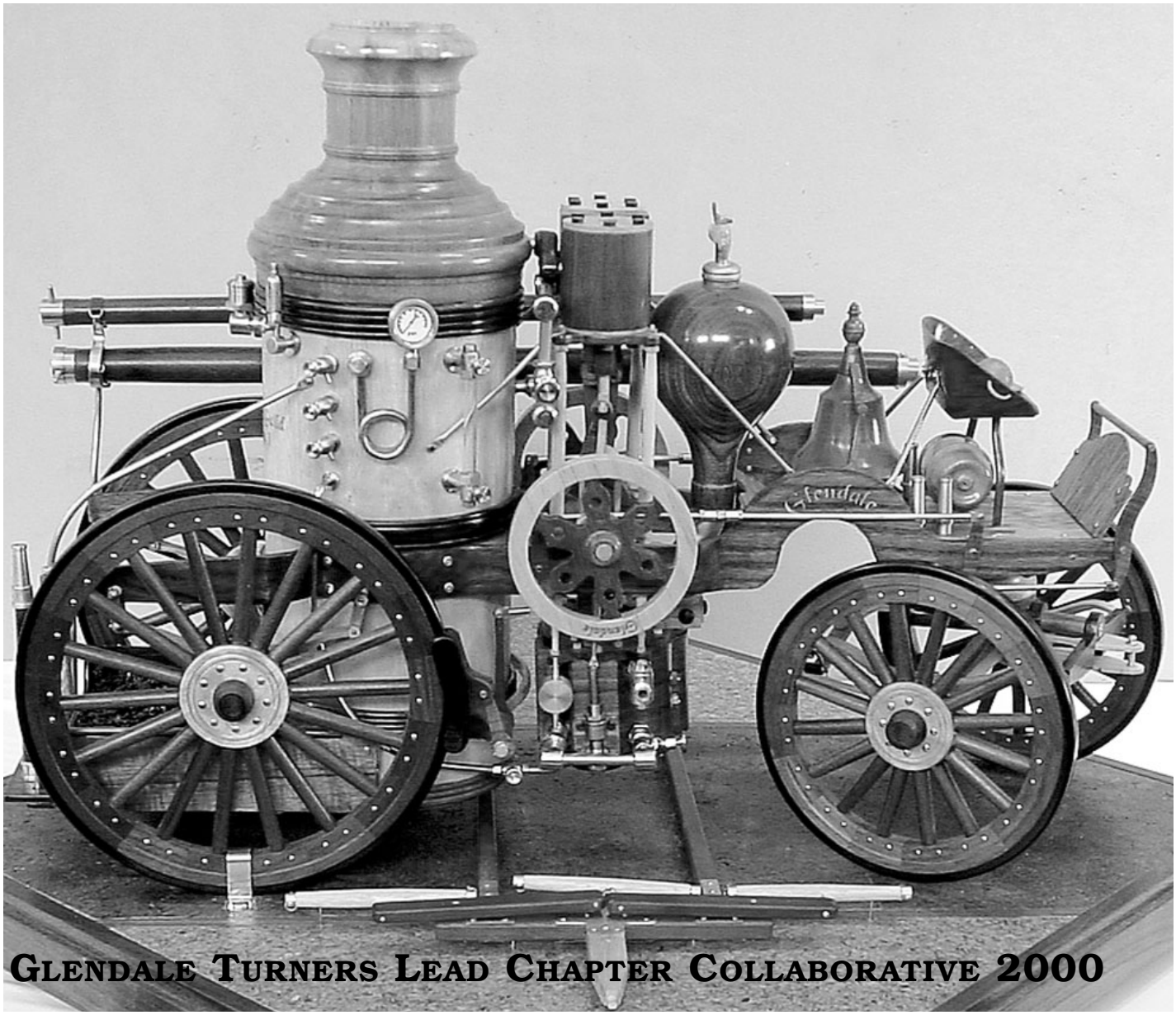
■ David Ellsworth on Wood Art ■ Charlotte 2000 ■ Spinning Metal ■ Turning Candlesticks ■

American Woodturner

The Journal of the American Association of Woodturners Fall 2000 $5.00 Vol. 15, No. 3



GLENDALE TURNERS LEAD CHAPTER COLLABORATIVE 2000

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

CHARLOTTE SYMPOSIUM WAS THE BIGGEST, AND ONE OF THE BEST

We have just completed our annual symposium, our 14th. If numbers mean anything, it was another success. We officially had 1132 attendees present and nearly 1400 at the banquet. The number of attendees was certainly the largest yet, but more significant to me is the percentage of our members who traveled to Charlotte. Our membership at the time of the symposium was 8,245, including members in 27 countries. That means that more than one eighth of our members or 13.5 percent attended. Seven countries were represented. I would consider that a high percentage of members to gather at one time, considering how far many of you had to come. I am also amazed at how many of you come such long distances year after year.

Some have wondered if the annual symposium is getting too big? Should we go to an East and a West "regional symposium"? I, for one, would surely hate to only see only half of the friends I have made over the years. The symposium is the highlight of the year for many of us. Putting on an event like this is one area where more is not necessarily cheaper. Because of symposium's size, we must to rent facilities in more expensive areas, but we are working hard to keep costs as reasonable as possible.

I feel certain we are getting the most for our dollar every year. That is because of the massive number of volunteers who so graciously pitch in to furnish equipment, aid demonstrators, and perform so many other jobs. The list at the bottom of this page includes all the volunteers whose names we have. I am sure there are others who should be included; I am sorry we do not have your name. Please accept our thanks just the same.

Some times we think that increasing the quantity of a thing will lower the quality. I can't see that happening at our annual gatherings. The gallery was probably the largest yet (1030 turned pieces), but the quality was better than ever, as was the diversity. I don't know of any greater display of turned pieces, ever, in one place. The trade show probably offered us the greatest selection of lathes, tools and wood ever assembled in one place. Plus 160 presentations by 58 top-notch demonstrators. The items donated to the auctions brought more than $41,000 for the educational grant program. That sounds like quality to me.

I hope you agree it is time to start planning your trip to St Paul, MN for July 6 through 8 next summer.

Speaking of quality, the board has just picked up another good member. Mark St Leger, who had the next highest vote total in last year's election, has agreed to fill a vacancy for the next year and a half. I know he is going to be a tremendous addition to this group. He is an educator by profession and will work on the Educational Opportunity committee among other things. Mark has always expressed a strong commitment to the AAW and has assured me he will work hard at whatever is needed of him, for the good of the organization. Welcome to the board, Mark.

— Dave Barriger is president of the AAW

Thanks to the Charlotte 2000 Symposium Volunteers

Charlie Alford
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Palmetto Woodturners
Piedmont Triad Woodturners
Smokey Mountain Woodturners
Tennessee Assoc. of Woodturners
Tidewater Turners of Virginia
Triangle Woodturners of NC

American Woodturner

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

On the cover: The Glendale Woodturners Engine No 1 topped this year's Chapter Collaborative Challenge at the annual AAW Symposium in Charlotte, NC. A story on the Guild's work is on Page 11. Photos of the other entries are on the back cover and pages 41-45. Cover photo by Larry Mart.

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

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Thanks from Robyn Horn

I would like to thank AAW and its board for presenting me with the Lifetime Achievement Award for 2000 in Charlotte.

I regret that I was not able to attend the banquet and receive the award personally, but I have heard that the comedy act of Jordan and Lamar was very entertaining and effective in covering for me.

When I began collecting and working in wood, I had no idea how many interesting and wonderful people John and I would meet that are involved in woodturning. The most exceptional aspect of AAW for me has been getting to know and becoming very fond of the many artists, collectors, gallery owners, and museum curators who are passionate about promoting wood as an art form, and who contribute their time and energy to this worthy effort.

AAW has been phenomenal in its growth and has been a catalyst for producing serious wood artists as well as encouraging everyone to enjoy the process of turning. I look forward to seeing which new artists will produce exciting work in the future.

AAW's importance in supporting tool development and material availability, with support groups around the country is truly amazing.

I sincerely hope that in the future, AAW, the Wood Turning Center, and Collectors of Wood Art can work together to continue to promote wood and woodturning which has so enriched our lives.

— Robyn Horn, Little Rock, AR

A letter from the Symposium

As I am flying back to Houston, TX after attending my fourth Annual AAW Symposium, I am overcome with mixed emotions again; first the total exhilaration of having my creative juices ready to spew forth with the design concepts which incubated in my mind for the past few days, and also with disappointment that the symposium was over and I had not been able to take in everything and everybody I wanted.

Four years ago I felt compelled to write an article for the September 1997 Journal chronicling my experiences at my first AAW Symposium; again I am compelled to share my experiences at this Symposium. First, on behalf of the over 1000 Symposium attendees, thank you to the AAW staff, Symposium Committee and local chapter volunteers for presenting us with the best organized and executed symposium I've seen. The demonstration rooms had adequate space for everyone; the trade show and eating accommodations were far superior to those of recent past symposiums.

Again the line up of demonstrators and presentations was outstanding. As always, there were more quality choices than there was time. I didn't have a chance to see at least nine demonstrators; with six others I attended one session but was unable to take in their sessions on other topics. But this disappointment in no way means I did not get my money's worth from the Symposium.

There were ten members of the Gulf Coast Woodturners Association that traveled by plane, car, truck and motor home from Houston to Charlotte. Our group ranged from turners seeking to improve their technical skills, to production turners to individuals whose focus was on the sculptural aspects of woodturning. Everyone I talked to had a positive feeling of having gained by their experience in Charlotte.

As with every year planning for the symposium started with my evaluating the roster of demonstrators and the various topics that they would be presenting. Next was the move to the rotation schedule. As always I was left with the question as to as to how I could be in six sessions at once. Decisions have to be made! After a detailed study of the rotation schedule and careful tactical planning my battle plan for the next three days has been laid out, including a backup for each rotation.

While my tool techniques have much room for improvement, this year most of my time at the symposium was to be spent on trying to broaden my view of woodturning as a sculptural process. At this point I am more interested in creating a visual object, than a salad bowl, although I will do both this summer.

I begin Friday morning with Trent Bosch. My first observation is that I hope the demonstrators assistant is able to find a platform for Alan Hockenbery to stand on after Trent finishes with adjusting the legs of the Stubby lathe in Room 213A. It's a good thing Binh Pho is demonstrating air brush techniques. After Trent is through adjusting the lathe height Binh would need an aerial ladder to reach the lathe. I found it enlightening to see some of the carving tools and techniques that Trent used in his work. After Trent finished we were still left with one major question, "will a purple balloon perform better than a pink balloon?" (Some questions are never answered.)

My next stop was to see Stoney Lamar, whose techniques and sculptural insight have inspired me since I first saw him at the 1994 Texas Turn or Two. Stoney's view of the lathe as a carving tool parallels where I am headed with my work. I found his view of imparting gesture and movement to the material and his concern with the relationship of intersecting surfaces very enlightening.

What can be said about Rude Os-

Letters edited for clarity and space.

An Open Letter to Studio Turners We need your help

The AAW continues to grow at a steady pace. Our membership will soon pass the 9,000 mark, and, as you know, many of those members are relatively new to turning. A major part of our mission to provide education, information and organization is aimed at these turners, but we don't want to neglect the interests and concerns of advanced turners like yourself, who helped form the AAW and have supported it over the years.

To better tailor our efforts to your interests, we are asking for your help. Please tell us what the AAW can do for you and your peers. What are the three things that you'd most like to see us do? Input from studio turners would be especially valuable in helping the Board of Directors develop future programs, both for the organization and for our Journal.

If you would be interested in running for the Board or being part of a special advisory committee to help the Board, I encourage you to contact a board member or Mary Lacer, the AAW Administrator, 3499 Lexington Ave N Suite 103, Shoreview, MN 55126.

Thanks for your help.

Dave Barriger, President of the AAW

olnik? He is the master to whom we all owe a great debt of gratitude for bringing an awareness of the beauty of turned wood objects to the public. We all pray that we will see Rude at many more Annual Symposia. Rude thanks from all of us.

I choose to finish Friday afternoon with David Ellsworth, whom I consider the finest teacher of wood turning I have ever watched. While I have seen David demonstrate 7 or 8 times, he is always able to remind me of subtle techniques I have either forgotten or overlooked.

Saturday morning started with Jan Peters. Jan left us with many ideas on how to be more effective in selling our work. Jan's guidance included: remembering we are working with people, get the best photography possible and communicate with the gallery or retailer who is selling your work. My experience is that selling art is very different than selling almost anything else and we have to work together as a team to be successful.

Stoney drew me back to his next two sessions with a discussion of techniques and philosophy. His view point on "Deciding when the work was done" and knowing when to stop was very insightful. Learning his techniques and the tools he uses for carving, I found very helpful. And of course throwing a 24 inch face plate off the lathe adds excitement for a sleepy after lunch crowd.

Since I always need help in developing new ideas for my turned wood sculpture, my next stop was Christian Burchard's session on idea development. One of the concepts that Christian presented to the attendees was that, " Our skill is the language and we decide what we are going to say". Many design ideas will come to us through our observations of nature and other artistic medium. Creativity is a way of life and we must allow a creative atmosphere to develop. We all struggle from time to time in our lives to be creative. Christian told us "to find one's style is to find one's soul".

Early Sunday morning I walked around town in my daily effort to delay if not eliminate another trip to Cardiac Intensive Care. As I walked through downtown Charlotte past the Mint Museum and three galleries showing turned wood sculpture I became inspired by two different metal sculptures in front of office buildings. As I walked, I determined I could create similar forms in wood on my lathe. As I continued to walk I went through several iterations of refining the design and techniques to execute to design. I am really excited with the prospects.

Returning to the Convention Center I attended Michael Lee's demonstration on carving. I enjoyed his creative view point. I gained an understanding of the carving methods he used, and immediately went downstairs to the Trade Show Area to purchase some of the carving bits Mike uses.

My next stop was "starting your creative engine" with Frank Sudol. Frank's message was that "Creative life is a journey", and that "Good work is not synonymous with perfect work..... to require perfection encourages paralysis". Frank challenged the audience to "Study your mistakes and learn from them". I came away from Frank's session believing that creativity is a muscle that must be exercised.

I ended the 14th AAW Symposium in an informal discussion on creativity with Betty Scarpino. She was the fifth demonstrator that passed along Clay Foster's recommendation to read the book "Art and Fear". I liked Betty's suggestion of if you can't fix it, feature it.

I was sad that I was not able to say a leisurely Good Bye to all of the old and new friends that I left behind in a rush to catch my flight. The 14th Symposium was a great learning experience and the 15th is expected to be better. Well the plane is landing, it is time to end this rambling. See you all next year.

—Jim Keller, Missouri City,TX

MISCELLANEOUS PDFS AND CDS FROM CYBERSPACE

In this issue I'll cover two topics from the email bag, PDF file format and CD disk storage. Woodturners new to the computer have had questions about how these technologies work, and how can woodturners use the technology? First, we have to understand the topics.

PDFs?

These days a lot of content is available on web sites in PDF format. I have received a number of emails from concerned woodturners who don't seem to be able to read newsletters in PDF format. PDF (or Portable Document Format) file format is a product of the Adobe Company (www.adobe.com) as a response to those people who wanted a general document formatting process for transferring files on the web and CDs. There are several products related to PDF files. There are reader programs available for almost any type of computer platform or operating system. This software is free to download from the Adobe web site.

How can they do this for free? Well, they sell the products to create the files. They had to give away the readers so there would be a reason for people to purchase the file creation software. No free lunch here.

The PDF creation software is called Adobe Acrobat. This is a suite of programs that can create PDFs from various platforms, generally Microsoft Windows or Apple Macintosh systems. On PCs, you can install it so it is just another printer driver. You create your file from any Windows program and then print to a file just as you would to your printer. Thus, you create your chapter newsletter or another type of formatted document and print to a PDF. You link it to your web page and anyone with a PDF reader program around the world can print it just like it came from your printer. You can also email the file as an attachment. Cool (geekspeak for "very nice".)

Why would you be interested?

PDF files are used widely for distributing formatted documents on the web. Most United States government agencies have used this format for years to distribute information in the exact format it would be distributed on paper. The IRS is an example. You can print your tax forms from the IRS web site exactly as they would come to you in the mail. A number of local AAW chapters make their monthly newsletters available in PDF format since this eliminates printing and mailing costs. Check the Adobe web site for information on obtaining the PDF readers and editing software.

CD-ROM, CD-R, CD-RW, CD-What the Heck?

If you use computers, you probably are familiar with the read-only CD-ROM drives. You use them to load software and data into your computer. Most software comes on CD-ROMS since they hold about 450 times the amount on a floppy disk. Every new computer comes with a CD-ROM drive.

Lately, the alphabet soup has thickened after the hyphen in CD-?. Now there are CD-R drives, CD-RW drives, and DVD drives which have become available. The CD-ROM drive could not be used to write data, just to read prewritten data or play music. The CD-R and CD-RW drives are used to read and write information on similar looking media. I won't get into how it works, but these drives are becoming so inexpensive that many of you will start using them for storing data soon, if you haven't already.

The CD-R is a write-once drive. You can store up to 650mb (megabytes) of files on a CD-R drive. You usually write in one session to the disks, but you can write in multiple sessions if you don't mind losing about 20mb for each session to write a new directory (table of contents.) The CD-R blank disks can be purchased for a couple of bucks so it is a really cheap way to store all those digital photos and chapter newsletter scans that are filling up your hard drive. If they are created properly, CD-R disks created on one platform can be read on different platforms, so MAC disks can be read by PC and so on. Be sure to read the manual for the proper procedure (just as you would read your tool instructions.)

The CD-RW is a newer type of disk that is becoming more widely available. This is a re-writable disk that can store about 500mb after formatting, but you can write to the disk over and over. Unfortunately, many CD-ROM drives can't read the CD-RW disks, and so you probably will be limited to making them for your own use on the CD-RW drive which wrote the disks. You probably wouldn't use this product for sending a disk to a friend to view the files unless the friend had a CD-RW drive. CD-RW blank media is also much more expensive than CD-R blank disks.

DVD is a newer technology that is like read-only CD-ROM. This won't be a factor for a while in the woodturning community since the writers are still out of the range of most people. If you have a digital camera or scan a lot of photos for newsletters or web sites, a CD-RW drive can be a good investment. You can't find CD-R drives much anymore, but a CD-RW will create CD-R disks. They now cost about $200 from any good computer store or on-line.

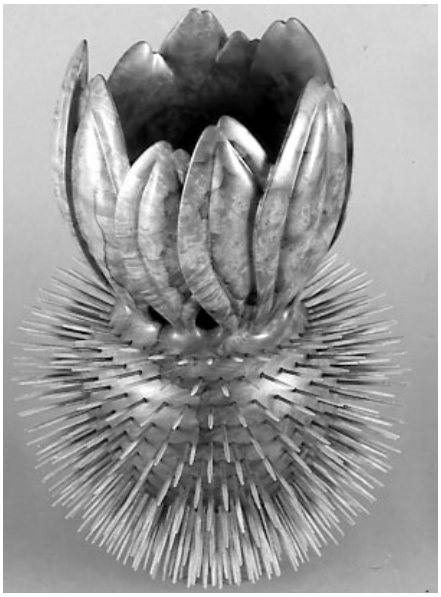
Please e-mail ideas for this column or questions to the AAW geek at webmaster@woodturner.org or snail mail to 210 Wilmot drive, Raleigh, NC 27606-1231.

A NEW COMPETITION, DEMONSTRATORS AND SYMPOSIUMS

Enter Exhibition of Woodturnings Inspired by Nature

Where does one get ideas for woodturning? Works by other turners, architecture, commercial products, pottery, glass and basketry have been common sources. But there is a vast, often overlooked area to draw upon: the natural world. Forms from eggs, fruits, vegetables, seeds, seashells, and even the human torso and landscapes appear in the works of many fine turners. At times a very direct approach is expressed in leaf, flower, and tree forms that are a part of a turning. And a universe of patterns, textures, and colors can be tapped for treating turned surfaces.

The next AAW exhibition will try to capture some of this inspiration. The first opening of the show will be at the Minnesota Museum of American Art in St. Paul, June 2 until August 12, 2001–only a few blocks from the AAW National Symposium to be held July 6–8, 2001. From there we hope to travel the show to several locations. Discussions are already underway for sites in California and New York.



"Enchinacea" by Ron Fleming. Dogwood Burl, $8\frac{1}{2}$-in D X $12\frac{1}{2}$-in. H

The show will include invited and juried turners; no more than 20% will be invited. Jurying (from slides) will be by David Ellsworth and Sandy Blain next March. Accepted work will need to arrive in St. Paul by early April 2001. Applications for the show are at the front of this Journal and will also be in the winter Journal. Note: the source of your idea need not be obvious to the viewer, but should be conveyed to the jurors with text.

— Alan Lacer, Troy, WI

Demonstrators Wanted for St. Paul Symposium

The AAW Symposium Committee is looking for top-notch demonstrators for the next annual symposium, July 6-8, in St. Paul, MN.

Featured national and international demonstrators, who will do six rotations during the St. Paul Symposium, will be announced in the December issue of *American Woodturner*. There are plenty of openings for those who would like to do two to four rotations. If you have great technique and want to share it with others, or would like to present some new ideas or a unique approach to design, St. Paul might be a great opportunity for you.

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
Bobby Clemons, Conference Chairman, 423-447-6994
Dave Barriger, Conference Committee, 407-886-3325

Symposiums Planned

Plans have been announced for regional woodturning symposiums in the West and in the South.

The Second Annual Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium has been scheduled for Sept. 30, 2000 at the Chilson Recreation Center in Loveland, CO.

The one-day event features five rotations and 20 demonstrations, an Instant Gallery and a Beginners Workshop. Featured Demonstrators include: Dick Sing, Mike Mahoney, Pete Holtus, Dave Gillespie, Lee Carter, Don Deatheridge, Keith Gotschall, Steve DeJong, Dave Nittman, Kurt Theobald, "Doc" Thode, Doug Schnieder, and others.

Contact: Chairman, Wayne VanEvery, 970-392-9035,
e mail: Vaneasy200@aol.com.

The Southern States Woodturning Symposium will be March 30 - April 1, 2001 at the Georgia Mountain Conference Center, Gainesville, GA.

Sponsored by five AAW chapters in the Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee area, this symposium will feature 25 rotations, an Instant Gallery Critique and Auction. Demonstrators include: Frank Sudol, Nick Cook, Judy Williams, Dave Barriger, Dave Hout, Bobby Clemmons and Brian Simmons.

For more information contact: Symposium Coordinator Willard Baxter, 770-535-2325, e-mail: ewbaxter@gateway.net.

New England Symposium Called Major Success

The third New England Turning Symposium was a major success by almost any measurement. There were over 300 attendees; revenues exceeded $12,000; David Ellsworth's Keynote Address was masterfully crafted and extremely well-received; all of the demonstrators but one arrived on time and did a great job; and all of the vendors seemed at least reasonably satisfied.

This one-day event at Pinkerton Academy in Derry, NH, featured demonstrations by 30 unpaid instructors. Peter Bloch said the event was sponsored by the Guild of New Hampshire Wood Workers and the Granite State Woodturners. Their primary purpose was to raise money for scholarships and to help fund a new Oneway lathe for Pinkerton Academy,and for the Guild's general fund. This Symposium will yield about $3000 for each.

Bloch, who is well-known for his exquisite translucent turned lampshades, was at least the nominal leader of this undertaking. I had asked him why they put on the symposium because I was awed by the enormity of the work and coordination involved. He, on the other hand, was rather matter-of-fact about the whole thing. "This is the third one, our second one, and we recognize that it's going to be a lot of work. Still, all of us in the Guild and in the Granite State Turners feel that it is very much worthwhile."

The general feeling among the attendees seemed to be that there was enough here for it to be a two-day event. Asked about that, Peter said, "With a one-day event we can charge $40 for admission, ask the demonstrators to come here at their own expense and work without pay (we provide lodging), and be confident that we have adequate numbers of troops to handle the workload. Once we go to a two-day situation all the dollars multiply rapidly. The event becomes more than twice as complex. And while we haven't ruled it out, we are cognizant of the fact that a wonderful manageable and worthwhile activity could become quite unwieldy with just a little over-ambition. For example, nearly anybody can come up with $40 and can spare a day. If it goes to two days lodging, feeding, security, staffing ... all these could easily become more than we're prepared to undertake."

Spacious, well-lit facilities at Pinkerton Academy were a highlight of the NE Symposium. Photo by Roy Noyes.

