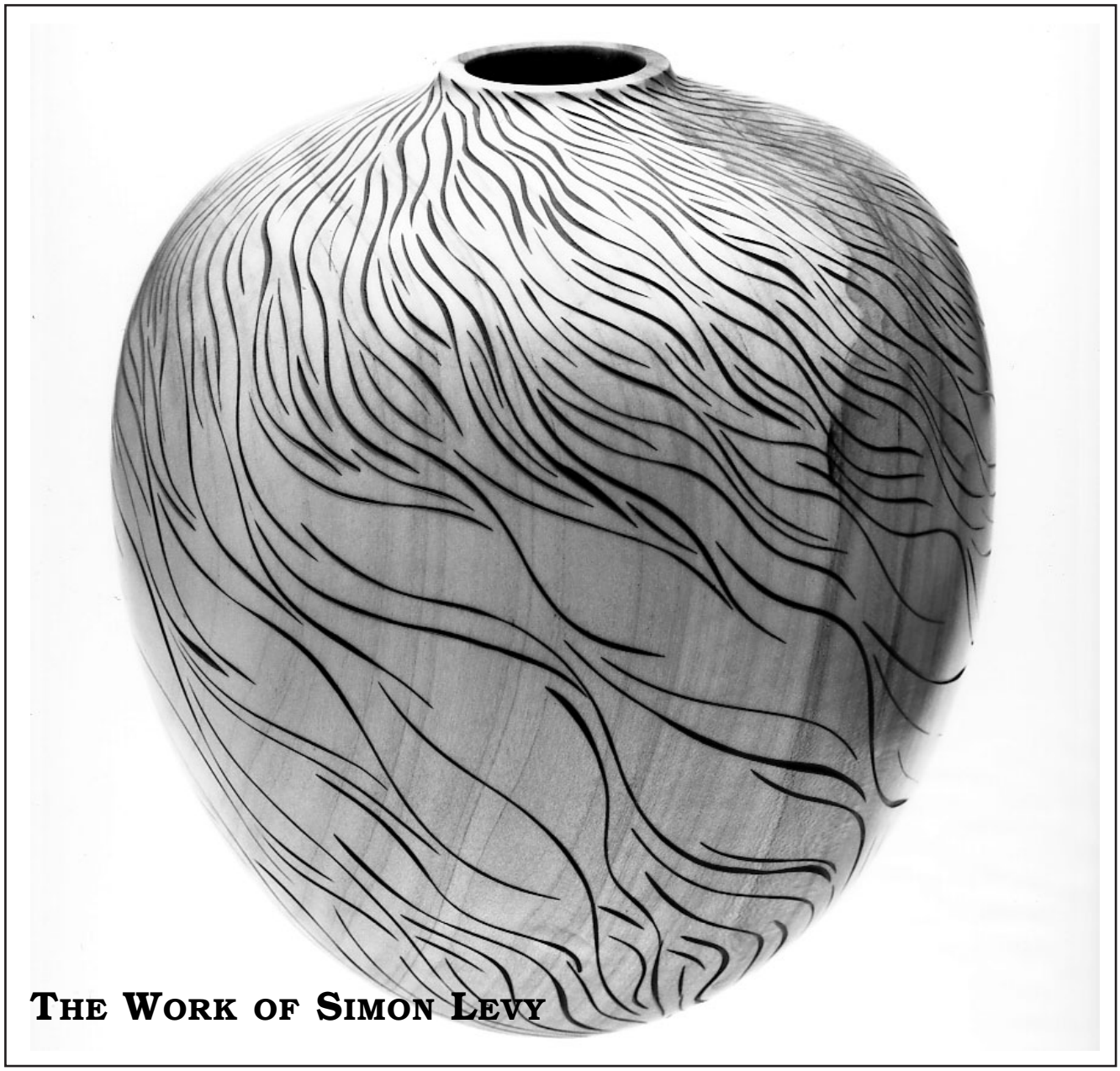
■ Turning Ornaments ■ German Symposium ■ Bowls With Handles ■ Hackberry ■

American Woodturner

The Journal of the American Association of Woodturners Winter 2000 $5.00 Vol. 15, No. 4



THE WORK OF SIMON LEVY

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

IN A COUPLE WORDS *OR* THE TALE OF TWO TERMS

I SOMETIMES FIND IT FUN TO PLAY WITH the comparison, and significance of words. I guess more succinctly, I want to look at the impact of two behavioral actions.

One is **Competition**. To paraphrase Webster it means a rivalry or contest for a prize, honor, or advantage. Our country was founded on free competition — well, let's not get started on that. One example given in my dictionary is: "small businesses are getting a lot of competition from the chain stores." Ask the small businessman if it is good for him? Competition can be a motivator to help people reach their potential. The downside of competition is that for one to win or gain an advantage, others must lose or experience a disadvantage. Although all might improve, it creates barriers between participants.

The other term I want to look at is **Cooperation**. This is defined as working together for a common purpose. "For a company to be prosperous, cooperation between the different departments is paramount." Cooperation can lead to lasting relationships.

A football or basketball team must compete to be successful, but it first must have cooperation within the team. So which is of greater importance? I am sure this will vary depending on the situation to which they are being applied.

Now let's apply them to the AAW. I think we can agree that both are involved to some extent. So, which is more important? Hands down, in my opinion, it is cooperation. Man's competitive nature has been a hindrance to the forward progress of the organization, when someone feels his way is better than that expressed by the rest. As I see it, this organization was founded through the cooperation of some experienced turners to improve the skills and knowledge of themselves and any others that are interested in turning wood and the product thereof. It is the function of the directors to observe the general feelings of the membership through attending mini symposiums, demonstrating at chapters, and talking and listening to individual members. We then cooperatively work to develop policies that are reasonable and fair for all.

This spirit of cooperation is distinctly well expressed in the execution of a symposium. If you have been involved in one at any level, you know what I am talking about. If you haven't been involved in one, you still probably know what I mean and I invite you to get involved if you like cooperative efforts. The Chapter Challenge is just one way that the AAW promotes cooperation within individual chapters. The whole learning process at whatever level is accomplished through cooperation of mentors and demonstrators. This is what makes this organization flourish.

This outstanding journal is a very real example of cooperation. It begins between the Board, the Administrator and Dick, our excellent Editor, and his supporting staff of assistant and contributing editors and, of course, all the work done by Dick's wife Lorraine. The cooperation goes far beyond that as so many members contribute through articles, tips and comments. It is only because of this cooperation that we can have such a terrific journal at such a reasonable cost.

Any organization requires teamwork or it is doomed. For the board of directors to function, cooperation is imperative within the committees as well as between them. Sure, there are differences of opinions, but there is no room for competition here. No one should be here with the objective to overpower the rest and exert his individual will or personal agenda. We presently have a cohesive group including the Board of Directors, Administrator, and the Editorial Staff. This makes it possible for us to concentrate on those issues that are of importance to you, the membership. We should leave the spirit of competition to the selling of the turnings.

In the next issue, I think I will delve into the terms **Craftsman** and **Artist**. That should be interesting. Feel free to send your thoughts on these words to barriger@magicnet.net.

THE REVOLVING CLIMATE

Still on the subject of cooperation, I would like to acknowledge two persons for their long and less than appropriately rewarded service to the AAW.

Roger Austin is resigning from his role as Webmaster. He is solely responsible for building the entire Web and Email that exists within the AAW. Thank you, Roger, for your years of service to this program.

Larry Hasiak will complete his two terms on the board at the end of this month. We have already rewarded him with the pigtail gouge but I would like to acknowledge his years of unselfish toil as treasurer protecting your money. Last year he served on five committees and was chair of two. Thank you Larry, for the time spent worrying over those books.

Bob Rosand has been reelected and will begin his second three-year term on January 1. He will continue to serve as chair of the publications committee and work with educational opportunities and by-laws and policies.

We welcome two new members who have been elected to serve three-year terms. We are looking forward to the help of Willard Baxter in the areas of conference committee, as well as chapters and membership. He says he will be glad to serve wherever we need him. Of course, we will still expect him to do the auction at the symposiums. The other welcome addition to the board is Lee Carter from Colorado. Lee is eager to help where needed and we are letting him get started in Conference,Educational Opportunity and the newly formed Internet Committee.

—Dave Barriger is president of AAW.

American Woodturner

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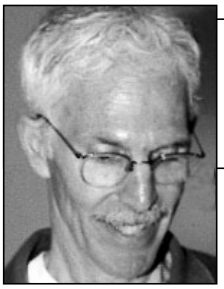
A Note about your Safety
An accident at the lathe can happen with blinding suddenness; respiratory problems can build over years. Take appropriate precautions when you turn. Safety guidelines are published in the AAW Resource Directory. Following them will help ensure that you can continue to enjoy woodturning.



On the cover: Simon Levy works in a small shop, where it is a virtue to avoid clutter. And, it's also part of his aesthetic. "Keeping the shop uncluttered helps you do work that is uncluttered," he says. Read more about his exquisite work and how he does it on Page 12-15. Cover photo by John S. Cummings.

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

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Spalting and Safety

Since my introduction to woodturning, about three years ago, I have developed a desire to learn all that I can, especially when it comes to safety. I have read many comments regarding spalted wood and the necessity to exercise added caution when turning it. Having worked and been educated in the fields of forestry and wood technology, I have never seen any professional publication or article that emphasizes safety when working with spalted wood, over and above, the general precautions one should take when working with any wood.

I have a suspicion that an unwarranted fear has developed among turners that spalted wood is toxic to turners. Spalting is the result of an attack by a wood-rotting fungus. This fungus will infect wood but will it infect humans? Most of us are susceptible to allergens of one kind or another. I have more than my share, but I have never personally seen any ill affects, either dermal or respiratory, from turning spalted wood. My curiosity has prompted me to research the effects of spalted wood on humans. Any reference that you or Journal readers could provide would be appreciated. Of course, all of us should exercise good judgement by using general safety precautions when turning, and go to the necessary extreme when turning woods, especially exotics, that have been found to be toxic in one way or another.

I feel obligated to comment on another safety issue that I speak on from experience. A recent issue of the Journal addresses the practice of ripping bolts with a chain saw to produce turning blanks. This is a dangerous activity even if one is experienced and has the proper equipment.

About three years ago I was doing this very thing, ripping bolts into turning blanks, when the saw I was using kicked back and struck me. It took five hours in the emergency room and 150 stitches to repair the damage to my face and shoulder! My eye was probably saved because of the fact that I was wearing my safety glasses. I was fortunate that I did not lose an eye or any teeth, or that a major blood vessel was not damaged.

I had many years' experience using a saw without an incident. Experience is no guarantee. One should always use the proper safety equipment, a saw that is equipped with a chain brake and a chain that is designed for ripping. I was using a light weight saw without either. I now have a professional grade saw, with TWO chain brakes, and believe it to be much safer because of the added weight and power.

Always use extreme caution when ripping with a chain saw, even when using the proper safety equipment and a properly equipped saw.

Mike Wade,Parkersburg, WV

Thoughts on Instant Gallery Critique

The critique of the Instant Gallery has always been one of the highlights of our national conferences. Stoney Lamar and I conducted the critique this year and with 1500 pieces to choose from, it was indeed a challenge deciding which objects to select.

As a pure learning experience, the gallery critique is unique. You have a blending of many styles and approaches that have been produced by people of all ages and experience levels which, when placed side-by-side, provides a wonderful visual mix. Secondly, those if us conducting the critique have the opportunity to respond directly and spontaneously to what we see before us. The participants can thus learn about the fundamentals of good design, plus exposure to ideas and concepts that they might otherwise not have considered. Similarly, the critics have a chance to observe the growth of our field through the objects we see. We try to select pieces which illustrate both strong and weak elements in design in an effort to help people understand how to improve their own efforts.

There is, of course, the anxiety of anticipation. "Will they choose 'my' piece"... which is a natural part of this event. Chosen or not, gaining perspective from an outside point of view is what makes these critiques so valuable to the growth of our field: object by object.

—David Ellsworth, Quakertown, PA and Stoney Lamar, Saluda, NC

Reflections on Competition

In reflecting on the collaborative projects at Charlotte, there has been a concern among some of the smaller chapters that the competition, as it is now structured, gives the larger groups a decided advantage.

I suggest that is it more a question of desire, imagination, determination, and commitment of the members participating rather than the sheer volume of the membership that governs whether a chapter can produce a competitive project.

In our case, only 17 of 100 members elected to participate in the collaborative project. Of those 17, about one third did most of the work. Such a ratio, though unfortunate, is probably typical of most projects that volunteer groups undertake.

In my opinion, selecting the right leader, who has the vision, organizational ability, and drive to accomplish the task is more important by far than the size of the chapter or the technical turning ability of the individual members.

In our case, many of the individual turnings were produced by turn-

Letters edited for clarity and space.

ers with relatively little woodturning experience, but the final product was successful because our leader, Fred Denke, did an outstanding job of planning, management, encouragement, and supervision of the total project.

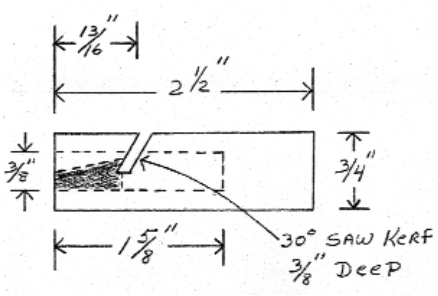
The collaborative project has provided our chapter with a deeper appreciation of the skills of our members, an opportunity to make new friends among our membership, and a vehicle to give the public an appreciation of the art and craft of woodturning as we display the project at a variety of functions in our community. We hope that all chapters, no matter their size, participate in the collaborative challenge next year.

— John Horn, president
Woodturners of North Texas

Echoes of the fipple

There have been several questions about the fipple mentioned in my article on Turning Whistles in the Summer 2000 Journal (Vol 15, No.2).

Below is a detailed print showing the fipple in place (the shaded area represents the fipple.) In order for the whistle to work, when you blow the air needs to flow upward across the fipple and be split by the sharp



intersection you created with the saw kerf and bored hole. Also on this size whistle the $^{3}/_{8}$-in. hole needs to be bored $1^{5}/_{8}$-in deep for the best sound results. Have fun and turn a bunch of Christmas gifts. Folks will love them.

— Mart St. Leger, Pearisburg, VA.

Remembering Charles Culpepper

Charles Culpepper of Rollingfork, MS was an unusual man of character. He was my close friend. At his funeral I found that most everyone there considered they were his close friend. I have heard it said "you don't know Charles Culpepper until you have heard him pray." The pastor that preached at his funeral said Charles "had the audacity to think there was nothing he couldn't do." He was adept with his hands. He was an artist -- pencil sketches of the Mississippi Delta scenes.

Charles was a woodworker, as was his father. He was not always a woodturner. He became a woodturner shortly before his retirement in 1993. Few have more vigorously embraced woodturning! He enjoyed vacationing near Gatlinburg, TN. There he could attend a woodturning class at Arrowmont , while his family (especially the grandchildren) enjoyed the mountains.

It was his desire that Mississippi charter a chapter of AAW! With Charles as a founding member, Magnolia Woodturners, Inc. was formed June 16, 1996.

Macular degeneration, a severe eye problem caused Charles to become known as the Craftsman's Guild of Mississippi's "Blind Woodturner."

As the disease progressed his wife, Ann, helped him remain productive. He saw by feeling. Diagnosis of emphysema and lung cancer didn't alter Charles' positive attitude or deter his interest in turning wood. Providing the program for Magnolia Woodturners, Inc., his message was simple - "make every cut as though it is your finish cut!"

His funeral was a celebration! He asked that he not be in repose. He considered that his turnings were representative of his "spirit." He wanted his turnings to be our focus. Much of his work. including some pictured here, belongs to collectors. There is a lot to be celebrated about Charles Culpepper's life!

Secure in his faith, he wanted us to view his turnings as we celebrated his life!

— Adrian Sturdivant, Brandon, MS. Charles wrote a letter "Executive Shop Cleaning Duties" in the Winter 1999 Journal.

RAY ALLEN, TURNER OF SEGMENTED VESSELS, DIES

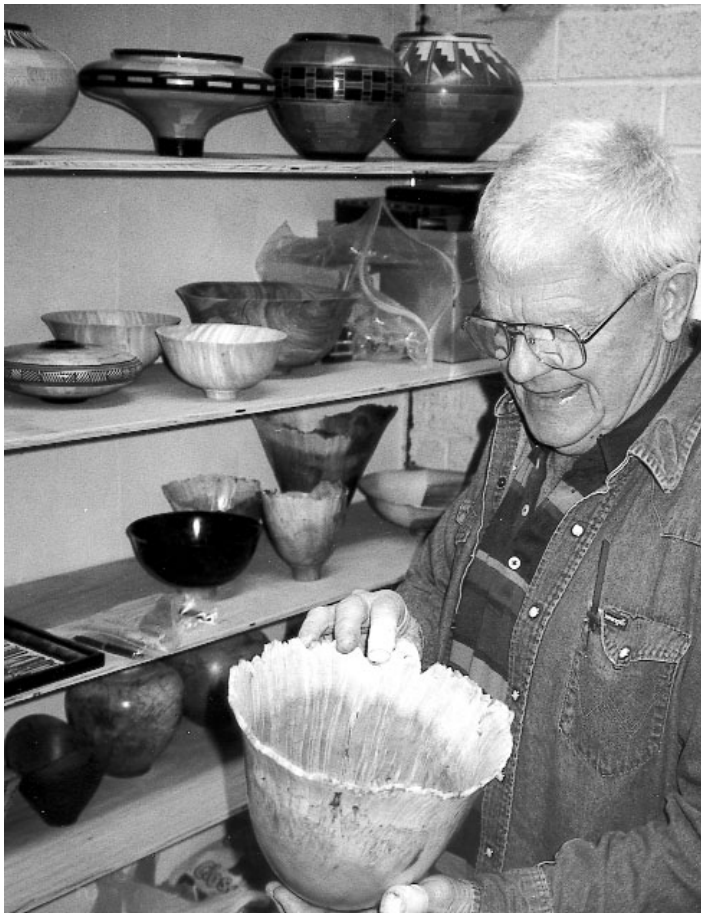
Ray Allen, a kind and loving human being and arguably the finest turner of constructed vessels who ever lived, passed away on August 11 due to complications following heart surgery in Yuma, Arizona. He is survived by his wife Phyllis, two children and four grandchildren.

Ray was born near Dickson, TN, in 1930. After graduating from high school and serving in the U.S. Air Force, he was a carpenter, a trade he followed for 30 years before becoming a full-time woodturner in 1988.

Few turners have ever found a calling as passionately as Ray. He quickly became a recognized artisan in the world of woodturning. His complex Southwest designs became recognized as a standard in segmented turnings. He said that his inspiration came from prehistoric and present day Southwest Indian pottery. He loved the intricacy of design and the shapes so well identified with American Indians. The challenge of translating the pottery designs into wood became his obsession for the next 22 years.

Ray was a teacher. He enjoyed inviting interested woodturners to share a day or more with him in his studio in Yuma. I was fortunate to be one of his students. My time with Ray became a defining experience in the direction of my work. He told me that one of his greatest pleasures was as a teacher sharing his skills with others. Many of the world's well known turners also came to Yuma. Ray said he enjoyed trading "war stories" and sharing the many secrets of turning with theses colleagues. One of Ray's most appreciated attributes was in "telling it like it is." He never glossed over a situation that rankled him. When asked what he thought of a certain supplier of wood, Ray told me "Don't spend a penny on that company, you won't like the results." When the time with him was over I looked at my many pages of notes and realized the treasure trove of useful ideas I had gathered as well as some homespun philosophy.

Ray's vessels appeared in many galleries and craft fairs over the years. His favorite gallery, del Mano in Los Angeles, began showing his work in 1992. In 1996, he had a one- man show there, displaying twelve pieces, priced up to $18,000. At the AAW banquet in North Carolina this year, a 4-in. turning of Ray's auctioned off for $800. He also liked the challenge of large size turnings. In 1994, the *Yuma Sun* carried an article describing the biggest vessel on record, a piece 36-in. in diameter and 32-in. tall, composed of 2777 pieces of wood weighing 47 pounds. In 1999 Ray acquired a John Nichols large lathe and produced his



Ray Allen, above, was considered by many to be one of the best makers of laminated turnings in the world. His largest piece was 48-in. in diameter and made up of more than 7,000 pieces of wood. Photo: Courtesy of author.

life's largest vessel, 48-in. in diameter with more than 7000 pieces of wood. Ray was photographed curled up in his creation. This size turning will be difficult for mere mortal turners to ever surpass.

