two new skills, a sample of his handiwork, but most importantly a sense of having been a guest at Santa's workshop. And the analogy is no stretch.

In 1989 the president of our chapter was elected President of the Board of Directors of United Cerebral Palsy Association of Western New York (UCPA), an agency serving developmentally disabled children and adults. This coincidence would reveal a dimension of Jim's nature that had only been hinted at before.

Toys for the holidays

We decided our holiday project would be to create toys for the Agency's children's center. It was as if we had custom designed a second career for Jim. The first Christmas we delivered more than 300 hand-crafted toys. Along with the rest of us in the delivery party, Jim was deeply moved by the response of the children and the staff. He was off and running.

In his pick-up truck he now travels throughout Western New York like a roving minstrel, often accompanied by one or several of our members. He doesn't sing, but his lathe does, as he demonstrates our craft while selling what he doesn't give away to raise money for a variety of programs for kids with special problems.

Community service thrives

He has become a leader and standard bearer for what is now perhaps the unique feature of our group, community service. When he's not doing that or turning projects in his shop, he is promoting and organizing programs to enhance the skills of our members and disseminate interest and participation in turning throughout the community. His efforts amount to a large extent for the fact that our meetings can no longer be accommodated by a canoe. Indeed we've had to limit membership to 80, establish a second club and have

waiting lists for both.

Many people cannot be adequately represented by words, pictures or anything else short of a personal encounter. Jim is one of them.

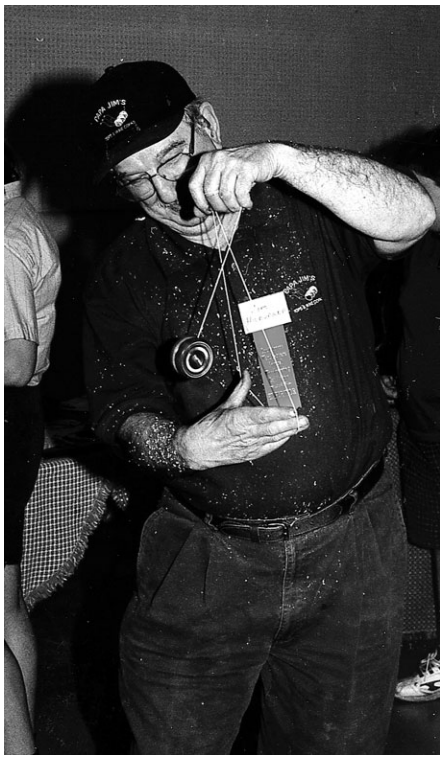
You have to experience his enthusiasm, zest and, most of all, generosity. When you meet him these qualities hit you between the eyes. In case they don't, you need only watch this 70-year-old man engage not only his peers, but children, who are so captivated by him that it reminds you again of the earlier reference to Santa's workshop. To experience one of his demonstrations is as close as these kids will get to the North Pole and, at some level, they seem to know it and it's OK.

This past year, it was Jim Hilburger's extraordinary contribution to advancing the interests of our membership, especially our commitment to community service, that moved us to establish a special award to recognize members who distinguished themselves in service above self. It is no coincidence that the award carries the name of its first recipient---Jim Hilburger.

Ray Bissonette is a member of the Western New York Woodturners. He wrote about the chapter's community outreach program to bring the joys and benefits of turning to the local community in the Winter'98 Journal.

AAW Member Profile

Western New York Woodturners



About the Chapter:

The Western New York Woodturners joined the AAW in April 1997. The chapter now has 80 members, with a waiting list of 6 to 10.

The group had to limit the number of members because meetings are held in a school and are limited by the fire restrictions. Plus, the group was getting too big. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month.

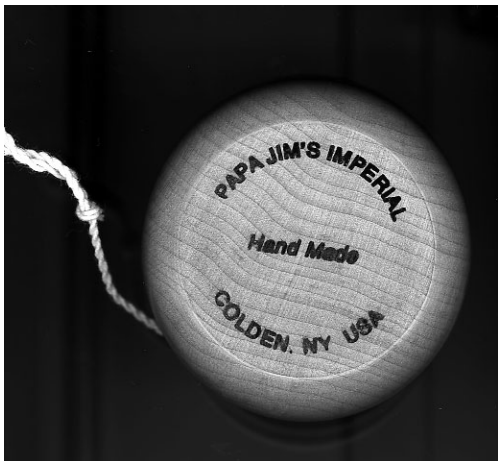
After members found it necessary to limit the size of the chapter, they formed a new club called Woodturners II, which meets on the second Thursday of each month. Jim Hilburger was very instrumental in starting that club; for more information contact him at 7286 Lower East Hill Rd, Colden NY 14033 (716-652-3096).

papaJim@localnet.com

Membership information for Woodturners I is available from Jim Vasi, 254 Amherston Dr., Williamsville, NY 14221 (716-632-5381)

jimvasi@worldnet.att.net.

The secret of the perfect move to delight young and old lies in the details



Jim has a habit of not only cloning commercial products, but improving on them. Most recently he has begun producing yo-yos. After perfecting a method of tuning a perfectly balanced yo yo to match anything commercially available, he decided to step up to the ball-bearing models. He purchased the bearings through commercial outfits, but found the current technology for fitting bearing into the wooden stock unsatisfactory. Using his skills with a metal lathe, he designed and produced an aluminum insert into which the bearings could be installed with consistent fit and balance. The inserts are turned to tolerances of 1000th of an inch and require multiple depths and internal diameters. The devices, the size of a pencil eraser, obviously don't lend themselves to photo depiction but, as those of us in the Western New York Woodturners have learned: if Jim says it works, you can count on it.—Ray Bissonette.

TURNER'S TOUR OF GERMANY

Nutcrackers, miners and other local folk

ALAN LACER

THE ERZGEBIRGE REGION OF FAR eastern Germany is a hotbed of turning activity.

With approximately 200 workshops in the region doing all or some woodturning, it is no wonder that lathe-turned objects play such a key role as market goods.

In the Spring '99 Journal I described only one aspect of this rich 350 year turning heritage — the ring or hoop turner. Alongside the tiny animal figurines and other items fashioned by the ring turners reside other fine objects off the lathe: the German nutcracker, smoking men, chandeliers, angel and miner candle holders, flowers and trees, miniatures, puzzles, animals built of turned elements, pyramids, and on and on. The impression I got from visiting the area is that many of the objects revolve around toys and Christmas and Easter themes, which reflects the deep roots of this region.