David Ellsworth, in his Keynote Address, attempted to give us "… a clearer picture of ourselves, not only who we are, but from where we've come and where we might be headed through our adventures in woodturning." He offered an insightful and most pleasant review of the years from 1986 forward. He also discussed with knowledge, maturity and thoughtful reflection the relationship of Craft to Art as it pertains to woodturners today. "In summary", he said, "I view the growth within our field somewhat like an extended journey. Occasionally the road is straight, the pace swift and sure, and I find myself confidently laying my map aside. At other times-probably most of the time — it seems more like a series of odd and interesting intersections where instincts, rather than instructions, seem to be my best guide. This is when I recognize that the importance of growth, like life itself, need not be focused on destination alone, but rather on the journey itself. Most of all, I need to learn to trust my own instincts, and to be careful not to diminish the importance of the term Craft in favor of the temptation of Art. Both are equally valid and both are available to us all through Woodturning."

For myself, I left Derry feeling humble. I was just one of 300 to 400 people who had gathered for one day to immerse themselves in something they love, woodturning. All were trying to be decent people doing the best they knew how to share their knowledge, passion and enjoyment of turning with one another. It is my belief that this, not the negativity with which the mass media drench us each day, is what our world is all about.

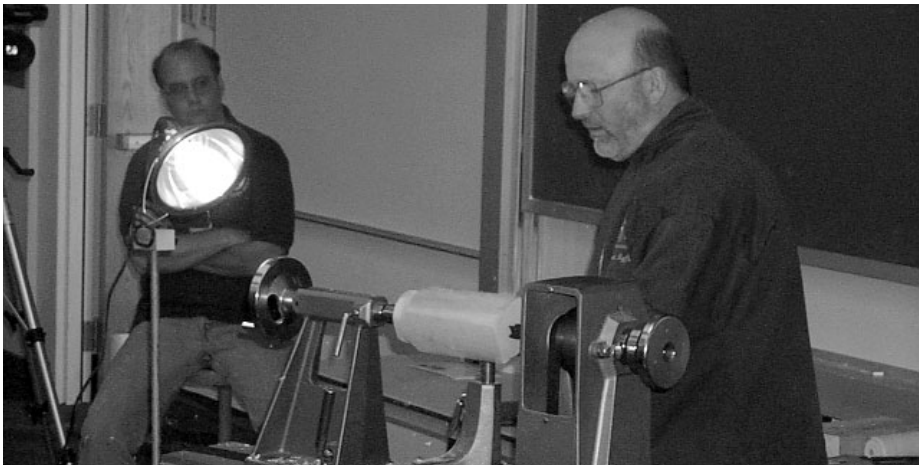
—Ken Keoughan, Friendship, ME

TURNING SEMINARS IN UTAH AND MISSOURI

THE UTAH WOODTURNING Symposium celebrated its 20th year last June by treating 400 participants at Brigham Young University in Provo, UT, to over 100 demonstrations by some of the world's best woodturners

International presenters included Richard Raffan and Guilio Marcolongo from Australia; Stuart Batty, Ray Key and Stuart Mortimer from England; Hans Weissflog from Germany; Tony Rea from Ireland; Ken Sager from New Zealand and Johannes Reiber from Norway. U.S. presenters included Rex Birmingham, Kip Christensen, Virginia Dotson, Gorst Duplessis, Mark Gardner, Ron Gorton, Linda VanGehuchten, Max Krimmel, Mike Mahoney, William Moore, Dale Nish, Lane Phillips, Robert Rosand and Joe Wagner.

Other activities included an evening barbecue, a swap meet, a silent auction, an "Instant Gallery" of over 350 pieces, and the annual "Great Egg Cup Race." New this year was a "Presenters' Showcase" where demonstrators turned a finished item in 15 minutes or less; and a silent auction which raised over $3300 for BYU Technology Teacher Education scholarships.



Richard Raffan was a featured demonstrator at the 20th Utah Symposium. Photo by Chuck Herrick.

The Utah Symposium tradition was initiated by Dale Nish in 1978 and has since become an annual event, making it the longest running woodturning symposium in the world. The symposium, sponsored by the BYU Technology Teacher Education Program and the Utah Association of Woodturners, now is coordinated by Kip Christensen.

A CD documenting the event with nearly 1000 still pictures and hundreds of megabytes of video with sound, is available from Chuck Herrick; 801-775-0712 (fax); or cherrick@xmission.com.

The next Utah symposium is scheduled for June 7-9, 2001. Contact The Utah Woodturning Symposium, P.O. Box 50196, Provo, UT 94605-0196 (801-378-2021.)

—Kip Christensen, Springville, UT

Turning Point Workshops, 2000

Hosted by Jeff and Nancy Farris of Farris Machinery, the Turning Point Workshop Series is in its fourth season in Grain Valley, MO, just east of Kansas City. The three-day event attracts attendees from throughout the Midwest; more than 35 individuals participated in July.

Instructors included: Soren Berger from New Zealand and US turners Robert Rosand, Willard Baxter and Nick Cook. Bobby Clemons, AAW board member and Tony Kwasniak, product manager for British toolmaker Robert Sorby presented special demonstrations.

The workshop provided something for everyone, including basic bowl turning, production techniques, Christmas ornaments, marketing, three legged stools, small projects, spheres, vacuum chucking and demonstrations of specialty tools.

Soren Berger hollowing a sphere. Photo: Cathy Wike-Cook

Willard Baxter conducted an auction on Saturday evening with work produced by the presenters and attendees. It raised more than $2400. The funds will be divided five ways with money going to the AAW, Kansas City Woodturners, Wichita Woodturners, Topeka Woodturners and Independence Woodturners.

Contact Farris Machinery for information on next year's schedule of Turning Point Workshops.

— Nick Cook, Marietta, Ga

GLENDALE ENGINE #1

Group Effort Produces Extraordinary Results

BILL HASKELL

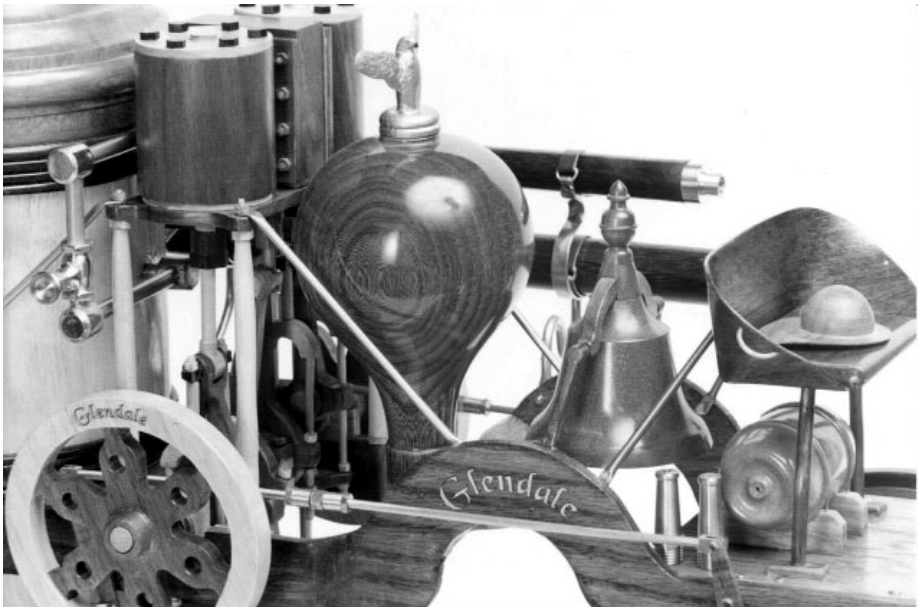
THE GLENDALE WOODTURNERS Guild embarked on an ambitious project in January 2000: to build a model antique steam pumper fire engine. The Guild, which serves the greater Los Angeles and outlying areas, currently has a membership of over 150 who are interested in woodturning, learning more about it and sharing their passion for it.

The impetus for this project was the American Association of Woodturners annual symposium in June, where a collaboration competition was held in Charlotte, NC, among the chapters from across the country. Needless to say, based on the creations of various AAW chapters in prior years, the competition from other woodturning clubs is astonishingly keen.

Our antique steam pumper fire engine is a replica of steam fire engines built by the American LaFrance Company in the 1900 to 1913 period in an Elmira, New York, factory. A team of two horses typically pulled steam pumpers like this; the heavier engines sometimes used three horses.

The American LaFrance Company today is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Freightliner Corp., a Daimler Chrysler company. The company had its beginnings in 1832, with the manufacture of hand-pumper wagons. In 1884, a new design was introduced that utilized a piston steam engine for pumping water. By 1888, the company was advertising this engine's superior power with the claim, "We guarantee 80 pounds of steam in five minutes from cold water." Through its 167-year history, American LaFrance built a legendary reputation as the world's most acclaimed manufacturer of fire apparatus.

Twenty members of the Glendale Woodturners collaborated on the model. They used 23 species of wood, and most of the wood parts were turned on a lathe. Even the fire helmet on the front seat was lathe turned. All the brass parts for nozzles, hose connectors, plumbing, gauges, etc. were turned from brass. All in all, over 1,100 pieces were fabricated in creating the assemblies used to make this exquisite piece. It is estimated that over 1,000 hours of painstaking work over six months were invested in the planning and execution process of this group undertaking. With the number of participants involved, it was a real surprise and thrill to see all the pieces come together and fit in the assembly process.



Detail of pumper shows brake, seat, water barrel and bell.

The attention to detail and the dedicated hours of so many paid off. At the AAW Symposium, woodturning attendees and other visitors marveled at the piece and they voted it the coveted and sought-after top prize! The Glendale Woodturners were indeed proud and thankful.

At the fund raising auction after the symposium dinner banquet Saturday evening, the fire engine went for the highest price of the night. The new proud owner was thrilled to claim this marvelous piece. He plans to give it to his father, a retired fire chief, for Christmas.

This is the second year the Glendale group participated in the Chapter Collaboration Challenge. In 1999, the group created a magnificent lathe, all out of wood, with parts spindle and faceplate-turned from a delightful array of hardwoods. This piece, while it did not place in the competition that year, was very impressive and much admired. In fact, it has been donated to and accepted by the Smithsonian Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art in Washington D.C., where it will be in the permanent collection. An obvious lesson learned from these joint undertakings is that a group effort can achieve extraordinary results, and sometimes at a level far greater than ever anticipated in the beginning.

– Bill Haskell is a woodturner in Placentia, CA.

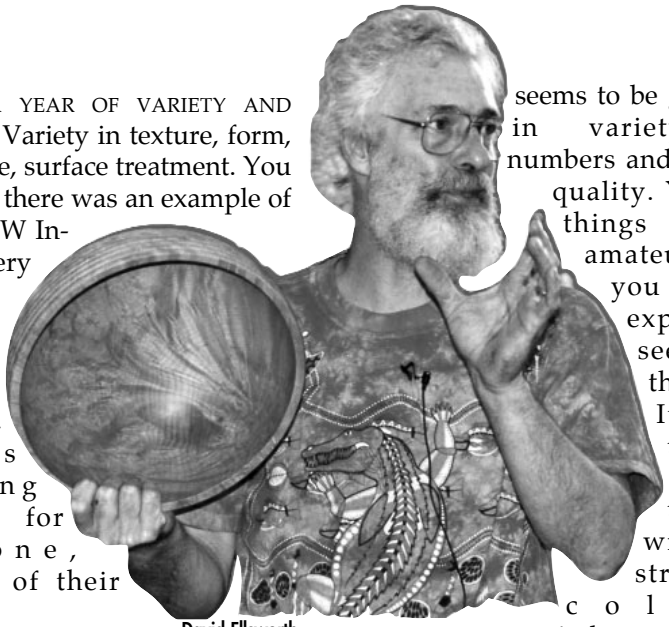
INSTANT GALLERY 2000

Bigger and Better Than Ever

GARY C. DICKEY

IT WAS A YEAR OF VARIETY AND growth. Variety in texture, form, color, size, surface treatment. You name it and there was an example of it in the AAW Instant Gallery 2000.

As one visitor to the gallery observed, "There's something here for everyone, regardless of their taste in art."



David Ellsworth

And there was no mistaking the fact that the bar had definitely been raised when it came to the quality of workmanship exhibited.

As long time gallery observer and collector Arthur Mason noted, "It seems to be growing in variety, in numbers and overall quality. You see things from amateurs that you used to expect to see from the stars. It's a treat to see the things with the stress on color, construction and the variety of techniques.

"I've never been to a symposium without buying something and it's not to do someone a favor. I only wish for a better system to bring the artist and collector closer together and make it easier to buy their work."

He explained that the critique and Instant Gallery provided a snapshot of the woodturning field.

"It's hard to compare, but it's an institution that increases in quality every year," Mason said.

Charlotte attorney, Keith Oberkfell, visiting with his wife and two children termed it "fantastic, the best kept secret in the Charlotte art world. I can't believe the media hasn't gotten hold of this, but I guess it's mostly for the turners to see what others are doing," he said. Oberkfell and his family learned about the Instant Gallery after taking in the Mason Collection at the Mint Museum.

"We thought that was a great show, but I'm so glad we didn't just stop there. This," he said, gesturing at the expanse of the Instant Gallery,

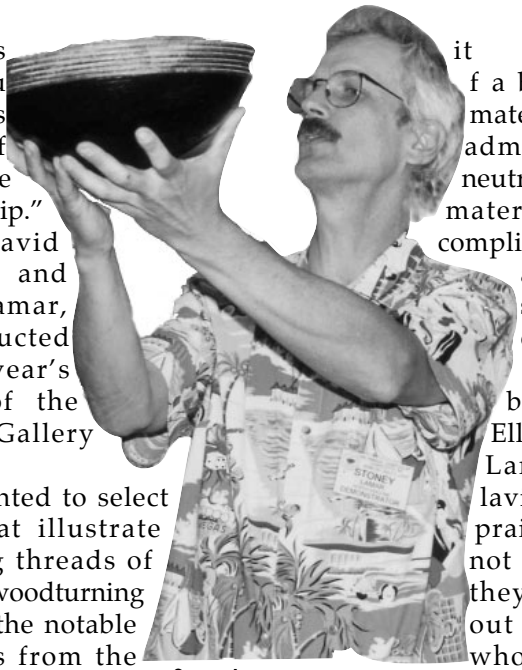
A feast for the senses -- Instant Gallery 2000 featured more than 1100 turned wood pieces,

"just leaves you speechless in awe of the workmanship."

Both David Ellsworth and Stoney Lamar, who conducted this year's critique of the Instant Gallery agreed.

"We wanted to select objects that illustrate continuing threads of themes in woodturning as well as the notable departures from the norm and the exciting innovations that are illustrated here," Ellsworth said.

Pointing to objects like the palm bowl by Gaye Siegel Ellsworth noted that it was "a fabulous material" as he admired the neutrality of the material and complimented the artist for his surface decoration.


Stoney Lamar

While both Ellsworth and Lamar were lavish in their praise, all was not positive as they pointed out pieces whose bases and tops were out of proportion to the rest of the vessel and tried to show where the artist might have enhanced a piece with a different approach to design or technique.

"I often liken the turned vessel to the human vessel," Ellsworth said. Looking at an oak pot, he commented that it appeared as though the shoulders were weak and tired.

"It seems to want to lie down and rest. I like to see a vessel of this design with the shoulders raised to be even with the neck or lip."

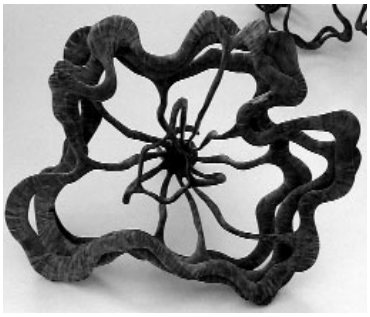
Both critics were fascinated with mixed media pieces using found objects and with pieces that incorporated industrial objects marking a departure from the natural environment.

"It's like looking at a bridge as opposed to a pile of rocks," Lamar added as he admired the delicacy of a composite wood piece with braised inserts.

"This one looks like it was made by a madman, but it's the result of an International Turning Exchange group," Ellsworth said of a piece by the French turner, Alain Mailland. "It is thrilling and a good indication of things going on in woodturning

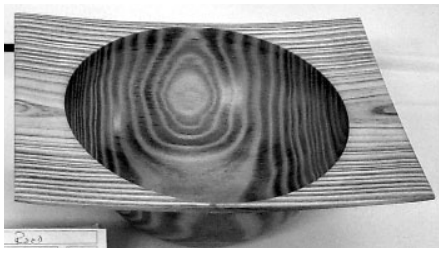
possibly the largest collection of woodturnings ever assembled.

Photo by Jamie Donaldson



Clockwise from lower left are candlesticks by Linda VanGehuchten, and vessels by Byram Reed,Simon Levy, Gaye Siegal, Alain Mailland and Dale Larson.

(Photos by Nileen Hunt of Raleigh, NC and Gary Dickey)



outside the United States. It's part bowl and part vessel -- it actually becomes its own entity," he said.

Both Ellsworth and Lamar expressed intrigue with the beaded vessel by Linda Fifield. "The artist has an understanding of the material. Madrone is hard, but the artist knows how to get the pristine look out of the material that has a life of its own,"Lamar commented.

Ellsworth praised the work of Dave Nittmann as "a beautifully done basketry concept combining the linear and spiral designs from Native American works."

Lamar admired Mike Lee's work. "This is a person in touch with himself and his environment--a beautifully carved surface treatment making a water-like form which is only natural since Mike is a surfer and the water theme shows."

A common theme throughout the critique was the notable efforts that many turners took to "invite the viewer inside their work."

As Ellsworth observed of one work, "He took a common vessel, exploded it, and rejoined it allowing the viewer to experience the interior."

Another piece was notable for the artist's cutting and wiring bells and trinkets asking the viewer to get involved with his work, while another was praised for "playing with paint to give a bit of surprise."

Lamar brought a round of laughter to the event as he recalled talking with a vendor in the trade show who had informed him that "the multiple axis turning is the wave of the future." The keystone of Lamar's work has, for years, been the multiple axis technique.

His advice to newcomers to the technique: "Be careful when you throw things off-center--it's the beginning of going in a new direction."

Ellsworth praised the work of Byram Reed entitled "Plain Ole Pine Bowl" saying it was "a perfect application of wood to the form" and noting that "naming a piece is very much a part of the creative process."

Both critics hailed Gale Montgomery's uses of dyes and the imperfections of the material in the design of the object.

Jack Vesery drew high praise for his "small objects tastefully done and his attention to surface work." Ellsworth noted that a Vesery piece in this year's gallery was his first attempt at handles, and gold leaf made for a lively interior treatment.

Lamar was drawn to the "understated nature of Simon Levy's graphics — sgraffito like — engaging in a subtle way," and to Binh Pho's work. "His piercing bamboo represents the culture he's coming from and the vessel concept extends vertical planes and uses a sculptural approach."

This could have been called the year of the miniature with so many turning to scaled down versions of larger vessels and objects.

"Bigger is not necessarily better," observed Lamar.

But he was speaking of turnings -- not Instant Galleries. And the Gallery of 2000 will long be remembered as not only bigger, but better as well.

Gary Dickey is Assistant Editor of American Woodturner.

METAL SPINNING

An alternative material

ERNIE CONOVER

Author Ernie Conover puts finishing touches on a pewter bowl after spinning.

Metal spinning is the art of forcing a metal disk down over a form (or chuck), which is revolving in the lathe.

Many common everyday items are spun metal. One of the best examples is spun-metal reflectors used extensively in the electric lighting industry. Others include aluminum cookware and, of course, bowls. Commercially, special heavy-duty spinning lathes are used, but spinning can also be carried out on a standard wood lathe.

A variety of nonferrous metals can be spun, including gold, silver, copper, brass, aluminum, and pewter. All, except pewter and dead-soft aluminum, have a tendency to work harden during spinning and consequently require frequent annealing. Work hardening is a change in the crystalline structure of the metal caused by the great force applied during the spinning process. The metal becomes hard, brittle, and cracks radially if not annealed at regular intervals. Annealing of nonferrous metals entails heating to cherry red and plunging in water--just the opposite of ferrous metals.

Pewter is immune from work hardening, is easy to work, and is a material people perceive as valuable. Therefore, it is the perfect material to learn to metal spin. If you are on a tight budget, you might consider dead- soft aluminum as a less expensive learning material. Aluminum bowls, however, are just not the stuff heirlooms are made of.

Modern lead-free pewter is a safe, durable metal that can sit side by side with silver at Lady Astor's tea party. Because standards are voluntary, it is important when purchasing pewter or Britannia metal to specify that you want lead-free metal. The best source I have found for pewter is A. J. Oster Alloys Inc., 50 Sims Avenue, Providence, RI 02909-0257 (800-289-3797).

Don't be surprised to face a $75 to $100 minimum charge when ordering pewter. Expect to pay $12 to $16 per pound.

The material in this article comes from ***Turn a Bowl with Ernie Conover,*** by Ernie Conover, published February 2000 by the Taunton Press, Newtown Ct. (800-888-8286). Our thanks to the publisher for making the material available. — *Editor.*

What size blank do I need?

Figuring what size disk of pewter you need to spin a given form can be problematic. Because the metal stretches a bit during the spinning process, you fortunately almost always end up with too much metal. The excess is easily trimmed away, and in fact several trimmings are necessary during the spinning process anyway.

The easiest way to figure the diameter of a blank is simply to stretch a string or flexible steel tape measure from the center of your chuck to the rim. Or, draw the design out on paper and measure in the same manner as the stretched string.

Chucks

Spinning entails forcing a metal disk down over a form, which is revolving in the lathe. The form is properly called a chuck, and it is the negative form of the item you plan to spin. Very satisfactory chucks can be faceplate turned from a durable hardwood, such as maple.

It's desirable to incorporate a "foot" into a chuck. Once you have the metal blank centered on the chuck, the first act is to "catch" the foot. That is, spin the metal down over the ridge that forms the foot. Now the blank will stay centered throughout the rest of the spinning operation, because it is trapped on the chuck by the foot and the follow block.

Follow Block

The follow block is simply a block of wood that is turned to a perfect fit with the base of the chuck. It holds the pewter disk against the chuck throughout the entire spinning operation. A well-designed follow block is drilled or scraped out to be a press fit over the point of the live center in

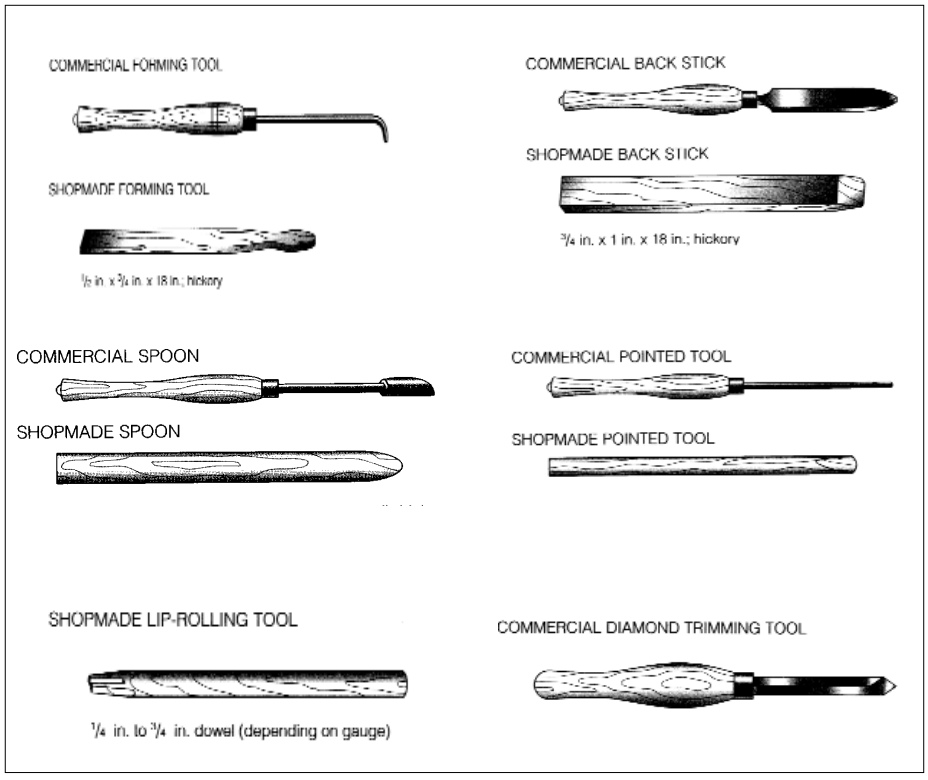
the tailstock and is shaped to mate perfectly with the base area of the chuck and to be about $^1/_4$-in. in diameter less than the diameter of the foot. Like the chuck, the follow block should be turned from a durable wood. Tailstock alignment is critical to the follow block working properly. When advanced by the tailstock ram, it must center on and fit with the chuck.