Ray's work is on display in some prominent museum, including the Renwick Craft Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, the Irving Lipton Collections at the Erie Art Museum in Erie, Pennsylvania, the Detroit Art Museum in Detroit, Michigan, the Honolulu Contemporary Museum in Hawaii, the American Craft Museum in New York and the Edward Jacobson Collection of Arizona State University in Tempe. His work is also in private collections in Europe, Asia, Australia, South America and the United States. His collectors might better be called fans, often buying new turnings sight unseen. One collector in the United States has 36.

"He said that his inspiration came from prehistoric and present day Southwest Indian pottery. He loved the intricacy of design and the shapes so well identified with American Indians. The challenge of translating the pottery designs into wood became his obsession for the next 22 years."

Ray was not a tall person at 5 foot 8 inches, but he was a giant in his field. He influenced the contemporary woodturning movement in the world in a profound way.

He leaves behind an army of admirers in the craft of turning wood into beautiful objects of art which will be treasured by their owners. Those of us who were lucky enough to know him will greatly miss the gentle giant in the craft of turning wood into beautiful objects of art.

— Dave Ramsey, Rio Verde, AZ

Featured Demonstrators named for Symposium 2001

The featured national and international demonstrators for the St.Paul Symposium. July 6-8, 2001 will be:

INTERNATIONAL:
Soren Berger, New Zealand
Ray Key, England
Hans Weissflog, Germany

NATIONAL:
Bonnie Klein, Washington
Mike Mahoney, Utah
Dale Nish, Utah
Al Stirt, Vermont

Each featured demonstrators will do six rotations. Demonstrators who will do two to four rotations will be announced in the Spring Journal.

Inspired by Nature Exhibit Deadline in March

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.

The show will include invited and juried turners; no more than 20% will be invited. Jurying (from slides; deadline March 1) will be by David Ellsworth and Sandy Blain. Accepted work will need to arrive in St. Paul by early April 2001. Applications for the show are at the back of this 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

ROCKY MOUNTAIN WOODTURNERS HOLD 2ND SYMPOSIUM

The Rocky Mountain Woodturners (RMWT) second annual turning symposium was another smash hit last September with local turners and several not so local turners from as far away as Michigan, Tennessee, and California.

This journey began with 1994 AAW National Symposium in Ft. Collins, CO. That event sparked the formation of the Rocky Mountain Woodturners with notables such as Dr. Lee Carter, David Nittmann, Trent Bosch, and five other dedicated woodturners. Over the next 4 years the club continued to expand and evolve. David had a dream of doing a "mini symposium" in October, but it never went beyond the discussion stage until 1999. The timing, the mix of people with the time, motivation and energy was finally all present.

The first symposium was planned for almost a year, with lots of meetings and a $1000.00 Educational Grant from the AAW as seed money. Several club members had been to the AAW and Provo, UT, Symposiums, and with their experience and the advice in the AAW's Symposium Guide and a wonderful write up sent to us by the Central New England Woodturners, we jumped in with both feet. Our 1999 October Symposium was held at the Industrial Arts shops, labs and classrooms in two buildings at Colorado State University. We had everything the big symposiums have: six demos going simultaneously with a mix of professional and local turners, with four rotations, a trade show/tool sale area, a Beginners Room, Instant Gallery, lunches and tee shirts and even snow! Our first symposium, generated enough money for us to make a significant payment on our first club lathe.

The first symposium really drained the club's energy. Most people involved had to postpone other things in their lives to work on the committees, and needed to get back to their families, lives, jobs and of course woodturning. I had started on one of the 1999 symposium committees but ended up dropping off due to the load of college classes, family responsibilities and a full-time job. I did volunteer to staff the Beginners Room for the entire day. It was truly a remarkable event to stand with a person who had never held a turning tool and guide them into making a top, goblet or bowl.

After months of vacillation, in April I finally committed and told the club President, Jon Fosse, that I would volunteer to be the Symposium Chairman. Curt Theobald, a self-employed cabinetmaker, wanted to do the Program. Dick Moody, one of our always busy retirees, took on the Registration and Publicity committees for a second year. I went to work recruiting the rest of the committee chairmen, and was told "no" more than once. David Gillespie, a dynamo of youthful energy and caffeine, who works a full and a part-time job, and is selling work in several local galleries, agreed to head the Staging Committee. I needed two more and was able to get Kevin Dunn, who on top of being involved in several other clubs and a family works at a retail lumber yard, to take on the Show committee, which handles the business of lunch, coffee, pop, donuts and tee shirts. He recruited his wife, Rene to help out at the symposium.

Of special interest to me was the Beginners Room, which we decided to call the Hands On Learning Center. After carefully considering who might have time for this important job, I contacted Dick Branecki, another of our club's retirees and original club members. I knew he was busy, donating time to Habitat For Humanity, selling turnings and carvings at several local galleries and shows, and with the help of his wife Vicki, is building a new home up in the mountains. I lucked out when he said he would.

Also working with us was the club's President, Jon Fosse. When Jon is not working on club business, he is a self-employed production spindle turner and family man. Along with Jon, Nancy Quick-Brewer, our Secretary/Newsletter Editor was there as well. Another retiree with disabilities, and a terminally ill daughter, she worked on mailing lists, creating info sheets, getting copies, and running errands and delivering brochures. I structured the committee the way I run projects at work; each individual was empowered to make decisions for their respective areas, coordinating as needed with the other committee members. At our regular meetings, each explained where they were in completing their tasks.

The first hurdle was the site selection. To avoid spreading out in two buildings again, we booked the Chilson Community Recreation Center, in Loveland, CO, a wonderful facility containing a senior and recreation center located less than an hours drive up into the beautiful Estes and Rocky Mountain National Parks. We agreed on a program consisting of 5 demos with 4 rotations, two internationally known turners and the rest from the area. The entire program had to be diverse enough to attract both the experienced turners and people who were seeing woodturning for the first time. Curt had to work out a well rounded program, working out the equipment and room requirements of each demonstrator. Once this was done, the Program plan was given to Staging. Dave and his assistant Dale Ketchner, had to borrow, rent and transport the equipment needed to make the demonstrations happen.

Inviting known turners with mail-

TURNERS MEET IN THE ROCKIES

Cindy Drozda showed how to turn an earring stand. Photo by Lorraine.Burrows.

ing labels provided by the AAW was easy enough; getting the mailing list from the other two area clubs was also needed so brochures could be sent to them as well. There are turners that are not members of the AAW that we needed to notify. From the beginning one of our points of focus was on reaching out to students and teachers in the high schools and local colleges. A mailing list for schools statewide was purchased from the State Department of Education. After hours of culling through the list of over 1400 schools, a run of 472 mailing labels was printed that covered Colorado schools grades 9-12, that included public, private, parochial, alternative, and even schools for disabled children. Using the Internet several more schools in southern Wyoming were added to the mailing list. Nancy also started placing brochures in the arts buildings and student centers of the local colleges and in lumber yards, woodworking stores and a few selected restaurants, and sending symposium information to our Webmaster, Bruno Melli to be placed on our website.

The last Saturday in September finally arrived. At 7:00 AM the doors opened and we began bringing in all the equipment and setting up. A pleasant surprise, through Dr. Carter, his friend Dale Nish had arrived with a load of turning items and was setting up in the Hands On Learning Center. Dale brought some new spindle tools to show us. The assortment of lathes in the Hands On Learning Center was impressive. Anyone could take a Bonnie Klein, Record, Vicmarc, Woodfast, Jet, and a Delta for a spin. By the time we thought of contacting Oneway for some casters, they couldn't get them to us in time to drag in a 950 pound 2436. The Instant Gallery was set up; the demonstrators had been getting ready for the first rotation. By 9:00 the rooms were milling with anxious attendees. The 2000 symposium was kicked off with opening ceremonies and introductions of all the demonstrators, complete with slides of their work. Once the first rotation started a few of us got to sit down with a big sigh and some coffee; it was finally going! But, soon we were back up and checking attendance of the different demonstrations, which is great information for planning next year's program.

Mike Mahoney from Utah and Dick Sing from Illinois worked hard doing different demonstrations for each of their three rotations. Mike did production bowls, urns with threaded lids and hollow forms, while Dick did platters, ornaments and of course his signature pens. Both were able to demonstrate awe inspiring work with such ease and humor. Colorado area demonstrators included Joe Aquila doing lace bobbins and Steve DeJong with two rotations turning goblets and micro and miniature turnings. Both are members of the Pike's Peak Woodturners club located in Colorado Springs. From the Front Range Woodturners club in Denver, Keith Gotschall turned natural edge bowls and Pete Holtus, with two rotations, made birdhouses and boxes.

And from our club, David Nittmann did an informative presentation on sharpening. Dr. Lee Carter showed goblets with a twist and wooden cases for pocket measuring tapes. Cindy Drozda made a Rowley styled earring stand, while David Gillespie showed a square edged bowl. Doug Schneiter made wooden pebbles, Doc Thode demonstrated his thread chasing techniques. Don Deatherage went through an assortment of homemade jigs, fixtures and tools. And lastly, the symposium Program Chairman, Curt Theobald demonstrated segmented turning jigs and fixtures. We were surprised that a process that requires great patience, time, attention to detail and what can be tedious repetition was the demonstration with the highest attendance. In the Hand On Learning Center, Dick Branecki demonstrated ornaments, John Schefick made candle sticks and tops, Allen Jensen made bowls and hollow vessels. And finally Roger Hughs

MORE REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM REPORTS

turned weed pots.

As the day progressed several things stood out. First, the Hands On Learning Center had anywhere from 4 to 15 people in it all day long. The Instant Gallery, which was in the lobby and open to the public, attracted a steady stream of people not attending the symposium. This is an amazingly social event. There were 15 minute breaks and a 1 hour lunch between the rotations and everyone was busy talking. The day went by far too quickly; many asked if we had contemplated a two-day event. We ended with a closing ceremony, raffling off donated items from the AAW, Craft Supply, The Wood Emporium, BMC West, Starbond, the demonstrators and an attendee.

Of the notable attendees, the AAW was well represented by Dick Burrows and his wife Loraine who drove from Tennessee and Norm Hinman from California. It was great to discuss our symposium with them. Dick Sing's wife Cindy's ever-present smile and outgoing personality made everyone feel at ease and welcome.

Some interesting statistics about attendance: not counting demonstrators, 143 people were paying attendees. Of those 143 attending, 62 are locals attending their first symposium and are not members of the local chapters or the AAW. Four high school students spent much of the day in the Learning Center.

We are looking forward to our 3rd annual symposium in 2001. Mark your calendars for the last Saturday in September. Watch our website for information. We are posting photos of the 2000 event: www.verinet.com/~drmelli/rmwt.html.

— Wayne Van Every, Eaton, CO

Luxembourg's First International Woodturning Seminar

It was more than a challenge to organize a woodturning seminar and an exhibition in Luxembourg as there is no woodturning association here, no clubs, and no professionals. Woodturning is nearly unknown to the public, except for the presentation of the US collection "Out of the Woods" in 1995.

How many unknown woodturners might be working in their shops? Would the public be interested? These questions could not stop four amateur-woodturners, who convinced the National Craft Council to set up the country's first woodturning seminar by submitting the very best publications on the subject as well as selling our art with the most beautiful pictures. Finding the demonstrators was no problem, as there were: Melvyn Firmager and Albert Harrison (GB); Alain Mailland (F); and Paul Peeters (B)

French turner Alain Mailland demonstrates.

The seminar took place in a beautifully restored medieval castle in a village east of Luxembourg-City. The first two days saw 85 delegates attending, coming from Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and even Great-Britain. An unexpected positive surprise was the fact that almost 50% came from Luxembourg. The third day open to the general public knew a real big success. The first visitors entered the site before opening time and continued to flow in all day long. Permanent demonstrations in-and-outside the castle, a bright shining sun, flying ribbons of shavings delighted hundreds of spectators. Not to forget the public's enthusiasm for the splendid exhibition (with good sales) of the demonstrators' work as well as for a choice of turnings created by a few Luxembourg amateurs. The success of the event could be measured by the media coverage: A TV report, several radio interviews, articles in two national magazines and newspapers.

— Edgar Back, Luxembourg

TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS SYMPOSIUM

The 13th annual TAW symposium was held at Arrowmont School for Arts and Crafts last August. This is our annual fundraiser to support scholarships, educational donations to teaching institutions and to promote the art and craft of woodturning.

We also call it a "fun raiser" since we hope that everyone will have a good time, as well as learn to be a better turner.

This year we had four demonstrators. Dave Barriger, John Jordan, John Mascoll and Pat Matranga. When you combine that group with a facility like Arrowmont something good is bound to happen.

Each instructor passed on his or her method of sharpening and shaping tools. I think everyone learned a great deal from this.

After watching John Jordan and Dave Barriger demo, it was obvious from the questions that there was a lot of interest in green woodturning. John Jordan hosted an after-hours class for those interested in green wood and wood movement. This was definitely worth staying up late to see. We all got a good dose of what happens when wood dries.

Pat Matranga at TN Symposium. Photos by author.

Pat Matranga and John Mascoll passed on their enthusiasm for woodturning along with a myriad of techniques for using the turning tools and adding texture and color to the piece. Did I mention they both had a great sense of humor?

Arrowmont has a wide variety of lathes to drool over and John Jordan brought the Omega Stubby to entice us further.

This year we had three vendors to help our guests get the wood and tools that they need to have fun on the lathe. Atlanta Wood Products had a huge selection of burls, Mahogany Hill from Jackson, TN had a large selection of Cocobolo, and Willard Baxter had a selection of Robert Sorby tools and Oneway chucks.

If you haven't been to Gatlinburg or Arrowmont you are missing a great opportunity. We are planning another great symposium for next year so bring the family and enjoy our Tennessee hospitality.

— John Lucas, Cookeville, TN

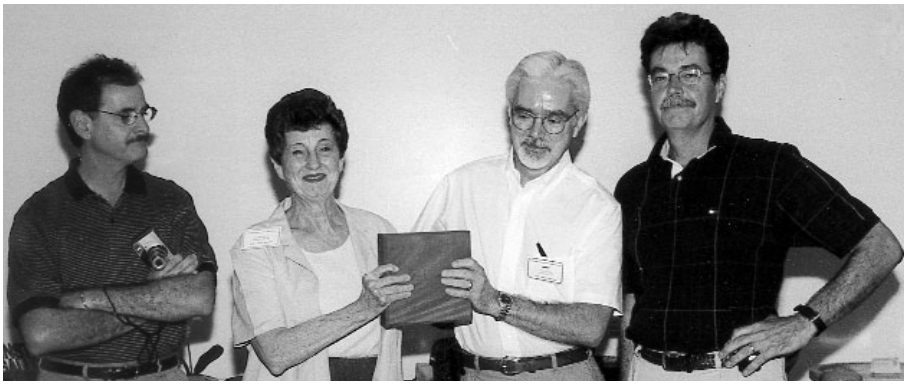
TAW Honors Former Board Member Charles Alvis

The TAW presented a donation to Arrowmont School for Arts and Crafts in Charles Alvis' name. During the TAW symposium a memorial brick was presented to Jeanne Alvis and will be inscribed "In memory of Charles Alvis by the Tenn. Assn.. of Woodturners." The engraved paver brick will be placed in the entrance walkway of the woodturning shop.

The annual TAW symposium is a fund raising event that Charles believed in very strongly.

In 1985 Charles began taking classes at Arrowmont. In 1986 Charles and eleven others started the TAW. He was the founding president.

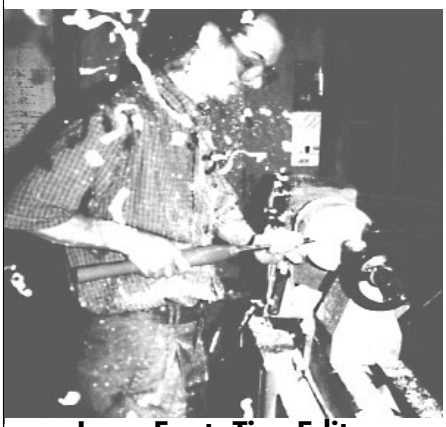
Charles taught at Arrowmont at least 8 times and assisted turners such as Del Stubbs, Ray Key and Al Stirt.



Jeanne Alvis , second from left, receives an engraved paver at Arrowmont school in honor of her husband, and former AAW board member. Charles Alvis who died last year.Also present were Bill Griffith, Mike Zinser and Steve Reilly

Charles showed his dedication to woodturning by serving as a board member and as President of the AAW. He was a friend and mentor to many and will be missed. We at the TAW owe Charles our gratitude for the contributions he made to woodturning and to the TAW.— *JL*

Variation on Vacuum Chuck

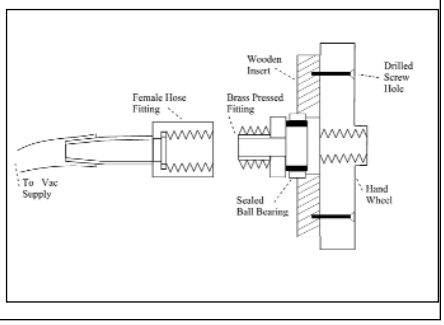


Jerry Fant, Tips Editor
Wimberly, TX

Vacuum Chuck

The diagram at right shows a variation of the sealed-bearing type vacuum chuck. It may be unique in that the handwheel stays on the lathe at all times, and that the knock out bar can be used with all but the hose intact. The set-up time for use of the vac chuck is very fast. The pressed brass fitting was turned to the diameter of the bearing and pressed in. The bearing was epoxied into the wooden insert (Don't get epoxy in the bearing).

—Jerry Kroehn, Portage, Michigan
West Michigan Woodturners



Safety Tip:

A chuck with its jaws extended beyond the edge of the chuck body can be a real knuckle buster. Be safe by applying a piece of duct tape or masking tape to one jaw and let the tape extend past the jaw outward for about $^{1}/_{2}$-to-$^{3}/_{4}$-in. When the chuck is spinning and your hand gets a little too close to the extended jaws, now you will feel the gentle flapping of the tape against your hand instead of the hard, sharp steel biting into your flesh. Since I started using this technique, there are no more sudden surprises when I get close to the spinning jaws.

— John Horn, Fort Worth, TX

Hand Stain Remover

I recently decided to experiment with water soluble stains on my turnings. I was frequently getting stains on my fingers, even when trying to avoid it with plastic gloves. Washing never removed all of the skin stains. Finally, it occurred to me to try the stuff my wife uses to get clothes whiter — household bleach. By taking a little bleach, full-strength, on a small brush or paper towel, and rubbing it over the stained areas on my hands, all of the stains immediately disappeared. Make sure you don't have any cuts or sores on your hands when you try this. Then, wash your hands to get the residual bleach and odor off your skin.

— Phil Snyder, Mt. Laurel, NJ.

Editor's Note:

On Tannin Stains from woods like Walnut, Oak, and Mesquite lemon juice works very well.

Keeping Super Glue Fresh

I've heard lots of tips on keeping Super Glue fresh and unclogged. Here's one more. I keep mine in a Mason jar. There's a cap on the Mason jar but not on the glue bottle.

This allows enough air to let the glue drain back down the tip, but not so much that the glue sets. It's worked well for me; the bottle is just now going bad, and I bought it in spring of '99. And I live in an unairconditioned house in Maryland.

— David Smith, Maryland

Mini-Lathe Bed Additions

Bed length of a mini-lathe comes up a lot. While not a substitute for a full-length lathe you can do the following in a pinch. You can mount the tailstock "off bed" on those rare times when you need more length. Just mount the tailstock to a bench lined up with the headstock. You can even make ways for this to extend your length between centers to about 40-in. Keep the banjo on the cast iron bed of the lathe and flip the stock end for end to complete the turning. You can't put as much pressure on the piece between centers this way but it should be enough to securely hold and drive most pieces you want to turn. Certainly it's do for most tool handles and table legs.