Classic nutcrackers from Erzgebirge. The taller one is 15-in high; the shorter is 9-in. The hair and beards are made from rabbit fur. Photos by Alan Lacer

Nutcrackers and caricatures

Let me start with the omnipresent nutcracker (Nussknacker). Although a little late in coming to this region of Germany, it has taken on its own style and interpretation. Earlier examples of nutcrackers as full human figures are found in Thüringen and Bavaria — probably beginning in the late 18th century. With the publication of E.T.A. Hoffman's fairy tale *The Nutcracker and the King of Mice* in 1816 (also the inspiration for Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* ballet) there was a solid link to children and Christmas. Toymaker Wilhelm Fuechtner in the 1870's launched the prototype and inspiration for the Erzgebirge nutcracker.

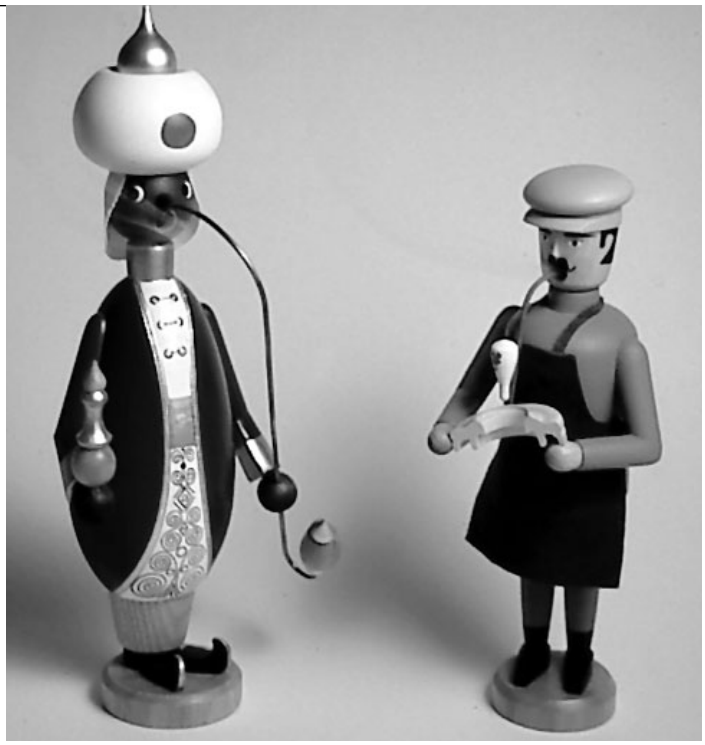
In some ways the nutcracker can be described as a functional caricature. Traditionally the figure was most often a government official, such as a king, warden, forester, soldier, or policeman. Many have a cartoon quality about them — probably intended to poke a little good-natured fun at the official. Also, "nutcracker" may have earlier meant persons with a big mouths, capable of cracking nuts with their teeth. Most were meant to actually crack nuts, a delicacy around the Christmas season, or at the very least a children's toy. By way of a strong lever protruding from the back, the mouth opens to reveal the jaws of the cracker — and the lever usually provides plenty of force to crack even the most stubborn of nuts. (See issue Vol. 12, No. 4 Dec. 1997 of *American Woodturner* or *Techniques and Projects III* for detailed methods of creating a nutcracker).

Today the nutcracker has taken on other uses and an extensive variety of personas. You may find the crackers as decorative objects at Christmas time — placed around the room or tree — or a highly sought after collectable. By one estimate there are more than 15,000 collectors in the U.S. alone, many in organized clubs. One of the larger makers of nutcrackers in Germany produces 22 of its 75 different types just for the American mar-

ket. Throughout the region the figures go far beyond government officials to include Santas, bikers, snowmen, skiers, doctors, professors, barbers, fishermen, pilots, mountain climbers, baseball players, beer maids, Native Americans, Uncle Sams, mouse kings, and on and on.

The smoking man

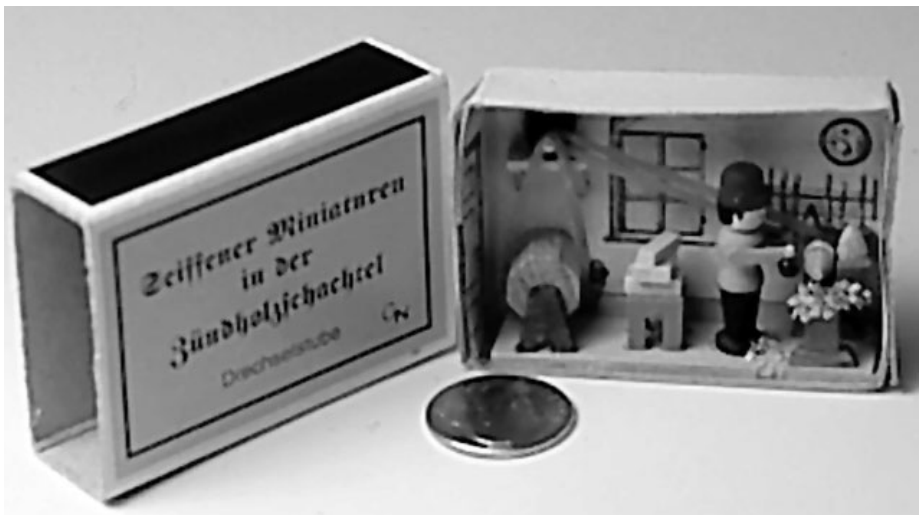
A more unique turned figure to this region is the smoking man (Raüchermann). First appearing in 1860, these small figures are quite unlike the nutcrackers. Not a caricature but rather a laid-back figure more representative of the local folk. Smoking was certainly a common practice with men of the mid-19th century Erzgebirge region and these figures reflect well the time of origin. Essentially a two-piece figure, the smoker is joined much like a lidded box at the hip section. The upper portion is drilled and bored to provide clearance for a piece of cone-shaped incense and an escape path for the smoke—through the mouth of the smoking figure (see photo above, right.) The lower half contains a platform (usually with a small metal pan) to hold the incense. Although turning is the foundation for many of these figures, details were often formed from special malleable substances to create arms, hands, and facial features, thus adding a more life-like quality to the work. Early figures were often miners, Turks, chimney sweeps, firemen, peddlers, turners — most often, the local folks themselves. Today, of course, there is a wide variety of figures with new ones coming into the market each year.



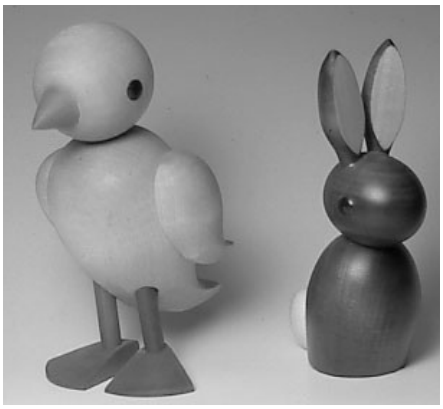
Turnings that smoke: two smoking men, 9 1/2 -in. and 8 -in. high respectively. The Turkish figure has been common since the beginning of this tradition, bit it's not clear why. Usually the figures were of locals.