Spinning Rest

Much different from a normal woodturning tool rest, a metal-spinning rest is a T fabricated of heavy steel sections. There are two metal pins that can be moved to several locations along the top surface of the T. The pins afford fulcrum points against which the turner can lever the tools and backstick. In the past you had to fabricate (or have a machine shop make) a spinning rest yourself. Fortunately, they are being made these days by Sorby and can be purchased from anyone who sells the Sorby line.

Tools

Spinning tools are considerably different from normal turning tools. A good spinning tool has a hardened, polished tip that lays the metal down without marring it, a stiff shank that will not flex under the high lateral forces applied during spinning, and a stout handle for good purchase. As with rests, we once had to make our own tools. Fortunately, pewter can be spun with wood tools made in the shop from hickory. My father made his first set out of sledge-hammer handles that he bought at a hardware store, and you can do the same. Various spinning tools and the specifications of shopmade wood tools are shown in the drawings below. I have listed the American nomenclature for these tools, but because Sorby is the only maker supplying spinning tools for the woodturning market, I have also included the British terms (in parentheses).



Spinning tools need to be kept well polished, because the surface spun by the tool will be no better than the surface finish of the tool itself. This is true of the wooden tools as well. You can buff wood, and I always buff my tools (wood or metal) with stainless-steel compound on a cushion-sewn wheel before the start of a spinning.

Forming Tool (Hook Burnish)

The forming tool is used for the initial laying down of the metal over the chuck. Its broad contact area moves a wide area of metal. It is an easy tool to make from wood.

Spoon (spoon burnish)

The spoon has a highly polished surface, which is a large radius, so it is perfect for final smoothing of the metal to give a regular polished surface. Technically, this is not a polished surface but rather a burnished finish, which is where the British name for the tool comes from.

Pointed Tool (Fingernail Burnish)

The pointed tool is used for detailing work, such as coves and beads. It's the tool to reach for any time you need a hard edge or a small detail.

Backstick (steady)

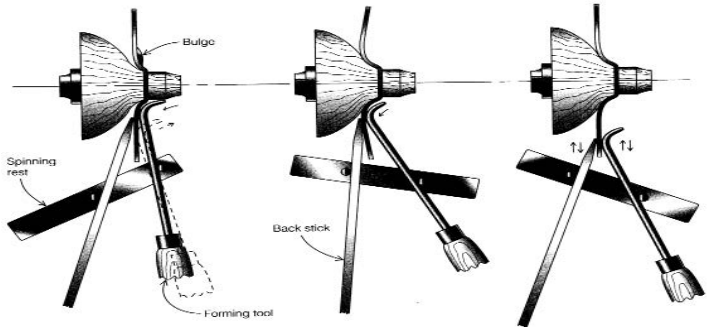
The back stick is used for initial centering of the blank. Mostly it is used in combination with the forming tool to support the metal and keep it from wrinkling during a lift. Before Sorby came out with their spinning tools I never knew a back stick to be anything but wood.

Lip-rolling tool

I learned about this improvised tool from a spinner named David Jones in Millersburg, Ohio. Most old texts on spinning show the spinner using a pointed tool and a back stick

How Metal Behaves Ahead of the Tools

1. Catching the foot 2. metal forms reverse cone 3. bringing disk back flat



(or two back sticks) in conjunction with one another to roll the lip. When I saw David using this tool I thought, "Why didn't I think of that?" It's incredibly easy to make, because it is essentially a pointed hickory dowel with a kerf sawn in it.

Diamond trimming tool

During the spinning process the metal flows outward much like rolling out a pie crust. Occasional trimming is necessary to remove the excess metal and to bring the blank back into round. This is the job of the diamond trimming tool. It can be made from a square section of tool steel, though a diamond-point turning scraper works fine for the purpose.

Lubricants

A lubricant is necessary to keep the tools from galling, or wearing away, the metal during the high pressure applied by the spinning process. The lubricant needs to have high pressure and temperature lubricity and be easy to remove after the process is completed. A good lubricant is Murphy oil soap in gel form. (It also comes in liquid form, but you need the gel.) It has excellent lubricity and eats up heat but washes off easily. Simply use a paintbrush to swab the surface of the blank with the oil soap.

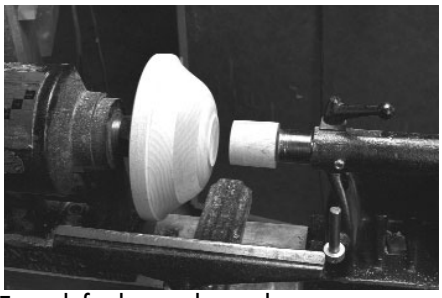
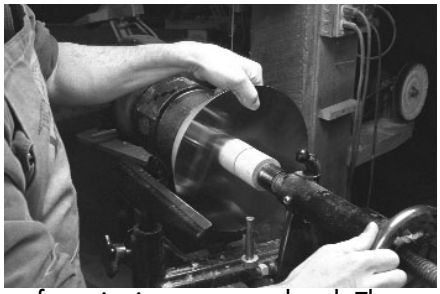
The dynamics of spinning

The dynamics of metal movement during the spinning process is intriguing. The pewter goes through dramatic changes under the pressure of the tools, acting more like a plastic than a metal. But, when you think about it, it has to, because you're asking a flat disk of metal to become a hemisphere. This means the metal is stretched at the foot area, but has to shrink (get smaller around the diameter) for the rest of the way up to the lip of the bow. The metal has to go somewhere and this is why you usually end up with extra metal at the lip.

If you have ever watched potters, they move the clay up in the same way when they "throw" a pot. They support the clay with one hand on the inside, just as we support the metal with a back stick, and they form the clay with their other hand on the outside of the bowl, just as we do with the forming tool.

The metal "moves" ahead of the tool much like a wave comes into a beach. This is why spinners speak of "moving metal." It actually forms a bulge ahead of the tool, as shown in the drawing at left (Step 1). For this reason, it is necessary to spin back toward the foot after every lift toward the rim. Otherwise, you'd end up with all of the metal at the rim and severe thinning in the lower areas. By alternately lifting metal toward the rim and then spinning back toward the foot we keep the metal near its starting thickness, and everything goes well. Again the clay analogy works here. If potters did not move the clay back down toward the base of the pot, they would end up with all of the clay at the rim. Therefore, they alternate lifting the clay with pushing it back down to the base.

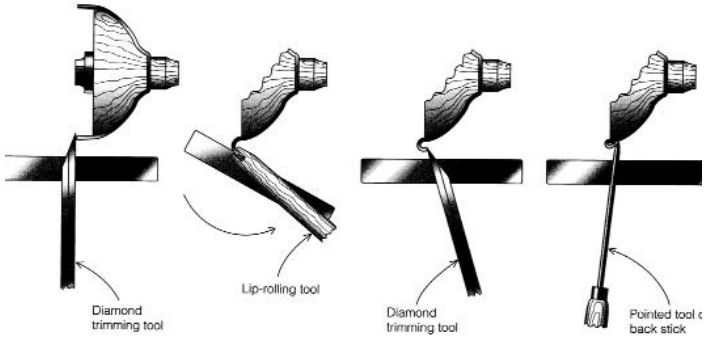
A second problem is that the metal that has not yet been spun down to the chuck will form a reverse cone, as shown in Step 2 of the drawing, above left, if you don't straighten it out. This is where the back stick comes into play. It is used in conjunction with the spinning tool you happen to be using (probably the forming tool at this stage) and provides a support for the metal be-


From left above, the author prepares a set-up for spinning a pewter bowl. The pewter disk is inserted between the chuck and follow block with light tailstock pressure. Soap is applied as a lubricant prior to spinning.

Rolling an Edge

1. Trim the edge 2. Roll the edge 3. Trim a second time 4. Roll metal down



fore it is spun down to the chuck. Equal forces are applied to the back stick and the spinning tool, much as you would pick something up with chopsticks. Any time the metal starts to form a reverse cone, it is spun back straight again, as shown in Step 3 of the drawing on the previous page. This is done by moving the tool, with the back stick on the opposite side, out to the rim. Failure to use a back stick properly usually results in wrinkling of the metal, which usually means the blank ends up as scrap.

Once the metal is spun down to the entire chuck, it's time to trim it. You now have two choices: simply cut the rim off square and break the sharp edges with abrasive paper, or roll the edge. A rolled edge adds a finished look and strength to the bowl and is easy to do. For heavier gauges of pewter a hard edge works well too. Take your choice. If you are going to roll the rim, then trim the radius about $^1/_4$ in. proud of the rim, as shown in Step 1 of the drawing, above right. Now use the rolling tool to partially roll the metal around (Step 2). A second trimming is now necessary (Step 3). Finally, using a pointed tool or the back stick, lay the metal down tight to the side wall of the bowl (Step 4).

Metal finishing

The secret of professional-looking pewter lies as much in metal finishing as in the actual spinning. This is just the same as with wooden bowls: If you don't sand and finish properly, all your work is for naught. Pewter designs work with a wide variety of surface treatments, from a brushed look to a mirror finish.

The process of metal finishing removes minor imperfections from the surface of the metal and gives the entire spinning a uniform surface quality. Uniform surface quality is the key here; whatever you choose as a finish, it needs to be uniform. Current tastes seem to favor a brushed finish in which fine abrasives are employed to impart small, unidirectional scratches to the surface. It is advantageous to do as much of the metal finishing on the lathe as possible. Fortunately, this makes the production of unidirectional scratches with abrasives easy.

A polish is obtained when the scratch marks left by the abrasive are exceedingly small. At some point the scratch pattern can become random with no detriment to the look of the finish. A mirror polish is obtained by using successively finer grades of abrasive until the scratch marks become smaller than the wave length of visible light.

Finishing a pewter bowl

I usually start with a small square of fine emery cloth (a cloth-backed abrasive for use with metal, which is available at most hardware stores). The first thing I attack after spinning is the rim (whether rolled or square). After removing the tool rest, I use a small square of emery to carefully break all sharp edges and remove all burrs--anything that might cut my fingers. I now work the entire outside of the bowl right down to the foot. Next I go to Scotch-Brite abrasive cloth. Although 000 steel wool will work fine, I prefer Scotch-Brite: It has less tendency to get wrapped up in the work and leaves a nicer brushed finish. If a finer finish is desired, pumice and common mineral oil on a small square of felt leaves a



With the lathe at low speed (600 rpm or less) the disk is centered and the author uses the forming tool and backstick together to perform the lift and draw the metal into a cone sliding both tools toward the rim. The forming tool (center is used to spin metal down to the chuck. A V-scraper (right) is used to trim the disk round.



The lip-rolling tool is used to start rolling the lip (left). After initial smoothing with a spoon burnish, the bowl is polished first with emory cloth, then with Scotch-Brite abrasive cloths (center). At right is the finished bowl.

very nice finish.

Finishing the inside of the bowl can be done on the lathe as well. The best tactic I have found is to mount a wood disk of an appropriate diameter on a faceplate, scrape out a recess that matches the foot of the bowl, and then secure the bowl in the recess with double-sided tape. Then the inside is finished the same as the outside. The easiest method for doing the very bottom is to first withdraw the tailstock and follow block. Then hold a piece of fine Scotch-Brite against the base of bowl, keeping it on the chuck; start the lathe at a very slow speed, and let it run for a couple of seconds. Snap-loc disks are available from Merrit with a Scotch-Brite facing. Armed with an electric drill you can spin the Scotch-Brite disk against the bottom to yield a unidirectional brushed finish.

Buffing

A buffer can also be handy for off-the-lathe polishing. Charged with the correct wheels and/or compounds, a buffing wheel can give you anything from a brushed look to a mirror polish. Buffing is the technique of using cloth or felt wheels, revolving at moderate speed and charged with abrasive compound, to improve the surface finish of metal. The abrasive compound is usually a wax/grease and abrasive mixture. Sold in stick form, it is crayoned on the revolving wheel. Small jackshafts designed for building a buffer are available at industrial hardware stores and from mail- order tool catalogs. They have a $^{1}/_{2}$-in. or $^{5}/_{8}$-in. arbor, which fits readily available 4-in.-, 6-in.-, and 10-in. diameter cloth wheels and are best powered by a fractional horsepower 1,725 rpm motor.

A second way to make a small buffer for pewter polishing is to mount a buffing wheel in the lathe itself. The same small arbor that we used for the inside of a bowl with a $^{1}/_{4}$-in. or $^{3}/_{8}$-in. shank is perfect. Mount the arbor in a drill chuck in the headstock spindle of your lathe.

Buffing wheels and compounds

Buffing wheels are available in two types: spiral-sewn and cushion-sewn. The spiral-sewn wheel is better for coarser compounds when aggressive cutting action is desired, whereas the cushion-sewn wheel is better for initial polishing when gentle cutting action and a mirror finish are required. Scotch-Brite flap wheels are available at industrial hardware stores and are great for brushed finishes at the buffer. Buffing compounds are proprietary in formulation and tend to be packaged by the purpose for which they are intended. Therefore, compounds are sold for brass, steel, stainless steel, and so on. For buffing pewter, I have found that Dico compound E5 emery gives a fine brushed finish and removes minor surface imperfections, and SCR stainless or rouge gives a mirror polish. Dico compounds and buffing wheels are made by Divine Brothers in Utica, New York, and are available in most good hardware stores. Equivalent compounds are made by Formax Company of Detroit, Michigan, and are sold at all Sears stores. I keep a spiral-sewn wheel charged with E5 emery on the left side of my buffing arbor and a cushion-sewn wheel charged with SCR stainless or rouge on the right side. After burnishing with the spoon, I buff lightly on the left wheel; then if I want a mirror finish, I move to the right wheel. When buffing you must always buff off the edge. Buffing into the edge could send your spinning crashing into the floor. The key word here is lightly. Heavy buffing with any degree of pressure will round over the edges and wash out details.I often use a 4-in. wheel to buff the inside of a spun bowl.

Just as with wood bowls, you want to put duct tape over the arbor end and nut to prevent them from marring the surface if they inadvertently touch the work. Pewter will mar easily, so the best tactic is to watch the arbor end and not let it touch the work at all--duct tape or not.

When not writing about turning, Ernie Conover is teaching at his school, Conover Workshops, with his wife Susan in Parkman, OH. Turn A Bowl with Ernie Conover, © 1999 The Taunton Press, is his latest book.

RING HOLDER

An elegant gift that's easy to turn

BOB ROSAND

SURVIVAL IN THE CRAFT SHOW MARket demands that you have a wide range of products which are affordable, yet give the maker some sense of pride in what he or she is producing. When I turn these items, I do the best job I can relative to the price that I charge. I try to finish a $20 dollar item as well as a $500 bowl. I may not power sand the $20 object, but you'll have to look hard to find any sanding marks.

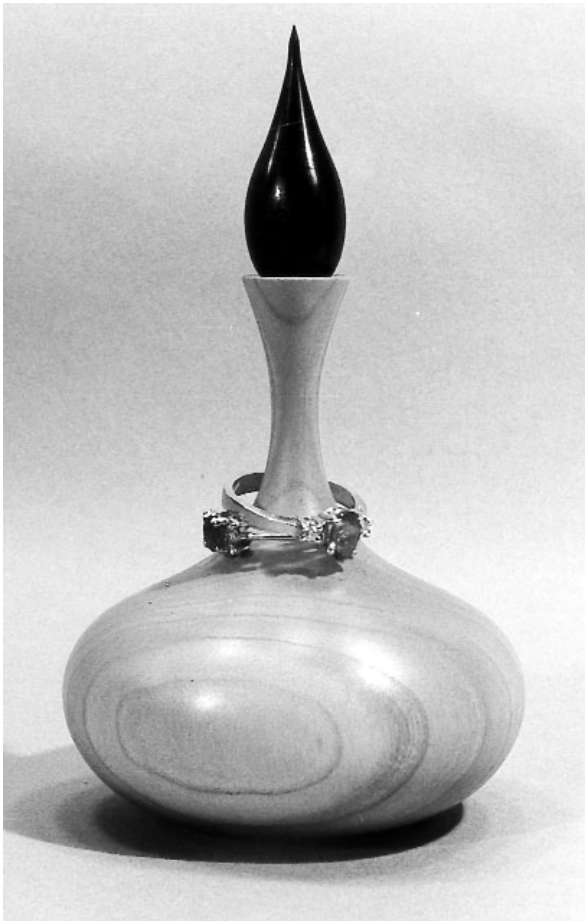
One of the turnings that I have been successfully marketing over the years is a ring holder. I found the idea in a magazine a couple of years ago and modified it to suit my needs. The one I modeled my ring holder after was turned out of a solid piece of wood and had a bit of a foot on it. When I looked at it, it reminded me of the weed pot that I have been producing for a number of years, except that its rim was significantly narrower to accept a ladies ring and it had what I call a "flame" coming out of the hole that would have held dried flowers in my weed pots. I also thought that a contrasting wood for the "flame" added a bit more character to the piece.

Turn a concave area on the top of the ring holder, then bore a hole so you can bring up the tailstock to support the neck while turning.

Generally, the body of these pieces are finished with an oil, such as Waterlox. The flame, which is made of ebony more often than not, is polished to a high gloss.

Turning the body

The body of the ring holder can be made with any type of straight-grained wood, such as maple, walnut or cherry. If you have scraps of burl around, they also make beautiful ring holders. Regardless of which wood you choose, start with a block about $2^{3}/_{4}$-in.-square by about $3^{1}/_{2}$-to-4-in.-long. I glue the stock to a waste block that fits into my Oneway chuck. If you don't have a chuck, use a small faceplate with a waste block screwed to it and glue the stock to that. The only advantage of the chuck over the faceplate is that I find it to be a bit faster.

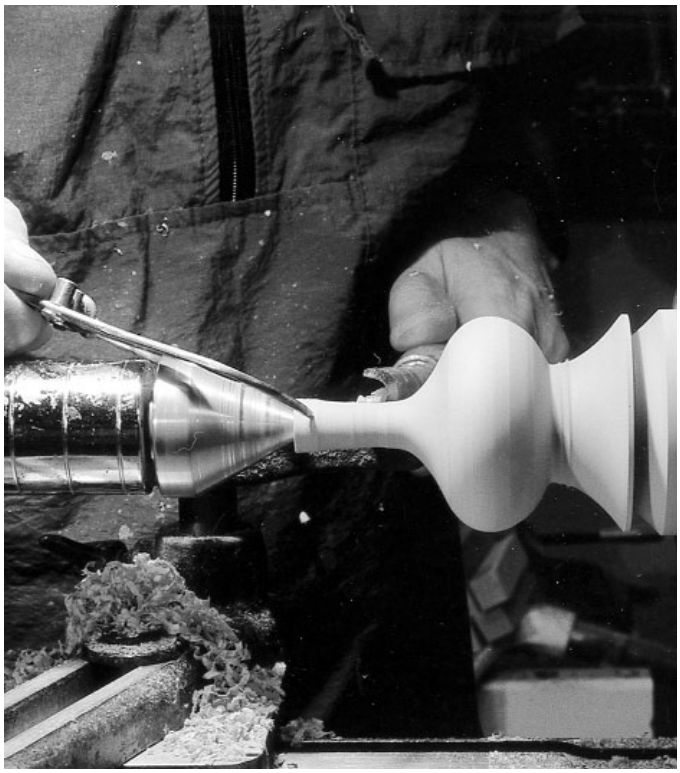


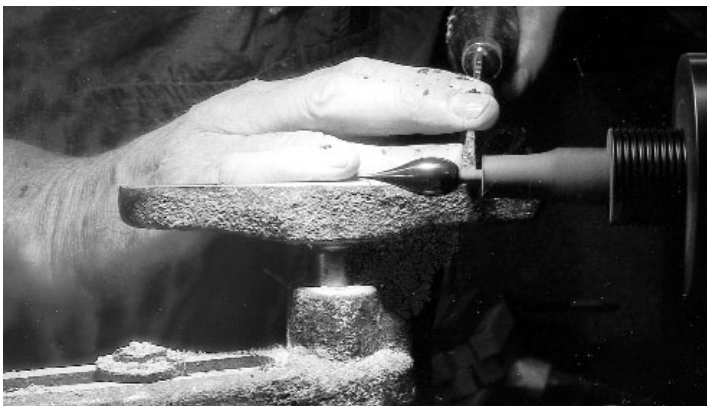
A magazine article inspired the author to modify a weed-pot form to make this ring holder.

I also recommend using scrap hardwoods for the waste block, rather than soft woods like pine or plywood. In my experience, the pine is too soft and the plywood often separates under the stress of turning.

Turn the body of the ring holder to a cylinder of about $2\ ^{1}/_{2}$-in.-diameter and then true up what will be the top of the ring holder. Next, turn a small concave section in the top of the ring holder, as shown at left, and drill a small hole (about $^{3}/_{16}$-in.) about 2-in.-deep into the ring holder. Remove the drill chuck and replace it with your live center to support the neck of the ring holder while turning. I generally switch to a $^{1}/_{2}$-in. spindle gouge at this point, but a $^{3}/_{8}$-in. spindle gouge would work fine. Refine the shape, taking light cuts. The widest point of the neck of the ring holder should be about $^{1}/_{2}$-in. Don't make the taper of the neck too narrow. Remember that you have drilled a $^{3}/_{16}$-in. hole through it. The bases that I turn are rather "squat" and have no feet. I just prefer them that way. Refine the base until you have a tenon with a diamer of about 1-in., and then reduce the lathe speed and sand to a minimum of 400 grit.

Once you sanded the piece to your





The author uses calipers to size the neck, above, so that a ring will fit over it, but not be so narrow that he cuts into the hole bored in the center. To finish the bottom, he uses the drill bit as a drive center, top right. The flame finial is turned separately and fit with a tenon to slip into the hole in the center of the main body. Photos by author.

satisfaction, part the piece from the lathe, but leave a tenon about $^1/_4$-in.-long for mounting the piece when you finish the bottom. To rechuck the piece, I take the drill chuck and place it and the drill bit I used previously in the lathe headstock. Now carefully slide the ring holder on to the drill bit and twist it until it engages the wood of the ring holder. Make sure that very little drill bit is showing to minimize vibration and whipping. I also recommend slowing the lathe down at this point. Carefully bring up the revolving tail center to support the bottom of the ring holder and turn away the tenon you left previously, leaving a recess in the bottom so that it will sit flat. Even though the $^1/_4$-in. tenon also gets turned off, it allows the tail center to engage and support the wood, eliminating the dimple that would be caused by the center. An alternative to this method of finishing the bottom would be to part the piece off the lathe and sand it flat. The down side of this is that all of your turning buddies will make fun of you for sanding it flat.

The Flame

I cut $^5/_8$x $^5/_8$-in. flame stock of various lengths, depending upon what is laying around the shop. The flame stock is held in my chuck and turned to a cylinder using my roughing out gouge. As with the body of the ring holder, if you don't have a chuck, use a waste block with a $^1/_2$-in. hole drilled in it, then turn a $^1/_2$-in. tenon on the flame stock and glue it into the waste block. The flame is turned to a finished diameter of about $^1/_2$-in. and tapers to a point. I use my vernier calipers inside the neck of the ring holder to determine the diameter of the finished tenon and use a parting tool to size the tenon and to part it off. After sanding and polishing, it is then glued in place with a little thick CA glue or yellow glue. That pretty much completes the ring holder. There is certainly some room here for variation. I have a ring holder in mind that is modeled after an old oil can.

The whole project easily can be completed in an evening and should justify to your spouse some of the excess time you spend in the shop.