— Richard Allen, Virginia

More On Mini-Lathe Beds

You can also make a wooden tool rest the full length of the handle (or leg) and then make a wooden support for the end. This is the way most of the early lathes were built and those guys turned a lot of chair legs. Use a hardwood. If you think you will have problems with the tool rest just imbed a piece of drill rod or angle iron in the top surface.

— John Lucas, Tennessee

Glasses Won't Stay On!

I have a tip that isn't woodturning, but sure is useful. When your glasses fall apart, you can glue the screw to the screwdriver with CA glue. This

makes it much easier to get the screw back in. You can also put CA glue on the threads to keep it from falling back out.

— John Lucas, Tennessee

Jamieson Handle Accessory

I have a Jamieson stabilizer handle and I use it for deep hollowing. It's a great tool, but I've always wanted to be able to mount different diameter tools in it (it only takes $^3/_4$-in. diameter tools, the same as the Stewart System). I thought maybe a drill chuck might work, and it did. The chuck capacity is $^3/_4$-in. and it has a $^3/_4$-in. straight shank that fits into the Jamieson handle. I now can mount my $^1/_2$-in. diameter Exocet and many other smaller shanked tools. It also gives me the ability for easy tool rotation (when you want to adjust the angle of the cutter to the wood). I purchased the chuck from a local tool supplier, but they currently don't stock it. I'm sure other tool suppliers would handle the chuck. I paid less than fifty dollars for the chuck and straight shank. It's made the stabilizer much more versatile.

—Basil Kelsey, Ypsilanti, MI

Finishing Tip

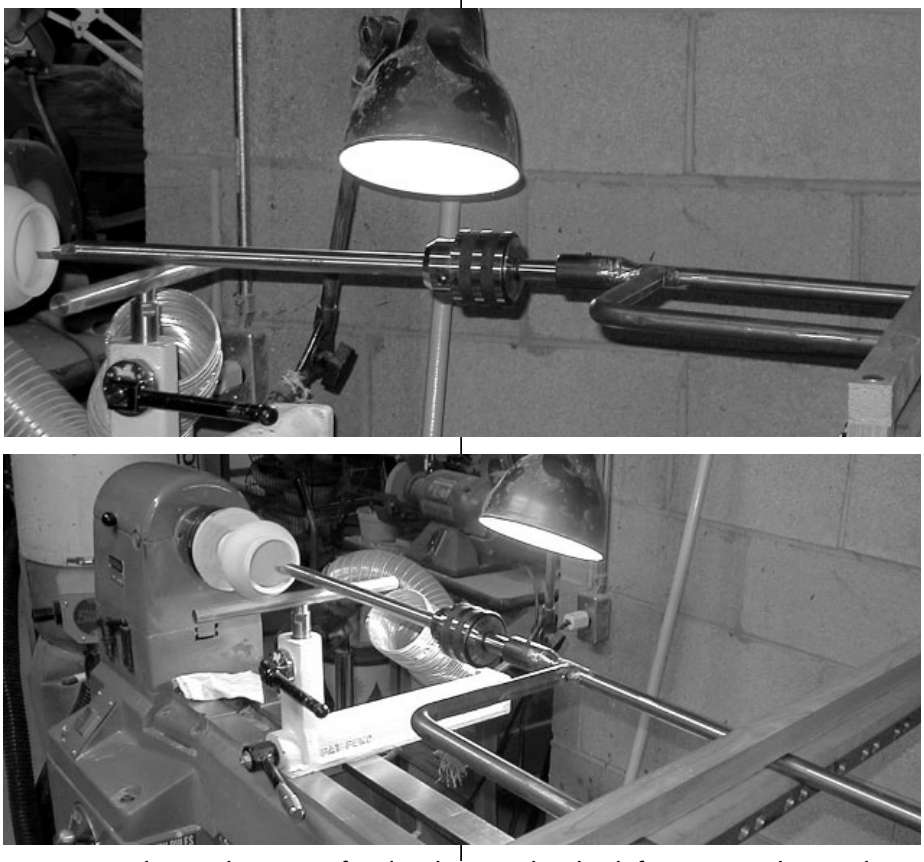
Following final sanding of your work, try wiping the turning down with a sheet of the new Pledge Wipers. They will remove all traces of sanding dust without leaving a film as tack cloths often do. They are also excellent for cleaning the workshop and keeping surfaces really dust-free. Try them and see!

— Ken Wattman, Pennsylvania

Making Scrapers

For the large scrapers buy high-speed-steel blanks from a machinist sized $^3/_8$-in. x $^3/_4$-in. Regrind the cutting edge into a thumbnail shape with a blunt grind angle. Grind the shoulders over on the socket end about 3-to-4-in. until it will just barely (snug) fit into a $^3/_4$-in. pipe. When you have the fit right, jam enough steel wool into the pipe to plug it 4-in. below the opening. Now, mix up two-part epoxy following the instructions. Pack it into the stuffed pipe end up to about $^3/_4$-in. depth. Drive the blade into the pipe and fill in the remaining void on either side of the blade with the remaining epoxy.

— Don Boles, Atlanta, GA



A Jamieson boring bar setup fitted with a Jacobs chuck for increased versatility.

Doing the Glue block twist

When I do hands-on workshops with larger groups, I make extensive use of glue blocks to which the turning stock is glued. The turning stock is attached with super glue and accelerator. In one class we had an abnormal rate of failures. The student would glue the pieces together, put them in the chuck, and as soon as he/she touched the tool to the piece, it would fly off the lathe. The mystery was solved, when I realized that the students were not firmly pressing the piece of wood with the glue on it to the piece with accelerator on it. The fumes from the accelerator were causing the glue to dry prematurely, resulting in a poor glue joint. Once I had the students twist and press the pieces together we had no further failures.

— Bob Rosand, Bloomsburg, PA

Trade a Tip for a Hat

Beginning with the Spring 2001 Journal, we will be giving an AAW ball cap for the best tip of each issue. To qualify, SEND YOUR TIPS TO JERRY FANT, 251 Gold Rush Circle, Wimberly, TX 78676

jerryfant@worldnet.att.net

SIMON LEVY

Finding your voice with sketch pad and lathe.

DICK BURROWS

SIMON LEVY'S WORK WHISPERS. THE message is enticing: mysterious, yet familiar; disciplined, but exuberant. Alive! As I began to decipher his visual clues, I realized I didn't care how he made each piece; I was just enjoying the experience.

It was refreshing jolt in an age when obsessions with techniques and materials often slap down the wide-eyed part of the soul that wants to delight in every shape, texture and color. Though I had seen photographs of his work, I was startled by my reaction the first time I saw his work up close during his show last year at the Appalachian Center of Crafts in Smithfield, TN. Once I started talking with Simon, I realized that he considered receiving such a response was better than blue ribbons for his work.

The blessing of vision

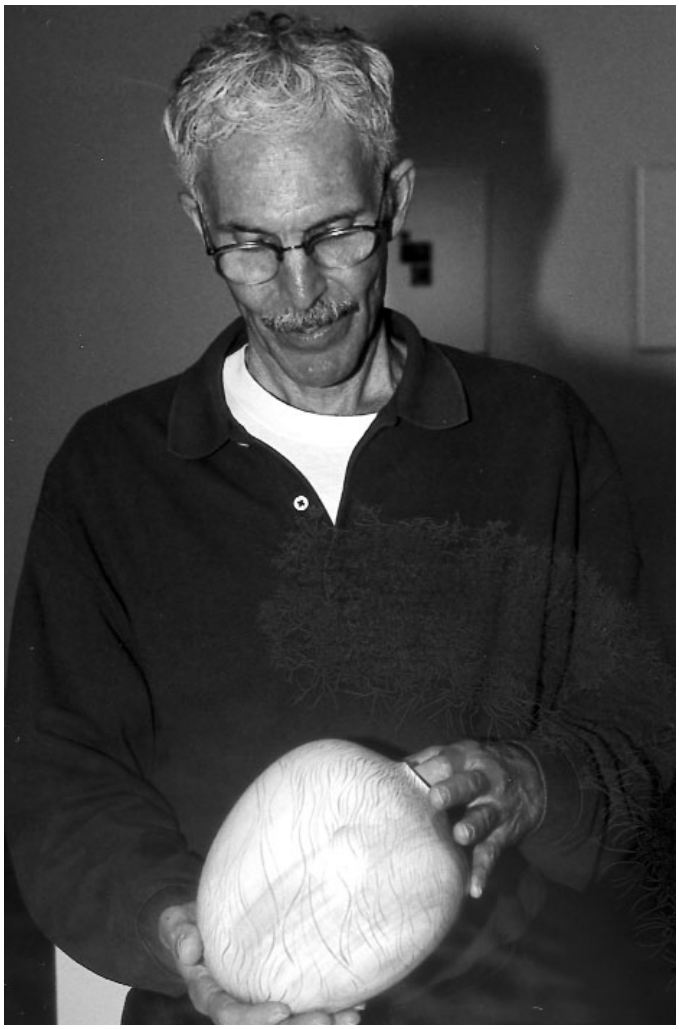
At one craft show, he said, a woman lead another into his booth. The second woman was blind. They asked about his work and he started putting the pieces in the blind woman's hands. She caressed them, and kept saying how really beautiful they were. "It was a humbling and rewarding feeling. And a feeling of gratefulness for the blessing of vision."

Kids also spark that same inner glow within him.

Earlier this year Simon sold a small, relatively simple sassafras vessel to a 9-year-old boy, who had come into his booth several times. The boy wanted to look at Simon's sketchbook, asked how the piece was made, what tools used, how the shape came from the log. "He was interested. He really wanted to know how the shape came from the log."

This was a new experience for him. When he was an art director designing album covers for country music stars, he never got to see the people flipping through the bins in the music shops, never had an opportunity to see their reactions. "Doing craft shows I can really see the fruits of my labors."

Simon took his first turning class in the Winter of 1996 with former AAW director Bill Stephenson at the Appalachian Center, about 70 miles from his home in Nashville, TN. Bill got him started, then hooked him on turning. Later that year he took another class, this time with another former director — Clay Foster — at Arrowmont School in Gatlinburg, TN. In Foster he found what Simon calls a "creative mentor and friend," the first of a series of mentors who would influence him over the years.



Simon Levy discusses his work in the gallery of the Appalachian Crafts Center.

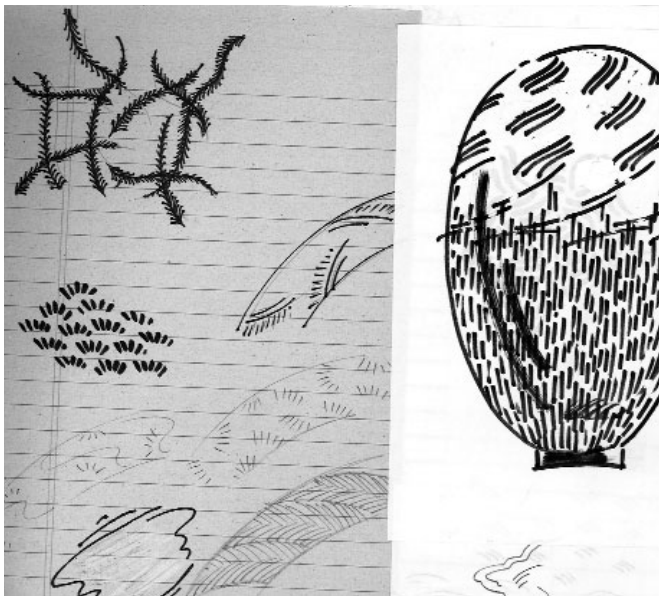
He soon set up a one-car garage shop, equipped it and went to work. "Everyone says don't quit your day job right away, but that was exactly what I did. I could have probably done turning part-time, but I knew in my heart that I needed to do it now. All my life I've been doing things that people said I shouldn't."

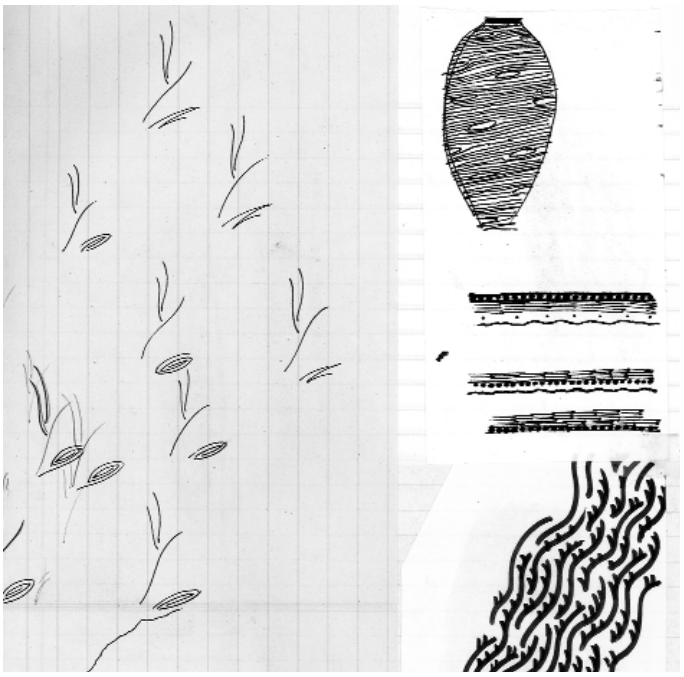
"I enjoy the solitude of the work. It's not so much that I am a loner, but for so many years I was so busy, so accustomed to dealing with so many things at once. My work now is solitary, more direct. I'm doing every aspect of it.

"It really suits me. I'm comfortable with other crafts people, and with the solitary process, doing my own work in my own space," which he describes as a simple shop.

"I invested in good machinery, and work in a really small space. With a small shop it's really a necessary virtue that you eliminate clutter as

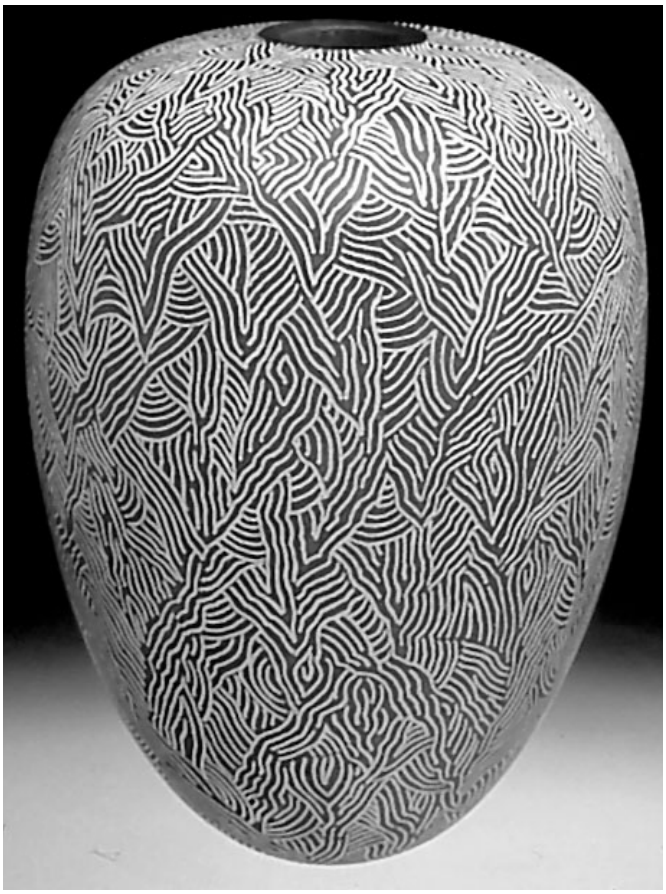
Thinking on Paper, working out ideas

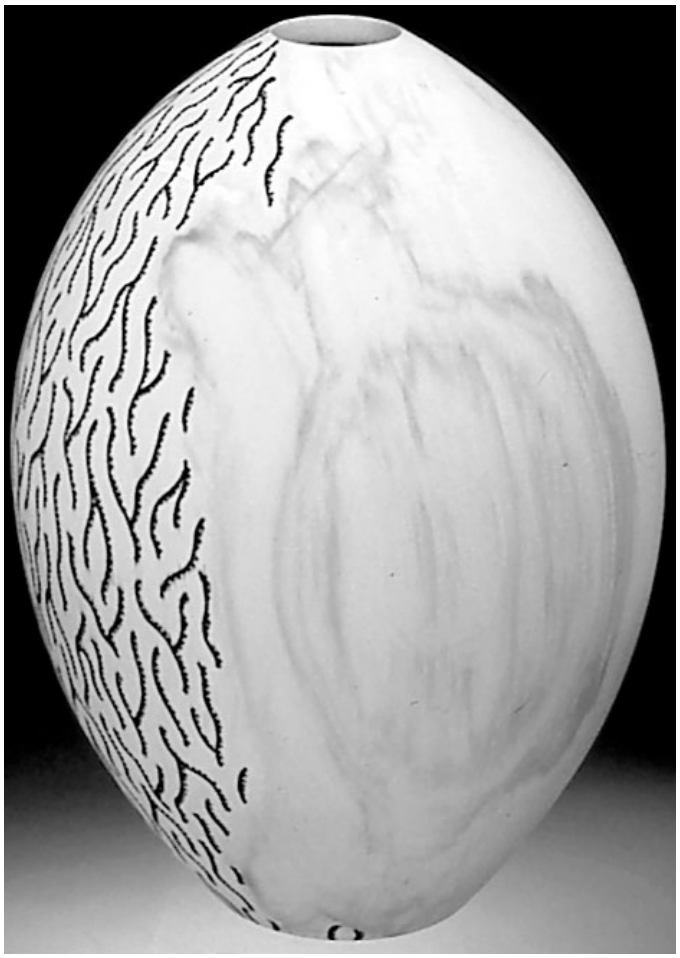




Sketches and doodles, often inspired by nature, help Levy clarify and develop his ideas.

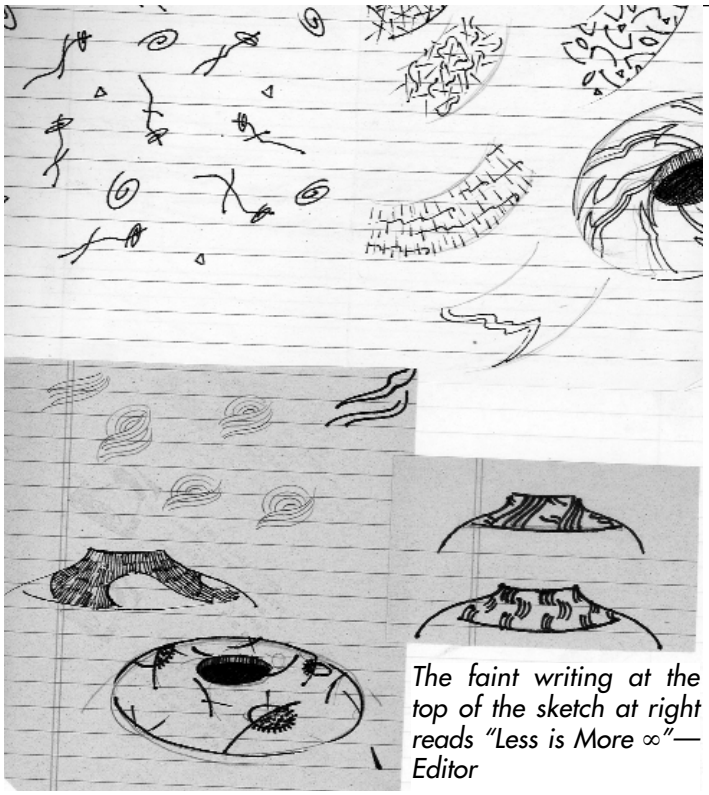
Creating In Wood, giving your ideas a voice



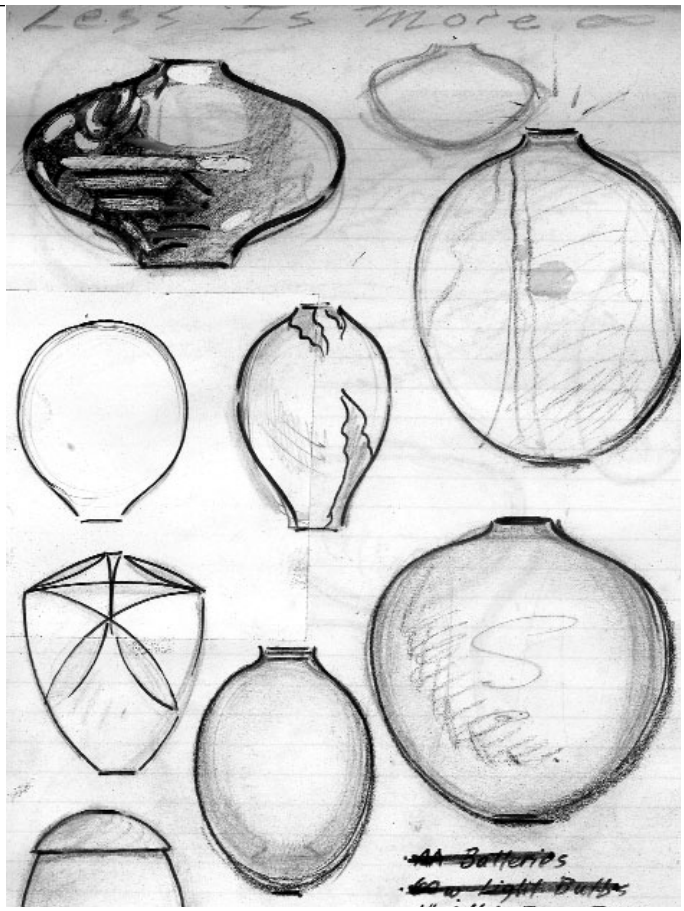


Engraved cherry vessel with white acrylic paint, above, left: 8.25-in. H X5.75 -in. D; Box Elder vessel, bleached with black ink drawing., right, 8.5-in. H X 5.75-in. D

Photos this page: John S.Cummings



The faint writing at the top of the sketch at right reads "Less is More ∞"—Editor



A sketchbook is one of Levy's favorite tools since art school days. The sketches are not works of art, just reference points to helps him "get an idea out"

much as you can. Keeping the shop uncluttered helps you do work that is uncluttered. It's part of my aesthetic; it's intentional."