Miniatures cut taxes

Perhaps one of the most fascinating traditions of this area is that of miniature work. Spurred by a change in export laws at the end of the 19th century (duty was figured no longer by value but by weight) and increases in the cost of raw material, the creative folk turned to miniatures. Both individual pieces and entire scenes were the focus of the miniature woodworker. Elaborate jigs and fixtures were used, often on small table saws, to produce the specific details or parts. Today you find examples of chairs, clocks, fiddles, cradles, tools, bowls, food items, butter churns, carriages, wagons, and about every conceivable other household item — and of course, a number of these small objects are turned. Often these form the basis of scenes, even scenes that fit inside the smallest matchbox (see photo at left). Currently more than a hundred different scenes made this way are available commercially. Sometimes the small-scale woodworking is combined with ring-turned animals to complete a scene or an individual toy. What all of these objects have in



Matchbook scale miniatures: A turner's workshop is shown here. The item on the far left in the shop is a tumbler used to soften the corners on objects such as children's play blocks.



Clockwise from upper left: A 3-D turned puzzle from the shop of Gunter Richel, about 4-in. high; middle, a turned chandelier in the Toy Museum in Seiffen, about 2-ft. in diameter and 3-ft. tall. This example shows both curved tubes and bead chains. Right: toys built of turned elements from the shop of Sons of Roland Webber, ranging in size from 5-in. high to 9-in. high.

common is the emphasis on detail—both with the woodworking and painting.

Chandeliers for local homes

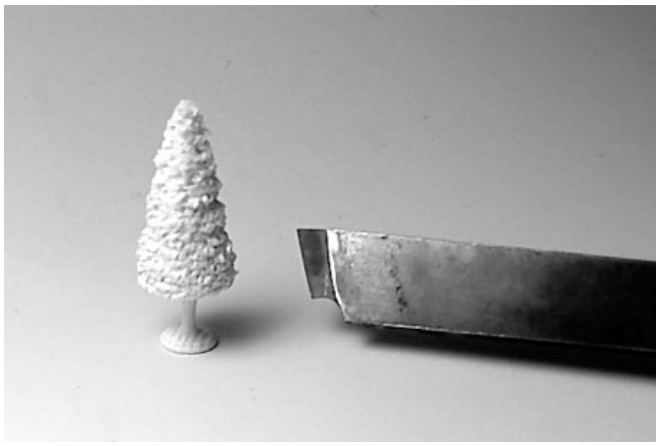
A style of woodworking that truly evolved from a folk art is that of the chandelier, which was created not for a booming toy market, but rather to adorn the houses of turners, toy makers and local residents. These were of two distinct types: a tiered variety with curved arms to support the candles or lights and one built of chains of beads. The curved-armed variety was made from hollowed rings that were cut in half and rejoined as curved tubes. The chain type of chandelier (Kettenleuchter) is an exercise in bead making. One of the chandeliers from around 1900 in the Toy Museum of Seiffen has 64 different chains with a total of 1,750 beads.

Flowers and trees

One of my favorite styles of woodturning was that of the flower and tree maker. Performed with a modified skew chisel, this type of turning is called "sharp and soft" due to the fact that the fibers are only severed and then gently rolled into shape. We had the experience of watching the true master of this technique, Günter Leichsenring — the continuation of a 100-year family tradition of toy makers. Quickly but with great skill Herr Leichsenring produced flowers and trees of a variety of shapes and sizes. Turned flowers are usually painted and sold as flower arrangements, potted flowers, blooming cactus, or individual stemmed flowers (see photo next page). The trees are often painted and become part of a scene, an element on an arched candleholder, or an individual tree, as the owner wishes.

Wood choice is critical to the flower and tree turner. The more symmetrical pieces were of basswood, very straight-grained and rather on the damp side of dryness (not less than 18% was one suggestion). This process works best with split wood rather than sawn. Pine or spruce tend to produce a tree less uniform and with the curls more bunched together — more like a conifer (see my attempt at this technique with pine and my modified skew on the next page).

What a fascinating tradition of turning has evolved in the Erzgebirge. To me, this was folk-art at its best. Yes, strong financial concerns are operative, but the work was made in efficient ways rather than simply driven by how cheaply work could be produced. Even the least expensive work was well designed and executed. I found strong pride among the makers and sellers for both past and current work. I came across a motto applied to one of the turning families that translated "Be faithful to excellent old things, but be stirred and take delight in exciting new things." — a fine attitude about all turned works from anywhere or any time.



Trees and Flowers

Above, top: Stages of turning a tree by master turner Günter Leichsenring. The basswood is held in a cup chuck; the blanks of wood are simply driven into the recess with a mallet. Middle: Günter creating a turned flower. Both the tree and flower are cut with a modified skew chisel. Bottom right: The finished articles from the above demonstration. Normally they would be grouped in a scene of flower arrangement, and often painted. Bottom left, the authors version of a modified skew to do "sharp and soft" turning. The tree is from pine and therefore creates a more clumped look than when using basswood. The curved area on the skew below the lower point is beveled on the sides and polished to allow gentle rolling of cut fibers.

Alan Lacer is a turner and contributing editor to American Woodturner living in Shoreview, MN. The recipient of this year's AAW Honorary Lifetime Membership Award, he wrote about German ring turnings in the Spring 1999 issue of American Woodturner.

Never Give Up

Woodturning and physical impairment

ROBERT WADDELL

Many woodturners with long term physical impairments have learned over time to compensate. And more and more of us are facing the same problems as we become impaired because of age, injuries, strokes, degenerative joint disease, chronic back conditions or other debilitating diseases.

Some of these problems will be temporary; others will be permanent. Occasionally, a woodturner has even been advised to discontinue turning. An avid turner will not accept this recommendation lightly; however, safety should never be disregarded and any turning modifications should always focus on safety first.

To those woodturners who have found a way to accommodate and continue to enjoy turning, we salute you. Your strong desire to turn and your adaptations serve as an inspiration to the rest of us. Some of you have shared your solutions with me, but there are others out there who could help by sharing your "workouts" with your fellow turners who may have similar conditions. I encourage you to reach out and guide turners searching for help.

Helping the impaired

I hope that all who are willing to share information will send it to the editor of this Journal, so we might create a resource file to assist other turners with similar problems. Anyone who has seen impaired persons return to their hobbies truly understands how much this means to their quality of life.

This article is not intended to comprehensibly deal with individual impairment. And, it is in no way a substitute for consultations with your personal doctor or physical therapist. My intent is to deal with these impairments collectively and to emphasize some of the more common conditions and suggest solutions.