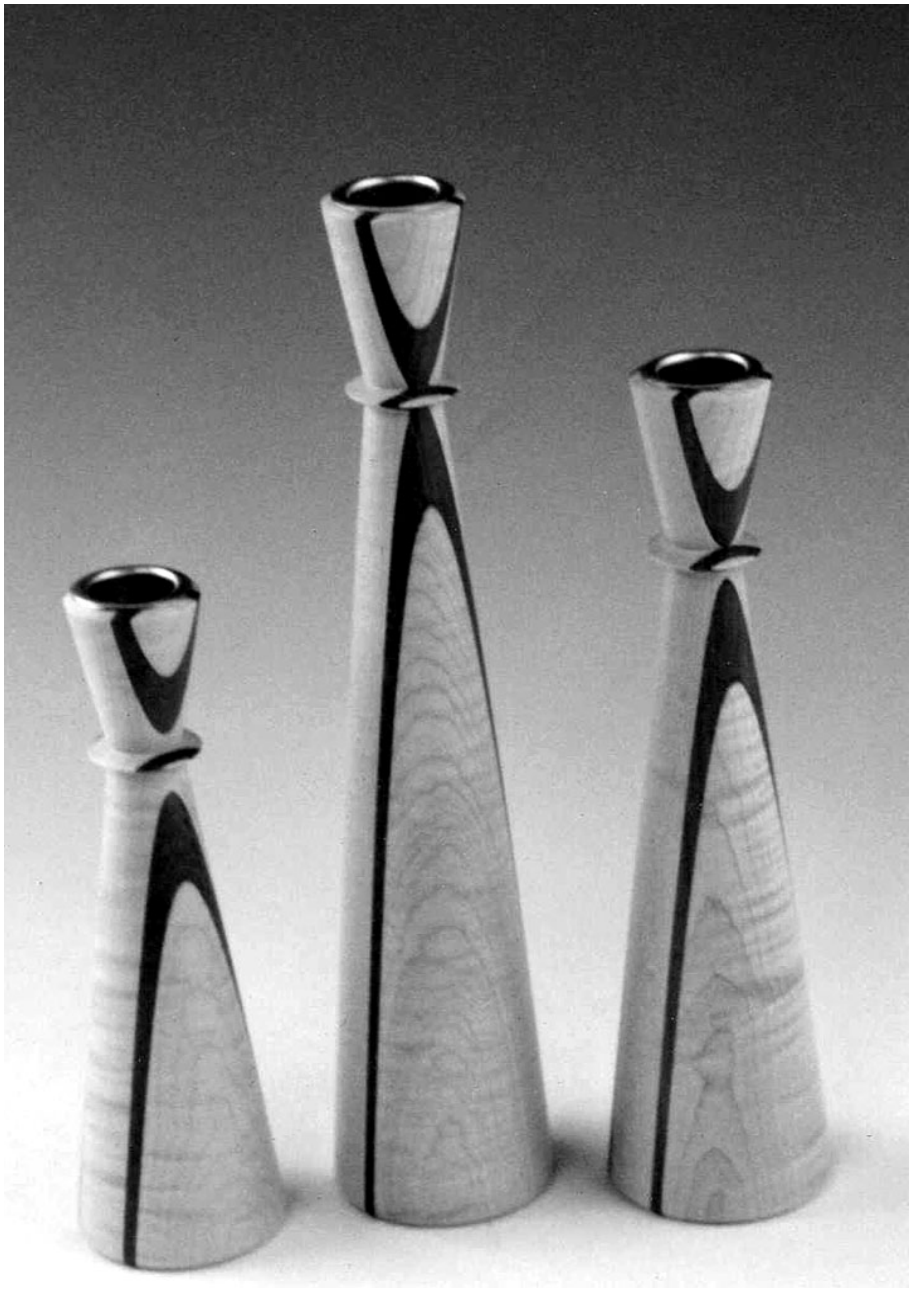
Bob Rosand is a professional turner and teacher in Bloomsburg, PA, and a member of the AAW Board of Directors.

THE LAMINATED CANDLESTICK

Details make the difference in design

ALAN LELAND

"My first contact with woodturning was at a Windsor chair workshop taught by Curtis Buchanan. A short time later my wife noticed an announcement for the Triangle Woodturners and prodded me to attend a meeting. From then on I was hooked on turning. There is nothing to compare to being with a diverse group of people who share a passion for turning. The willingness to share ideas and skill astounds me." -- Alan Leland



I developed this laminated candlestick design while exploring pieces that would set my work apart from that of other woodturners at craft shows.

I was inspired by Rude Osolnik's candlesticks, but wanted to put my own spin on the design. It occurred to me that I could break up the middle of the candlestick with a simple bead. I turned a few dozen candlesticks out of solid maple, walnut and red oak but grew tired of the plainness of the solid wood, and so I began to laminate various woods together. One of my early attempts was to use three layers of $^{3}/_{4}$-in. maple with two layers of $^{1}/_{4}$-in. purpleheart sandwiched in between. This looked okay, but I felt that the design could use a little tweaking. When I purchased some $^{1}/_{8}$-in. purpleheart, I combined it with some figured maple that I had lying around and wow! The result was much better than I had envisioned. I have since used this pattern in sets of three candlesticks of varying heights and also a table lamp.

I start by selecting an interesting maple board which I plane to a $^{3}/_{4}$-in. thickness and rip to $2^{1}/_{2}$-in. in width. I then rip the purpleheart (which I purchase in $^{1}/_{8}$X3X24-in. blanks) to the same width. I dry fit the pieces, alternating maple and purpleheart, to ensure that the most interesting maple figure is facing the outside of the candlestick. When using quilted or tiger maple, I try to line up the quilts in all three pieces of maple. When I glue up the blanks I make sure that the two outside pieces are glued with the cup facing in (see figure #1). The cup is in the opposite direction of the growth rings.

The next step is to glue up the blank with polyurethane glue. I have found that polyurethane glue does not leave a ridge at the glue joint as

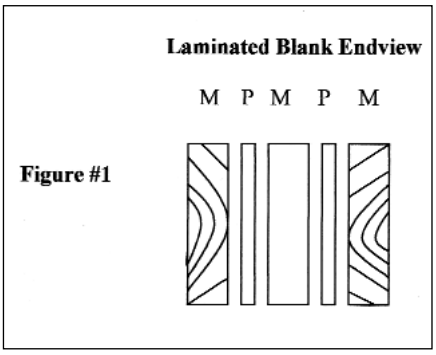


Figure #1

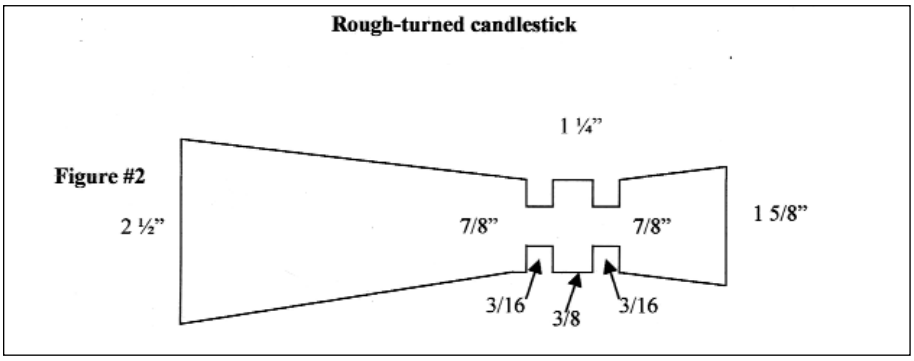


Figure #2

the wood expands and contracts, making for a smoother finished product. I dampen one side of the glue joint with a damp sponge. On the other side I spread out the polyurethane glue with a piece of cardboard or wood scrap. I clamp the parts and then set them aside for at least two to five hours. I generally let them sit overnight.

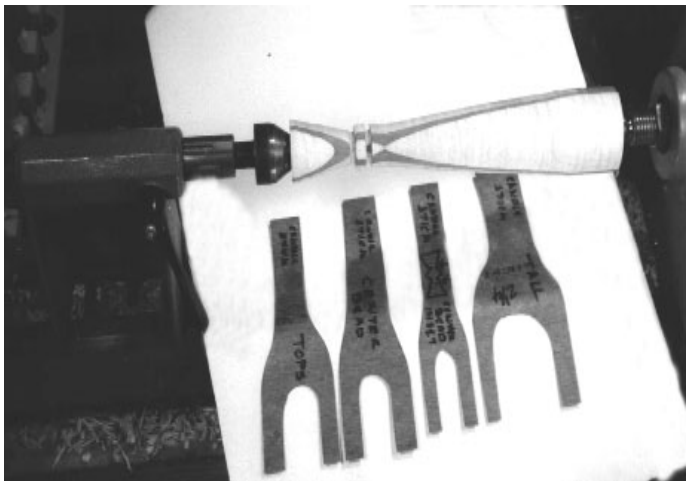
While the glue is setting, I make my gauges. Using scrap laminate pieces cut in the shape of a sling shot, I make the following gauges: top $1^{1}/_{2}$-in., bottom $2^{1}/_{4}$-in., center bead $1^{1}/_{4}$-in., and center bead inset $^{7}/_{8}$-in. The gauges are used as a rough guide, so the final dimensions are not critical.

When the glue has dried, I remove the clamps and take the blanks to the bandsaw. With the table set to 45°, I rip the corners for easier turning. The ends are then squared and the blanks are cut to length. You may want to cut the blanks a little longer than the finished height to compensate for the final trim cut on the lathe. I have found the following heights to be aesthetically pleasing: $7\ ^{1}/_{2}$–to-8-in., 10-to-$10^{1}/_{2}$-in. and 12-in.. When I make a set of three candlesticks, I set the height as I turn them so that the tops of the two smaller candlesticks stop at the center bead of the next tallest candlestick.

I use a center finding jig to mark the centers of both the top and bottom of the blanks. I mount a $^{7}/_{8}$-in. Forstner bit in the drill press and drill a $^{3}/_{4}$-to-1-in. deep hole in the top, being careful to center the hole between the layers of purpleheart. I then drill the hole in the bottom for the lead shot. In the past I have done this after I finished the candlestick. The lead shot hole is drilled to the full depth allowed by the Forstner

Materials List

- **(2) $^{1}/_{8}$ x 3 x 24-in. purpleheart**
- **(3) $^{3}/_{4}$ x 3 x 24-in. maple (highly figured)**
- **Polyurethane glue (Excel One, Gorilla Glue)**
- **$^{7}/_{8}$-in. Forstner bit or equivalent**
- **1 brass candle insert**
- **#9 chilled lead shot (available at some gun shops)**
- **Thick C/A glue**
- **Beeswax, Carnauba wax, or other finish**
- **Spindle gouge, scraper, skew, parting tool**
- **Laminate or other thin material for gauges**
- **$^{1}/_{8}$ x $^{7}/_{8}$-in. plug for candlestick bottom lead shot hole**



The author uses a series of template gauges, shown above left, to accurately duplicate the diameters of the laminated candlestick. At right, is the setup for boring the hole in the base before filling with lead shot for stability.

bit or the drill press.

I mount the blank on the lathe using a Steb center spur bit in the headstock and a revolving cone center in the tailstock. The gauges are laid out nearby in top to bottom order. I turn the blank at slow speed to a cone shape, keeping the diameter of the blank greater than $2^1/_4$-in. at the bottom and greater than $1^1/_2$-in. at the top. I use a $1^1/_2$-in. spindle roughing gouge for this step. This gouge was the first turning tool that I purchased and I use it for everything from pens to chair legs. Use your gauges often for quick sizing checks. Once the rough cone shape is achieved, stop the lathe and measure down from the top 2–to-$2^1/_4$-in. to mark the area for the center bead.

I use a $^3/_{16}$-in. parting tool to cut the rough depth for the bead. I cut down the width of the parting tool on both sides of the mark to just shy of the depth of the gauge. This leaves a cut twice the width of the parting tool. Using the center bead inset gauge, I part down on either side of the center cut to just shy of the gauge depth (see figure #2). You can vary the final pattern of the candlestick by changing the depth of these cuts. Do not cut too wide a part, as the candlestick tapers to this inset.

Using a gouge or skew, I taper the top and bottom to the inset. As these are roughing cuts, I leave a little extra thickness at the top and bottom for the final finishing cuts. It is important to leave ample wood at the top to minimize the risk of splitting when the brass candle insert is put in.. I stop the lathe and view the pattern as it emerges. It may spark some ideas for adjusting the sizes and angles to change the pattern for future candlesticks. Once the candlestick is roughed out, it is time to cut the bead. I start by drawing a line through the center of the part left for the bead. I use a $^3/_8$-in. spindle gouge for this procedure. For control I wrap my index finger around the tool rest stud. I cut the bead by sneaking up on it, taking a little bit of material with each cut. The goal is to have the angle of the bead the same on both sides. The lines of the top and bottom taper should appear to converge directly under the apex of the bead.

Helpful hint for tapers

When cutting a taper, set your tool rest at the desired slope of the taper. This way you can use it as a guide. To check the taper for variations, stop the lathe, place a straight edge on the candlestick, and look for bumps or voids.

The next step is to make the final cut. Brave souls can go ahead and use the skew for this. I generally use a $^1/_2$-in. square end scraper, which evens out the surface for sanding.

After I complete the finished cuts I ease the top and bottom edges with a gouge, which gives the appearance that the candlestick is floating on the table. I leave enough flat area on the top for the brass insert. (Measure the outside diameter of the insert and mark the top edge of the candlestick just shy of this measurement.) The candlestick is now ready for sanding.

I start with 100-grit and go on up to 1500-grit. I try not to sand the bead until I get up to 180-grit, so as not to round it over. At around 180- grit I stop the lathe occasionally and sand with the grain. There is nothing worse than looking at a nicely turned piece and spotting a sanding scratch. With the last couple of grits I sand the outside edge of the bead so that it is not razor sharp.

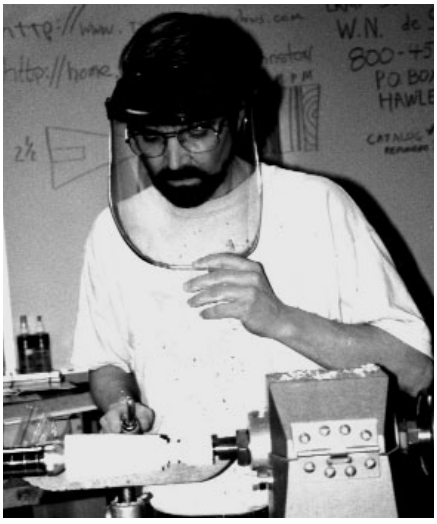
I use Hut wax, available from many turning supply houses, for my finish. Starting with the brown stick I apply it and buff it in. I then apply the white high gloss stick and buff it in. I follow this with a good quality carnauba or beeswax and carnauba combination wax. I vary between using a french polishing cloth and a good cheesecloth to buff the wax. It is important to hold the cloth loosely in your hand in case it gets caught, as it is better to have the cloth leave your hand than to pull your fingers into the lathe.

Now is the time to fill the bottom hole with lead shot.

Using a small paper cup or yogurt container, I pour some shot into the hole. I then pour in some thickset glue, add a little more shot and then more glue, leaving enough room for the plug. I cut the plug from purpleheart that was turned to the diameter of the hole, and then glue the plug in place. Once it dries I sand it with a 2-in pad sander attached to a Sioux right angle drill, being careful not to sand the edge of the base. I am careful to wash my hands after handling the lead shot, as it contains cyanide.

The final touch is to add the brass candle insert. Be careful at this stage because the insert may split the candle top. I sometimes file off the knobs on the insert to ensure that the fit is not too tight.

Enjoy yourself while making these candlesticks and be sure to experiment with the design. It is those subtle changes that make all the difference.



Alan Leland is a past vice president of The Triangle Woodturners of North Carolina and owner of Sliding Dovetail Woodworks of Durham, NC. He was a demonstrator at the Charlotte AAW Symposium.

REASON FOR GOING

Observing Symposium Attendees in Charlotte

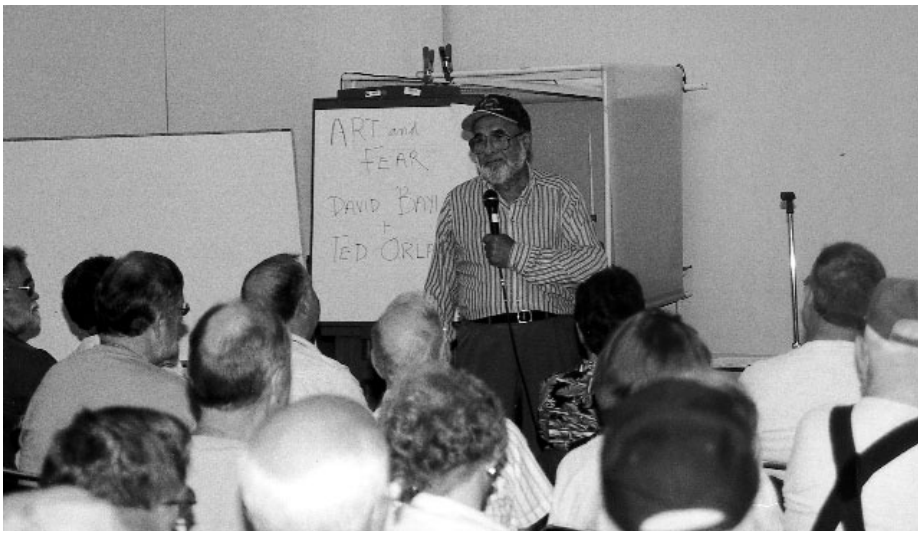
ALAN LACER

AT A WOODTURNING CONFERENCE A few years ago an individual who frequently put on woodturning courses commented to me: "People don't really learn anything in coming to these conferences."

After the same conference Del Stubbs — woodturner extraordinaire — who attended as a participant and not as a demonstrator, commented: "Now I really know why you attend these conferences." By the way, Del had taken about 20 pages of notes from the sessions he attended.

So why do people come, and why do so many keep coming back year after year?

This year I attended the AAW Symposium in Charlotte with no other duties than to write about the conference. I made it my goal to focus on the reasons why people come to these events. Here are some of the reasons mentioned by a broad spectrum of woodturning enthusiasts, amateur and pro alike, with whom I talked.



Frank Sudol made the symposium for some with his ideas on how to "Start Your Creative Engine." Photos Alan Lacer and Dick Burrows.

First, there is the obvious — over 160 sessions by 58 demonstrators on about any aspect of woodturning and related areas. With 16 simultaneous sessions it was tough to pick which one to see — seems there were always thee or four that really tripped my hammer. What seemed to appeal to most attendees was the wide diversity of sessions in each rotation: there was always something for the person new to turning, but also valuable topics for those further along, such as selling to galleries, use of color, photography, surface treatments and developing ideas. Even with over 1000 attendees, the rooms were large and the options many, so that there was never a sense of overcrowding.

One session that was particularly moving was "Start Your Creative Engine" with Frank Sudol of Canada. Many of you know Frank as a storyteller and comedian, but this session was all business and quite serious. He focused on overcoming the particular

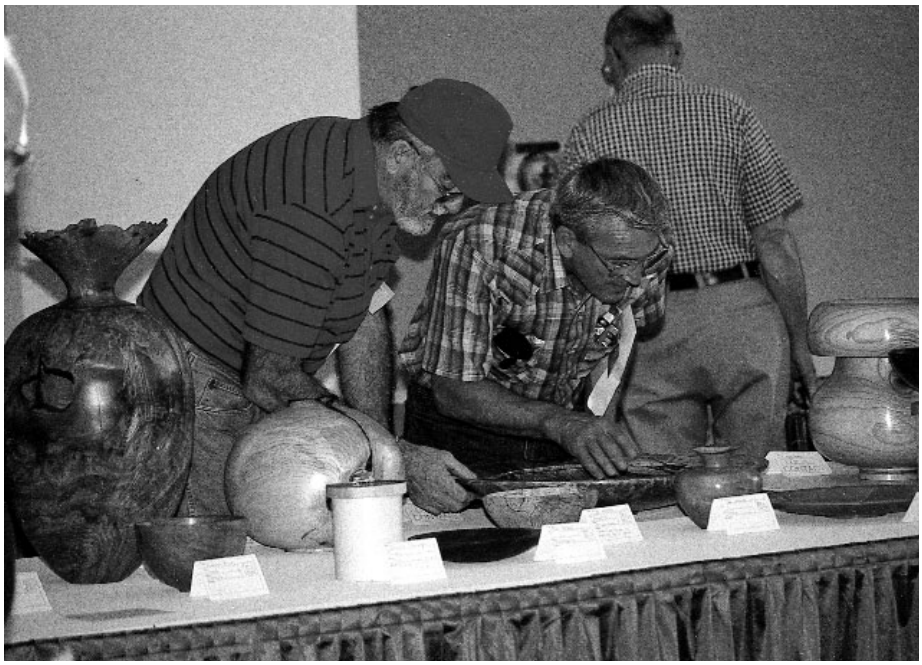
Allan Batty shared a lifetime of turning experience, from production techniques to ideas for turning exquisite little miniatures like the lidded box of synthetic ivory, at right.

"short circuits" that block you from creating your own work. Such things as copying the work of others (you always give away some of yourself when you copy someone else's work), comparing your work to others (usually someone better and you always lose), obeying too many rules of design (never have a large base on a bowl, always go thin on the walls and the like), seeking approval from others (especially don't let judges rattle you — all shows are about what that particular set of judges liked, not that your work is necessarily weak), and a fear that you don't have "talent" or the magic (talent is the least thing you need to do good work).

That session with Frank was one of the most moving sessions I have ever attended — and the tears and nods around the room told the story. People coming up afterwards to shake his hand, to thank him or comment, bordered on the profound. What made this session so powerful was that it all came from the heart — not scripted, not overly organized, often spontaneous, and never to be repeated exactly the same way ever again. I think that one session made the conference for many in the room.

The trade show at this year's symposium was one of the largest such events ever, offering everything from pro-level lathes to finishing supplies.

What really struck me this time about the sessions — and mentioned often by others — was watching someone so freely give information that maybe took months, years or a lifetime of turning to develop or understand. Allan Batty of England has been in the trade for 45 years and was a well-spring of information in his six sessions — most of the information is not in the books or videos, and you have a chance to ask him questions. Johannes Michelsen demonstrated his wooden hats and discussed his early problems and the ways he solved them. Even though he draws his income from those objects, he still generously shares the techniques for making them!



This year's Instant Gallery, the largest ever, offers many opportunities to see and study almost every type of turning imaginable.

And folks attended the sessions with different expectations. Some said they came looking for information, some said it was to watch a great turner work, and some said it was to hear the stories of a lifetime at the lathe.

I know for a fact that many come for the woodturning wares. No other turning conference approaches the scale of the trade show at an AAW conference. This year there were 42 different vendors covering 70 booths and 5 tables of tools, machines, wood, finishes, motors and speed con-

trollers, and the like. A time to see new machines (such as the heavy weight Jet lathe — or is it a Powermatic?), new tools and steels, the latest chucks (Oneway's "Talon") — a great opportunity for the sellers and buyers alike. Folks liked the fact that they could see products in action (maybe even use one), ask questions and even talk directly to the designer or maker — hard to do with just a catalogue.

More than a few people responded that they came for the Instant Gallery. This year's spontaneous exhibition featured about 1030 pieces brought by those attending the conference. I must say it gets better and better every year. Most shows have been "pre-selected" for your viewing — not this one. The work of beginner and pro may sit side-by-side and you determine what you find interesting or pleasing. One conference goer estimated he spent about five hours of the conference in the gallery just enjoying the work. And as many folks as could cram into the space, gathered to hear the Instant Gallery Critique, a perennially popular event conducted this year by David Ellsworth and Stoney Lamar. *(A report on the Instant Gallery Critique begins on Page 10.)*

One side note about the Instant Gallery is worth mentioning. A participant mentioned it reminded them of diving board experience: to spring high above the water, the board first takes you down a ways before it propels you skyward — so the Instant Gallery at first made them feel like selling their lathe and tools, then inspired them to go back to improve their work.

What has become an annual event, is turning into a real mind blower: the Chapter Challenge Collaborative exhibit. With about 150 AAW chapters in the US and Canada to tap from, this event is drawing more and hotter competition each year. Working within size and weight restrictions, there seem to be no limits to the imagination and ingenuity of the clubs — some of the best collaborative efforts in the field today. This year there were 25 entries, with the Glendale, CA, Woodturners Guild voted by conference goers as the "best" — but all expressed something of value, whether extraordinary turning or design, feats of engineering, wit and playfulness, or group effort. Several clubs expressed the unexpected benefits of bringing their clubs together and increasing participation.

Each symposium draws the pioneers of the field like Rude Osolnik, shown above, one of the most influential teachers and craftsmen working today.

There is usually at least one formal exhibition occurring in the area during the conference. This year it was the Mason Collection at the Mint Gallery, only a few blocks from the conference. Some 120 works of turning donated to the permanent collection of the museum by Arthur and Jane Mason were on display. Many conference goers said they found this particularly interesting as it gave a snapshot of the turning field over the last twenty years or so.

A recurring theme for why people came simply had a lot to do with the other people in attendance. Just to be around others with a like interest, see old friends, make new contacts, talk turning, walk up to a David Ellsworth, John Jordan, Betty Scarpino, Dale Nish, Rude Osolnik, Allan Batty and the like and ask a question — how often do you get these opportunities?

For you who want to know, I should share a few more vital statistics from this year's conference. There were 1132 attendees (participants, demonstrators, AAW Board and employees), the banquet had 1400 in attendance, and the banquet and silent auction generated $41, 750 for educational scholarships.

Hope to see you in St. Paul July 6 to 8 next year.

Alan Lacer is a turner, teacher and writer in Troy, WI, and a contributing editor of American Woodturner. *He has attended 13 of the 14 AAW Symposiums.*

A Simple Bracelet

A Beginner's Project For The Holidays

DAVE SHEPPARD

When Georgia turner Willard Baxter looked over his back issues of *American Woodturner* and found no plans for a gavel, he promptly submitted instructions for turning such an item. (See *American Woodturner*, Vol 14, Issue 4, page 34). Similarly, I looked over the back issues, and found only one article on turning bracelets written about 10 years ago by the late Denver Ulery. I have been making inlaid bracelets since taking up woodturning in my retirement years, so I decided to submit these plans.