He describes himself as mechanical enough to do his work with simple tools: a short-bed Woodfast lathe, Dremel tools and variety of other carvers and engravers. One of his favorite tools is one he learned to use in art school - a sketchbook.

For him the sketchbook is "a reference point. It's not only the skill of drawing, but a wonderful way to get an idea out. Keeping a sketch pad in the shop is just natural thing to do."

As you can see from the sketches above and on the previous page, he draws a lot--not with any concern for a particular piece or its design — just to play with ideas. The whole thing, like his work itself, comes from his training and background as an artist, the way other turners who come from a more mechanical background might build on their technical training.

As you can see from some of the sketchbook pages, the line, forms, and textures of nature fascinate him. But he doesn't go off consciously looking for a motif he can reproduce as a turning. It's more a case of storing up impressions — sometimes this happens while he's engaged in an activity not directly related to his work, like when he is out fly casting for trout. "I always come away full of impressions; sometime later some means of expression develops."

Before this expression takes form in three-dimensional objects, it may evolve and be transformed many times as it goes around and around in his sketchbook.

The metamorphosis may intrigue him enough to carry the theme over to a three-dimensional sketchbook, a section of a partially finished or rejected vessel or bowl. Again doodles with a pencil or even a caring tool help him work out what he wants to communicate. Often it helps him work out not only the message, but how the message will be arranged and how many visual clues he needs to create it.

Often he sees evidence of the natural world emerging thoughout the doodling, but he's never quite sure why or how. "It's almost a spiritual thing. One of my favorite feelings is that I'm more of a channel than a creator."

"I try to make a conscious effort to follow my own creative path. In finding my own voice, it seemed natural to extend my creative process to the surfaces of my pieces."

The list of techniques he applies to the surfaces reads like a stew of turners' favorites and old art school reliables used individually and in all manner of combinations: engraving, woodburning, carving, plus acrylic paint, gesso, ink, and Prismcolor pencils. One of his most effective techniques is applying paints to accent and define engraved lines or to create

spirals and other patterns to lead the viewer's eye in way he wants. Regardless of the technique or aim, each effort is tempered with thought, restraint and his personal voice

He never neglects the natural figures and grain of the woods, either. Surface treatments must add to what nature has created, not detract or compete with it. He admits this can be difficult, especially with something as intriguing and mysterious as the natural patterns of spalted surfaces.

And, to avoid obscuring a syllable of this finely conceived and crafted voice, he relies on minimal finish; brush lacquer sanded to 400-600 grit, rubbing out the piece with 0000 steel wool and applying clear wax.

Simon readily admits that his work builds on the vocabulary developed by those who influenced him.

In addition to Clay Foster, many of his influences are also artists drawn to surface treatments: fellow Tennessean John Jordan, Alan Stirt, Michael Hosaluk and Betty Scarpino. And he responds strongly to both the level of craftsmanship and the artistry of objects from many different historical periods and cultures, such as Chinese vessels and many ancient Inca and Japanese works.

Cherry Bowl with engraved and wood-burned band: 7.5-in. H X13-in. D. Photo by John S. Cummings.

Influences versus copying

When I asked him about the differences between influences and copying, he replied that when he was a student studying advertising design, a professor told him "it's all basically been done before." He was taken aback at first, but realized there was wisdom in the statement and it made a long-lasting impression on him.

"As you grow and learn, you come to a really important proposition. Even in the beginning there is a lot of recycling. Part of what I create is from what we have assimilated, even if it's just our sense of what makes the world a beautiful place. We all have a creative voice. Whatever we have to say is a reaction to what we have seen, heard and felt. We reach out and call it our own. My feeling is that it is a very subjective quality where the line is drawn on copying versus inspiration."

"I never make an intentional copy. At least I'm not aware of it. I know in my heart that I'm a very visually orientated person. I know I'm highly susceptible to any visual influences, especially things I like."

Turning to him is a very vital, dynamic way of expressing and creating art.."You have to be there, constantly aware of the spatial dynamics. The details of the surface work and where it comes from are almost beyond me. You're going places, interconnecting things from our influences, sometimes almost primordial feelings of what we have taken in: symbols, shapes, images, things that fascinate us. If we follow what we like, we should be where we should be."

Nonetheless, he values craftsmanship highly. The whole gamut of turning skills from uniform, matched-to-the-object wall thicknesses to perfectly executed lines to finely sheared surfaces distinguish his designs. When I asked about one piece that was exquisitely conceived, perfectly executed and light enough to float, he ginned and said "That was a good turning day."

He likes pieces which he feels are resolved. As he works he tries to to do what looks and feels right. The resolution comes when the piece makes "a complete statement, a clear combination of shape, material and embellishment, if any. It leaves me an impression of completeness, and a level of artistry, even if it was inspired by children's work. Resolved doesn't always have to mean pinnacle of craftsmanship. It's more a question of how it speaks to me."

"Creating gives me permission to enjoy, and to give back a sense of what I like, what I understand."

And this type of communication is a sharing of experience, not just a solitary act. There is always a triangle of creativity between the artist, material and the viewer -- the person who looks at it, tastes it , experiences it.

"I like work that continues to talk to people."

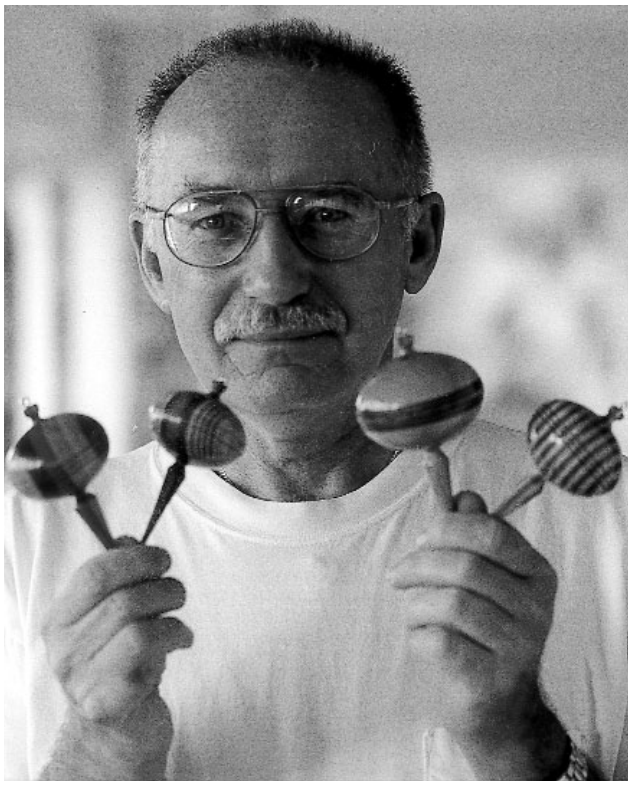
Dick Burrows is Editor of American Woodturner. Simon Levy can be reached at 2534 Blair Blvd, Nashville, TN 37212

FROM VESSELS TO ORNAMENTS

The Variations are Endless

LARRY HASIAK

IN 1985 I BOUGHT A USED LATHE AND borrowed some tools, which I later found out were spindle gouges and a parting tool. I had no training or help, and so I just started fooling around with the tools and available wood. Then I heard about a demonstration class conducted by Liam O'Neil from Ireland and hosted by Nick Cook at Highland Hardware in Atlanta. Wow, what a revelation! Natural edge bowls, lidded boxes, side ground bowl gouges! I didn't even know there was such a thing as a bowl gouge. I came home, located some wood and, after purchasing a couple of those wonderful side ground bowl gouges, started to turn natural edge bowls.



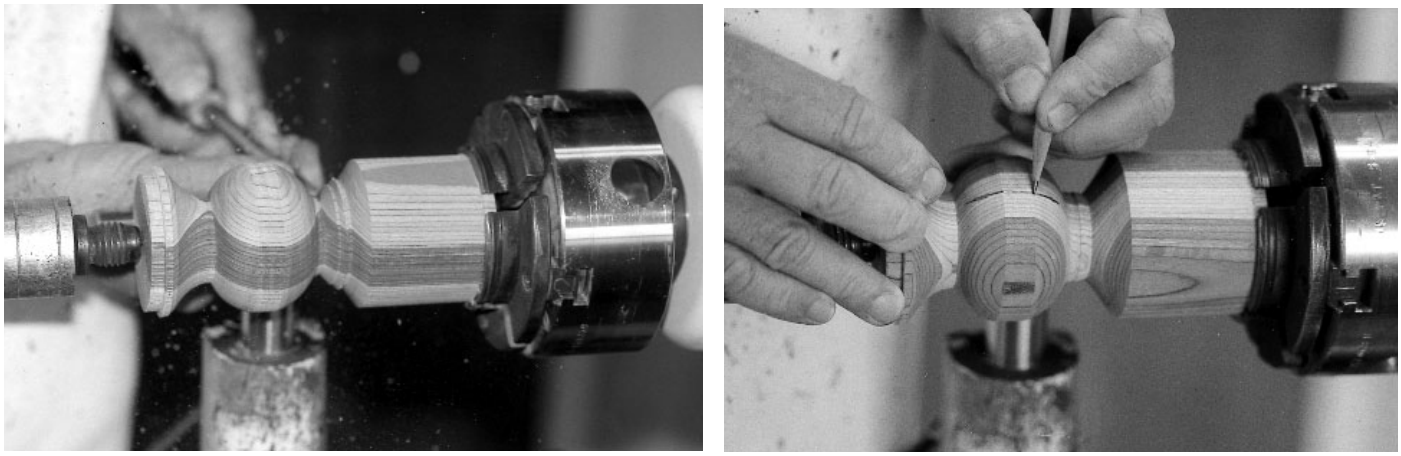
The author has made thousands of ornaments since 1986, and still is coming up with variations on the basic design described here. Photos: Mary Hasiak.

Natural edge bowls were fun, but I decided I wanted to turn a hollow vase (I now call them vessels). Not knowing how to hollow a vase through a small hole, I did the next best thing and cut the vase in half, hollowed each half and glued the halves back together. By this time I had purchased a "six in one" chuck, which made this job much easier.

Near Christmas 1986 I decided to make some tree ornaments. To make them lighter I incorporated the hollow vase idea. I turned a rough shape of a Christmas ball, cut it in half, hollowed the two halves and glued them back together, then finished the shape. Since that beginning I have made thousands of ornaments. I still make and sell 300 - 400 ornaments each year. They have evolved over the years in shape, size and material. I have many people who collect my ornaments and they expect a new shape or material every year. This becomes difficult as time passes, but it's fun and challenging to keep trying. I list some variations at the end of this article, but first I'll demonstrate one of my production designs.

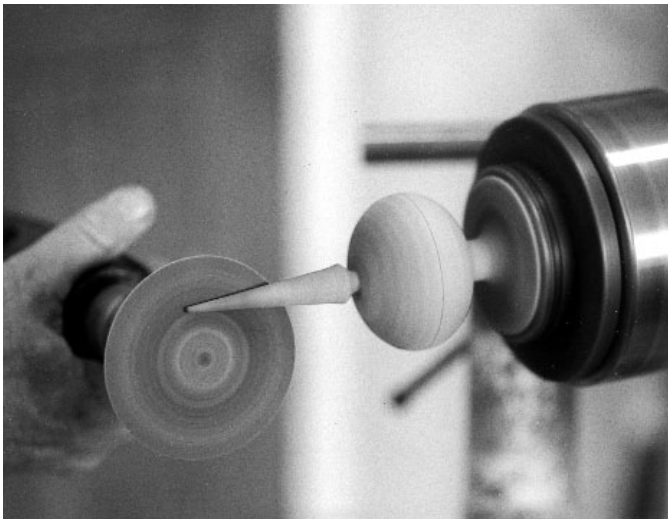
Let's make a Christmas ornament. We'll start with a blank $2^{1}/_{2}$-to-3 in. square by about 6-in. long.

I have made ornaments from all kinds of wood including cherry, camphor, cuban mahogany, banksia pods, and many exotics. In the last few years most of my ornaments, like the one shown

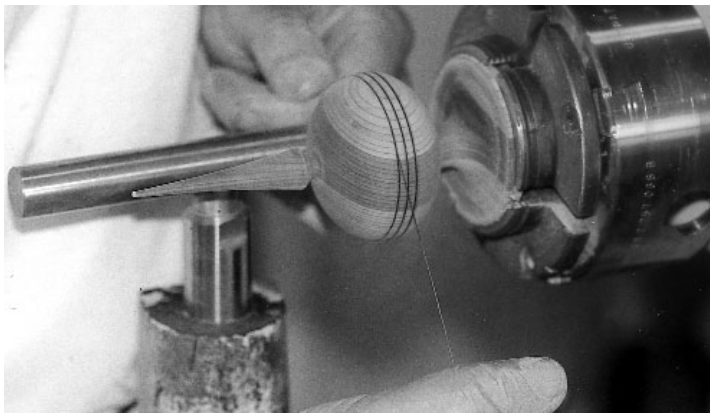


Hasiak turns a rough ball shape, above left, after making the Colorwood blank cylindrical and cutting a tenon on the tailstock end. Then he draws a longitudinal line along the high spot, so he can reassemble the pieces after hollowing them.

After bringing up the tailstock and cutting a tenon on that end, Hasiak cuts the ball in half with a parting tool, above left, so he can begin hollowing out each of the halves, above right.



After shaping the finial, above left, carefully power sand the finial before shaping the top of the ornament, above right.



Burn-in decorative grooves with a piece of wire.

here, have been made of colorwood, which I have laid up in special color patterns that are favorites at Christmas.

The first step is to mount it between centers, make a cylinder and cut a tenon on one end. Now put your chuck on the lathe and mount the blank bringing up the tailstock for additional support.

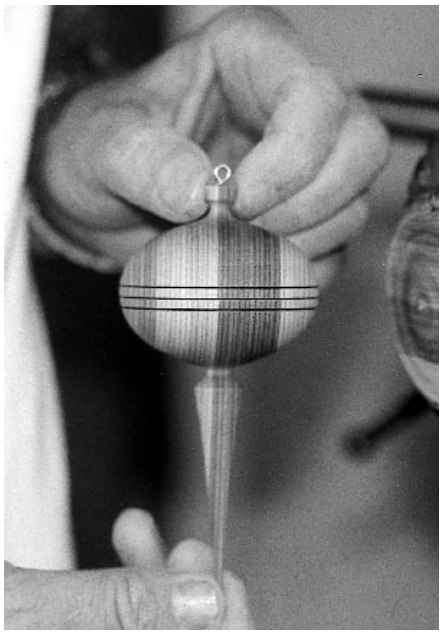
Cutting a tenon

The next step is to cut a tenon on the tailstock end. Note that you wait to turn the second tenon until the blank is mounted in the chuck so it will run true when it is reversed and remounted later. After mounting the blank, turn a rough ball shape on the blank closer to the tailstock than to the chuck. At this point the tailstock end will be the top of the ornament.

Stop the lathe. Draw a line across the ball at the high point. Next part the ball in two with a narrow parting tool being careful that the sides of the cut stay parallel and the parting tool goes in at an angle. The angle will create two cones which will fit together much easier than straight edges. Pull the tailstock out of the way and hollow the half of the ball still mounted on the lathe, leaving the walls about $^1/_8$-in. thick. You can use a round nose scraper or a small bowl gouge. Next remove the half just hollowed and mount the other half (which will become the top of the ball) and hollow it the same way.

Joining the halves

Glue the two halves together using instant glue. Carefully put a bead of medium-thickness glue on the edge of the ball in the headstock as you slowly turn the ball with one hand so the glue does not drip off. Next, put the other half in place lining up the marks drawn earlier. Hold the tailstock end of the ornament in place as you bring up the tailstock and use it as a clamp. The next step is to remove most of the waste from the bottom of the ornament using your tool of choice. It may be a skew, spindle gouge or a scraper. At the same time true up the ball, being careful not to turn through it.



Colorwood ornament by the author

You will now see a very disturbing cut line in the middle of the ball. Here is where you use the old rule "don't try to hide a defect — emphasize it. Take a very sharp pointed tool and cut a couple very shallow grooves on either side of the cut. as well as on the cut itself. Next hold a thin stainless steel wire on each groove until it burns the wood. You will now have three dark rings around the ball and the cut line has disappeared.

Shaping the finial

The finial is shaped next. It might have lots of beads and coves or it may be very simple, as mine are. The next step is to remove most of the excess wood at the top of the ball.

Now sand the ball very carefully, as it is now pretty fragile. Finish turning the top of the ball and sand it as well. At this point you may apply your favorite finish while the ornament is still on the lathe or remove it and apply the finish.

The final step is to drill a very small hole and insert the smallest brass screw eye you can find. As an alternative to the screw eye, you could glue a loop of fine monofilament into the hole. I did this for years until I found very small brass screw eyes at ACE Hardware.

Try making an ornament like mine, then where you are more comfortable with the process, add your own ideas and have some fun at the lathe.

Larry Hasiak is a full-time turner and teacher in Tarpon Springs, FL. This month he completes his second term on the AAW Board of Directors.

Variations on a Holiday

Here are some of the things I have done in the past to create variations of the basis Christmas Ornament.

✳✳✳✳ Made a jig to hold the ornament on your bandsaw and used it to cut wedges from the ball.

✳✳✳✳ Painted the inside of the ball various colors before gluing it together then cut the wedges to expose the colors.

✳✳✳✳ Painted a scene on the ball.

✳✳✳✳ Cut about 1/3 of the side of the ball away and painted a scene inside or installed small figures.

✳✳✳✳ Before turning, cut the ball end of the blank in two with a curved line and glue back together with a piece of colored veneer inserted between the two pieces. Next turn the blank over and do it again.

✳✳✳✳ Tape two blanks of different kinds of wood together and with one on top of the other cut both blanks at the ball end with a curved line. Now glue the pieces together mixing the kinds of wood. Please don't use maple and walnut which looks like something an amateur would do, instead try walnut and cherry. — *Larry Hasiak*

A Splash of Light and Color For Turnings

BINH PHO

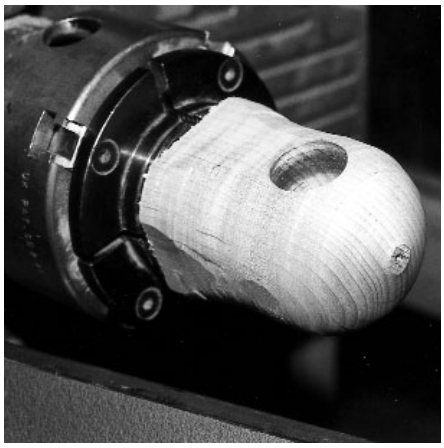
A few years ago, I watched David Ellsworth's hollow turning demonstration in St. Louis. He had a very good technique for showing viewers how his cutting tool works inside the vessel — he cut off one side of the vessel, so it was as if he had a window on the side of the piece.