Bowl turning requires more arm strength than spindle work and this fact has resulted in the "longer – stronger" bowl gouges which allow the turner to stabilize the tool against the hip and provide better gripping. Rubber handle wraps (available at sporting goods shops and electrical suppliers) enlarge the handle for better grasp and reduced slippage. It is also important that the tool rest, which acts as the fulcrum, always be kept close to the work. This position gives smoother cuts, reduces the lever arm of the tool so that catches, when they happen, are not as severe and are less likely to cause the butt of the tool to rise up. Face and head injuries, some of them severe, can happen with this type of control loss.

Dr. Waddell demonstrates turning from a sitting position.

Hollow vessel turning

Hollow vessel turning does not allow the tool rest to be close to the tool's cutting edge and a number of boring bar systems on the market have been engineered to lessen the effect of a catch under these circumstances. The concept is to offset the effect of a catch occurring with a longer lever arm.

John Nichols of Nichols Enterprises, Inc. in Stanfield, Oregon told me about his tool system. He had stressed the ease of use and minimal effort required with his boring bar and was kind enough to send one for a trial. The original set consisted of a square bar with one or more articulated joints, a straight boring bar, both of which fit in a "torque arresting" tool rest. The tool rest concept allows the bar to be extended in and out and side to side with minimal effort and does not permit upward and downward movement of the tool. The vertical support bar acts as a fulcrum for the boring bar, minimizing cutting effort. As a result, the cuts are smoother and completely controlled. The boring bar handles are therefore short since only one hand is required for control. The other hand is used to vary the tightness of the spacing screw on the tool rest so that chatter is kept to a minimum and the bar moves freely. The steel tips are supplied as Tatung G cutters and Crucible CPM 15 V scrapers; bars are available in different lengths and diameters.

John has recently re-engineered his entire line and the bars are larger, rectangular and have rounded edges, which are kinder to the vessel openings. In addition he has improved the articulated joints. These modifications have resulted in even less chatter and greater stability.

The system proved to be relatively easy to use and the learning curve was shorter than expected. The tool performed flawlessly and the new modifications have improved results even more. The captured tool rest gives one early confidence ,with a feeling of control and safety, and very little effort is required to control the bar. Accordingly, this type of system could be used by those with weakened arms for both hollow vessels and standard bowl turning.

Since a much lighter grip is required, chronic use syndromes such as carpal tunnel and tennis elbow, will be less likely to occur as well.

Adjusting lathe height

Standard lathe height does not accommodate all turners; lathe manufacturers design for the average turners height of 5′ 8-to-10″. Ideally, the lathe centerline should line up with the hand when the elbow is flexed 90 degrees. This position minimizes back stress; turners should make the proper height adjustments even if there are no back problems.

Those who have cervical spine (neck) problems, for example, may find that a higher-than-average lathe height may reduce chronic neck pain because it lets you turn with the neck held straighter, while those with degenerative shoulder disease might have less pain if the lathe is effectively lowered by building a platform to stand on.

Many of the types of impairment previously described, necessitate sitting while turning and a tall, wheelless, armless stool works better under these conditions and a lean-on type of posture allows for improved tool control. Rubber tips should be fitted on the stool legs to prevent sliding.

Chronic low back conditions which result in pain while standing are so common that some additional management suggestions may be helpful.

From a mechanical perspective, a pendulous abdomen changes the center of gravity or alignment of the spinal column and increases lumbar curvature which results in more spinal stress or pain. The use of elastic belts and corset-like braces may help but weight reduction and exercises offer more permanent benefit.

When standing, it is also helpful to alternately prop one foot on a stool. This lessens the lumbar curve and decreases stress. Some lathes, such as my Powermatic, provide for adding a board between the legs, which can be used as a footrest. Bending and twisting to the left is a common but stressful turning position so remember to adjust the lathe height to minimize this bend and make an effort to stand straighter.

One turner has suggested that the lathe be raised to chest height for those with chronic back problems. This position has apparently worked well for him and should be considered. However, it may cause stress to the shoulders that could cause pain.

Even more helpful, is to turn off the end of the lathe as in outboard turning. A number of companies sell bowl lathes and all of these are designed to allow the turner to face the turned object. Nichols Enterprises manufactures custom bowl lathes and I've found he has a genuine interest in working with anyone who needs this type of custom application.

Wheelchair turning

He has also engineered a lathe to accommodate wheelchair turning. I've examined this machine and also had the opportunity to sit in a wheelchair turning position. The detailed attention given to the chairbound turner was apparent and the entire unit appeared to be quite functional.

Wheelchair turning. Photo: Courtesy John Nichols

The new Powermatic lathe model 2050 allows the headstock to be pulled to the right thereby allowing the turner to stand off the end of the lathe. As described above, this position eliminates the twisting component of turning and lends itself to sitting on a stool.

Provide better lighting

Visual acuity decreases as we age and eyeglasses with magnification enable all of us to continue the activities of daily living as well as our hobbies. However, do not forget that aging eyes require more light. Accordingly, it is essential to have adequate lighting at your lathe in order to have proper visual control. It is amazing how often lathe work is done with poor lighting. Unsafe at best.

In summary, there are many ways to accommodate for physical impairment. Be persistent and creative and never hesitate to ask for help from anyone who you feel may help work out a solution.

–Robert Waddell, MD, is a retired orthopedic Surgeon and a member of the Tidewater Turners in Virginia, Beach, VA.