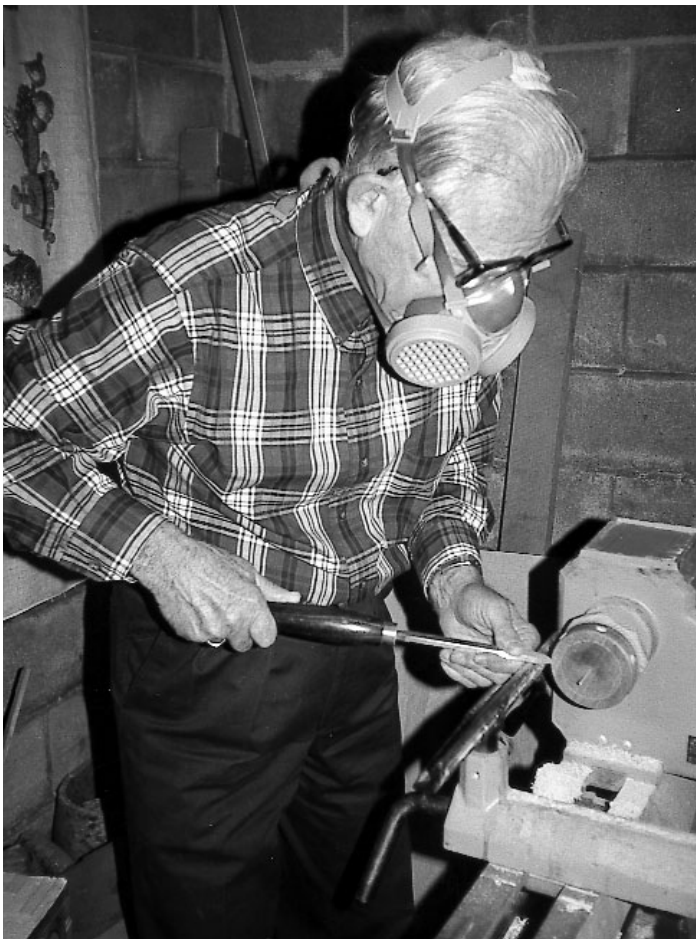
Denver Ulery's design consists of cutting out eight rhombohedra, gluing them together to form a ring, mounting the resulting piece on the lathe, then turning smooth the exterior and interior surfaces. Instead I turn a single piece and place several inlays around it.

A bracelet for an average size woman has an outer diameter of about 3-in. and an opening of about 2 $^{1}/_{2}$-in. These dimensions can be varied, of course, if you plan to custom fit the bracelet to a particular person.

I start with a square of wood, usually walnut, $3^{1}/_{4}$-in. square and $^{3}/_{4}$-in. thick. This is glued to a similar waste block, usually pine. I use Franklin Titebond wood glue. While some turners say it is not necessary to saw off the corners, I do so because it just seems to make the turning easier and more vibration free. I drill a small hole through the center and glue in a round toothpick, which I use later to align the bracelet on my drill press when I bore holes to accept the inlays. I attach the bracelet stock/waste block assembly to my 3-in faceplate, mount it on my lathe, and turn the workpiece and about $^{1}/_{4}$in. of the waste block to a diameter of $3^{1}/_{8}$-in.

Next, I mark the mid-line around the outside surface so I can lay out the inlay locations.

The number of inlays to put in your bracelet is up to you. For myself, I thought that any number less than four was too few and that eight would be a bit much. So I chose to mount six inlays in my bracelets. For a circle whose diameter is 3-in., six points on its circumference are about $1^{9}/_{16}$-in apart. With small dividers I marked off those six holes. As I did, I had to vary the spacings somewhat until they were very nearly exact. At this point, I removed the faceplate with the waste block and work piece from my lathe.

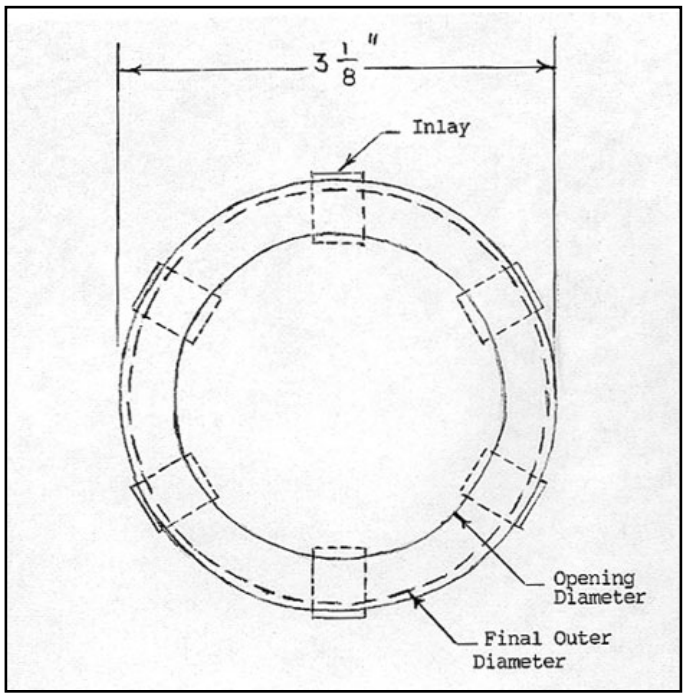


Author David Sheppard turns a bracelet in his home shop.

To my eye, inlays with about a $^{3}/_{8}$-in. diameter seemed right for a bracelet this size. I had some ash stock on hand, so I mounted a slender piece of it on my lathe and spindle turned it to a diameter of $^{3}/_{8}$-in. Since I planned to make the bracelet about $^{1}/_{4}$-in.-to-$^{5}/_{16}$-in. thick between the outer and inner surfaces, I need to cut six pieces of the ash $^{7}/_{16}$-in. or a smidgen longer.

Next, I placed my faceplate with the waste block and work piece assembly still attached in a small vice on my drill press table. The wood is rotated until a hole mark seems to be at the top. I place a $^{3}/_{8}$-in. Forstner bit in the drill press, move the work back a small distance and depress the Forstner bit, moving it down in front of my work. If the bit's point moves down in line with the toothpick, I am confident that the hole drilled will be vertical and pass through the bracelet center, as shown on the next page. After aligning everything, I raise the Forstner bit, move the work forward, and drill a hole $^{7}/_{16}$-in. deep down through the marking. Then I immediately glue an inlay piece into the hole and proceed in this fashion all around the bracelet.

When the glue is dry, I remount



The author's walnut bracelet is simple to turn, but can be decorated with a variety of inlays to create a perfect gift. Photo and drawing by the author.

the faceplate with the waste block and work piece back on my lathe. With a spindle gouge I turn the outer surface down to the desired final diameter. In so doing, I make the inlays flush with the outer surface. The opening is now cut to its final diameter, but not quite all the way through the workpiece. The edges on one side of the bracelet can now be rounded off. In fact the outer surface and the surface of the opening you have already cut can be sanded.

Simple drill press set-up is used to bore the bracelet for inlays.

I now use my $1/16$-in. parting tool to cut into the waste block where it joins with the work piece. I cut down until I'm slightly beyond the edge of the opening. Then I come around and cut with my parting tool just inside the opening. As soon as I reach the cut mentioned above, I turn off my lathe. When the work piece is cut off in this fashion it is hanging on the parting tool, with no danger of its being dropped.

Next, the bracelet is mounted on a Nova chuck in expansion mode with the unfinished side toward the tailstock. A word of caution is in order here. Do not put a lot of "oomph" into expanding the chuck's jaws. Use just enough force so that the jaws hold the work firmly. If you put a lot of "oomph" into expanding the jaws, in all probability you will crack the bracelet. I know. I have done it! It is now an easy job to smooth off this side of the bracelet, round over the edges, and sand the rest of it.

Again, whatever you want to use to finish the bracelet is up to you. I usually apply a couple of coats of Behlen's salad bowl finish, followed by a coat of paste wax.

The possibilities of varying the design are just about limitless. I have used Honduras mahogany, birch and cherry inlays; and used the Honduras mahogany and cherry for the bracelet body with the walnut and ash as inlay pieces. Other light woods, like holly, apple and dogwood, would also be good candidates. As you can see in the picture above, sometimes, while the bracelet is still glued to the waste block I use a $1/2$-in. Forstner bit to notch one side of the bracelet to make the edge more interesting.

So, happy turning, make chips and brighten someone's day by making her a bracelet she will love!

David W. Sheppard is a retired physics professor and turner in Buckhannon, WV.

World of Wood Art

David Ellsworth views Our Past, and our Dreams

David Ellsworth delivered this address earlier this year during one of the most significant weeks in the world of wood art: the Collectors of Wood Art (CWA) meeting and the inaugural exhibit of the Jane and Arthur Mason Collection at the Mint Museum of Craft + Design in Charlotte, N.C. The essay offers a valuable and stimulating survey of turning and other wood art by one of the pioneers in the field. Because of its significance, we are printing it in its entirety. A report on the CWA is on Page 51.

Good morning, and welcome! This is the fourth gathering of the Collectors of Wood Art that began with another remarkable event that was conceived and finely crafted by Robyn and John Horn at their home in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1997. It occurred to me that, not unlike the beginnings of the American Association of Woodturners; "When you think you have a good idea, you try to create a 'comfort zone' by surrounding yourself with people who also think you have a good idea. And in order to do this, you must first find out who those people really are."

Well, this is a unique group, because in attendance today are representatives of virtually all the styles and types of individuals who make up the "World of Wood Art" as we know it today. In effect, they are first the Makers, namely the artists and craftspersons whose works have provided the inspiration for these events. Then we have the Disseminators, meaning the gallery owners, museum curators, critics, writers and editors. And we have the Acquisitioners, which, of course, are the buyers and collectors. Now I only make a distinction between a 'buyer' and a 'collector', because it's common knowledge among us Makers that a 'collector' becomes a 'collector' only after the acquisition of their 2nd work of turned wood art. Best yet, we have a distinguished group of invited guests who, as personal friends of Jane and Arthur Mason, might even be called the Visionaries of our group. You see, they have come here - whether they knew it or not - to see what all this excitement is about, and to become so inspired that they might be encouraged to join the previous category … first as buyers, and possibly by the end of the weekend, even as collectors.

Now, if any of you might question the impact of events like these, I can only reflect on a 'letter to the editor' that I read a few years ago in American Woodworker magazine. A woman wrote in saying, "I gave my husband a birthday present of going to a woodturning weekend…and he never returned!"

So part of my job here today, is to help create that 'comfort zone' by helping us … through my own personal experiences and totally unbiased opinions … to learn a bit more about who we are, and how the field of wood art has evolved up to this point.

First...The MAKERS:

In an effort to help discover who we are, I'd like to begin by looking at the Makers. And to do that, I'd like to go back to what life was like in the early 1970's, when I became a full-time studio woodturner.

Let me say that there was barely a handful of full-time woodturners in the US who were surviving at this craft in the early-70's, and even fewer galleries who were brave enough to handle their work. Most of the turners were scattered around the country, some didn't even know that the others existed, and almost none of them had ever met one another.

Of the turners whose works have had the greatest influence on the field of contemporary turning today, I will begin with James Prestini.

Prestini basically defined the term 'Modern' design in woodturning with his exceptionally beautiful, 'pure forms' (as they were called at the time) that he made from 1933-1953. When I first met him in 1977, he was working in sculpture, had already retired as a professor in the design department at UC Berkeley and hadn't turned a bowl in over 20 years. But he was very much a vitally alert and inspiringly creative individual. He also had a great love for fine wines…so, of course, I was forced to sample his latest acquisition whenever I visited his home in Berkeley.

Next is Rude Osolnik who was teaching woodworking at Berea College in Kentucky by day and turning the rest of the day and most of the night. Rude had a large stash of wood, and along with his one-of-a-kind pieces, he was also one of the greatest production turners of the era. He was also a savvy horse trader, and it was common for me to leave a few of my finished pieces in trade for some of his finer chunks of rosewood. And he would drink just about anything you put in front of him. His great love was moonshine, so, of course, I was forced to sample his latest acquisition whenever I visited his home in Berea.

Ed Moulthrop was a well known architect in Atlanta (that's in Georgia!) before he started developing the techniques to turn his large bowl forms…most of this involved learning how to control the use of polyethylene glycol, plus those harpoon-length hooked tools that tended to want to throw him up and over his homemade lathe. You probably remember that he photographed his kids inside

of the bowls to give them some scale —the bowls that is — and I once asked him if they really liked to play inside of them, or had he actually sent them in there to do his sanding!

Bob Stocksdale was turning bowls in his basement in Berkeley that had a ceiling that was not much taller than himself, and happily blowing dust into his neighbor's yard. In 1978, I made a special trip to his home to introduce myself and when he met me at the door he said, "Come on in and meet my wife, Kay. She's the famous one." We soon went to his basement to look at wood and that's where I watched him turn with the gouge for the first time…which was one of the reasons I went there. I left with a lovely bowl made of Ceylon ebony that cost me only $125, and it was the best lesson I ever paid for. The year before I had seen one of his Lignum Vitae bowls for sale in Frazer's department store in downtown Berkeley that was only $49.95 retail. Unfortunately, I didn't buy it, but I later reminded myself of the phrase that, "The price of art goes up". And that was the second lesson I learned that day.

Stephen Hogbin was scouring junkyards in Canada to find truck axles large enough to turn his laminated sculptural furniture. He'd recently been featured on the cover of the Woodcraft Supply catalog, which was about the best exposure one could get in those days. I didn't realize until I met him in 1980 that he was such a brilliant designer, or that the impact of his work would have such a profound influence on much of the work done today, both here and in Australia. In fact, when he submitted one of his pieces from the "Walking Bowl" series to a show I was jurying, I gave him a call and swept it up before the show even opened.

Melvin Lindquist worked as an engineer for GE in Schenectady, NY, but spent most of his off time trying to figure out what to do with all that rotten wood laying around in the forests of the Northeast before his son, Mark, could sneak it away to make salad bowls with bark inclusions that leaked salad oil … and then astounding everyone by calling them "art" and actually trying to sell them for real money. Most people don't realize that Mel turned spalted wood for twenty-five years on a Shopsmith lathe in a room with no ventilation; or that at 89, he's still turning at their current home in Quincy, Florida; and that he's still trying to keep Mark from telling him what he should and shouldn't do when designing a piece. And what no one knows, is that I once spent a few days working at their home in Henniker, New Hampshire, just after Mark had finished building his new studio. Unfortunately, because I was turning pieces of wet wood, I left a large streak of moisture up the walls and across his freshly painted ceiling above his lathe…which is probably the reason he didn't get out of bed the next morning to say good-by when I left.

David Ellsworth with some of the objects he has created. Photo courtesy of the author.

Mark would of course go on to develop a variety of innovative techniques involving complex and highly controlled surface textures using a chain saw. And he is probably best noted for his extensive design developments through the use of spalted wood, natural-edge burl bowls, totemic sculpture, and most recently, the use of robotics … which basically means that Mel no longer has to hold the bowls while Mark is cutting with the chain saw!

Let me emphasize that this gang of characters were by no means the only turners doing exciting work during this era, but that they were the early innovators who helped re-shape traditional woodturning by bringing it into the Modern Movement of Craft. In fact, by 1982, the primary design elements that make up this movement had already been established. They are: bowls, vessels, hollow forms, spindles, furniture and sculpture … and everything being done today relates in some way to those six primary design elements.

The question is, how did we get from then to now. Part of the answer is the impact of Fine Woodworking magazine, which began in 1975, and was the only national showcase magazine at the time for what was happening in the field of woodworking. Second would be the Rhinebeck, San Francisco and Baltimore craft shows

that were sponsored by the American Craft Enterprises. It was at these shows that turners had a chance to meet artists from all the other media fields, make contacts with gallery owners whom we hoped would display our work, and, of course, try to sell enough work to pay for our trip home. And third would be the Woodturning Symposiums that were organized by Albert and Alan LeCoff, and Palmer Sharpless and held at the George School in Newtown, Pennsylvania, north of Philadelphia. These symposiums were held twice each year from 1976 to 1981. They were the first formal teaching venues held in the country, and they became the stimulus for all the teaching forums that have occurred since.

It was at these symposiums that students had a chance to meet all the big named turners, as well as people who were new to the field, and who would become known over the years not only for their works, but also their teaching skills. And it was also here that we established the, "If you don't want to share your ideas, don't bother to come" philosophy that has become a hallmark of woodturning instruction ever since.

As an outgrowth of these symposiums, Dale Nish, of Provo, Utah, began a series of annual conferences at Brigham Young University that he would steward for twenty years. The combination of these events and his three excellent books on woodturning techniques were instrumental in helping galvanize the entire field. I might also say that in the late '70's, I used to drive the eight hours across the mountains from my cabin in Colorado to get wood from him, which wasn't easy since he was as good a horse trader as Rude, and both were better than me. But Dale has a generous heart. In fact, I would stash a small bottle of whiskey in his kitchen cupboard, just in case I forgot to pick some up when I crossed the state line into Utah. Noreen obviously didn't mind, because it was always there when I returned. Then, when he came to my cabin in 1981 to interview me for his third book, *Master Woodturners*, he brought his own stash: In this case, two six-packs of Coca-Cola and the biggest box of chocolate cream-filled Oreo cookies you ever saw.

The woodturning symposiums organized by Albert and Alan LeCoff and Palmer Sharpless were the stimulus for all the teaching forums since. "And it was also here that we established the, "If you don't want to share your ideas, don't bother to come" philosophy that has become a hallmark of woodturning instruction ever since."

The next step in this legacy of learning was to establish week-long classes at multi-media craft schools like Penland, Haystack, the Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Peters Valley and, of course, Arrowmont. We also organized a series of conferences at Berea College, the College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, BYU in Provo, and again, at Arrowmont in 1985…which is where the American Association of Woodturners was formed. We then have the formation of the Wood Turning Center in 1986, and, finally, a number of private tutoring opportunities that began with Russ Zimmerman's classes at his home in Putney, Vermont, and that now include schools run by John Jordan, Bonnie Klein and myself.

While this has certainly been an ambitious 25 year period, there is something missing from this picture. What's missing is that unlike the media fields of ceramics, glass, jewelry, fiber and wood working, there isn't a single university in the western world that offers an advanced degree program focused specifically on woodturning. And without these programs, our field has been limited in its ability to excel on an equal plane with the other media fields when it comes to understanding the basics of design, aesthetics, problem solving and personal creative development. Another casualty of not having academic support in woodturning has been our almost total neglect of the importance of the history of objects from other cultures, and of other media that would have helped provide a much-needed level of perspective for the development of our work. In fact, all of the vessel shapes being produced today are derived from objects made in ceramics and basketry, some dating back several thousand years. Similarly, woodturners have virtually no access to the history of contemporary woodturning outside of word-of-mouth associations and back issues of our techno-magazines. It's no wonder that so many turners are reduced to cloning themselves, when their primary source of inspiration comes from the color-glossy photographs of objects that were copied from color-glossy photographs of other copied objects!

Thanks to the archives of the Wood Turning Center, much of this historical reference material is available. And thanks to a collaborative effort by the Yale University Art Gallery and the Wood Turning Center, a history of contemporary woodturning is being compiled. Turners do have an insatiable desire to learn, but I think we who are the teachers of woodturning also have a responsibility to provide our students with a broader perspective on what it means to be a complete "student" of our craft.

Question: How do we help our teachers to explore the aesthetic dimensions of their own creative growth so that they, in turn, can pass

this knowledge on to their students? In other words, if we wish to experience the benefits of a field that is artfull, then we need to expand the dimensions of our current learning programs to include art-related topics.

I believe this can be done in the same manner as when we impressed upon our students in the '80's and '90's that the importance of good design was a natural extension of the process of making, rather than something to be feared. It can be done by using the mechanisms of education we already have, namely, our conferences and workshops, and possibly in a collaborative effort between the American Association of Woodturners, the Wood Turning Center and the Collectors of Wood Art. And the results of these efforts could be published in our respective journals. Obviously this will take time to develop and many years to see the results of our efforts.

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Now...The DISSEMINATORS:

The anthropologist, Joseph Campbell, in one of his PBS interviews with Bill Moyers, reflected – and I'm paraphrasing here - that 'artists are the gods of society, for they bring us the ideas that ask us to reach beyond ourselves'. Art is often seen as a reflection of society, both in its grandeur and its ugliness, but it can also project changes upon society. So important is the influence of art on culture, that when we look for clues into the cultures of antiquity, what we value most was their art, architecture, and literature.

Museums, of course, have become the repositories for the objects produced in our culture, and museum curators have become the stewards of these collections. Artists have always relied heavily on having their works included in museum collections, for beyond the hype and the whims of any given period in an artist's career, we all need some foundation of credibility to acknowledge our life's work and to accurately establish its place in history. Placing objects of Craft next to paintings and sculpture within our museums, has always been a curious problem, which was only partially solved with the invention of the term "decorative arts".

Fortunately, as the Modern Movement of Craft gained strength, the traditional academic divisions between art and craft began to thaw. Certainly one reason is that by the early '80's, excellence in both aesthetics and conceptual development of Craft had reached such a high level that curators could no longer deny that serious artistic statements were being made. A second reason for this re-defining of old standards, in my opinion, may have been that there just wasn't much happening in painting and sculpture over the past few decades that was worth getting excited about. Craft, on the other hand, established itself with both vibrancy and excitement, and it was readily accessible to the general public. And third, as we can see from the effort Mark Leach has invested here at the Mint Museum, we have a new breed of museum curator; namely, people who have become tired of defending the dusty old dungeons of academic traditions and more interested in investing time, space and money into the artwork of the 'here' and 'now'.

Our museum curators have always relied on the progressive efforts of artists, and I especially recall a lecture given by Tom Buechner of the Corning Museum of Glass in 1987, when he said that the most valuable thing that artists can do for themselves is to continue to do good work.

The role of the gallery has, of course, been critical to the survival of the arts, because the galleries are not only the distributors of artwork, they also function as the eyes and ears to museum curators. Basically, galleries and artists are in the same business, each depending on the reputation and the credibility of the other in an effort to succeed. But being in the gallery business is a tough row to hoe. It's extremely competitive, the costs of advertising and overhead are high, and sales are dependent primarily on the public's discretionary income that is, in turn, a reflection of the health of our economy.

Another one of the great unknowns in marketing artwork, comes through the Internet. Web pages seem to be an excellent way of exposing one's work to the marketplace, especially for those who don't yet have gallery representation. And there are now on-line galleries, some of which handle a selected stable of artists, and some that will accept everything from sculpture to straw dolls. Marketing through the Internet is an exciting concept, including the potential for secondary market sales. But at the moment, it's still too early to know

what this potential really is. What we do know is that direct sales on the Internet are also a direct threat to the survival of the galleries. And if accurate records of these sales are not kept, as will likely be the case, the history and provenance of these objects will be lost. No gallery wants to compete with their own artists who are making direct sales, so it seems prudent for artists and galleries to use the Internet as a collaborative tool by linking their efforts through their respective web sites. Also, galleries now have the capability to post entire exhibitions on the Net. So, in the future, we can only hope that clients will bother to visit the galleries to experience the works first hand before they commit to a purchase.

Critics have at times been considered a barometer of the arts, but I fear that they have never succeeded in addressing the "language of Craft" from their academic foundations in "artspeak". Moreover, most magazines today don't publish art criticism, simply because no one seems to want to take the time to translate it. What I do encourage are well-written reviews of exhibitions. In this way, more people in the field will become exposed to the works being shown, plus we could add to an expanded language base that would be both comprehensive and directly applicable to our roots of the crafted arts.

And finally, the ACQUISITIONERS:

While everyone has their own interpretation of the term "beauty", I'm sure we all know the excitement of acquiring and living with objects whose beauty so enriches our lives. The passion we have seen by the buyers and collectors of turned wood objects over the past quarter-century is clearly a direct reflection of the passion we Makers have in producing these objects.

Equally important is what these collectors have done with the works in their collections. Not only have collectors supported artist's visions through their acquisitions, they have also contributed immensely to the education of the general public by giving the field of woodturning the level of credibility that it so richly deserves as a legitimate art form. This has been accomplished by donating objects for induction into the permanent collections of museums, plus loaning and donating entire portions of their collections to museums for public exhibitions. Equally important, collectors have provided the means for publishing books that document the scope of their collections, which subsequently preserves their place in the history of the Modern Movement of Craft. For example: Beginning with Edward Jacobson's, "The Art of Turned Wood Bowls" in 1985, major museums throughout the country have now exhibited the collections of Dr. Irving Lipton, Dorothy and George Saxe, Ruth and David Waterbury, Anita and Ron Wornick, Robyn and John Horn, Robert Bohlen, and, as we see here today, Jane and Arthur Mason.