I designed my Christmas ornament with this technique in mind, then added a stained glass effect with a lacquer that hardens into transparent facets of color.

Here is my step- by-step process.

Step 1: Cut a blank $2^{1}/_{2}$-in. square x 4-in. long, then drill a 1-in. diameter hole through the side of the blank. The center of the hole should be about $1^{1}/_{4}$-in. from the side and 1-in. from the top of the blank.

Step 2: Mount the bottom end in a 4-jaw self-centering chuck. If your chuck is unable to hold the square blank, mount the blank between centers and turn a tenon to fit your chuck.



The bored hole becomes part of the ornament design, and also provides a window to gauge wall thickness while you are turning.

Then shape it to your desired ornament with the holes somewhere near the center. Important note: Leave the mass at the bottom for stability while hollowing the inside.

Step 3: Now you are ready to hollow the inside. Some of you may now be wondering what's up with the hole?

1. It helps us to see the cutter working inside of the ornament.

2. Makes it easy to judge when when you achieve the wall thickness $^{1}/_{16}$-in.

3. It enables us to run the string of Christmas lights through the hole and leave one light inside to illuminate the ornament.

4. It's a nice design, offering the possibility of mounting miniature turned objects such as a Christmas tree, bell, etc., inside the ornament.

5. It allows chips to exit easily.

I use my $^{3}/_{8}$-in. spindle gouge to drill from the top through the desired bottom. These holes will accent the decorative elements at the top and bottom of the ball. I also use the same spindle gouge to rough out the inside, then start hollowing to the wall thickness with my miniature curved-tip hollow turning tools. Watch the end tip of your cutter to gauge the wall thickness.

Step 4: Follow the contour of the ornament form to complete the outside shape and part it off. We should have one hole on top, one at the bottom and one on each side.

Step 5: Turning the decorative hanger and icicle to fit the top and bottom hole.

Step 6: Sketch with pencil and pierce the design. (See my piercing article in Summer 2000 Journal.

The voids in the pierced areas of the author's ornaments are filled with a colored lacquer product to create a Faux Stained glass effect. Photos: Courtesy of the artist.

Step 7: For the faux stained glass technique, I use the product called 3D Crystal Lacquer. Simply use a small applicator to outline the void (pierced area), then fill in.

This product works well with my ornament design. Steve Sinner of Bettendorf, IA, found it at a local craft store in Iowa, then discussed it with Frank Sudol, who had been trying to develop an ancient French enameling technique called "plique-a-jour" to fill voids with transparent color.

You can order this product at Sakura Hobby Craft, Torrance, CA. Phone (310) 212-7878.

It comes with several different colors such as red, blue, green, purple, yellow, etc. The most important one is the Clear color, so you can create your own shades. If you decide to do this, make sure to use water-base metal-acid dye to prolong the color.

Good luck and have fun this holiday.

Binh Pho is a turner in Maple Park, IL. He was a demonstrator at the AAW Charlotte Symposium last summer.

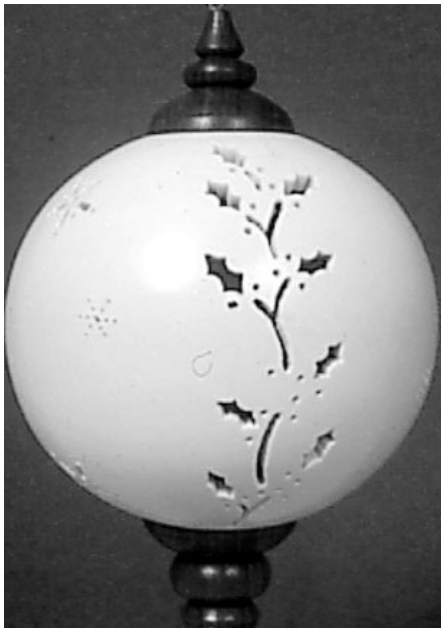
Holiday Delights

Ornaments With A Piercing Appeal

BRUCE HOOVER

The Christmas Tree originated in 16th century Germany, where people decorated fir trees with roses, apples, and colored paper. The Pennsylvania Germans brought the idea to America in the 1820's. Forty years later glass balls first appeared on American trees and quickly became a mainstay of our Christmas traditions.

My passion for ornaments began a few years back, when I saw Mark St. Leger demonstrate how to turn a hollow ornament. Then, in an effort to garner the top prize at our chapter's friendly competition at the annual Christmas dinner, I decided to embellish my ornaments with the pierced carving techniques I'd seen on bowls and vessels. My first effort combined carving with a snowy winter theme in a holly-and-bloodwood ornament covered with pierced snowflakes and a miniature ornament inside. It was well received and I just kept going. The resulting collection I named Holly Shore Ornaments ©.



One of Hoover's pierced Holly Shore ornaments

The author makes a final cut to refine the outside shape of the globe. Photos by Janet Hoover and Dick Burrows.

I think you'll find these ornaments as challenging as I did because they require so many different skills, such as very-thin hollow turning, spindle turning in miniature, pierced carving, and a healthy dose of imagination.

While the pierced designs on my ornaments vary widely, I generally prefer two basic globe styles. My favorite has either a round sphere or an inner tube-shaped body, with a short finial on top and a longer, more delicate finial on the bottom. The second type is an inverted "tear-drop" shape with a single long finial on top, in the style of Mark St. Leger. I have experimented with other styles, but always return to these shape because of their very classic and ageless look.

Materials:

Holly is my favorite wood for the ornament bodies. The light color is bright and inviting, an excellent contrast to the piercing which visually appears dark. It is reasonably strong, turns easily, and its tight grain is ideal for ultra-thin turning. Also, it does not "fuzz " much when pierced. You could substitute another light-toned hardwood, such as box elder, maple, or birch, as long as they are relatively hard and tight grained. Some medium-color woods also offer enough contrast for piercing. As a rule, dark-colored woods are not as appealing because they provide little or no contrast to the piercing. If you plan to put a light inside the pierced ornament, though, the darker woods can be stunning!

For finials I prefer darker woods that contrast with the lighter bodies. Stick with wood that's relatively solid in color; a multi-colored or highly figured wood will clash with the piercing. Busy plus busy equals TOO BUSY. The emphasis should be on the body and the carved patterns. My favorite finials are bloodwood, redheart, ebony, ziracote, cherry and walnut. For ornaments with a dark body, holly or other light-toned wood

is an excellent choice.

Turning the body:

I utilize two different methods for turning the bodies. The first is to rough out the body to about $^{3}/_{16}$-in. wall thickness, allow it to dry and then re-turn it to final shape and thickness. The second is to turn the body completely, from start to final thickness, working from a green blank mounted with the pith exactly on centers to minimize distortion. You risk losing a few blanks to unexpected wood movement with this method. Either way, I shape the top half of the globe first, and complete it before starting the bottom half. If you shape the bottom half before the top is done and then make a mistake on the top, you have no room left for corrections.

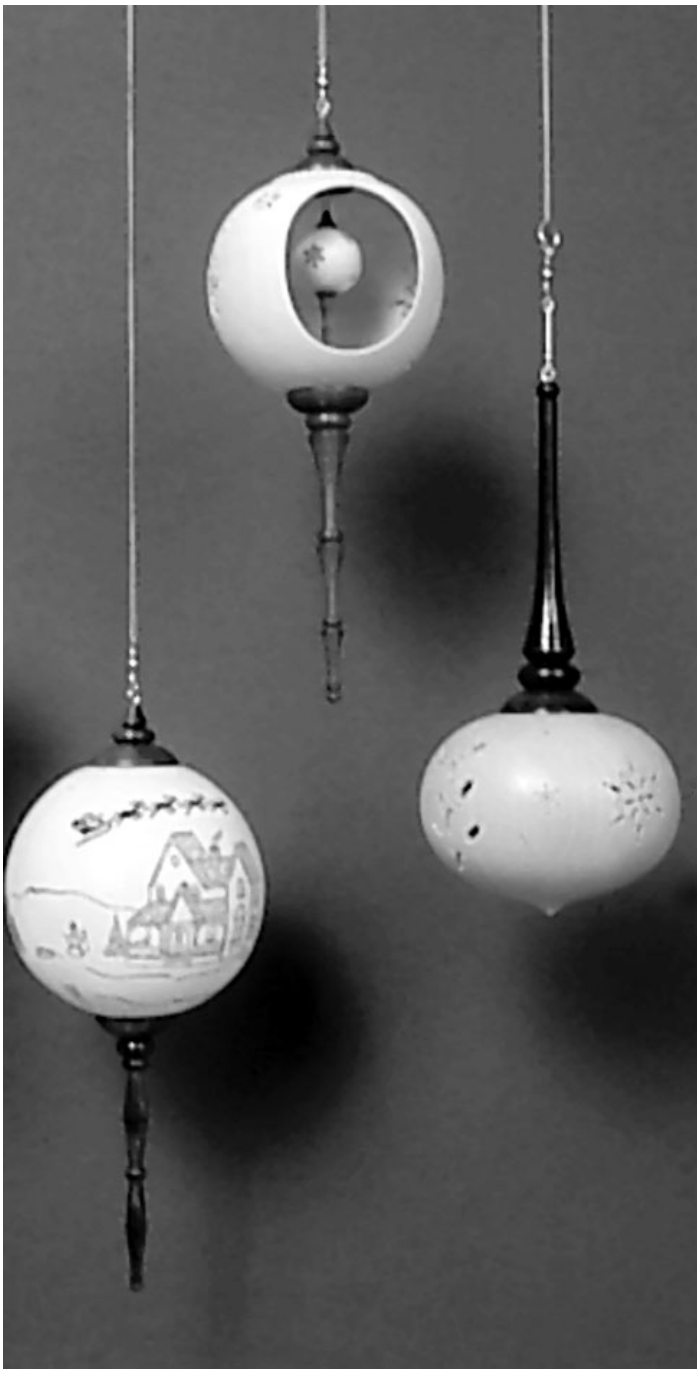
As you complete the form, leave a full 1-in. tenon at the base of the globe for support when you hollow, and then smooth the outside with a shearing cut. If you are turning a sphere from green wood, be sure to leave it a little "squashed" because as it dries, it will seemingly "grow" along the grain due to the different shrinkage rates.

Using your tool of choice, begin hollowing to remove most of the waste, then even up your wall thickness. I first take it to about $^{1}/_{8}$-in. or so throughout and then reduce it to a final thickness somewhere between $^{3}/_{32}$-to-$^{1}/_{16}$-in.

When I am satisfied I've reached final thickness, I use a $^{3}/_{4}$-in. diameter Forstner bit to drill through the bottom into the tenon left there. I now make a final cut across the bottom through to the $^{3}/_{4}$-in hole to separate the globe. If green, put the globe aside to dry and stabilize. Sand as required through at least 400 grit. I normally finish with several spray coats of lacquer. This step is important because it protects the globe from handling during the piercing process and also makes it easier to remove stray pencil layout lines. It will be buffed out later.

Design & layout:

At this point you need to choose the style and size of patterns that best fit the size and shape of the body you have turned and the theme you wish to depict. Look for stencil patterns or designs you like and modify them to suit your taste, and size them to fit the project at hand. Avoid large openings because they almost always look like mistakes and detract from the overall appearance. Divide them into two or more smaller openings to create more attractive patterns. The designs shown in the ornaments pictured here will give you some ideas.



An ornament within an ornament, top center; a pierced design and a combination of piercing and scrimshaw highlight three of the author's pieces.

Using a pencil, VERY LIGHTLY sketch your designs in the desired locations. When you have small defects such as knots or checks, try to utilize shapes that will either accent or eliminate them. Transferring patterns from a flat piece of paper can work OK for some designs, but do not always work especially well for symmetrical patterns like snowflakes because of the curved surface, so practice your sketching skills. I often find that my sketching is only a suggestion of the

design and the piercing is neater and more accurate. Sometimes it is helpful to sketch only some parts of a pattern, and then pierce, adjust as necessary, and then sketch the rest.

Snowflakes are what I chose to use on my very first pierced ornament and they continue to be my favorite and are sort of a trademark of mine. The design possibilities are endless, but they are also very difficult because the patterns must be symmetrical. Non-symmetrical designs, like wildlife or flowers, tend to be more user-friendly. Whatever designs you choose, be careful not to overcrowd the surface area. Ornaments will have a much more aesthetic appeal if you leave enough "white space" so that the designs do not run together.

Negative Vs Positive

I started out doing negative-dominant piercing, which means that the material removed, the voids, represents the design. Positive dominant is when you leave your design mostly solid and pierce negative space in it and around it. In this case you should tend to make the designs a little larger so they stand out more clearly. Both look good; experiment to decide which is right for you. For even more design options, you can also add some three-dimensional surface carving to compliment your piercing.

The Carving Process

Pierce carving is a complex and versatile art. You have to do it in order to learn it; there is no substitute for hands-on trial and error. The learning never ends.

There are literally dozens of power carving tools on the market today. The one to use is the one you have or can afford. I started out using a small Dremel flex-shaft and I now use a dental drill operating up to 325,000 rpm for piercing with a 170L dental bit. I also use $^1/_8$-in. shaft turbo carver (54,000 rpm) for miscellaneous tasks.

Holly ornament with pierced carving and scrimshaw carved designs.

What ever you use, here are some helpful things to remember:

•Take your time; don't get in a hurry and force the cutter. This will only cause excessive burning of the openings and premature bit failure! Some woods will burn easily, even with a slow feed rate.

• Always keep the cutting bit as perpendicular to the surface as you can. If you get too far off line, the piercing will look irregular and sloppy. The thinner you turn the body, the less this problem is noticeable.

•If you have a slip and make an error…STOP! Assess the situation… Then correct the problem by customizing or adjusting the pattern to accommodate the stray piercing.

•USE YOUR IMAGINATION! This is your most valuable tool. After all there are no set rules and you are free to sketch any design you want, place it in any location you like, and shape it any way you choose.

•Do not try to make the bit create something it cannot. Very fine details, such as points are best dealt with afterwards using small files to dress up any lines or edges that may not be as crisp as you would like. This can be very time consuming, but the extra effort shows.

Turning the finials is just everyday spindle turning in miniature. My preference is to use a small screw chuck with a live center in the tailstock. This provides good stability and allows me to support the delicate finial as I turn. Use of a four-jaw chuck would prevent this. I make every effort to get clean crisp cuts on beads and coves and to make smooth finishing cuts on the long portions. A sharp skew is key here. This greatly reduces the amount of sanding needed and in turn protects the fine details from being rounded over in the process. I apply a lacquer-based finish while on the lathe.

The tenons should be sized to match the globe openings very closely for a sturdy joint. I use five-minute epoxy to assemble them. The length of the finials is important for good balance and proportion. Let your eye decide. The long finials on both types of my ornaments range anywhere from 125-to-250 % of the body height.

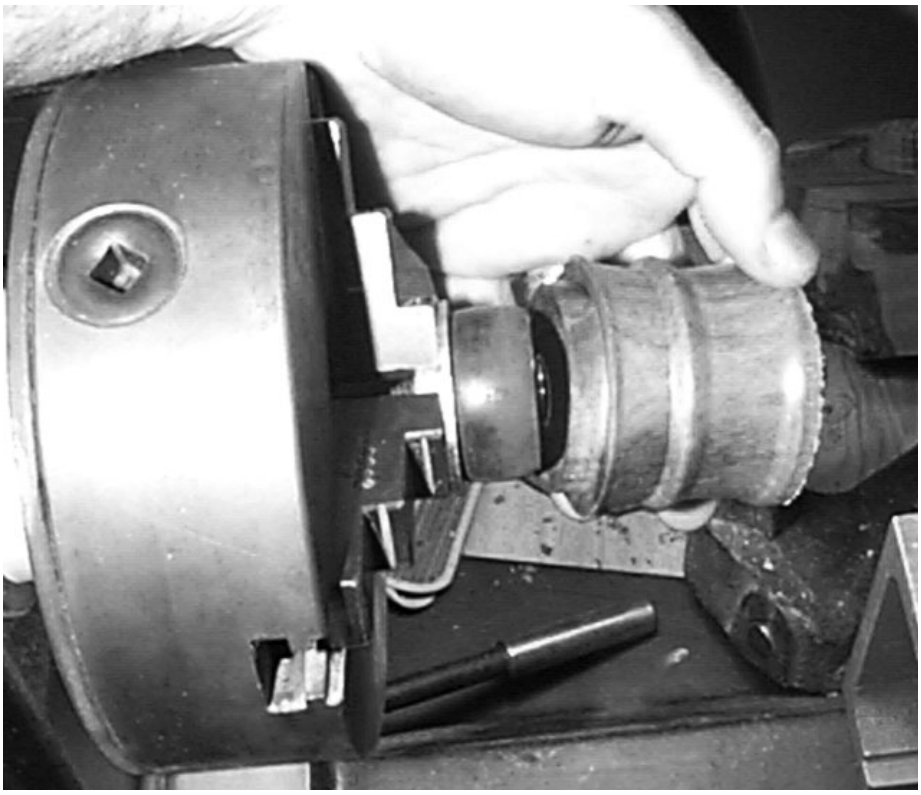
Displaying Options

Small brass screw eyes or eye pins are the simplest ways to hang your ornaments. Attaching a #10 brass fishing swivel will allow them to be easily viewed all the way around. I prefer to use brass stands with a mirrored base for displaying them on a mantle. Lighting if desired can be accomplished by using either a battery pack or a small power supply with low voltage bulbs.

Bruce Hoover is a woodturner who lives on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

Automotive Gizmo Makes Low Cost Chuck

ANDY COHEN



The rubber section of an automotive freeze plug, held in a scroll chuck, can be expanded to create a secure soft gripping device for small boxes and other similar items. Photos by author.

Foot finishing small hollow forms, cups and boxes is a challenge.

Expensive scroll chucks bite and compress the wood. Jam chucks which secure the turning by squeezing it between custom-built fixtures on the headstock and the tailstock work, but once you finally become proficient at making them, you find the following disadvantages:

1. Jam chucks also compress the wood, as well as mar a finish.

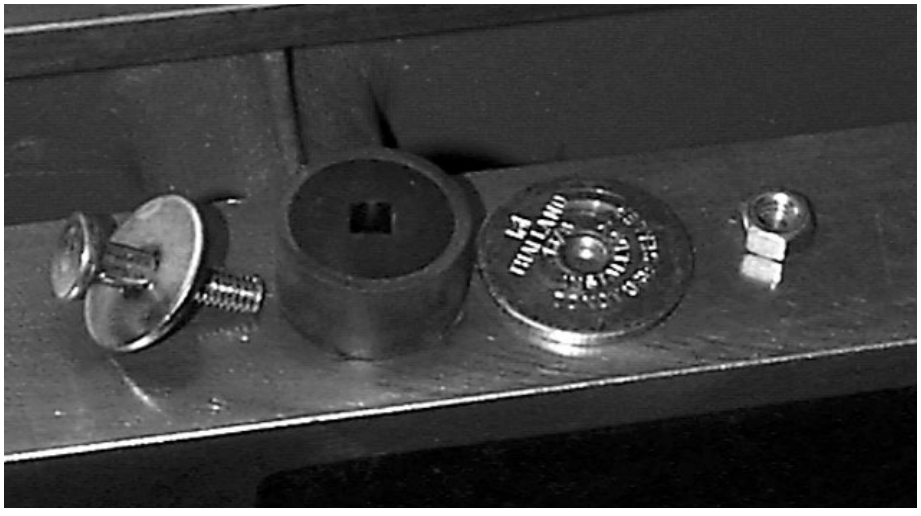
2. A piece with a fragile thin base, such as a goblet, can break when the turner inserts it onto the chuck.

3. The turner has to take the time to carefully turn the chuck to the correct diameter.

4. If the nearly completed piece comes off the jam chuck while the foot is being worked, the piece can be ruined.

To avoid these problems, I've found an inexpensive, yet incredibly effective solution — Freeze plugs!