Wallet Friendly Shear Scrapers

Finishing Cut Tools at an Attractive Price

DAVID REED SMITH

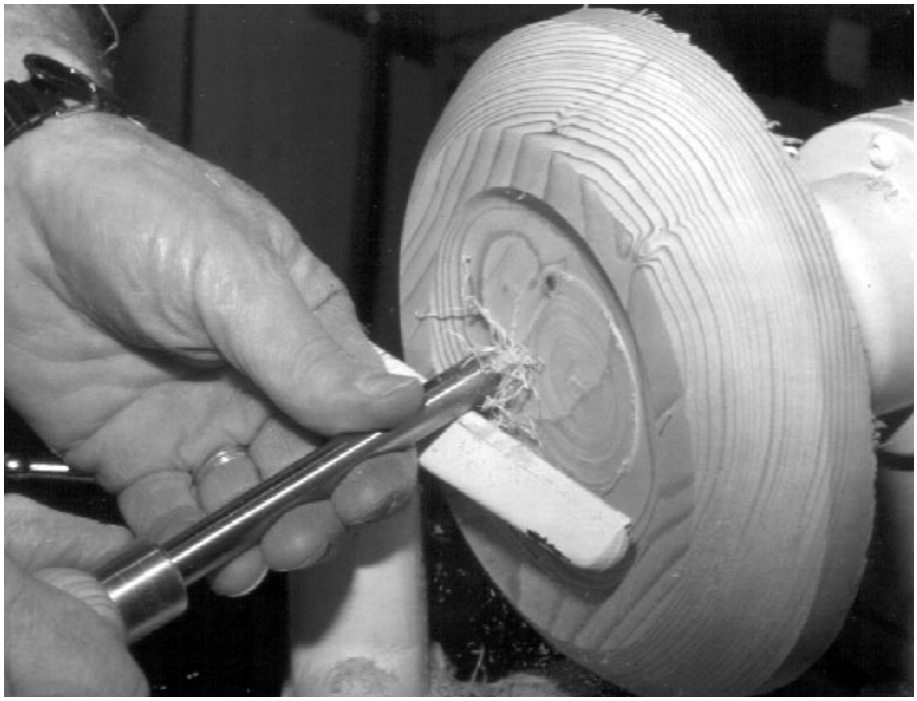
Ordinary rectangular scrapers can be hard to use for shear cuts. They don't slide well on their sharp corners, and if your attention wanders a bit and you start cutting too high up on the unsupported edge, the results can be anything from mildly disconcerting to downright painful. You can buy scrapers with a rounded bottom edge and interchangeable tips, but they're not cheap and you have to deal with all that tip changing.

Here's how to make your own very effective and easy to use shear scrapers at an almost irresistible price. When using this tool, keep in mind that like any scraper, it is best used as a fine finishing tool. It isn't well suited to work with a large overhang over the tool rest or to remove large quantities of wood.

To make a shear scraper you need to cut the round blank in half lengthwise for about $^1/_2$ in., then shape the tip. I find it easiest to start with a cutoff wheel in an angle grinder. I do this outdoors. My basement is full of wood chips and sparks go everywhere and a lot of grinding smells less than pleasant. I clamp the blank vertically in a vise and use the angle grinder to cut straight down about $^1/_2$ in. Cut so that one edge of the kerf is at the middle of the blank. Then turn the blank sideways and cut straight down to form the notch. Then I mount a grinding wheel in the angle grinder and neaten things up a bit, and rough out the bevel. The standard 70 to 80 degrees scraper bevel will work just fine.

Now's the time to turn a handle.

The rounded edge (front) and square edge (rear) shear scrapers make quick work of putting the finishing touches on turnings. They cut sanding to a minimum.



Author demonstrates finishing cuts with the round nose scraper on pine. The rounded jobbers length drill stock makes for ease in rolling the tool to best cutting angle.

Sources

A good source for High-Speed Steel for these scrapers is an industrial supplier. I use J & L Industrial Supply at 1-800-521-9520. You can get Jobbers Length High Speed Steel Drill Blanks in a variety of sizes. The size you want depends on the particular tool you're making, but $^1/_2$ in. is a good starting point. My $^1/_2$-in. blanks (cat #DBK-19032L at J&L) are 6 inches long and cost $6.23. You don't need the catalog to order: customer service can usually find what you want. While you're at it, get a couple of extra $^1/_2$-in. blanks and maybe some smaller ones.

You may want to try a three-point tool or a small round skew as well.

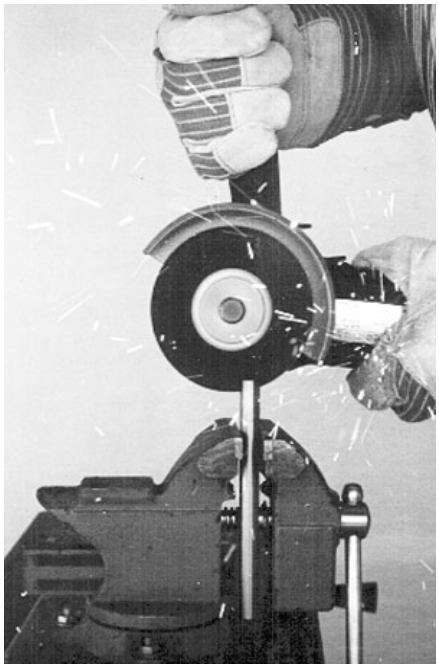
You'll probably want a short one, about 6-to-8 in. These tools aren't designed for heavy cuts, and a short handle allows easier maneuverability.

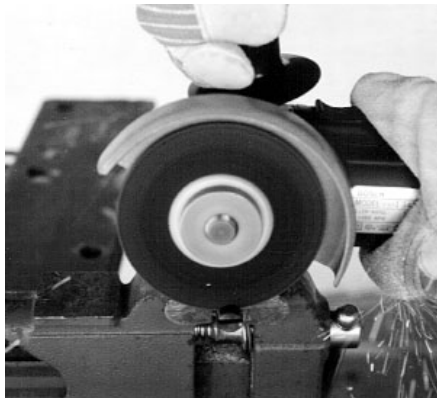
Once you've got your tool mounted in a handle, you need to shape the tip on your bench grinder. I make one straight across, and one curved. You don't need much of a curve, as rotating the tool 45 degrees or more for a shearing cut makes the effective curve greater. The tool will work with just a ground edge, but it will give a better surface with a little bit more work. Hone the flattened end with a slip stone or bench stone and then use a Veritas scraper burnisher or the slip stone technique Del Stubbs demonstrates in his video. I have better luck with Veritas. You can rehone and burnish a time or two before going back to the grinding wheel. You can also use a wet grinder such as the Tormek or Makita to sharpen to a polished edge. Sharpened this way the tool handles slightly differently but the finish obtained is about the same, and the edge lasts about as long.

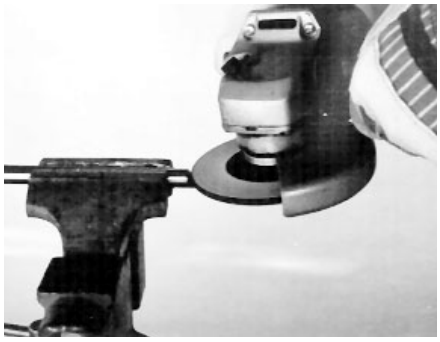
Whatever method you use, plan on resharpening more often than you would have to with an M2 gouge. After a little practice, you'll be able to tell from the sawdust coming off the tool and the effort required that it's time to sharpen. The sawdust should be fine ribbons, not just dust. The tool will continue to cut after it starts to dull, but the surface will show more tear out. Since you'll have to sand this out, it defeats the purpose of using the shear scraper in the first place. Hence the adage: Keep a cool (and sharp) tool.