There are, of course, certain responsibilities that every buyer assumes. Once you've made that 2nd purchase, you need to hire a secretary. The reason for this is that when you become known as a 'collector', you will soon become inundated with a mountain of mail from every gallery and woodturner in the Western World who wishes to include their "latest and greatest" as part of your growing collection. Upon receiving your first mailing, it would also be a good idea to hire an architect and a lighting engineer to begin re-designing the interior of your house so that you can properly display your acquisitions. Whatever you do, be sure to include a light table, a slide library and plenty of file cabinets, because most artists keep lousy records and you'll soon find that you are in charge of keeping their records as well as your own. Another good plan is to commandeer one of your kid's bedrooms as your new 'collector's office'. They don't really need it, and they can always double up. Besides, they're all going to leave someday anyway, and when they do come back … and they always do come back … you will already have rehired the architect and finished your new home that now has enough room to accommodate your growing collection, and your grandchildren.

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Now I speak from some experience, since Wendy and I have acquired nearly 200 objects of craft and art over the last 20 years. We don't actually call ourselves Collectors with a capitol 'C', because we don't have the capital to support the careers of all the talented people we know. But we do love being surrounded with the energies of all these people and, being Makers ourselves, we realize that supporting someone else's vision is another way of contributing to our own. My point is that collecting is one of the few legal addictions we have today, and I've always felt it was important not to miss out on the opportunity to support a good habit.

Of course, everyone acquires objects for different reasons. In fact, a

number of people have come to me over the years and said they wanted to become collectors, but didn't know where to begin. I suggested that this was an important decision, and that they might start by looking in some of the boxes I just happened to have in the boot of my car!

Seriously, my advice is to take your time and do your research. Look at as much work as you can. Talk with other collectors, gallery owners and turners to find out what excites them. Start out slow to give yourself time to adjust to this excitement, and to grow as you learn from the objects you acquire … and grow you will. Don't freak out if an artist changes their style or moves in a new direction, it's a natural part of the creative process to explore new ideas in order to move forward. Support this growth, even if it means waiting for that 'special' piece that will surely come once this new direction has had time to take a good look at itself. Don't be surprised if you find yourself saying, "I just don't know why I'm drawn to this piece." Well, as we all know: When something stirs from within, you don't need to understand it to develop a long-term relationship. And most importantly, give yourself the time to learn to trust your own instincts! Recall that acquiring artwork, not unlike the process of making it, is part of a long and wonderful journey. You will never be disappointed, and you are guaranteed to bring many wonderful people into your life.

Another interesting aspect about acquiring work is that galleries and collectors always seem to want the pieces that are 'fresh' and 'hot', or 'never before seen'. I've been told this is part of the 'game' of collecting … whatever that means. Don't forget that every object that we make is 'fresh' and 'hot' when it is being made. In fact, every object is always made at the peak of our abilities. So you might consider looking for older pieces, especially those that represent different stages in an artist's development. Their price, of course, will be more than the original price, because, again, the price of art should go up as an artist's career evolves. But they'll generally be less than the current market price for similar works. Artists who are conscious of their careers will have saved some of these pieces. And because it's the gallery's responsibility to help develop their artist's careers, they too may have stashed away a few of these earlier gems. Furthermore, the price of the works you see today reflects the growth of our field and the reputation of those who have contributed to it. And while not everyone's work is going to increase in value mega-fold over the years, I have yet to see the value of anyone's work go down … including the rocking chair I got from Sam Maloof in 1986.

"… as soon as woodturners broke with the traditions of their industrial past, they entered into a world that is rich with new concepts, new ideas, and a broader language base. It is a beautiful language, for it engages the "soul" and the "spirit of intent" that is at the heart of the creative process. "

As all collectors realize, sooner or later you will encounter the conundrum of the balance between the terms 'art' and 'craft'…it's just part of the baggage we inherited from the painters and the potters. I use the term 'balance', because the two are inseparably linked. I also realize that for some, this may be a tired old song. But I would suggest that as soon as woodturners broke with the traditions of their industrial past, they entered into a world that is rich with new concepts, new ideas, and a broader language base. It is a beautiful language, for it engages the "soul" and the "spirit of intent" that is at the heart of the creative process. Of course, it was inevitable — in fact, predictable — that woodturners would encounter this dilemma at this stage in their growth; in fact, all the craft media have done exactly the same thing. A case in point is an article I saw in a photographic magazine titled: "How a century of advances in equipment, and the dedication of talented photographers, transformed a Craft into an Art." I suppose this means that all the dedicated and talented photographers over the past 100 years are now artists. In any case, it certainly does sound familiar.

Now … I'm not aware of anyone who's come up with a usable definition of either 'craft' or 'art', but I can describe the intimacy of the relationship between them, which is that "craft is the foundation from which art can grow." To me, it is that 'can grow' part that's the most interesting, because it speaks of personal choice, interpretation, and intent.

Making the shift from craft to art is, of course, not easy. I like to think of it as being placed into a rich new landscape where there are no maps, no accurate guidelines or distance markers. The direction one takes is less relevant than the direction one has taken. There are no rules that can't be broken, or formula that can't be changed. And once you feel you have arrived, you're likely to discover that you have just begun … or maybe you were there all the time.

On a purely personal level, I am proud to be both a craftsman and an artist. And when the two shake hands, I know that I am doing really good work.

David Ellsworth is a turner, teacher and writer in Quakertown, PA, and served as first president of the American Association of Woodturners.

THE WRONG TURN

Disaster from a "Little More Speed"

TOM ALBRECHT

I AM A FULL-TIME SPECIAL ED TEACHER and a part-time turner. The majority of my turning work is architectural (replacement balusters, newels and finials for rehab and restoration work.)

Recently I had a job to make eight half-columns of red oak that were to be used for flanking a double-sided fireplace above and below a mantle. Each column was about 44-in. long with a 12-in. diameter top and bottom and a simple cove transition into an 11-in. diameter main shaft.

While I have turned some large and complicated pieces before, I had not done anything that involved this much pre-turning preparation and labor. I was a little nervous about attempting something so complicated and large, but I didn't want to turn the job down, and anyway, it would be a learning experience. I am the kind of guy who gets obsessed with challenging jobs (at least that's what my wife tells me). So, I lay awake at night plotting and figuring how I was going to approach this task. I read an article in *More Woodturning* about column prep and glue-up, written by New Hampshire turner Jon Siegel. I called him in NH to ask some questions and clarify some details. Finally, I decided to use the methods he described in his article — with one exception that I'll come to later.

Each of the four columns was made of 12 pieces of $^{6}/_{4}$-oak with a large face of $3^{1}/_{2}$-in. and beveled on each edge to 15°. I carefully laid it all out full-size with a compass and protractor and decided that, even though a finished wall thickness of just over $^{3}/_{4}$-in. was probably too generous, I preferred to play it safe on my first glued-up column. I prepared the stock carefully. All 50 pieces (including two extras) for the four columns were jointed and planed square at the same time on large, heavy, European machinery, and beveled on a power-fed shaper with a digital readout for the spindle tilt. I should point out here that I don't own all this equipment. I am fortunate to have a friend with a large and well-equipped millwork shop where I rent time on the machinery. My shop is modest in size. My lathe is the largest and most expensive piece of equipment I own.

Finished columns, ready for delivery

I weighed each piece and marked it in order to balance the layout. Then I dry-clamped the first column to check the fit and make fine adjustments in the angles by removing a couple of pieces to joint a modified angle to close any gaps. This last step is very important because, with 12 edges that need to meet perfectly, a difference of even a quarter of a degree on each edge would make a 3° gap and a poorly joined structure.

I glued everything up following Siegel's recommendations, with one exception: I added some brown kraft paper between two of the opposing joints so I could easily split each column in half after turning. Although Siegel didn't really advise against this, I could tell from the sound of his voice during our phone call that he wasn't too keen on the idea. I told him I'd done this successfully on solid newels and balusters. "Really?" was all he said.

The glue-up was a messy two-person operation: I gave my wife a big apron and a big thank you, and we went to work. The fast-drying glue, and the size and weight of the pieces made it all unwieldy. (The glued-up, clamped columns weighed around 100 pounds each.) But it went well and all the joints tightened up perfectly—no gaps. I did notice that in some of the joints, the paper had slid

The author, above left, described his accident as "overconfidence, inexperience, foolishness, stupidity, all of the above. Full of naive confidence, I decided a little more speed would help get through this tedious sanding process." The result was the shattered pile of rubble shown above right.

out, which meant there was wood-to-wood contact which would make those joints impossible to split. But I decided I'd just forget about the "paper splitting" method and figure out some kind of jig for ripping on the table saw later.

With growing trepidation, I screwed plywood discs into each end of the first column for attaching a face plate and tailstock, managed to mount the first piece on the lathe without help, reset my pulleys to the slowest speed, put on my face shield and helmet, dialed down the speed control to zero, and pushed the green button. Phew! Nothing terrible happened. I dialed up the speed. Things started shaking up a little at about 300 RPM, but then settled down nicely right around 400 RPM. For a while I just stood and watched it spinning. Once again, I was glad that I had invested in this expensive and heavy machine. I tweaked the tailstock and cautiously applied my big 2" gouge.

The roughing down didn't take too long, because with twelve pieces of wood, the column was almost round to begin with. Soon I was feeling confident, and I cranked up the speed to a little over 600 RPM. The shaping went well on the first column. I even found I could sand at 800 RPM, top speed on the low pulley. This was actually going to work!

By the time I had completed three columns, and had only the sanding of the fourth one left to do, I was eager to finish the job. Sanding can be boring. In fact, Richard Raffan wrote that it is a good idea to locate your lathe near a window so you can have something to look at while doing the "boring" sanding work.

A disastrous turn

This is where I took a *wrong turn*. Call it overconfidence, inexperience, foolishness, stupidity, all of the above. Full of naive confidence, I decided a little more speed would help get through this tedious sanding process. So, I set the belt up to the next pulley, dialed down the speed to 900 RPM, reversed the motor, grabbed my sanding block, and pushed the green button. That's when all hell broke loose. Actually, it wasn't hell, it was just the column rocketing off in all directions. I'm not sure what I noticed first—the explosion, the sudden darkness, or the void under my sanding block where the column should have been—but that baby blew apart faster than you can imagine. I was amazed nothing big hit me. All the lights in a 20-ft. radius were shattered, my tool cabinet and its contents were smashed, and there were 3-ft. jagged shards of torn-apart red oak all around me. For a long time I just stood there feeling awful and embarrassed, and thinking about the hundreds of dollars of useless lumber on my floor. When I finally had the heart to look closely at my new pile of kindling, I noticed that all but one of the breaks were within the wood grain and not on the glue joints. There was one clean break, and that was at the one joint where the paper hadn't slipped out. That must be where it had started to come apart. And at 900 RPM, once a joint fails, the whole piece starts splitting and flying.

I cleaned up the shop, replaced lights and fixtures, bought more lumber, and started another fourth column (and completed it successfully).

I know it could have been much worse. (For instance, I could have been killed, as my horrified wife pointed out.) And yes, I am grateful to be alive. And I guess I got my "learning experience."

Tom Albrecht turns wood in Wilmette, IL

SHADY DOINGS

Turners can go beyond just doing bases

LARRY JENSEN

TURNING LAMPS? SURE, NO PROBlem! Turning shades? Why? Why not?

Turning lamps offers a very nice challenge to merge practicality and aesthetics. And turning lamps, to me, means turning shades as well. The first lamps I turned were bases only. I bought the shades, but they were expensive and I could see that their cost could drive the total lamp price beyond what a reasonable customer would pay.

The thought occurred – why not turn the shade as well?

A shade was just an inverted bowl with a big hole in the bottom. Lord knows, I'd put a few holes in bowl bottoms before. Why not do it this time with intent? Heat problems seemed solvable. So I bore down and, after a few experimental fits and starts, all worked out. Now I regularly turn table lamps – including the shade – and even have a couple of floor lamps on my resume.

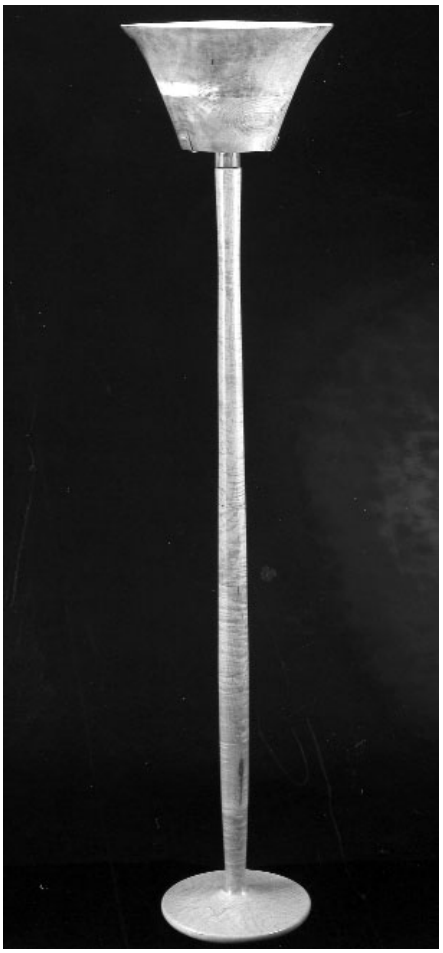
Designing lamps

Designing a lamp is actually quite a challenge; it's certainly more than designing a base, designing a shade and sticking the shade atop the base. There has to be a compatible design throughout, with coordinated shapes, wood colors and wood patterns.

My judgement is that the base design should be minimized so that the shade can dominate, or vice versa. Otherwise a strong base and a strong shade would compete with each other for attention. Nevertheless, customers have opinions too, so the shades and bases must have certain standardized features and dimensions that make them interchangeable.

The basic table lamp

After experimenting with various sizes and shapes, I decided that to my eye the most pleasing lamps had a base diameter of about 5-to-7-in., and were about 11-in. high from table level to the top of the light's brass work. A shade must be at least 3- in.-wider than the base to provide a protective insulating air gap. In addition, the lamp has a 5-in.-diameter hole in the top to both provide a heat escape vent and to hold the brass support ring. Safety must be a prime concern, because of the heat generated and the wiring involved. If you have any doubts, be sure to contact an electrician or other expert.



The author's Quilted Maple floor lamp, trimmed with Ambrosia Maple and fitted with a Box Elder shade. Photo: Dan Bruhn

Table lamp base

To make the lamp, I begin by bandsawing a 1-in.-thick block to a 5-to-7 in.-diameter, as dictated for the design I'm making. I save the bandsawn corners to turn the finials (threaded ornaments that hold the shade to the rest of the lamp). A $^{3}/_{4}$-to-1-in. mortise is drilled through the center of the base to accept the column's tenon. I fit this mortise onto an expanding jaw chuck to rough out the base and flatten the lip of the mortise. Later I will drill a hole horizontally for the electrical cord; the goal here is to bore a hole that does not degrade the aesthetics, but maintains the functionality and stability.

Next, I select a column timber, 12-in.- long and 2-in.-square. Matching foot and column by color and pattern is essential. The column stock first is bored out with a lamp auger or a $^{3}/_{8}$-in. brad point bit (18-in. -long) to hold a hollow, threaded rod that will take the electrical wires from the base up to the fixture. Lamp augers and long bits are available from many home supply stores or mail-order suppliers. I bore the entire length of the column, while the piece is on the lathe, using a hollow center (from Craft Supplies USA 800-551-8876).

After boring the column, I squeeze a 2-in.-long piece of threaded lamp rod in a compression jaw chuck and slowly turn about 1-in. into the rod hole, while running the lathe on low rpms. The other end of the hole is fitted onto my live center and the timber squeezed between centers. This chucking method provides a way to turn the column symmetrically to a rough cylinder around the center hole.

A tenon about half as long as the thickness of the base is also cut on one end of the column, then the base and column are glued together before

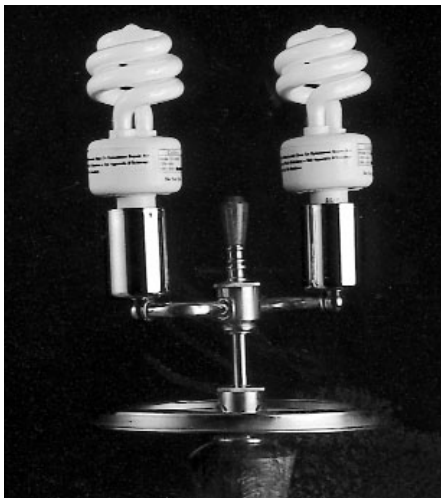
A selection of Jensen's lamps:, left to right, Walnut base table lamp with Eucalyptus shade showing foot, column, shade and finial; Walnut base table lamp with Ambrosia Maple shade; table lamp with textured and brassed Sassafras base and Tasmanian Myrtle Beech shade. Photos by Dan Bruhn and the author.

final turning and sanding.

Finally, I mount a long section of the threaded rod in the compression chuck and slowly thread it towards the lamp base until it just reaches the end of the tenon. The rod is hacksawed off at the fixture end, leaving about 1-in. protruding.

Electrical hardware

Prior to adding electrical hardware, I drill the horizontal hole through the base, so that it meets the center hole just below the lip of the tenon. The electrical cord from the plug is pushed through this hole and up the hollow rod in the column. I wire a thumb-wheel on-off switch on the wire to the outlet.



Author favors compact fluorescent bulbs for his lamps.

Atop the column a brass disk is slipped over the hollow threaded rod and a multi-purpose brass cylinder (cluster body) is screwed on, as shown at left. The cluster body has two or three threaded holes on its side to which elbows can be attached; a light socket is in turn screwed to the elbow. The electrical wire runs from the column, into the cluster body and through the elbows to the socket. Within the cluster body, wires from the column are soldered to wires going to each socket.

Originally I used low-power, 15-watt, candelabra base bulbs. These kept heat low, but were better for mood lights than reading lights. Now I am shifting to the new compact fluorescent bulbs manufactured by Bulbrite Industries, South Hackensack, NJ 07606. They look like "Dairy Queen" ice cream cones and screw into standard sockets. They are also low heat, but much brighter at low power, with an 18-watt compact equivalent to a 100-watt incandescent. You can read by them too. Although they are bulkier and cost more (about $15 per bulb), they are supposed to last much longer.

Shade support

To support the shade, a 2-to-4 in. rod is threaded into the top of the cluster body. The upper end is threaded to accept a knurled nut. On this nut sits the "spider", all held down with the finial. The spider is a thick brass washer with three equally spaced protruding arms. I trim the arms down and solder these inside a 5-in. diameter brass ring. The shade sits on this ring. (Lamp parts should be available from local suppliers. One supplier the author has used is Midwest Lamp Parts, 3534 N. Spaulding Ave., Chicago, IL 60618)

Table lamp shade

Next I turn the shade, just as if it were a bowl, but with a 5-in. diameter

Larry Jensen shows his chucking setup for turning wooden lamp shades.

hole in the bottom. I select my shade designs by looking at bowls upside down. The diameter of the shade is controlled by many factors, including the volume of the electrical hardware, the proportions of shade to base, the need to keep an air gap between the light bulbs and the shade, and the availability of thick timber. I have found that shade diameters of about 8-to-10-in. work well. This size provides a $1^{1}/_{2}$-in. air gap on each side that protects against overheating. The height of the shade is usually $3^{1}/_{2}$-to-4 in. The value in leaving a 5-in. hole in the top of the shade is that it fits the brass ring on each lamp and, thus, shades are interchangeable. Also, this is a protective air vent.

To turn a shade, I begin by bandsawing a circle from a thick block of stock. At the eventual top of the shade, I drill a $1^{1}/_{2}$-to-2-in. hole with a Forstner bit and slip this onto an expansion-jaw chuck on my lathe. Then I turn both the inside and outside of the shade. Here I always hope for the courage to get a thickness that will allow light to shine through, $^{3}/_{8}$-in. or less. The daring can take the thickness down to the translucent stage. Then I reverse the shade in a jumbo jaws chuck (Oneway Manufacturing 800-565-7288) to enlarge the hole to 5-in.

Finials

The scraps from bandsawing the foot and shade blocks can be turned into finials, the ornamental "nut" that holds the shade to the rest of the lamp. The process is much like making a wine stopper. A fundamental choice is whether to choose the finial wood to match the base or the shade.

I start with a standard lamp part called a riser, a cylinder with a threaded hollow on the bottom and exposed thread on top. I cut the corner scraps to about $^{3}/_{4}$ X $^{3}/_{4}$ X 1-in. and drill a $^{1}/_{4}$-in. hole at one end. I put epoxy in this hole and screw in the riser. When the epoxy is dry I screw the riser to a short section of threaded rod, squeeze the rod end in a compression-jaw chuck, and turn the wood to a finial.

Floor lamps

Floor lamps are a natural extension of table lamps. The main difference from table lamps is height, a wider base, wider column and wider shade. The base is about 8-to-10-in. in diameter and 1-in. thick with a 1-lb. disk weight recessed in the bottom for stability. The height is 48-to-54-in. to the hardware for a regular shaded lamp (shines down) and about 60-in. for a torchiere shaded lamp (shines up).

Several sections of column (about 12-in. each) must be mortised and glued together to get the full height. Gluing should first produce two sections of column, each no longer than 3-ft, because the rod that runs up the column for the electrical wires comes in 3-ft. lengths. One section of the column should be mortised about an 1-in. deep to take a coupling reducer, a short, internally threaded cylinder (standard lamp part). The mating of two rods within the coupling can be hidden within the column. Then the entire column is glued together and the column is glued to the base.

I added an extension to my lathe bed (to 60-in.), so that I could turn the whole base/column at once. This has been extremely beneficial.

My shades are about 14-to-16-in. in diameter, about 8-to-10-in. high, and with the same 5-in.-hole in the top as for regular shades. For some of the turning I use Oneway's Mega Jumbo Jaws (diameter to 16-in.). For lights, three compact fluorescent bulbs (11 watts each) are more than adequate for reading.

Finding large size timbers for these shades initially was a problem. I first laminated one shade from several thinner planks cut into rings. On another, I cored out the center and glued the cone atop the outer ring. Both methods worked, but the result was less than satisfying because the seams showed. I prefer solid wood.

Floor lamps - translucent shade

I always knew that I would eventually try translucent shades. This came about with a box elder shade, brought to about $^{1}/_{10}$-in. thickness with tedious effort. The translucence was by thinness only; no oils or resins were used. Box elder is quite nice lit up from the interior as the colors are warm cream, soft orange and soft red, with the usually subdued grain standing out. Wooden lamps and shades open many new venues for artistic exploration. Certainly it is exciting to make translucent shades.

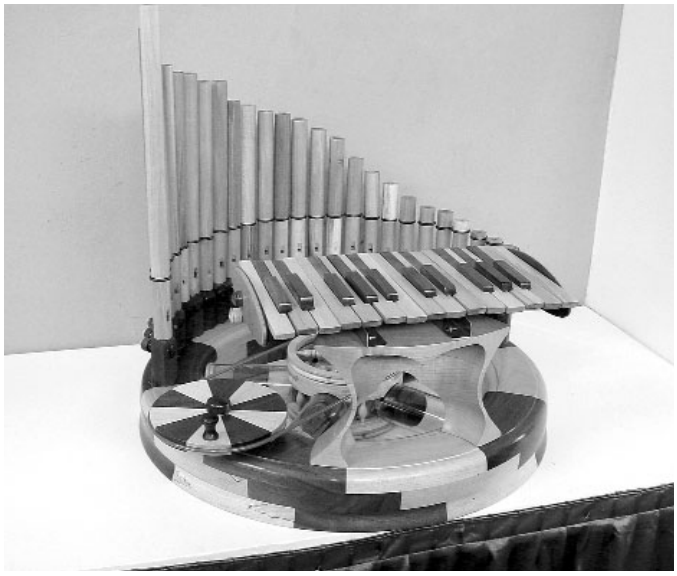
Larry Jensen is a turner from the Chicago area of northern Indiana.