A freeze plug is a 1-in.-thick disk of rubber sandwiched between two washers with a bolt running through the center of all three components. They are used to block an opened freeze plug area on a car's engine block and they are sold at most auto parts stores. They come in a large range of sizes from $^1/_2$-to-2-in. and are priced from around $1 to $4, depending upon size.



Freeze plugs, available in diameters from $^1/_2$-to-2-in., are composed of a rubber unit compressed between two washers by a nut and bolt.

The top area of the bolt is squared off like a carriage bolt, so the bolt doesn't slip during tightening. When the nut is tightened, the washers compress the rubber disk, forcing its sides outward enough to friction fit inside a small box or similar item. A perfect, soft chucking mechanism.

Use a three-jaw scroll chuck or drill chuck to grab the freeze plug nut. Select the best size plug for the piece. Place the outer washer flush against the scroll chuck jaws and insert the piece onto the plug. Twist the plug to bulge the rubber just enough to get it to grab the turned piece.

Put the rim of the piece flush on the inner side of the outer washer and the piece can get pretty close to center. Then just twist a little, but be careful — you can crack or break the piece.

If you get the right compression, the rubber will not mar or damage the work. It takes seconds to mount and I've never had the work fly off.

Andy Cohen turns wood in Santa Rosa, CA

ERZGEBIRGE SYMPOSIUM 2000

Language no barrier for world's turners

RANDY DICKINSON

IN THE SPRING AND FALL 1999 EDITIONS of *American Woodturner*, Alan Lacer reported on the rich woodturning tradition of the German "Erzgebirge" (Ore Mountains). I had seen some products from the Erzgebirge at craft shows and Christmas markets during my own visits to Germany over the last 20 years. Naturally, I was both intrigued and apprehensive when I first learned about the woodturning symposium to be held there.

Wouldn't it be fascinating to see first-hand the techniques described in Lacer's articles: the hoop turnings, unique to that area, the typical nutcrackers, smoking men, the miniature turnings, and Christmas trees? Would I be able to follow if demonstrations were given in German only? After all, my wife once observed that I have "absolutely no aptitude when it comes to foreign languages." How would I be able to communicate with local German turners? How would I feel as a foreigner at a European symposium? Would I feel out of place as a hobby turner at a symposium with European professionals? I had attended both the Tacoma and the Utah symposia before, and loved both experiences. I knew this would be different. Would I be disappointed? I decided to find out and registered.

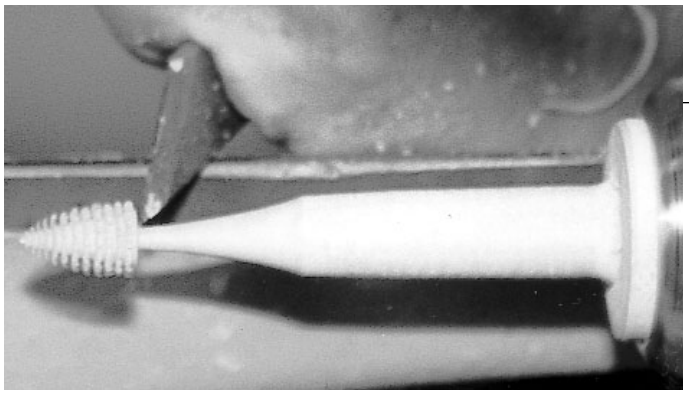
My wife and I left for Germany on July 26, 2000, spent a few days with relatives in Charle Magne's city Aachen, and then headed off to the Erzgebirge. We had made reservations at a campground near Seiffen, about 10 km (6 miles) away from the town of Olbernhau where the symposium would be held. The site of the symposium was a Saiger Hütte, a reconstructed complex where miners had in years past separated silver and copper ore from the local mountains. The copper was then processed into sheet metal used as roofing material for cathedrals, town halls, and famous buildings all over Europe. The largest hammer of the complex was still operational and would be used by the local blacksmith to demonstrate manual forging techniques for special turning tools.

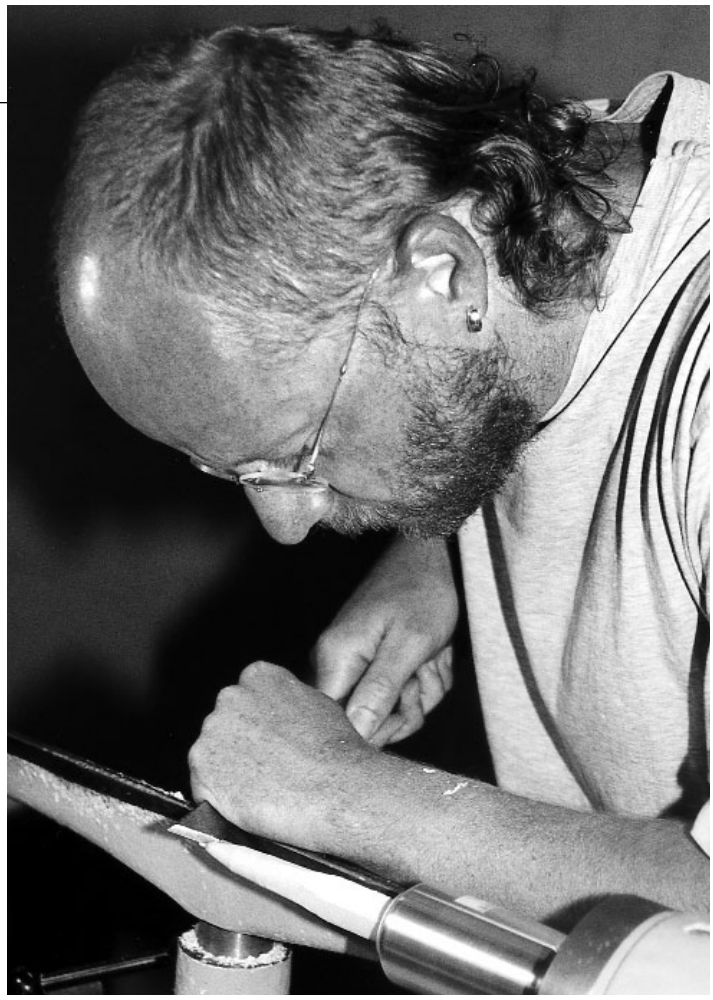
The Erzgebirge Symposium featured traditional tools galore and many turning families, like this group from northern Germany. Photos by author.

Even though we arrived a day early, we found the symposium information office already was checking in participants. I was quite nervous as I approached the assistant with my far-from-perfect German. A cordial welcome and many reassuring smiles quickly convinced me that I had come to the right place. After giving me a nametag and registration materials, the assistant assured me it was OK to look around the buildings where workers were setting up booths and equipment for the event.

A glance at the schedule confirmed that this was truly an international symposium. While there were many names I did not recognize, the list also included some familiar names (Richard Raffan, Terry Martin, Harry Memelink, Dave Regester, Michael O'Donell). I soon found out that Roman Scheidel, Kurt Johansson from Sweden, Sigi Angerer from Switzerland, Hans Weissflog from Germany and many more of the European turners spoke English very well and were more than happy to help me out.

Strolling through the exhibit halls, I watched the local workers assemble many Kreher and Wema wood lathes with care and pride. After all, both lathes are manufactured locally , and considered top quality by many of the local turners. Soon Uwe Kempel introduced himself as a local hobby turner who was helping set up. He had already spent a day with Robin Wood cutting local birch trees and building on site one of the three whip





German turner Uwe Uhlig, above right, turns a traditional Christmas tree. This work requires extensive skew work, a local specialty the author found, and specially ground tools, bottom left.

pole lathes on which Robin would be demonstrating for the next three days. Uwe himself also demonstrated traditional techniques — mostly on one of the foot-pedal lathes he had helped build — for turning the traditional miniature Christmas trees so typical for this region.

The organizers had assigned all participants into groups of 8-to-15 with a pre-determined sequence of who would visit which presentation when. This seemed awkward to me at first and I wondered if I would have the freedom to change groups and visit or re-visit booths according to my own preferences. It turned out to be no problem at all — the pre-assigned groups were an effective way to spread out about 300 participants for the first session. After that, many participants chose to stay in their groups; others took off and visited whatever interested them.

The symposium opened in a large centrally located area with speeches welcoming all demonstrators and participants and music from a local band. I couldn't understand everything, but the organizers were pleasantly surprised at the overwhelming interest by turners throughout the world. The next pleasant surprise was a group of about 25 local high school students - juniors and seniors who had been studying English as a foreign language since 5th grade. These students, highly visible in bright red shirts, were available at every booth to interpret for the German visitors if the presenter spoke English, or to translate English questions from the audience for the German-speaking presenters. This resulted in demonstrations that were quite different from what I had seen at the U.S. symposia: much less talking and much more visual demonstrating. After all, each sentence had to be repeated in the second language. The students were quite good at English, but often struggled with terminology unique to turning or woodworking. Often somebody from the audience would jump in and help out with specialized vocabulary, and the demonstrators patiently adjusted.

I dutifully went to the first assignment, a demonstration by Michael O'Donell from Scotland. He was interesting, doing a green thin-walled natural edged bowl. Of course, he had his grinding jigs there so one could see them in action, as well as the O'-Donell jaws that several other turners used as well.

For the next presentations I did not follow my assigned schedule. There were 12-to-14 rotations going at the

same time, and, of course, there was too much to see in too little time.

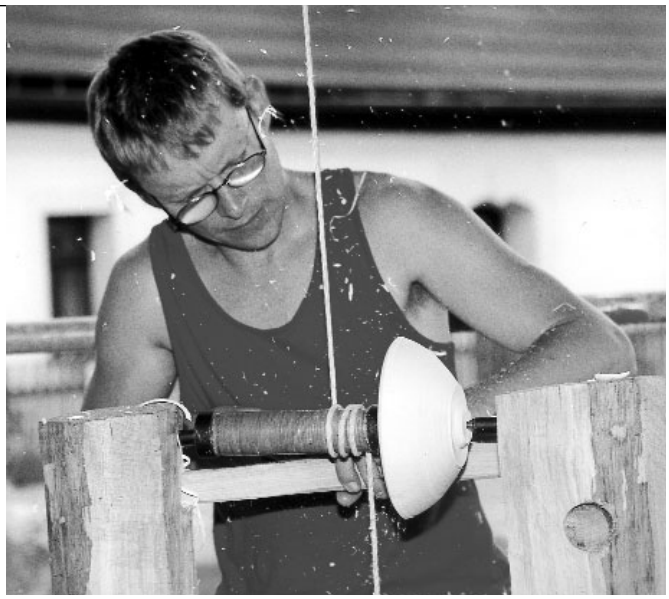
One presenter whose work intrigued me was Uwe Uhlig, who turns miniatures. His figures, birds, snowmen, and Christmas trees are often less than $^1/_4$-in. overall. Several pieces are glued to make the total miniature piece. Some of the parts are turned as small ring turnings about 2-in. diameter. For example, the wings on the tiny angels are turned in this manner and cut out of the ring. He was especially good with the skew, as many European turners were. I purchased a miniature scene from him of Cinderella feeding the birds; it is less than 1-in. square. Uwe did use a special grind on a skew to turn the Christmas trees, as shown on the previous page.

Rainer Gunter, an Industrial Arts Instructor from Austria, gave an interesting demonstration on turning a flute. There the translator was especially helpful for me, as I do not know very much about musical instruments. He ended up with a flute that he played and invited us all to play.

David Regester was interesting for me, as I have enjoyed his articles in *Woodturning*. He started out with a basic project — a mallet. I also suspect he needed a mallet for the lathes that the demonstrators used. On these lathes the wood is hammered into the head-stock, with no through spindle hole, so mallets were needed to get tools and pieces out of the morse taper. He turned intricate boxes with the many rings, an enjoyable presentation to watch.

Sigi Angerer gave an interesting inside-out turning demonstration, gripping the four square pieces of wood, which were not glued together, in a Oneway chuck.

One of the things he made was a Christmas ornament. I had a few questions, but a fellow next to me seemed to have all of the answers in both English and German. After helping me through a couple of explanations, he jumped up and said "Randy." I was rather surprised, but he turned out to be Jean Claude Gerber, an Internet friend of my local turning friend, Randy Rhine. Jean Claude had built his own ornamental lathe and had communicated quite a bit with Randy, a fellow ornamental turner. This was a pleasant surprise and we had several good conversations over the next few days.



Robin Wood of England on pole lathe.

Roman Scheidel gave an excellent demonstration on green salad bowl turning. He stated that if his customers really wanted a round bowl, he turned a thick bowl and then finish turned after it had dried. He is originally from California and now lives with his wife near Paris. I helped him carry his tools to the nearby Saiger Hutte hotel, and he gave me a small spinning top. He said he had a thing for tops; the one he gave me is super.

The open area near the Hotel in the Saiger Hütte complex had several treadle and spring pole lathes set up. Robin Wood was turning on a spring pole lathe. Everyone had an opportunity to turn something on the lathes. Most participants did a Christmas tree. Several husband and wife turners were turning here as well.

The gallery with all of the entries for the competition was quite interesting and I went to several evening presentations, such as slide shows by Raffan and Key, and a university program on the future of woodturning. One I missed, because I thought it was on "form", was really a demonstration of a computer program developed by the local high school students to design the ring turnings.

Throughout the symposium, video cameras captured the demonstrations on tape. These tapes were then displayed on two TV's in the recreation tent, about a half-hour after the actual demonstration. My wife especially enjoyed seeing the tapes. She has asthma that is triggered by wood dust, so she cannot view the demonstrations directly.

At the closing banquet, my wife and I sat at the table with the grand prize winner. The fellow camping next to us in the campground invited me to his shop at the end of the symposium. He had a meister in both turning and cabinet making.

Overall, my visit to the German symposium was a terrific experience. I met many interesting turners and woodworkers and saw many different tools and techniques. As I sorted through my pictures and unpacked my souvenirs — the nutcrackers, the wooden puzzle, the miniature Cinderella scene, the new chisel that I just had to have — I felt that this was the best symposium I had ever attended. But maybe the most recent event always seems like the best one ever?

Randy Dickinson is a turner in Portland, OR

THE UN-TEA PARTY

Turning challenges senses, begs to be touched

JACQUES VESERY

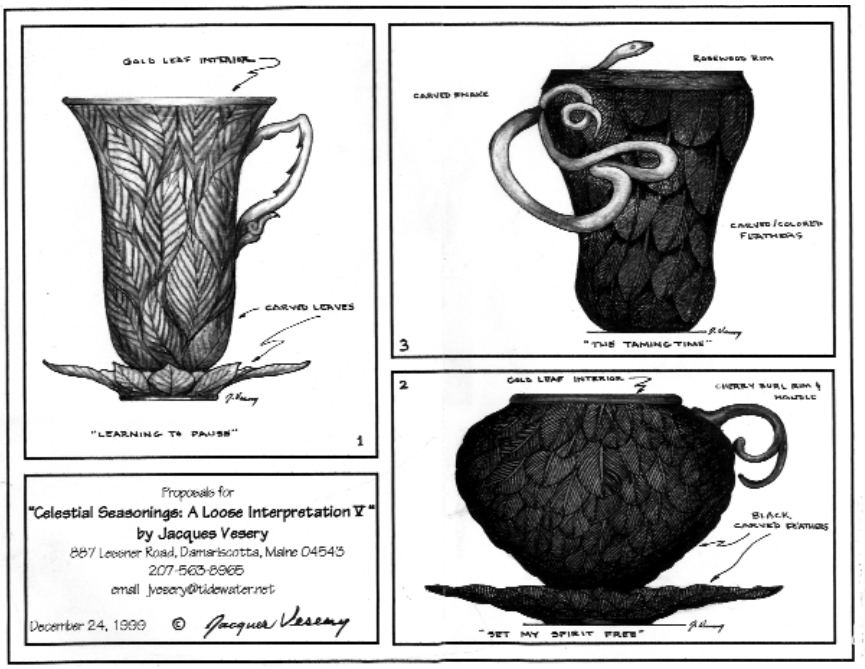
THE WORD "CHALLENGE" IS OFTEN connected to events in crafts involving many media, not just woodturning. Now **DON'T** turn to the next article because you think this is going to be just another one of those "Artsy Fartsy"write ups: you have to get beyond that prejudice.

From the simplest salad bowl to the most intricately textured vessel, everyone of us uses turning as an artistic expression. Whether it's through making, collecting, or teaching, the turned form is simplistic, inviting art that begs to be touched and challenges the senses.

In December of 1999 I decided to make a few drawings of tea cups to submit to an annual exhibit for the Celestial Seasonings Tea Company in Boulder, CO. *Celestial Seasonings: A Loose Interpretation V* would be a change from the past exhibits which were primarily tea pots. This year, the request was for tea cups. Of my three proposals, my favorite was accepted to be one of fifty pieces in the exhibit.

The true challenge for me was designing a piece, creating it outside of my head [put it on paper that is] and knowing the finished piece needed to emulate the original. Well, at least be close. One of my most sacred rules of thumb is "If you draw or design a piece on paper, that's that … it's done, finished, you don't want to make the piece anymore, Jack."

Drawing always gives me this feeling that the object is already completed; repeating the design, even if it is in wood rather than on a piece of paper, is not as enjoyable to me." Maybe that sense of copying, having to conform to the drawing is what keeps me from the drawing board. Though, don't be deceived by this. Drawings and renderings give me the same satisfaction as finishing a turning and in most cases, in much less time. The drawing just doesn't touch on that magic transformation that occurs in the turning procedure.



Vesery's original proposal for the tea cup competition.The actual objects are shown on the back cover. Although it is not his mind set to draw a piece before making it, Jacques says these renderings afforded play with some more difficult design concepts.

Those subtle changes in form which are instantly visible at the tip of a gouge seem less apt to vary on paper. I'm sure some art teacher would say "Hey! That's what erasers are for," but we woodturners know that's different. Until now, I've only had one piece turn out the way I intended. That time the original concept existed only in my mind (yes, that's right- I worked from a mental image, not on a hard-copy drawing.

In the teacup situation, I convinced myself that I would not follow the original drawing, but would conform to the concept behind it. It just happened that this cup and saucer looked like the rendered design I had submitted, and therefore I didn't really violate my own rule against making the same piece twice. In fact, it was REALLY completed four times... once on paper, and again in wood, and, of course, mentally and subconsciously prior to the physical drawing and turning. How's that for self-convincing psycho- babble?

Does any of this affect the creative process? It only shows up in the concept or design, not in the actual object. Or, does it? There's more than one way to skin a cat, tons of techniques for turning a form and millions of inspirations for art. Keep an open mind and enjoy the adventure, no matter what road it takes. I've learned that words conform and challenge should never be used in the same woodturning sentence.

Jacques Vesery is a turner and teacher in Damariscotta, ME. More information on the exhibit is available from Kathy Borgman at 303-503-5300, or at www.ferringallery.com/celestial/index

THE LARGEST HACKBERRY?

Tough, Stringy, Beautiful History

PETER M. SMITH

THE CHALLENGE WAS TO TURN bowls from a fallen limb of the Hunterdon Hackberry in NW New Jersey, one of the largest trees on the East Coast, certainly the largest Hackberry. Hackberry is in the same family as Elm and is a very similar wood: tough and stringy when wet, dense and strong when dry, and a good wood to turn.

The bowls would be sold at an exhibition as a fund raiser for the local Open Spaces Advisory Committee, which uses the tree as its symbol.

It was a large bough — some 3-ft. in diameter near the join. Unfortunately it had come down several years ago and was well past the spalting phase and well into the rotting phase of its return to earth.

On slicing a cross section, I found that the rot had penetrated several inches into the wood. Where the limb was 12-in. wide, all the wood was gone; where it was 24-in. wide, perhaps the central 12-in. was sound enough to turn.

Worse still, turning the center of the log is usually not recommended: fibers at the pith are looser and longer than in the rest of the tree and the wood rapidly checks or cracks from the middle out. So even if the core 12-in. of wood is sound, about 1-in. on each side of the pith is not used. Normally a turner would pass over such unpromising material, but this wood was irreplaceable.

I had to choose between reducing the log to small, good blanks, or cutting larger blocks at the expense of working decayed wood. I started with about eight large logs, and after a lot of chain-sawing, ended up with a couple dozen blanks of various degrees of soundness. It was hard to throw away any of it, even though about half of it was hopelessly spongy.