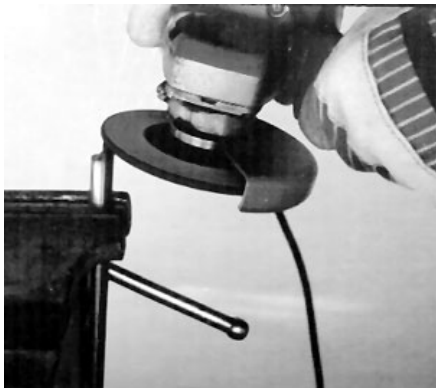
This really is a pretty user-friendly pair of tools. It's almost hard to make them behave badly. Just plop the tool on the tool rest, roll the edge up to about 45 degrees or so, and present to the wood, leading with the handle a bit. Don't try to take heavy cuts. Use the straight scraper for convex and straight surfaces and the rounded scraper for concave surfaces. You can roll the tool up more than 45 degrees to cut a surface more concave than your tool.

For $15 or so you can make yourself a handy pair of shear scrapers that are easy to learn to use. I use mine a lot. A light finishing cut on faceplate work with a shear scraper after the bowl gouge saves a lot of sanding time.

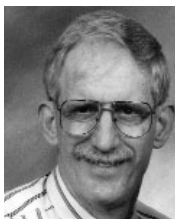








As easy as one, two, three, but always work with caution. Author begins cutting away steel for a flat on the HSS stock (top, left); re-clamping the tool horizontally in the vise, he grinds away the cut portion to reveal the flat which will form the cutting end of the tool (top right); a few extra passes with the grinder dresses the flat (center photo above); again, the tool is reclamped in the vertical position (lower photo) to begin rough grinding the bevel. -- All photos by David Reed Smith.



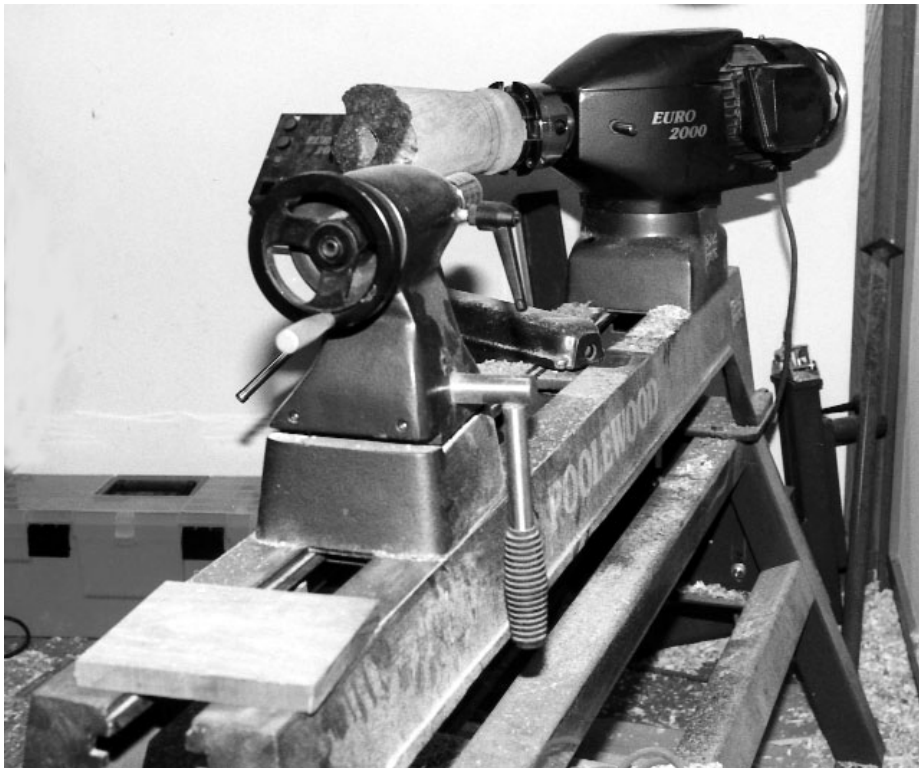
The author lives in the semi-boonies northwest of Baltimore, MD with his wife and two children. When not working at his real job taking x-rays in a local hospital he makes tatting shuttles, drop spindles and other esoteric turned items giving him an excuse to tinker and indulge a serious tool fetish. He welcomes comments, questions, suggestions and complaints by e-mail at David@DavidReedSmith.com.

A LOOK AT THE POOLEWOOD EURO 2000

The first time I saw a Poolewood Lathe was last year at the AAW Symposium in Akron. That was also the first time I got to try one. I was impressed then. I'm still impressed. A bargain is when one gets the perceived full value for one's money. The Euro 2000 is a bargain, in my opinion. Bargains appeal to me; enough so that I bought one.

But, to be totally truthful, it wasn't just my impressions that influenced me to choose the Euro 2000. David Ellsworth, my first instructor in turning and someone whose opinion I've always valued, said about this lathe, " I like it,.. a lot." Then, one of our turning club members and good friend, John Perri bought one. I assisted him in getting it set up in his shop and I began to really feel the pull of envy. Then, when my better half said , "you should get one!", I took a deep breath and made the call. It was a good decision.

The Poolewood Euro 2000 is heavy, versatile, quiet and powerful. Seems like about all one could ask of a machine. Though I have one of the early prototypes and there are some differences in currently shipped models, the differences are primarily due to design improvements suggested by Ellsworth. Subtle things like the positioning of the spindle lock, a standard hand wheel on the headstock, modification of the outboard tool rest support setup and design of the spur center removal nut. They have even improved the paint finish. Otherwise, a machine ordered today is pretty much like mine. So, I'll talk about mine.



One feature that the author likes is the Poolewood's ability to allow the headstock to rotate a bit, so the operator doesn't have to sit on the lathe to hollow that vessel.

3-phase conversion

The most notable feature of the fairly radical design line of the Euro 2000 is the motor. The motor is a full 2 horsepower, 240 volt, AC motor. What's different is that it is also 3-phase. The conversion from household single phase to 3-phase is made through a control box that is independent from the motor. This feature has the advantage of giving full torque across the entire speed range (0-3500 rpm's) with no loss of horsepower and no belts to wear, tear and fiddle with. The control box also happens to be your speed control panel that is freestanding, so it's moveable to wherever you wish. And the motor itself is utter simplicity with just two massive double-roller bearings and an armature. The shaft - with spindle threads of 1 $^{1}/_{4}$ in. x 8 tpi - is an extension of the armature brought forward through the front of the headstock.

Frankly, I was concerned early on that the no belt design would quickly magnify any mistakes in tool technique and I'd have a potential disaster on my hands. (Or walls, or floor!) No worries. Hasn't even been a factor, let alone a problem. That's not to say that I haven't blown up a piece, 'cause I have. But, I sure can't blame it on the lack of belts.

Correction on Vacuum Seals

We have been getting calls about a number in the Summer Journal.