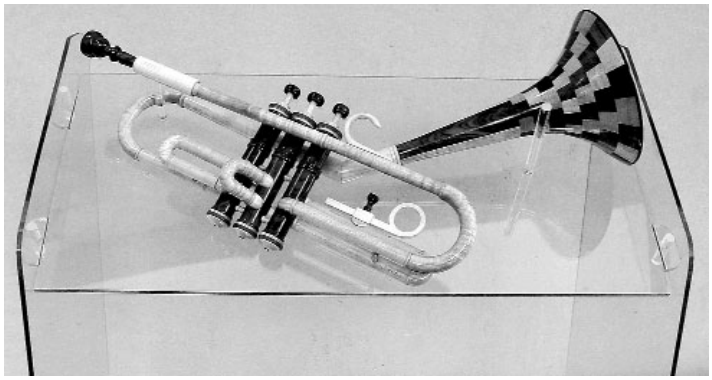
CHAPTER COLLABORATIVE 2000

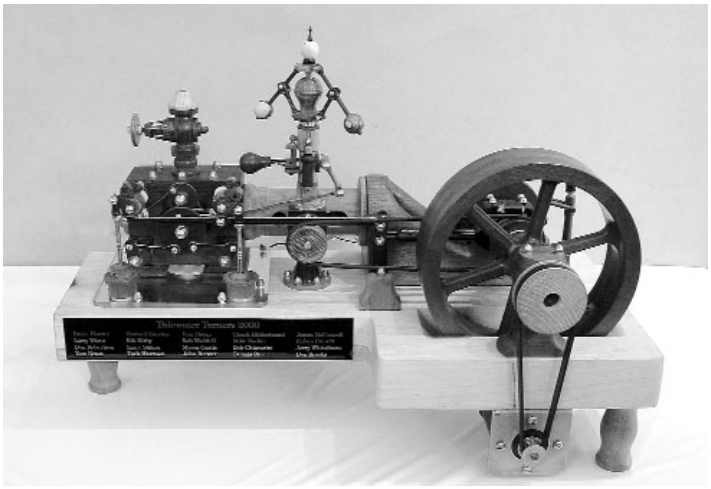
A Photo Tour of This Year's Entries

LARRY MART

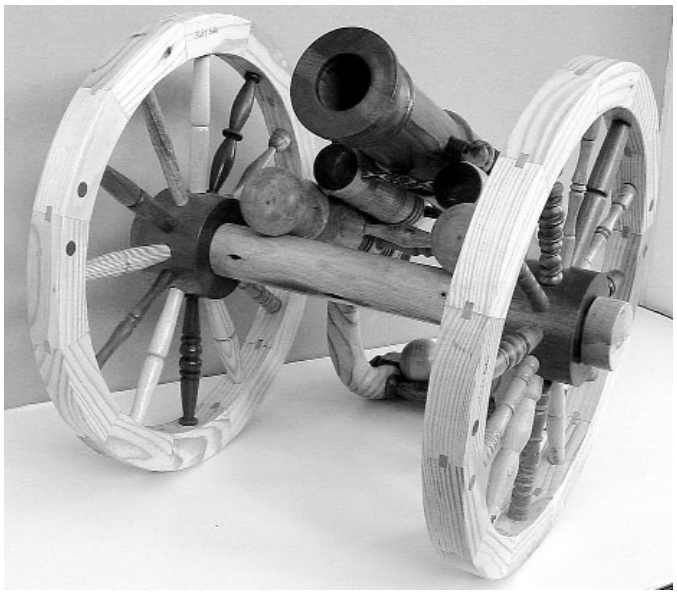
Honorable Mentions

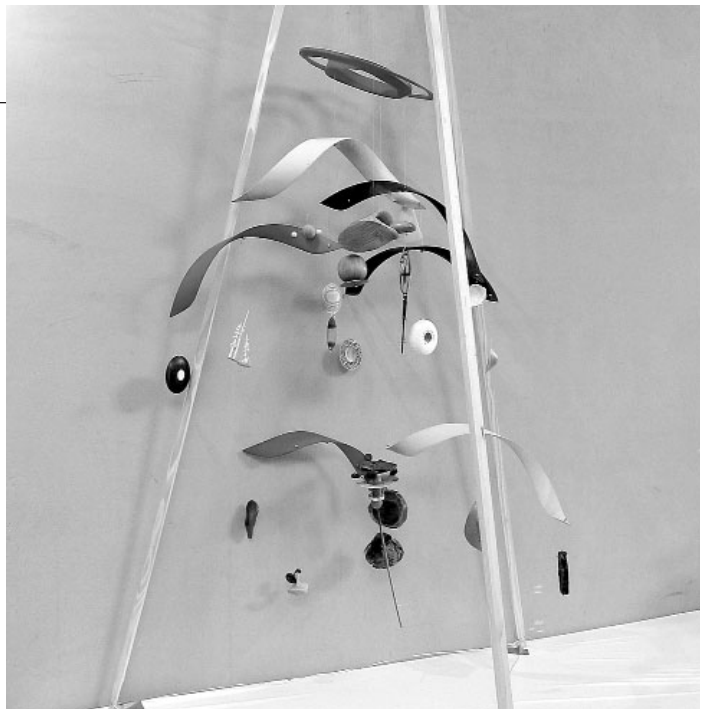


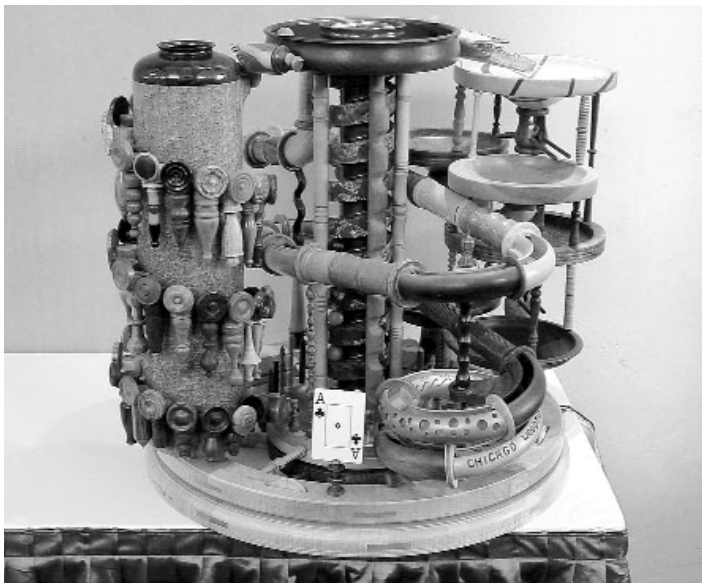




Honorable mention awards went to Greater Vancouver Woodturners Guild, above, "Organic Fantasy;" Nor Cal Woodturners, top right, "Trumpet Dizzy Gillespie Style;" and Tidewater Turners of Virginia, right, "Corliss." Other entries are shown below and on the following pages in roughly alphabetical order. Below left, Alabama Woodturners, "Civil War Canon; and below right, Big Island Woodturners, "Woods of Hawaii."



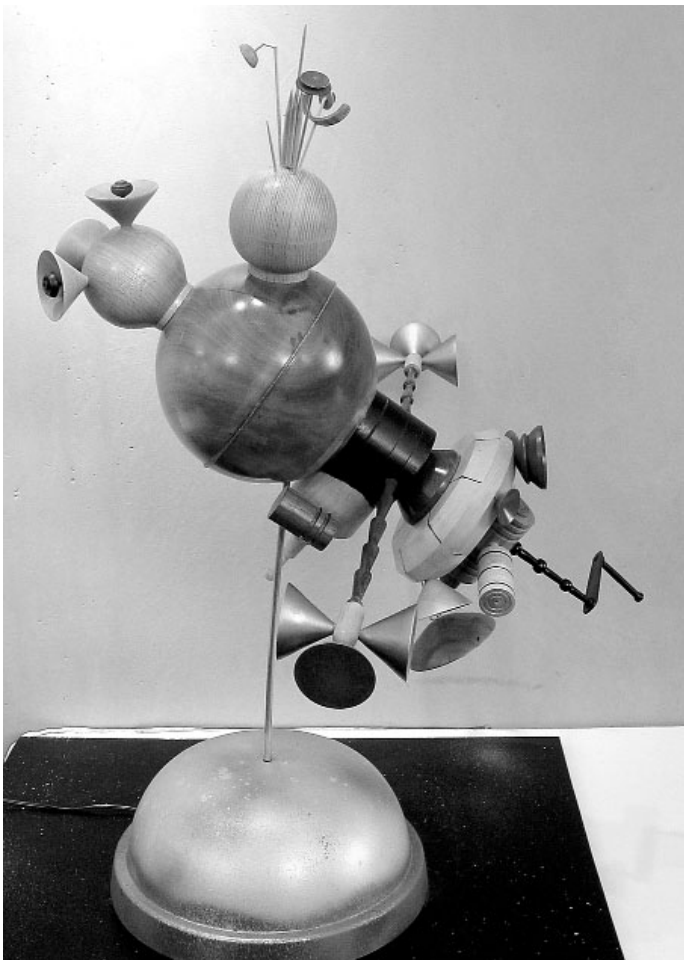




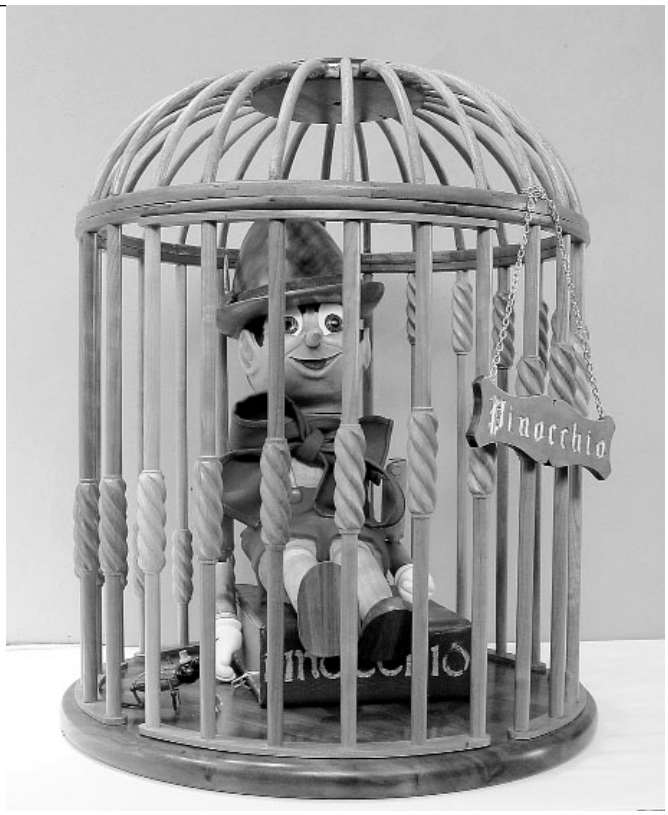
Clockwise from upper left: Brasstown Woodturning Guild, "Salad Bowl Express;" Bucks Woodturners, "Echo Lake II Mobile;" Central New England Woodturners, "All Our Eggs in One Basket;" Chicago Woodturners, "Chicago's Got Balls,' and Cascade Woodturners Association, "Table Top Kaleidoscope."

Clockwise from top left: Cumberland Woodturners, "Cumberland Cradle;" NC Woodturners Assn., "Flowers;" NW Washington Woodturners, "Jewelry Box with Jewelry;" Rocky Mountain Woodturners, "Colorado Fruit Plate;" Long Island Woodturner Association, "Still Life."

Rules for next year's Chapter Collaborative to be held during the AAW symposium, July 6- 8 in St. Paul, Mn, are included on one of the insert pages of this Journal and on the AAW web site. If you have any questions, please call the AAW office in Minnesota or your Board representative.



Seattle Chapter of AAW, above left, "Going Snorkeling;" Turners Anonymous, "Spacestation Anonymous," above right; and Triangle Woodturners of NC, left, "Jewelry Box."



Clockwise from upper left: Woodturners of St. Louis, "Rara Avis Schaeferii;" West Bay Area Woodturners, "Pinocchio;" Woodchuck Turners of North Vermont, "VT 2000 Vortex Collaborative Project;" Williamette Valley Woodturners, "Salad Set."

Simple Surface Decoration

Add a Colorful Turn With Acrylics

STEVE SINNER

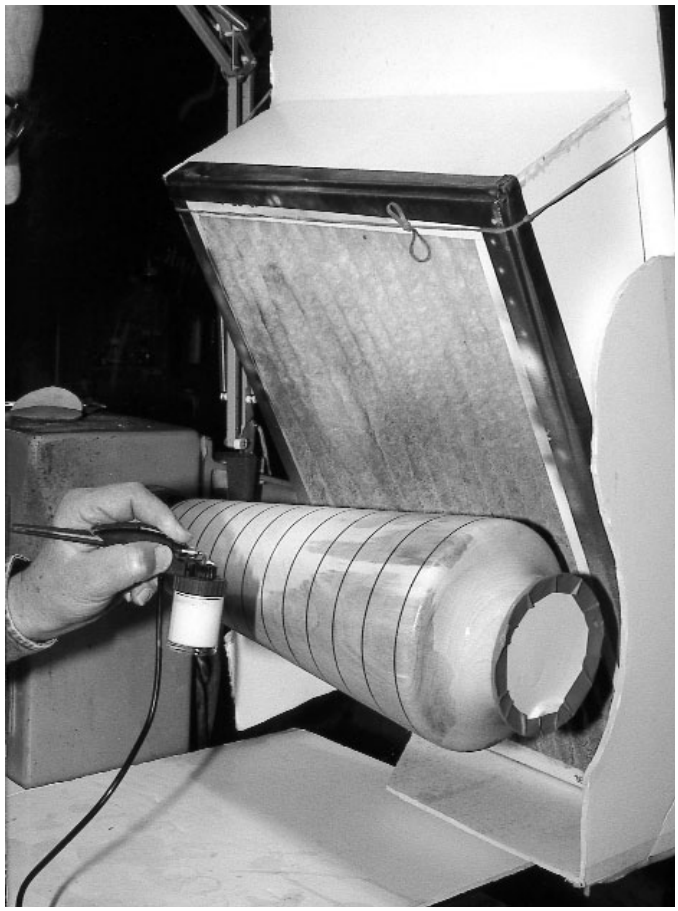
An accomplished woodworking friend of mine is an avowed purist — he won't even consider using stain to disguise a little sapwood on his projects. When I put paint on one of my turnings, he just grits his teeth, forces a smile, and offers the obligatory compliment.

Although his unstained work reflects his style, he has severely limited his options. Each of us observes our own rules regarding our work, on both conscious and subconscious levels. Unfortunately, every rule that we adhere to tends to limit our creativity. We compete with one another by trying to produce the most perfectly shaped bowl, the finest satin finish, or the most consistent wall thickness. We have developed unwritten standards for our work. Creativity is often perceived as an aberration.

Eliminating rules

I have been trying to identify and eliminate those rules from my mind for some time. But it is difficult, and only in the last year have I had much success at it. Not surprisingly, this can be an emotional quest. What we consider to be the right or wrong things to do with a piece of wood can be deeply seated in our psyches. I have heard several woodturners complain bitterly of "those artsy-fartsy" turners. A fellow in one of Michelle Holzapfel's sessions at the AAW symposium in Akron in 1998 became quite upset, blurted out several choice epithets, and stalked out of the room when the discussion turned to methods of cutting and carving on turnings. *Woodturning* magazine's February 2000 issue carries an editorial by Mark Baker regarding the commotion caused by the use of "colour" by some of the contestants in a prominent woodturning competition in Britain. Gosh, folks, there's plenty of room for everyone here. If it's not your cup of tea, just grit your teeth, force a smile, offer the obligatory compliment, and get on with your work.

Use of color is certainly not new. Well-known turners such as Giles Gilson, Frank Sudol, and Binh Pho have been using it for some time. They have primarily used automotive lacquers. When I wanted to use color, the problems of cost (automotive lacquers are not available in small quantities, nor are they inexpensive), flammability (lacquer solvents have a very low flashpoint, and would create an explosion hazard), and toxicity in my small basement work area sent me looking for another medium.

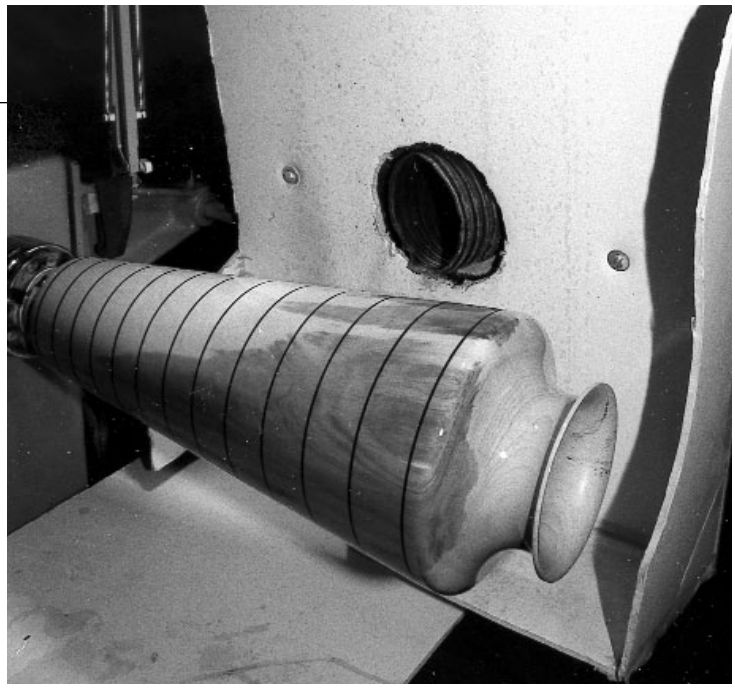


The author sprays water-based masking material, using an Aztek A220 airbrush. His regular sanding hood becomes an overspray collector by adding pleated filter, with plenum made from the same materials as hood. Rubber band holds filter assembly in place. Foam weatherproofing strips assure tight seal to hood.

The case for acrylics

If you decide to break some rules and actually put paint on wood, consider the use of artist's acrylics. They are water soluble, non-flammable, and non-toxic. Drying time is short. They are available in a huge range of colors and effects, including iridescent, fluorescent, glossy, glitter, and interference types for playing games with light. Dozens of additives and mediums are available to provide a practically unlimited array of effects. Even acrylic varnishes and wood stains are included in the product lines.

I prefer the Liquitex Medium Viscosity acrylics. They are sold in plastic jars. The stuff sold in tubes is the high viscosity version, and is better suited for painting on canvas, although they will work fine for some techniques. The medium viscosity versions are pre-filtered for use in airbrushes. There is a special medium to thin the



Sanding hood made from foam board, duct tape and hot glue increases collecting efficiency of dust collector hose. Foam board is bolted to standard tablesaw dust hood, which is supported by a dowel inserted into lathe's safety guard bracket (just visible to the left of foam board, above turning). Piece of foam board on lathe ways also encourages air flow across turning into collector, and protects ways from overspray or drips. Photos by author.

colors for airbrushing, but plain water works better in my equipment. Other mediums offered by Liquitex include gloss, matte, pearlescent, opaque extender, fabric, gel, and various textures. There are also additives to slow drying or enhance paint flow.

Acrylics can be applied in most any manner. Only lack of imagination can limit the possibilities. Dab them on with brushes, sponges, crumpled aluminum foil, carpet scraps, or whatever you can think of. Spatter techniques offer unusual effects. Spray them through airbrushes or paint sprayers. Smear them on with your fingers. Thin them with water and use as a pigment based stain. If you care to use your lathe as a painting platform, any of these techniques can be combined with rotation of the turning during application.

Although toxicity and flammability are not concerns when using acrylics, overspray must still be dealt with if you use any method of spray application. Small, portable "spray booths" are easy to make from foam core, duct tape, and a good quality pleated furnace filter. Make a kind of open sided box with a plenum behind the filter, and then attach your dust collector or shop vac to the plenum. Place the work near the open side of the box and direct the spray toward the filter.

Acrylics are compatible with polyurethane varnish. Starting with a coat or two of thinned polyurethane (allowed to dry, of course) helps to avoid raising the grain, which may result from the water content of the acrylics. Mixing acrylics and lacquers, however, has been known to create a mess! If you must use both on the same piece, use a coat of shellac to keep them separated. To be certain of compatibilities, make a test panel before risking damage to your turning.

Liquitex has published a sixty-four-page manual called *The Acrylic Book* that offers a wealth of information about their products and details many special techniques. Our local art supply store provides copies to customers at no cost. Or you can download it from the Liquitex web site at www.liquitex.com. Their consumer phone line is 1-800-272-9652. There are many brands of acrylics that I've not tried, and they are quite likely to work as well as any other.

If you feel like trying acrylics, visit an art supply store, or try places such as Michael's or Hobby Lobby. Two-ounce jars cost about $3.00 each, and will go a long way. These sources will also have selections of airbrushes, including those pictured here.

Unleash your creativity and have fun.

Above are examples of the various acrylic products readily available from local arts and craft supply shops and a few of the means of application, including brushes, airbrush, sponge and wool dauber.

Steve Sinner is a turner in Bettendorf, IA, and a member of the Chicago Woodturners. ***WARNING*** *Use of toxic materials may cause health problems, and use of flammable materials may result in fires or explosions when sprayed into dust collecting systems. Dangerous vapors from these materials will not be trapped by the pleated filters. Spray techniques referred to in this article apply to acrylics only.*

POINT-TO-POINT

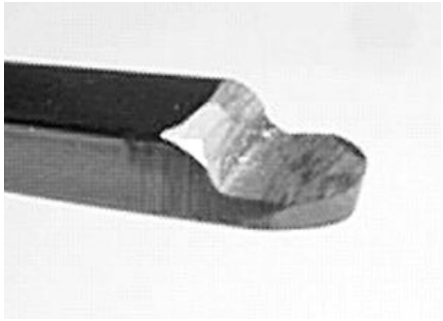
A Simplified Approach to Spindle Turning

BRUCE HOOVER

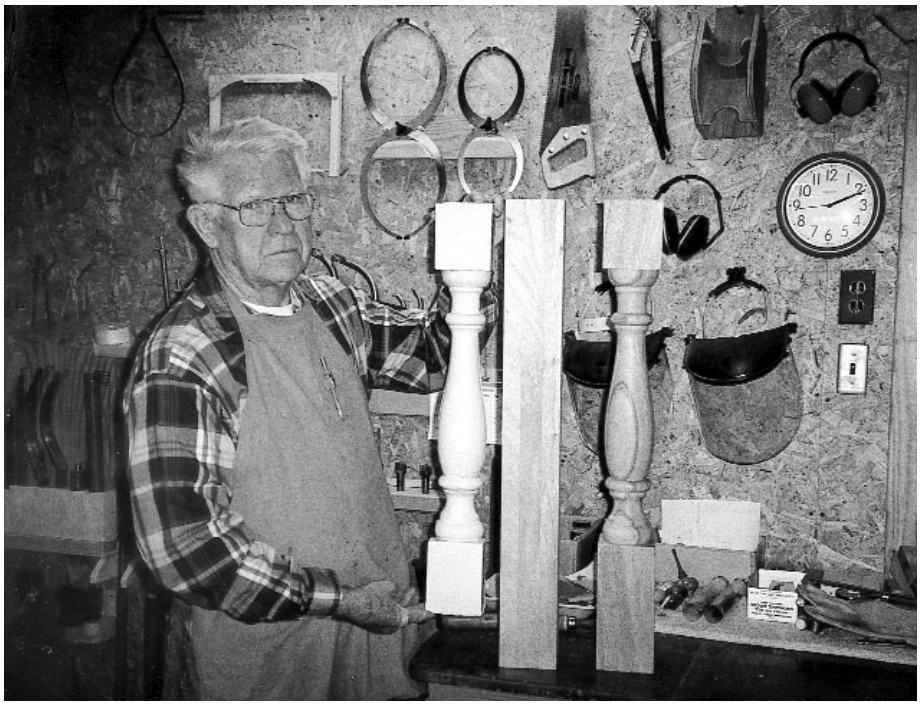
For a production turner like Myron W. Curtis, customer requests to reproduce architectural components are an everyday occurrence. A full-time production turner since 1984, Myron is well known for his speed, accuracy, and humorous "sea stories." He specializes in spheres, large porch columns, balusters, newel posts, circular moldings, and roulette wheels.

I was very fortunate one day to have Myron come to my shop for a visit and a little first-hand tutoring on spindle work (I had been bugging him for months). He brought along a piece of a project he was working on for a customer. It was a baluster for a widow's walk, one of 76 as I recall. I learned a great deal that day, but the most valuable of the many things Myron showed me was his "Point-to-Point" method of visualizing the turning process.

Myron explains, "Turning "Point-to-Point" means turning the curve from one point with an established diameter to a second point with an established diameter. It makes no difference whether the curve you are shaping is symmetrical or asymmetrical. It matters not if it is a bead or a cove. The object is to visualize the curve's contour between the two points and concentrate only on that part before moving on to the next pair."



Drop-nose chisel designed by Myron Curtis for spindle work, cutting end-grain and hollowing small projects.



Myron Curtis with the original piece supplied as a pattern for reproduction, along side a turning blank and an already finished piece destined for a restored widow's walk. Photos by author.