Hackberry bowls in the rough, top, with some of the finished pieces, in the 4-to-6-in. high range. Photos by the author

Turning punky wood

Turning punky wood, like the piece shown on the next page, presents many challenges to the turner. One basic problem is attaching the wood to the lathe - there's nothing solid to hold. Face plates with long screws in the central sound wood worked - most times - and the tailstock was used for extra support until the block was true. Then a waste block of oak was superglued on the foot for reversing the blank. The varying density of the wood meant severe lathe vibration. Then the wood turned and sanded as if it were made of sawdust, and the wide ribbons of shavings beloved of wet turning were not seen. Since the wood was half dry, tool edges dulled rapidly. The hardwood beetles had bored plenty of holes and a few of their live grubs were active - inch-long white worms had to be extricated with a long needle. This adds character. More limiting was the inability to do any fine work: thin walls and sharp edges would not hold; and beads or grooves were lost in the rough-grained rotten sections. Thin cyanoacrylate glue stabilized some critical areas, but not all. Since I was working near the pith, there was considerable checking and warping at the rims.

The Hackberry in Hunterdon County in northwest New Jersey was believed to be one of the largest threes on the East Coast. By the time turners got a chance to try to preserve the wood from a large, downed limb, the Hackberry was well past spalting and badly rotted, as shown above.

To save as much wood as possible, I used McNaughton Center Saving system , which allows you to core out the center of a blank and make another smaller bowl from this (several times over if you are lucky). Most big blanks yielded one smaller blank, which was even better to work than the parent since it was closer to the center. However, since the master blanks were not very deep (4-to-5-in. max), the saved blanks made for shallow bowls. The limitations of the wood and its size meant that designs were limited to standard salad bowl shapes. This was not an issue for me since I favor simple forms - and to do these well is not so simple. Minimal decoration was needed - often just three grooves on the outside rim.

The applied logo: from laser printer to tree with a little help from a hot iron.

Air drying and finishing

After rough turning, I left the blanks two months in my warm shop to air dry before finishing the turnings. On hindsight this was not quite long enough: a 13-in. wide thin platter warped badly and was ultimately rejected. The final yield was about 30 bowls ranging from 3-to-14in. diameter, 4-to-5-in. tall, and a few hundred gallons of shavings. Finishing the bowls was straightforward although the punky wood absorbed lots of sealer and oil. The finished surface was thus somewhat dull, and pitted where the wood was soft. Buffing with wax added a pleasing luster.

I also had the idea to rescue some of the wood from pith slices and use the quarter sawn boards to make small jewelry boxes. After a few weeks of drying, these 1-in. slices seemed stable and dry so I planed them down to $^{3}/_{8}$-in. thick boards - which promptly warped. I cut these into strips and made segments which could be sanded flat, and used these to build up the rim of one bowl.

Signing the bowls also let me try something new — imprinting the logo for the exhibition, a line drawing of the tree. I scanned this into my computer, added some text, a border, and flipped the image. This was printed out on my laser printer. Xerox ink is heat fused to the paper, and someone discovered that using a hot iron against the back of the image transfers the ink to wood, as shown at right. With a bit of practice, a clear and detailed image could be fixed on the wood. This image is resistant to oils and buffing. I'll use the technique for future bowls since the flexibility and the detail are quite liberating.

All in all, getting any bowls from this wood was quite an exercise. The compensation and attraction: wood from a special and grand tree, and truly unique bowls.

Peter M. Smith operates Sandsmith Studios in Princeton, NJ

Turning A Handled Bowl

A Multi-Axis Balancing Technique

TALMADGE MURPHEY

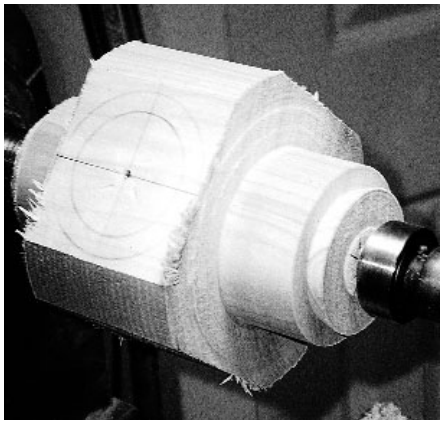
The evolution of the author's handled vessel, from original block with layout lines to two different variations on a theme. The vessel on the left still must be rechucked to turn off the bottom. The one on the right has been pierced, carved and finished. The disk with tenon in the front is stock for a lid. Photos by the author.

Several years ago it occurred to me that you seldom see a turned bowl or vessel with handles. This at first seemed a bit strange, because almost all glass, metal or ceramic vessels have handles. Since many of the shapes and designs we use in turning wooden pieces resemble those found in ceramics, glass or metal, it seemed logical to attach handles to turned work.

With ceramic, glass or metal objects the handles are added after the vessel has been formed; the nature of these materials makes it possible to fuse the handle to the object, so it becomes part of the vessel, in many cases without an obvious joint.

This joint is often stronger than the handle itself; a cup handle seldom breaks at the attachment point, but farther out in the loop of the handle. With wood, the challenge of attaching a handle is more formidable. The weak point of the assembly will invariably be at the joint itself.

With this in mind I set out to develop a technique for producing a turned wood vessel or bowl with handles that are part of the basic structure, without an obvious joint. That is, it must all be from the same block of wood.



A basic cylinder forms the shape of the vessel. The stock next will be rechucked to turn additional cylinders or protuberances perpendicular to the original.

Planning, balance essential

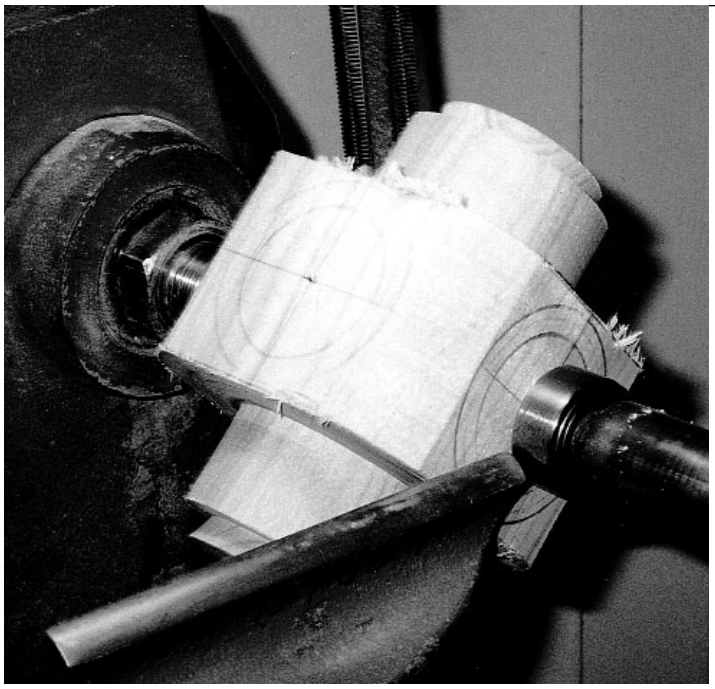
I quickly found out that this involved more than chucking a block of wood on the lathe and starting to turn. Obtaining what I had in mind required pre-planning, reasonably accurate layout, good preparation and, most of all, sound wood with good cross-grain strength. In addition, since my lathe is not one of the monster heavy weights, I determined that balance would have to be maintained throughout the procedure to avoid punching holes in my shop ceiling and chasing the lathe across the shop.

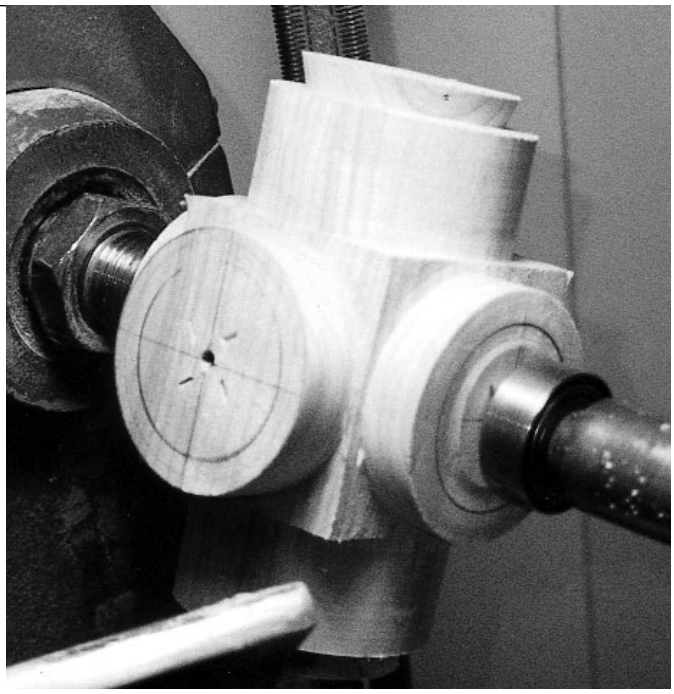
After trial and error I arrived at the technique which I refer to as "Balanced Multi-Axis turning" to produce loop or bail type handles on turned vessels or bowls. To preempt any complaints, I don't claim credit for "Balanced Multi Axis Turning:" I'm sure it was developed long before I was around. Here I use the term to describe my process, which involves starting with a rectangular block, turning the ends into a cylinder, as shown in the photo below left, then re-chucking along various axes to create cylindrical tenons perpendicular to the original cylinder. These tenons can be further turned and carved to form handles. The more tenons, the more pairs of handles.

To begin, check your wood supply to see what size of reasonably dry (10 -to-15% moisture content) wood you have. I prepare the wood by cutting it into squares and planing it as necessary to true up the surfaces.

Designing the piece

Designing the piece basically involves deciding how many pairs of handles I want and the general shape of the handles. Since I work with relatively small blocks of wood — the vessel shown in this article started as a 7-in. long and $4^1/_2$-in. square. I planned to use one axis to create the general form of the vessel and two





The author prepares to turn the first traverse axis, perpendicular to the central axis of the vessel. After that axis is turned, the next axis is chucked between centers to turn the second transverse axis. The dovetail section at the top of the main cylinder is for remounting the vessel in a chuck for additional turning.

additional axes to create $2^{3}/_{4}$-in.-diameter cylinders that would become handles. The size and number of handles depends largely on the dimensions of the original square. I've worked with as many as five axes to create four pairs of eight handles. You must cut a pair of opposing flat planes along the long edges of the block for each pair of handles. The piece with eight handles, for example, started out as an octagon.

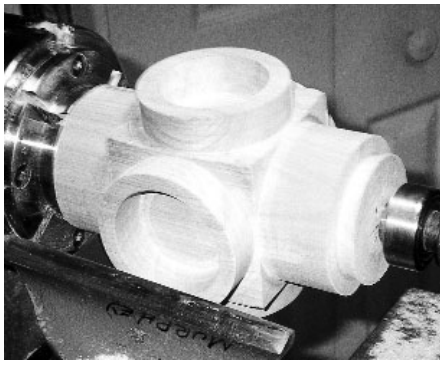
Laying out the design

After the design work I then lay out the design on our block of wood: the vessel here is based on three axes: one for the original cylinder which will develop into the body of the vessel and two other axes to form two pairs of handles. After laying out the various axes, I bandsaw along the long edges of the rectangle. This reduces turning time and vibration and lets you move the tool rest closer to the block after you mount the block on the lathe.

The first turning will be on the horizontal axis to develop a cylinder, excluding the handle blocks, and to cut chucking dovetails on both ends. Remember that at this point you want to maintain balance for the next steps, so the two ends should mirror each other.

The next turning will be on the transverse axis and for convenience will require turning the outboard handle shape, then reversing the block to turn the opposite handle shape, as shown above.

The same procedure will be followed to turn the next transverse axis if there is one.



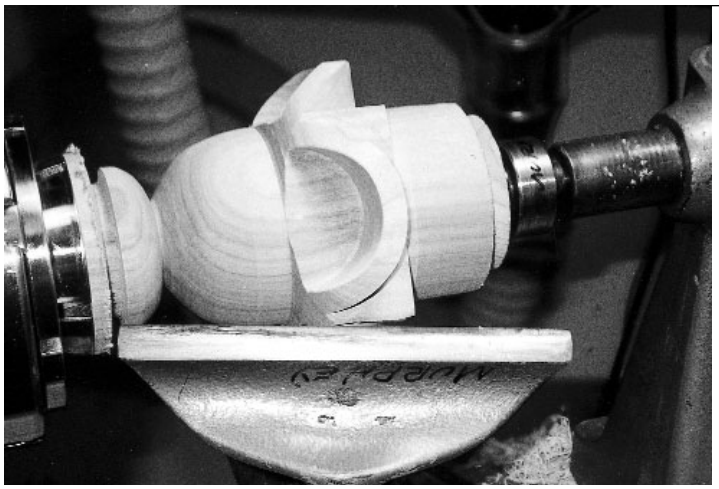
Chucked block, ready to be turned into the main vessel. The tenons that will form the handles have already been hollowed out.

After all the transverse axes have been initially turned it may be necessary to return to previously turned axes to trim them up to ensure the four (or more) handle profiles and intersections are uniform.

You should now have a large cylinder with dovetails at either end and two, four or more large tenons sticking out from the sides.

Next, hollow each of the projecting tenons. This can be done in two ways. First and easiest is to simply take the piece to the drill press and with an appropriate size Forstner bit, drill out the tenon center being careful not to let the drill point go beyond the surface of the main cylinder. Care should be taken to maintain vertical alignment when drilling.

The second method is to wrap the end of a tenon with sandpaper, align and chuck that tenon in a straight jawed chuck and, with light cuts, hollow the opposing tenon on the lathe (purist procedure). Repeat until all tenons are hollowed, as shown at left.



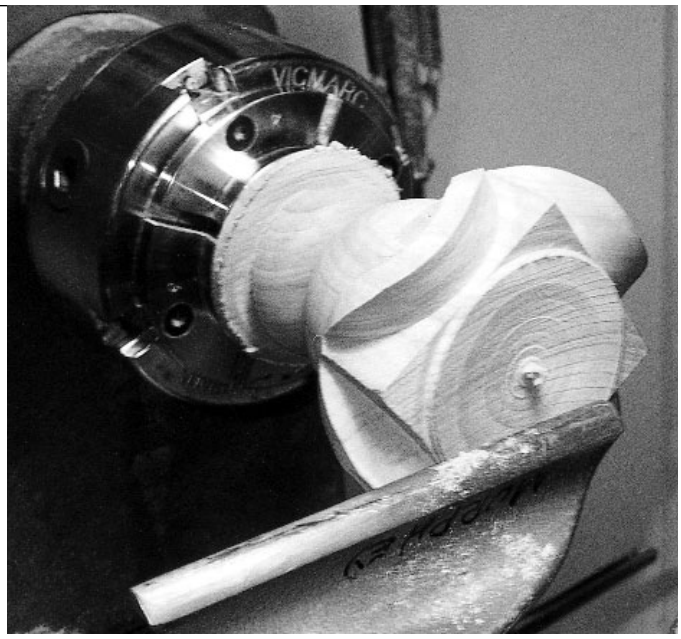


Photo above shows the author's vessel with the outside of the handles and the bottom turned. At right, the same piece with the lid blank cut off and the main vessel mounted in a chuck, so he can cut through the top of the handles.

Again do not penetrate beyond the surface of the main cylinder. Once the tenons are true, uniform and hollowed out, you can move to the next step. BEWARE: you cannot return to the tenons after this.

Decide now, in light of defects, cracks, etc. which is to be the top and bottom of the vessel. Chuck the bottom using the dovetail recess, as shown at the top of the previous page, and bring the tailstock up to support the top of the vessel. Make a mark about $^3/_8$-in. below (toward the headstock) the center line of the hollowed tenons. Mark the ends of all tenons in the same way. This will be the bottom of the handle attachment to the vessel.

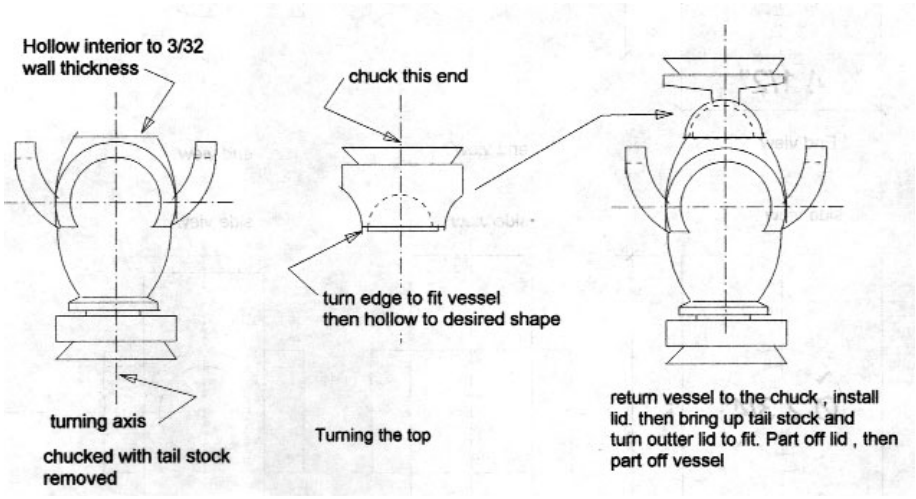
Start forming handles

Turn away the tenons from the upper (toward the tailstock) outer end of each tenon curving to reach the main body of the cylinder at the line previously marked. Proceed to turn the cylinder to the desired shape including the base. If the base to vessel connection is to be small, leave at least one inch for the time being to support the vessel while turning the upper portion and hollowing.

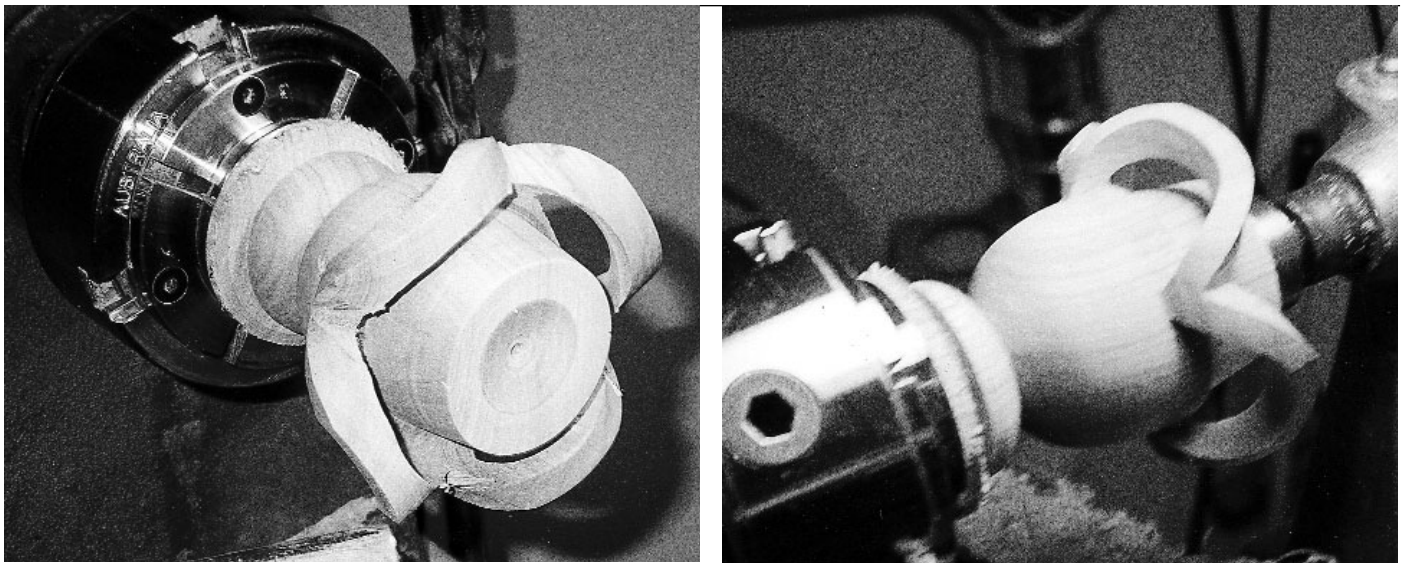
About $^1/_2$-in. above the top of the handles (toward the tailstock) part off the tailstock portion of the cylinder and set aside. This can later be used to make a top.