In John Hill's article Asheville Rubber and Gasket Co.'s number was transposed - the correct number is 800 532 4128 - page 26. We apologize for the error.

The tool rest and support.

Another feature I like is the toolrest and the tool rest support. This thing works and works well. And the design of the ways and the

MORE ON THE POOLEWOOD

steel stand mean that the chips don't build up underneath the toolrest to eventually make the toolrest difficult to move. It moves easily, smoothly and with one hand. And when locked, it doesn't move. Nothing fancy. Very reliable.

Rotating Headstock

Ever wish you could rotate the head of your lathe just a bit so you wouldn't have to lean so far over when making the final cuts on a bowl that's reaching the final cuts stage? And with the outboard toolrest support (an extra cost option), you can have easy accessibility to any part of your turning. You have to fiddle with the outboard support a bit to get maximum stability, but it's really just a case of getting used to the procedure. Once used to it, it really adds to the versatility of the lathe. Think of it as having a long bed and short bed lathe bundled into the same package. When you are not using the tool rest support it stores out of the way quickly and easily.

The head rotation is accomplished quite simply with the tool bar and single massive nut directly under the motor which holds it firmly in position. Soon after taking delivery, I made alignment marks on the headstock and headstock base for speeding up the re-alignment with the tailstock process, since there is no detent to indicate proper alignment. I also put a bolt through the ways at the very end just in case I made an inadvertent move with the headstock to prevent it sliding off the end and crashing to the floor. It's very heavy but moves easily and once started moving... well, you get the idea. One benefit I didn't realize came with a rotating head feature is that it becomes almost unnecessary to ever remove the tailstock when hollowing out a bowl or vessel. The fact that the head can be rotated means that the tailstock doesn't stab you in the elbow or interfere with tool movement. I've never liked trying to figure out where to set a removed tailstock anyway, and the weight of this one means you don't want to be thinking about this very long once you've got it in your hands!

One of the things I haven't cared for about other variable speed AC lathes was the fact that they didn't go all the way down to zero rpm. The Euro 2000 does. The control box, which is on a substantial pedestal and can be moved anywhere you wish, has a virtual digital display showing the rpm. This is nice when you want to keep returning to a particular speed. There is also a numbered dial that allows you to do pretty much the same. The unit is programmable for ramp up and ramp down and some other functions, but I've never had to touch it. There is a switch for ON, OFF, FORWARD, REVERSE, and NEUTRAL, all conveniently located on the face of the panel.

I have the optional steel stand. It shouldn't be an option. It is so solid and sturdy I can't imagine messing around building one from plywood. As currently being delivered, the stand is fabricated from 3-in. tubular steel and has four adjustable legs which allows one to fully adjust the height to their own preference. The incredible stability of the lathe can be directly attributed to the 28-in. wide stance of the legs. If the budget absolutely didn't allow for the stand, I'd recommend making sure that the stand you build is extremely sturdy and start saving to eventually purchase the steel stand. But, understand that it can't do the job as well as the steel stand. All it takes is to see and hear the difference. There is no sheet metal to vibrate since it is entirely constructed of square tube steel and that makes it very quiet in use. One leg is adjustable to accommodate uneven floors and the wide stance assures stability. Should one feel compelled to do so, a plywood box arrangement could be added to accommodate the addition of sand.

SPECIFICATIONS AND SOURCES:

Price: $3,895; Stand $525;
Outboard tool rest bracket (60" dia capacity) $495
Weight: 400 lbs. (stand approx. 250 lbs.)
Inboard capacity 20" dia x 40" long
#2 Morse taper (headstock & tailstock)
Tailstock barrel extension - 3"

U.S. DEALERS:

Bill Cook: 1590 N. Roberts Rd. #102, Kennesaw, GA 30144.
Tel: 770-422-0350

David Ellsworth: 1378 Cobbler Rd., Quakertown, PA 18951.
Tel: 215-536-5298

Suggested improvements

There are some improvements I'd like to see. It would make sense to drill the spindle for a vacuum arrangement. The spindle lock, though it works, could be improved. Someone who likes to carve a piece while it's on the lathe would probably want to have an indexing system. The tailstock wheel tends to work loose if it's used a lot as in drilling vessels prior to hollowing. It's easily tightened, but it could be improved. But, for the money, this lathe is a terrific value, in my opinion.

This is a well thought out machine. It is not fancy in spite of the unique no-belt, direct drive motor system. It is a solid lathe that should last a lifetime.

— Richard Tuttle
Schwenksville, PA

INSTRUCTION FROM NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA

Fundamentals of Woodturning by Mike Darlow. The Lyons Press, 198 pages, $24.95 ($35.95 in Canada)

Woodturning clubs will find this book a valuable addition to their libraries. It will serve as an introduction for new members, a refresher for the infrequent turner and a good reference source for the demonstrator. It doesn't contain the scholastic detail found in Mr. Darlow's previous book and in all fairness the exercises must be tried, not only read by the experienced turners before they comment on his suggestions. His work is carefully thought out, tried and diagrammed to prove its accuracy.

The heavy duty lathe illustrated in Mike's book is superior to the average home workshop machine, so I selected a mini-lathe to test his exercises. I was curious, since I have been turning for many years and have developed my own style. The first six exercises went well once I sharpened my tools following the instructions on pages 46-47. I also discovered speed is very important, especially on the lighter lathe and selected the mid range to complete these exercises.

I also became aware of the importance of reading Mr. Darlow's introduction which contains data needed to understand this book. I usually skip this, but urge non-readers to read and study every line before trying these techniques. The novice turner looking for a road map to successful turning might be tempted to start his journey at Chapter Six. This could result in a disaster. I suggest you start at page one and read every word before turning on your machine.

The most difficult part of Mike's book for me was to break my own bad habits. Almost all woodturners think their method is the best, but I believe Mike makes positive suggestions for improvement. The Darlow diagrams help prove his points but take time to study. He is like a physics professor who presents a problem to his students, shares the solution with a chart and can't understand why the students are still confused. Yet these same students after much study embrace his thesis and rave about his genius.

The Chapter on Bowl Turning was too brief, although it contained the fundamentals I feel a new turner might have trouble following this procedure. At least my students did. The explanations, step-by-step exercises, photographs and diagrams are not as well thought out and it would appear on the surface that a new book on bowl turning might be in order. I selected my Delta Lathe, because it is heavier and less likely to vibrate with a 10 in. by 5 in.h deep blank. The speed I selected was 800 RPM to rough and 1500 to finish and my bowl gouge was re-sharpened per Mr. Darlow's instructions. It worked fine. I'm fortunate enough to have most of the tools suggested in chapter ten, but this is a speciality and might be handled in a book especially written for that purpose. Mike does a good job with his drawings and photographs.