This article is all about points and the role they play in spindle work. More importantly it is about a different way to see them and work with them. I will not dwell on the "how to" of spindle turning because there are many fine articles and videos available which have covered this topic completely and expertly. I will however try to describe Myron's process and methods as plainly as I can with the focus on "Point-to-Point."

Tools

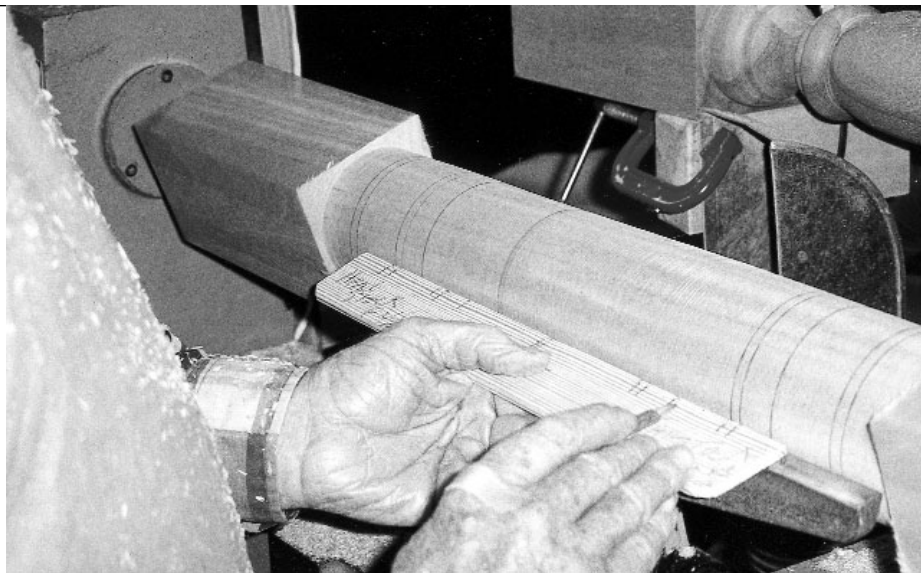
For this particular task Myron used only three cutting tools. A standard $^{1}/_{8}$-in. parting tool, a $^{1}/_{2}$-in. round nose scraper, and a $^{1}/_{4}$-in. drop-nose chisel – a tool that Myron designed many years ago and made from a $^{1}/_{4}$-in.-sq. piece of HSS 8-in. long. The top half of the cutting end is ground away for about $^{3}/_{8}$-in. and the rounded cutting edge is formed on the remaining lower half, as shown in the photo at left. The tool is very efficient for doing spindle work, cutting across end-grain, and is extremely effective as a hollowing tool for small projects (my favorite use). The square shaft provides stability on the tool rest that is very comforting. The tool is fitted with a handle of shape and length to suit the individual user. Almost all of our club members have made one or more and use them regularly. The vast array of Myron's work is all accomplished with a variety of scrapers, chisels, and parting tools. Myron thinks he owns a gouge of some description, and if he looked long enough around the shop, it might be found and probably in pristine condition.

Also a must for this work is a set of outside calipers for sizing. It is important to note here that the points of the calipers should be filed round and smooth to prevent catches because they are used with the stock turning.

Oh yes, and some 80-grit sandpaper strips in 1/2-in and 3-in. widths will be needed.

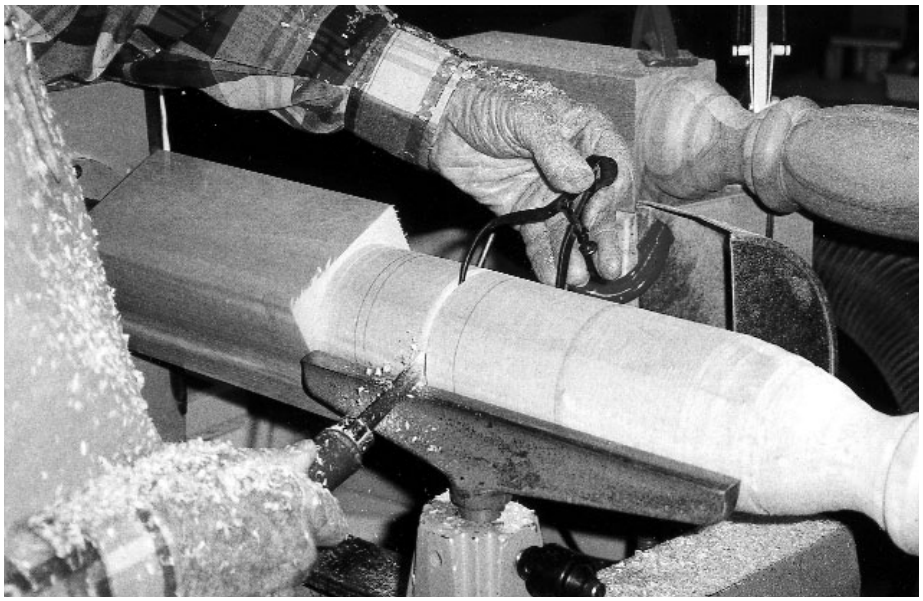
Design and layout

The design for this project comes from one of the widow's walk original balusters provided by the customer as a pattern for duplication. As is Myron's usual procedure, the already prepared stock was also provided by the customer; he does only the turning. Because these balusters are for exterior use, the material chosen was African mahogany that had been laminated and re-sawn square. The dimension of the square blank measures the same as the finished size of the pummels (the square unturned portions at the ends of the baluster). For Myron, the task was to make 76 reproductions of the original sample provided.



A story board increases speed and accuracy. The board is made using the dimensions of the original and has notches and marks on it that locate the different changes in diameter and shape, so that the guidelines can be transferred to the blank, just by holding a pencil in the notches while the blank is rotating.

To begin, Myron accurately marks the center of the ends of the blank and mounts it between centers. The drive-center that Myron uses has a center point and an outer cup about 3/4-in. in diameter that has no notches or teeth on it. Why it works is a mystery, but it does, and he uses it for turnings up to 8-in.-square and 15-ft.-long. Next, we used a couple of deadman supports to mount the first reproduction he had made behind the lathe, just above level with the next blank to be turned. He used the original baluster as a pattern for the first copy, then used the copy as a patern, so he didn't have to contend with the original's layers of paint or rotted sections when taking measurements. This method provides a right-at-hand source for the dimensions needed for setting the calipers and an invaluable visual guide to look at as you turn the curves.



Curtis uses a parting tool to cut a notch to the required diameter at a story-line location. The calipers are preset to the diameter and will slide over the blank when that dimension is reached.

Next he prepares a story-board, using the original baluster as a template. Use any available thin stock or plywood 1/4-in. thick or so. It is made simply by cutting the material about 2-to-3-in. wide and long enough to span the part of the turning that has to be shaped. Pencil marks are placed on it to show the locations of each point where changes in the pattern occur along the horizontal axis. Using a sharp knife a small notch is cut at each mark to guide the pencil against the turning stock. Often a secondary story-board is made to represent the more detailed portions that are turned after the initial rounding of

the stock.

Ready to turn

With the stock now mounted, Myron uses the story-board to mark the two points where the pummels begin at each end of the turned portion. He then starts the lathe and makes a precise cut with the parting tool, which Myron contends is much more user friendly than a skew. Next he rounds the cylinder between the pummels, using the round nose scraper. The story-board is used again to mark the points where the pattern changes size and shape. He simply places the story-board on the tool rest for stability and holds it very lightly against the rotating stock as he lays a pencil in each notch to make a mark. Using the pattern mounted behind the lathe, he sets his calipers to size for each marked point along the axis. Then, holding the calipers for sizing, one at a time he uses the parting tool to cut each marked point to the diameter pre-determined by the pattern. Myron cautions "Do not trust the calipers to hold their setting. The vibration of repeated use will cause the calipers to change adjustment, which in turn causes the balusters to gradually increase in size."

Now the rest of the shaping begins. Using the round nose scraper he then begins shaping the curves that make up the overall design. Myron states that "in order to keep it simple you need to remember to focus on the shape of the curve between each pair of established diameter points and turn the appropriate curve between them …. One at a time."

"When starting out, you may find it to your advantage to mark additional points and make extra sizing cuts on long curves or on curves that have an inflection point. This means the point at which they change from a concave to a convex profile. Turn each half of the curve independently and then smooth the transition."

The sharpened edge of a parting tool effectively makes a clean cut on the cylinder.

Turning beads can be a relatively easy task, but this part is a secret and I'm sure that Myron would appreciate it if you kept this to yourself! Begin by using the $^1/_8$-in. diamond shaped parting tool (with all five of its cutting edges sharp) to shape and shear scrape the bead. Outline the bead by making a parting cut, to the depth of the bead, on both sides of the bead. Then shape the bead using the "side" edges of the parting tool. When turning beads, remember that "A bead should come to reveal an exact point. A sharp, crisp exact point with no rounding or radius to it. This is for distinction in the work!"

Look carefully at your work as you progress. Don't wait until you're all done. On portions of the turning with a vase-type form it is easy to leave them too big. "A term I use when examining curves and shape of the work is 'fullness of form', which means that the form has a pleasing curve with no flat areas or extra girth. The curved line of the contour should always continue to flow, as does the contour on a sphere."

Once you are satisfied with the form you have turned, sand the piece to a degree acceptable for the use of the finished product. These balusters would be painted for outdoor use, and so an 80-grit finish is all that was needed. Other applications will need additional sanding with finer grits. BE CAREFUL not to damage any of those sharp, clean edges while sanding. Remember that the crisp edges and curves are what bring distinction to the work.

The POINT of this article

Myron re-caps that "you need to remember three basic things … the story-board gives you precise distances to points along the horizontal axis; the calipers give you the diameters at those points; and turning "point-to-point" creates your contours."

Use whatever tools you are comfortable or familiar with. Don't be afraid to try new ones like the drop-nose; it may become one of your best friends. Always remember that VISUALIZATION of the work in front of you is your most valuable tool.

Try the "point- to-point" method of approaching your spindle turning and see if it works to your advantage. You may discover that it can make your turning easier and more enjoyable. I hope we have made our point.

Myron W. Curtis is a custom-production, architectural woodturner living in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Visit our club website at http://www.esva.net/~woodturner/ and look him up under "Meet Our Featured Turner." Bruce Hoover is a woodturner who lives on Virginia's beautiful Eastern Shore.

TURNING WOOD INTO ART

The Jane and Arthur Mason Collection.

KEN KEOUGHAN

THE OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION OF the Jane and Arthur Mason Collection entitled *Turning Wood into Art* at the Mint Museum of Craft+Design marked the kick-off of a wonderful four-day weekend of wood art in Charlotte, NC. The Collectors of Wood Art held their 4th Annual CWA Forum concurrent with the Mason/Mint weekend, May 18-21.

First, the events connected with the opening began Thursday with a sparkling reception at the spanking new facility of the Mint Museum of Craft + Design. This was attended by over 400 happily jabbering people ranging from a college pal of Arthur Mason's to the museum staff, a very liberal representation of the artists whose work was on exhibit, and 100 or more members of the CWA.

Also included were representatives of the 10 art galleries who had work for sale on display at the Marriott City Centre Hotel and/or at several venues in Charlotte. Mark Leach, Curator of the museum and his staff were very congenial hosts and hostesses.

A tribute to the Masons

A dinner that was indeed sumptuous, back at the Marriott followed the $1^1/_2$-hour reception. The dinner, which was served to 380 guests, was yet another reflection of the Masons' generosity and thoughtfulness. Each guest had been assigned a specific seat at a specific table. Jane and Arthur Mason arranged most of that seating, the museum staff the rest. As one would expect there were talks and toasts and bright conversation. But there was no rubber chicken, no frozen peas and not a single boring moment. Appropriate and genuinely sincere tribute was paid to Jane and Arthur Mason. And the dinner drew to close when Todd Hoyer presented the Mason's with a copy of their own beautiful catalog, *Turning Wood Into Art*, signed by all of the artists present at the opening.

What about Charlotte as a venue? From the viewpoint of an attendee the city was magnificent. The downtown area mixed the trendiness of big-time urban with the architectural tradition of the Old South. People were pleasant and helpful. Four local art galleries within walking distance mounted significant displays of wood art. The Bank of America, a sponsor of the subsequent AAW Symposium in Charlotte had work by Mark Lindquist on display.

"Hands-on" exhibit for kids

A few words about the Exhibition. The Museum and Jane and Arthur went to significant lengths to put together a "Hands-On" area. Mark Leach, who has young children, feels very strongly about the Museum's commitment to education. And he believes "experiential learning" is a great way to generate interest. In the "Hands-On" gallery you can see how Virginia Dotson laminates her beautiful pieces; how Mark Sfirri turns with multiple axes; how Ron Kent's oil processes capitalize on the natural translucence of Norfolk Pine. Many other artists also have pieces in the "Hands-On" gallery. The individual artists contributed all of this work, which can be picked up and handled. It represents a fascinating way to learn about wood turning, a wonderful means of fulfilling some of the "educational" goals, of virtually every person and organization connected with contemporary turning.

In addition to the 125 objects from the Masons, several other turned pieces, including historic works, were given to the Mint Museum of Craft + Design in tribute to Jane and Arthur Mason by Susan Steinhauser, Daniel Greenberg and Ruth Greenberg. Susan and Daniel also gave a major grant to the Museum, as did the Rebecca Klemm Foundation.

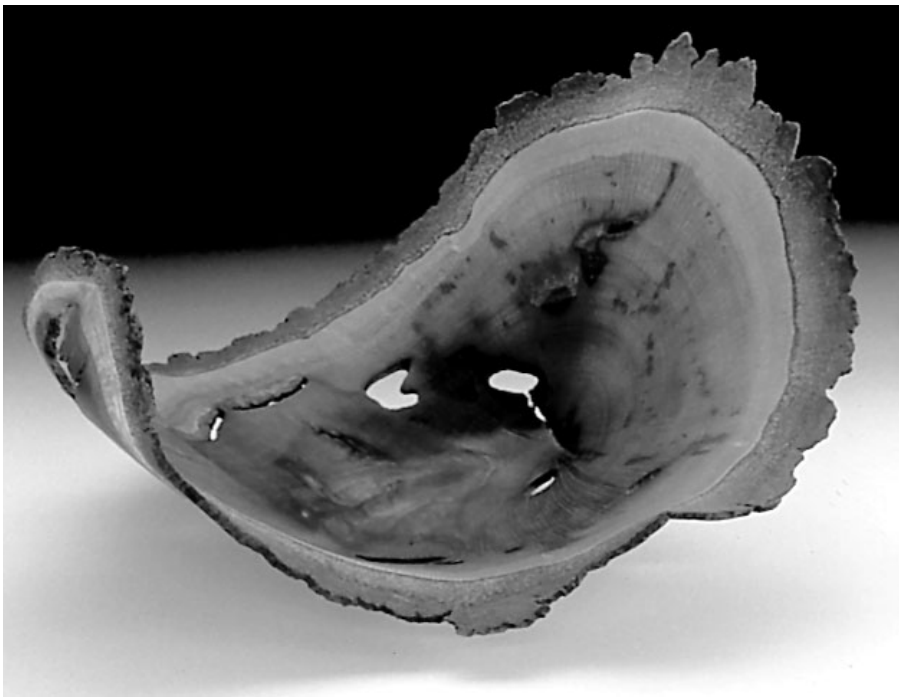
The significance of the 4th Annual CWA Forum running concurrent with the Mason/Mint Opening really cannot be overstated. It was the presence of the CWA that inspired the six national galleries to be represented. They included Center of the Earth of Charlotte, del Mano of Los Angeles, Hodges Taylor of Charlotte, Sansar of Washington D.C., Signature Gallery of Atlanta, and Southern Highlands of Asheville, North Carolina. In addition to these, 4 more local galleries, Noel Gallery, Joie Lassiter Gallery, Jerald Melburg Gallery and Gallery WDO carried special shows featuring wood.

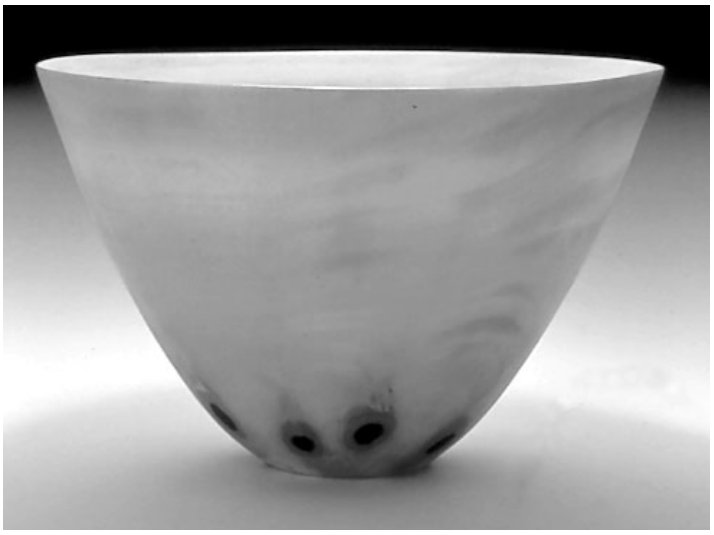
Ellsworth sets inspirational tone

David Ellsworth opened the Forum with a speech that will be quoted for years to come. (***The full text of that speech is printed on pages 30-35 of this Journal.)***

Michael Peterson, Merryll Saylan, Richard Hooper and Clay Foster in a panel discussion entertained the question of *The Germ of Ideas: Where Does Inspiration Come From*. At lunch Diane Rhem, a noted talk-show hostess, described the horror of losing her voice and the boundless joy she experienced in getting it back. Both events are chronicled in her book *Finding My Voice.* Curt Warnke, head of Exhibitions at the museum and Michael Monroe, former Curator-in-Charge of the Renwick and a powerful voice for wood as art, gave excellent walkthroughs of the exhibit on Saturday morning, focusing on how works were lighted, why they were displayed at the height selected, and

A Glimpse at the Mason Collection





Among the objects being displayed in the inaugural exhibition of the Jane and Arthur Mason collection at the Mint Museum of Craft + Design in Charlotte, NC, are: Clockwise from upper left: an untitled piece by William and Marianne Hunter; a 1986 piece from the Conical Series by Todd Hoyer; and left, a small gold translucent bowl by Ron Kent. The show — Turning Wood into Art — will be on display at the museum until Oct. 8, 2000. Photos: Courtesy of the Mint Museum.

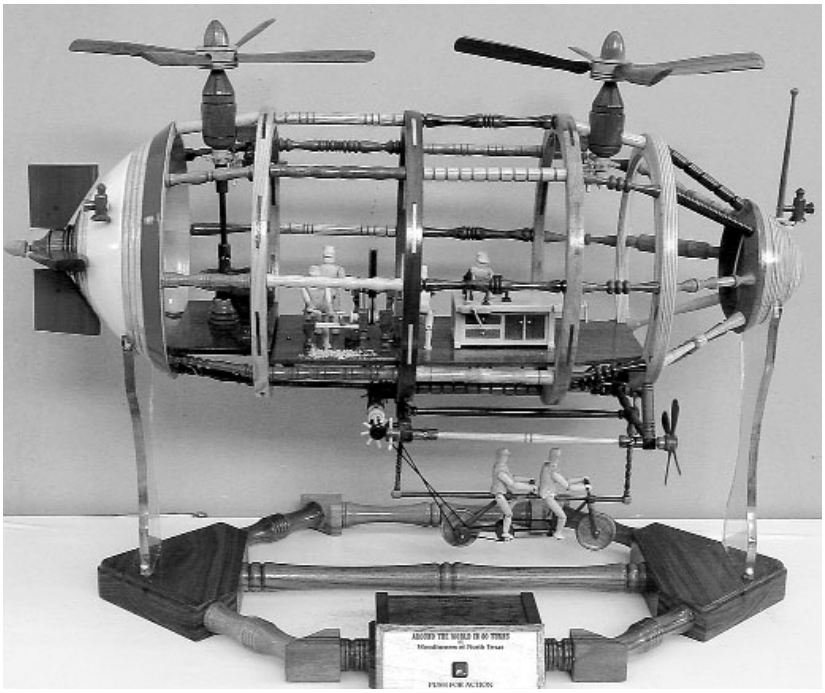
other display refinements that collectors and artists are constantly struggling with. There were other panel discussions, special gallery tours and, co-sponsored by AAW and Bank of America, sidewalk-turning demonstrations.

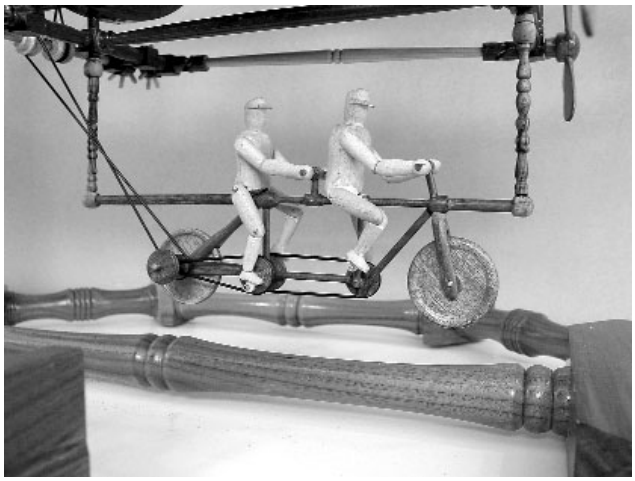
This opening we hope is predictive of more such events in the near future. Generosity, good fellowship and camaraderie characterized it. But that is just the first glimpse of the dust jacket of a very worthwhile book. The interest here is intense and its focus is education ... educating the public, including other museums, colleges and universities, galleries, the world of Art and the world of Small Children about wood and its place and importance as Art. And yes, that's Art with a capital "A".

Ken Keoughan is a contributing editor to American Woodturner.

From Pedal Power to Rotary Engines

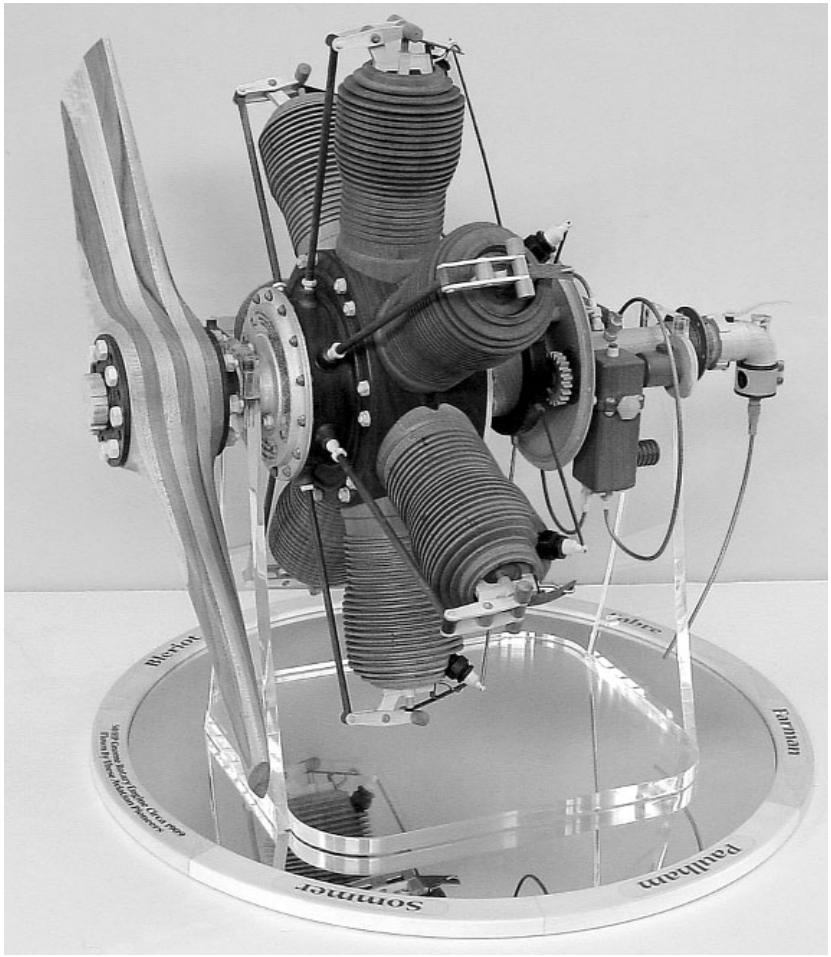
Charlotte Prize Winners Strut Their Stuff





2nd Place — North Texas Woodturners — *Around The World in 80 Turns. Photos: Larry Mart*

The First, Second and Third place winners of this year's Chapter Collaborative competition at the Charlotte Symposium are shown here and on the front cover. For photos of the three honorable mention winners and other entries, see pages 41-45.



3rd Place — Massachusetts South Shore Woodturners — Gnome Rotary Engine.