This is a fine book with excellent drawings and photos. It is a recommended gift for the wood worker on your shopping list because most craftsmen are interested in wood turning but don't take the time to learn the fundamentals. This book will fill that need and open the door to the ancient art of wood turning. Thank you Mike for a job well done.

Walt Rissmeyer is a turner is Lakewood, N.J.

Turning Boxes Video By Richard Raffan. Taunton Press , 57 minutes, $19.95.

Richard Raffan has produced one of the best turning videos to come out in the last several years. Raffan is the ultimate teacher and production turner. Richard works fast and explains quickly, but clearly. This makes for a video that is full of information that you will want to watch several times to pick up all the pearls of wisdom.

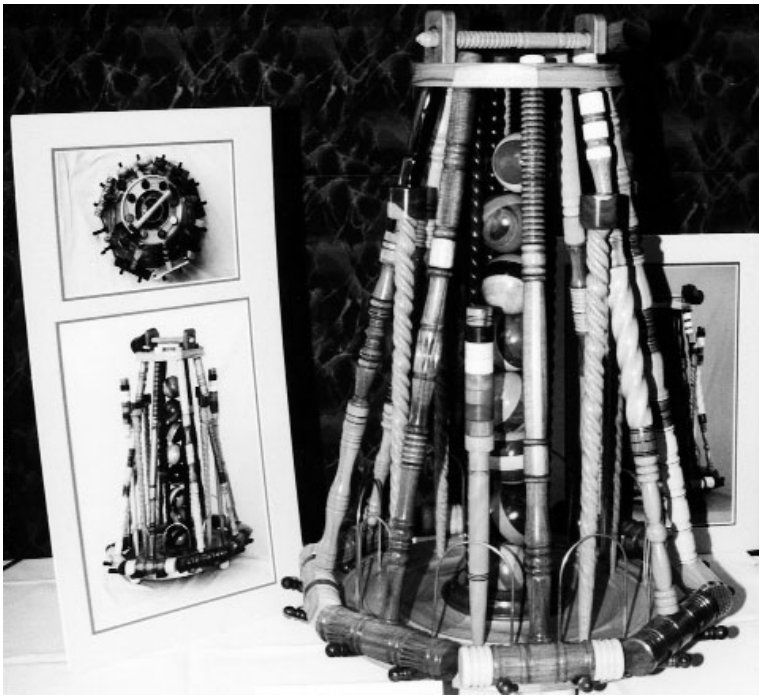
The technical quality of the video is excellent. Lighting, camera angle, voice over are all well done. It is rare that is done so well technically.

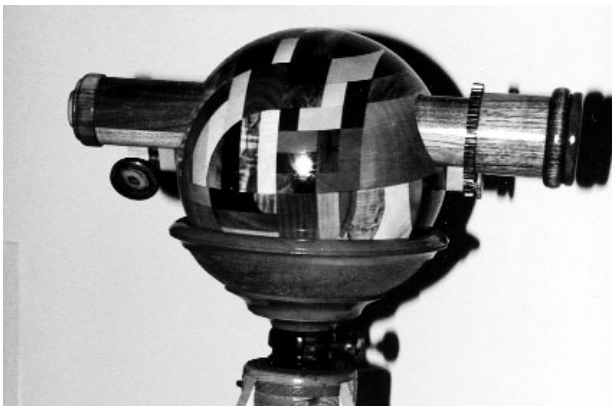
Richard carries you through all the steps of making lided boxes. The boxes include short boxes, tall boxes, and boxes with threaded lids. Richard rough turns his boxes and then lets them air dry. At a latter date he comes back to finish turn them. Raffan is a master at tool handling and he share his secrets with you. If you will study his video your tool handling ability will greatly improve with a little practice.

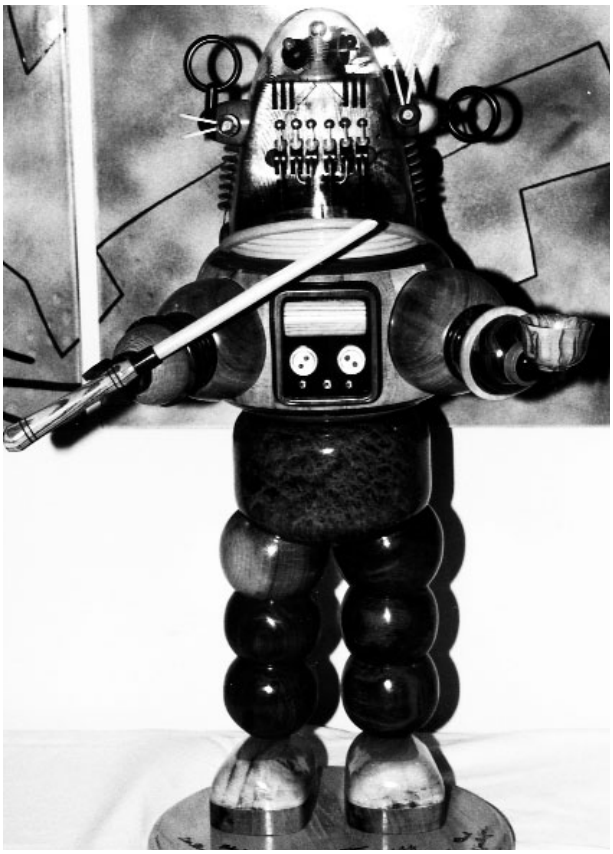
One of the aspects that I like best about Raffan's teaching is that he shows you his mistakes. He then shows you how to fix them. This is very helpful for beginners since we often feel that the masters never make a mistake. Real people make mistakes and Raffin shows up how to fix them.

There are only two faults that I find with Raffan's teaching. First, as a seasoned production turner he has some bad safety habits that he tells you about. So on issues of safety do as Richard says, not as he does. The second problem with the video is that it is so good, that it may take you a while to get it back once you loan it out. This video is a must buy for all clubs and anyone who wants to improve the quality of their turning.

Ron Hampton is a turner, carver and writer in Texarcana. TX







Collaborative Challenge Tacoma 1999

Robots and fish, Ferris wheels and locomotives, tools from handcrafted chisel to fully operational wooden lathes. The entries in this years AAW Challenge present a fascinating glimpse into the far-reaching fascinations, creativity and expertise of Chapter members everywhere. Among the displays this year, clockwise from left: “Woodrow the Robot” by the West Bay Area Woodturner’s Society; Detail of the Kaleidoscope by Dallas Area Woodturners; Croquet set by Bay Area Woodturners; eggbeater drill and bits by the Nor Cal Woodturners and Arizona Desert Sea World by Prescott Area Woodturners.
For more, see Page 14.