Remove the tailstock and with light cuts begin shaping the upper part of the vessel gradually working down inside the handles. As soon as you break through to the hollow in the handles stop and drip "hot stuff" on the upper portion of the handles to reinforce them if there is any doubt about their strength. Continue to work down inside, between the vessel and the handles until you have the handles properly shaped and the upper vessel wall shaped. It is usually best to leave a small shoulder on the vessel wall where the upper part of the handles attach to the vessel to provide tool clearance. An alternative to this approach is to use a coping saw to remove most of the wood between the handles and vessel wall, then finish using tools as above in the space. This usually eliminates the need for the "hot stuff" saturation.

Prior to the hollowing of the vessel put the tailstock back in place and



Finishing the handled vase: after turning out the area between the handles and the vase, Murphey hollows the interior to $^3/_{32}$-in., then turns the lid as shown above. The lid is fitted on the vessel for final shaping. Drawing by the author



After carefully turning out the area between the handles and the main vessel, above left, the author saws out the waste material in the corners between the handles with a backsaw. Above right, a look at the handles from the bottom of the vessel.

tighten it firmly against the end of the vessel to prevent it from moving in the chuck. Then with chisels and hammer remove the excess wood beneath the handles to bring this area in line with the rest of the vessel wall. A power carver works nicely to do this also.

After carving is complete, remove the tailstock and hollow the vessel.

The balance of the work involves rounding the edges of the handles, first with a knife or dremel tool, then finishing with sanding.

Finish any additional turning required on the bottom wall and part down to about $2^1/_2$-in. below the base if a top is to be made. Part off, if not.

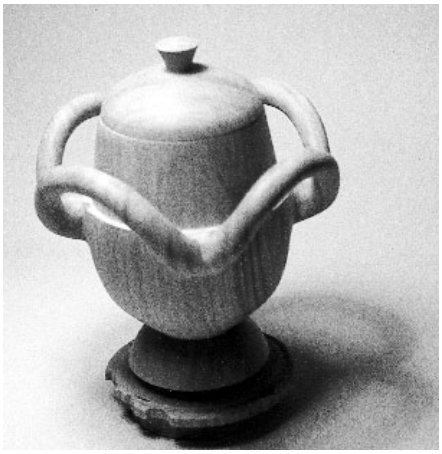
If the former, remove from chuck and put the block parted off the top earlier in the chuck and shape the top to fit to the vessel. For final shaping of the top, return the vessel to the chuck, install the top, bring the tailstock up to hold it in place and finish the top shape. Finish parting the vessel off, then returning the top to the chuck, finish and part it off.

You now have a lidded turned vessel with handles.

An open or closed bowl with handles is turned in much the same manner except the top portion is usually just turned away rather than being saved for a lid. To save wood, glue blocks can be used, but to maintain balance they must be applied to both top and bottom of the bowl blank.

When the carving step is reached, the residual un-turned wood will not only be beneath the handle, but will extend in a band around the bowl. This can be removed to form a smooth wall or simply carved and textured to become a decorative band. In using a square block to lay out a bowl, the handles will frequently fit into the waste corner areas of the block, thus not requiring additional block size for a given bowl.

For larger bowl sizes it is best to drill out the handle tenons rather than attempt to turn them out.



The author's vessel, finished except for turning out the bottom

Other possibilities

I have explored only some of the possibilities of using this technique. On bowls, you can turn two sets of handles about 30° apart. Then cut away part of each handle and connect adjacent half handles with brass rod to form two wide composite handles.

Other possibilities are: Turn large handles, cut away the handle top, drill the remaining sides and insert a dowel rod through the two holes. Turn at 30° for more frequent angles completely around the bowl, cut away the handle tops, drill the sides and run a continuous brass rod around the bowl circumference through the holes (carefully solder the ends together and slide joint so as to hide it in one of the holes to really baffle folks). Leave the projecting tenons square, drill the centers out for flat handles (no multi axis work involved here). And the list goes on.

Have fun putting handles on your bowls.

Talmadge Murphey is a woodturner in Franklin, NC. He was a demonstrator at the annual AAW Symposium in Charlotte, NC, last summer.

ARTISTRY IN WOOD

Turning scores a stellar debut at Detroit museum

LYLE JAMIESON

Wood — "sensual, sculptural, seductive — is the latest craft to enter the fine art realm," said Keri Guten-Cohen, the Detroit Free Press entertainment journalist, in appraising one of the major turning events of the year.

The weekend of July 8th, 2000, was an exciting turning point for wood fine art and woodturning artists from all over the world. The Detroit Institute of Art premiered its extensive new holdings in *The Fine Art of Wood: The Bohlen Collection*.

The Detroit Institute of Art is the fifth largest fine arts museum in the United States with holdings of over 60,000 works. Within its more than one hundred galleries are paintings, sculpture, and graphic and decorative arts that reveal the scope and depth of human experience, imagination and emotion. This exhibit mar ks the first time a major metropolitan fine art museum has owned and shown contemporary wood as fine art.

Art patron and collector, Robert Bohlen, of Brighton, MI set out three years ago "to assemble the best woodturning pieces in the world." Early in 1999 he invited Bonita Fike, associate curator of modern and contemporary art at the DIA to view his collection. "If you think this work is museum quality," he said," pick what you want." Fike picked 140 pieces from his collection of over 400, which Bohlen then donated to the museum. The exhibit showcases nearly 100 wood artists from around the world. "Wood art now benefits from the cross-pollination of ideas from different media, cultures, and time periods and demonstrates the universality of creative expression," said Bonita Fike. The exhibit will be featured at the DIA through the end of February, 2001, and may to travel to other museums in the future.

As an artist represented in this collection, I was proud and honored to be involved. Many of the artists, who came from all over the world for the opening festivities, stayed in Brighton, MI, about an hour from downtown Detroit and the DIA. Bob Bohlen arranged transportation and accommodations. The trip back and forth from Brighton to Detroit gave all of us a chance to renew old friendships and make new ones. It was a wonderful way for me to get to know some of the best and most creative wood artists in the world on a personal level. The Friday evening reception at the DIA was well attended with more than 30 of the artists present and participating in a book signing of the spectacular catalogue. The DIA has issued a hard cover, full-color catalogue titled, *The Fine Art of Wood: The Bohlen Collection* available in the DIA museum shop for $35.00.

Pondering the future of Turning: The Bohlen Collection opens at the Detroit Museum of Art. Photos by author.

Graham W. J. Beal, director of the DIA, stated: "The collection consists of wood objects created in the last decade when wood artists broke the boundaries of the vessel aesthetic to claim a freedom of expression long enjoyed by ceramists and glass artists."

On Saturday the DIA hosted a talk and slide presentation by Ray Leer and Jan Peters of the del Mano Gallery on "The History of Turned Wood" and Albert LeCoff, executive director of the Wood Turning Center, spoke and presented slides on "Wood turning: Back to the Future".

The Sybaris Gallery in Birmingham, MI, a suburb of Detroit, had an opening reception on Saturday afternoon for a special all-wood show. Many of the artists in the DIA collection were represented and sales were booming at the opening.

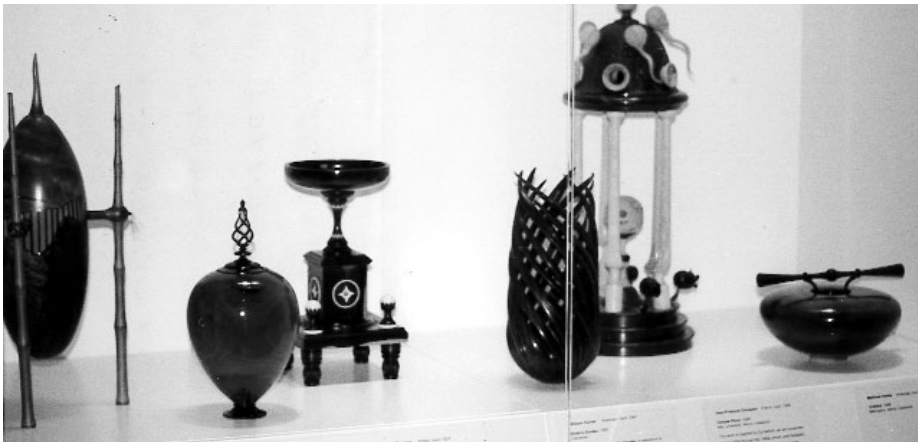
On Sunday, Terry Martin from Australia gave a gallery talk and historical perspective of his work and an extensive slide presentation highlighting the best turning artists in the world, many represented in the DIA show.

The "millennium" has become synonymous with pivotal or turning points and we surely can accept this exhibit as a millennium-magnitude moment. Thanks to Bob Bohlen's generosity and enthusiasm for wood, it is a turning point in the recognition of woodturning as fine art and it cele-

brates a pivotal artistic breakthrough.

In my opinion, this exhibition exposes the viewer to an exciting array of contemporary wood turning. One-hundred and thirteen pieces in this collection were made in the last five years. There were many departures from the vessel form, with a number of pieces that were sculptural. The exhibit has an element of historical perspective and the influence of pioneers like Bob Stocksdale with his classic shapes, Rude Osolnik's elegant candlesticks, and David Ellsworth's thin-walled vessels. We have all seen photos of their well-known work over the years. Leaders in the field, like John Jordan's beautifully textured hollow forms, Virginia Dotson's laminated vessels, Frank Sudol's intricately pierced forms, Betty Scarpino's bleached sculpture, Michael Peterson's flowing carved figures and Clay Foster's carved and painted vessels are well represented also. There are exciting new works from newcomers, like Ron Gerton's large hollow forms with cast bronze bases, Haley Smith's delicately detailed forms, and Jacques Vesery's exquisitely carved vessels. There was significant representation from around the world including from England, Stuart Mortimer's effective use of hand-fluted spirals; from France, Jean-Francois Escoulen's surrealistic temple sculpture and Alain Mailland's complex delicately carved shapes, and from New Zealand, Gael Montgomerie's fine use of color.

The Bohlen show include works by Jacques Vesery, left to right, Todd Hoyer, Michael Peterson and Lyle Jamieson.



Left to right: Works by Alby Hall, Stewart Mortimer, Paul Fletcher, William Hunter, Jean-Francois Escoulen and Matthew Hatala.

What does this mean for the rank and file membership of the AAW, the majority of whom will never become full-time studio artists? We can be proud to have our field recognized as part of this ground breaking moment in the fine art world. Most of the artists involved in this exhibit have given of themselves freely, sharing their techniques and ideas to help everyone enjoy turning at whatever level desired. This donation and exhibition can only raise the bar for all of those involved, whether as observer, collector, artist or hobbyist. We are all gaining enjoyment and fun from the lathe.

Bonita Fike in the book *The Fine Art of Wood: The Bohlen Collection* closes with the statement:

"Although all art is in some sense autobiographical, it is when the personal becomes symbolic that art relates to others and the viewer becomes a participant. Art helps the viewer see the world in a different way. It does not depend on technique or material. Art is a way of making ordinary experience extraordinary. And the artists in this exhibition use wood to assist us in discovering the exceptional in life."

What else can I say?

Lyle Jamieson is a sculptor and teacher in Traverse City, MI. His work can be seen on his web site at: http://www.lyle-jamieson.com

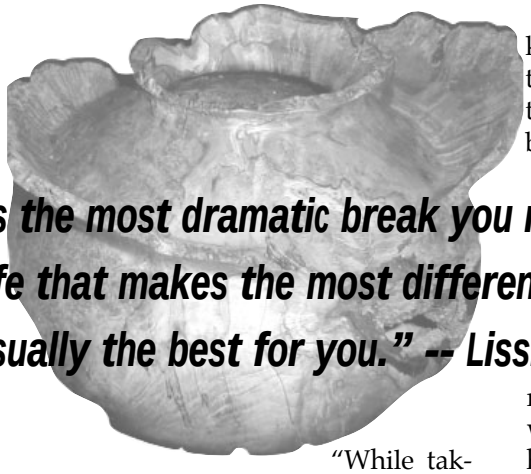
KNUD AND LISSI ØLAND

A Gentle Approach to Woodturning and Life

GARY C. DICKEY

According to Lissi Øland, you can tell a lot about people by the way they approach a piece of wood on the lathe.

For their part, Lissi and her late husband Knud, chose the gentle approach to woodturning as well as life itself.



"It is the most dramatic break you make in your life that makes the most difference--and it is usually the best for you." -- Lissi Øland

The two Danish immigrants were attracted to Western North Carolina by fellow-Danes, George Bidstrup and his wife Marguerite, a co-founder of the John C. Campbell Folk School. The Bidstrups served as co-directors of the Folk School in Brasstown, NC where the Ølands made their mark as woodturners and teachers of the craft.

The year before leaving Copenhagen, Lissi had talked to the Bidstrups about the possibility of coming to the United States. Their advice: "Learn English and folk dancing, get an immigrant visa and come to Brasstown." Lissi laughs now as she recalls her arrival in this country in 1961.

"I was so naive. I came from Paris on a student flight with about $100 in my pocket. Then I took a bus from New York to North Carolina."

She had learned English, but it still took an effort to overcome the culture shock.

"While taking a taxi in New York, the driver rattled on about the Yankees. I knew the word, but only in the context of the civil war. It was only later that I learned he was talking about baseball," she said.

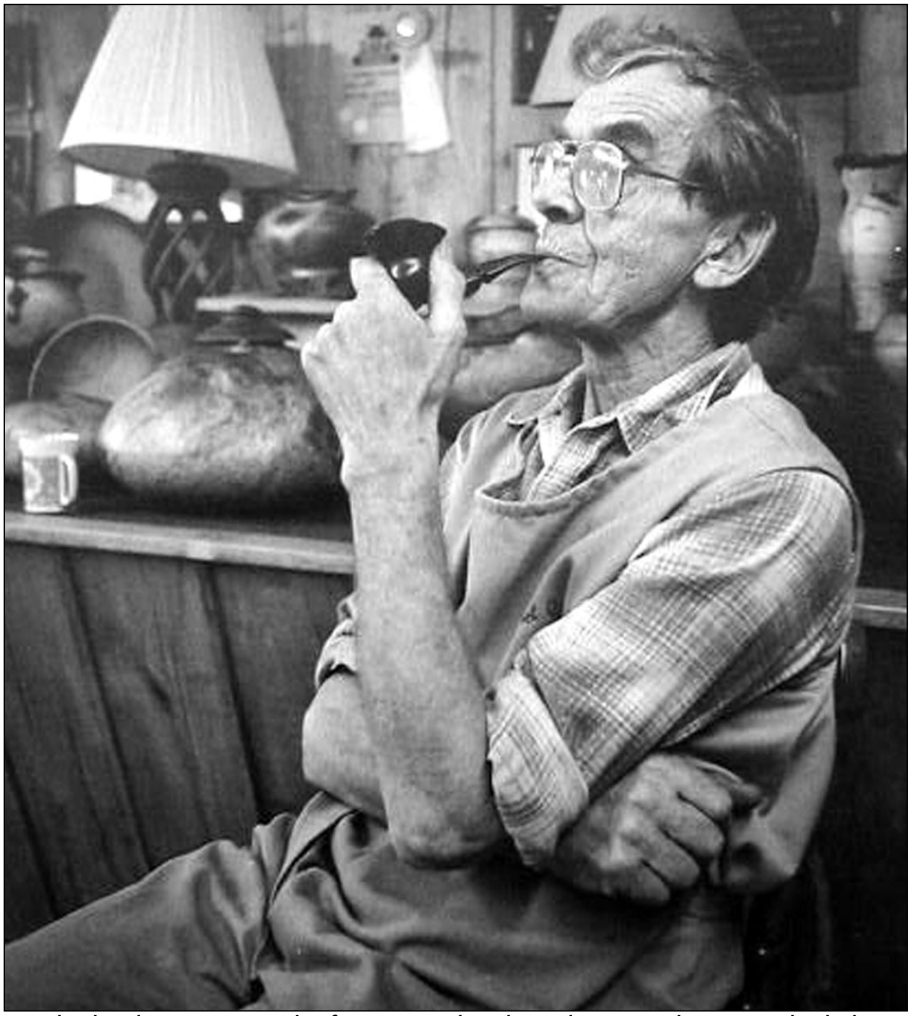
After "playing" at the Folk School for awhile, Lissi left Brasstown to complete her education at Berea College. While there, she worked as a dental lab assistant and learned to make dental bridges and crowns. It was a trade that would come in handy throughout her life, even as a woodturner.

Upon graduation from Berea College, she returned to Brasstown and opened a dental lab.

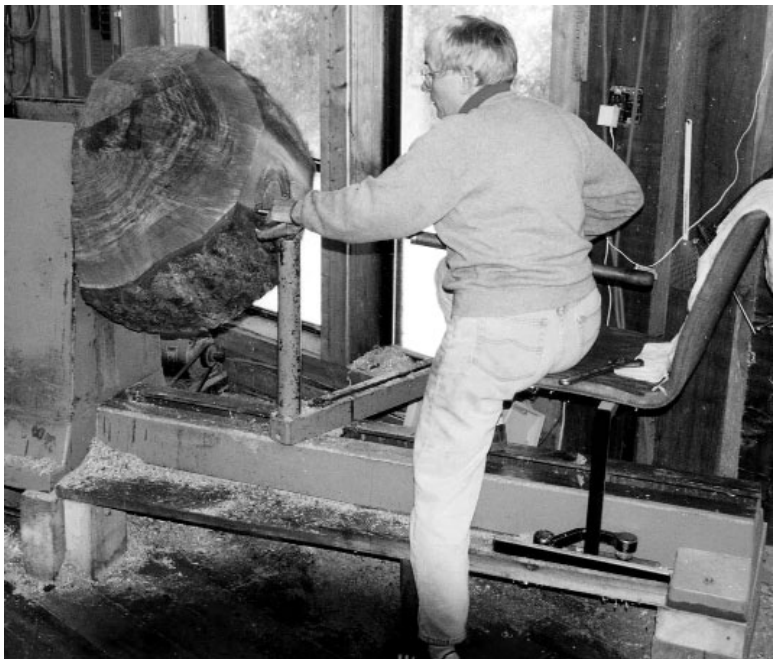
"George Bidstrup had become ill with heart problems and died in 1971, so I moved my dental lab to Brasstown and took care of Marguerite until her death some ten years later," Lissi recalls.

First and foremost an educator, Knud moved to this country permanently in 1975 after two previous sabbatical visits studying at the John C. Campbell Folk School.

The sabbatical years apparently had a tremendous impact on his decision to retire early from his post as director of



Knud Øland was among the first to turn bowls and artistic objects on the lathe at the John C. Campbell Folk School. Previous turnings were done as furniture parts.



Knud, left, is shown chainsawing a bowl blank at the farm near Brasstown, NC around 1985. Today Lissi, right, carries on the Øland bowl-turning tradition as she begins shaping a large walnut bowl on the Hal Baker custom built lathe.

the Youth High School on the island of Mors in northern Denmark and immigrate to the U.S.

He and Lissi were married in 1978 and together they began to establish a gallery and workshop.

His experience at the Folk School included intensive study in woodworking and design and no doubt led to his decision to become a full-time woodturner.

In his resume at the height of his career, he explained his decision like this:

"Having spent the early part of my career as a teacher, I found in 1977 that it was possible to make a living and satisfy my desire to create useful and ornamental art objects at the same time.

"In the years I have been turning I have had strong response to my work, and the last two years I have been able to fully support my family through sales of my work," he wrote.

"Knud already had begun to acquire woodworking tools and machinery such as a table saw, a band saw, a drill press, and an old Sears, cast-iron-bed lathe," Lissi said. "He was very good with his hands and had the ability to see the potential beauty in a piece of wood before he started a project."

Knud is perhaps best remembered among woodturners as a great teacher and for his unorthodox turning methods.

As he once wrote, "I am a self taught turner. I have not felt that I could afford either the time or the money to attend courses. And perhaps an added reason for not attending is that I have been too involved with my work, too excited to leave it."

Unabashedly, he admitted that he was "what most woodturners consider a 'scraper.' However, I am using my tools to cut rather than scrape. I make all my own tools," he said.

"Knud never felt entirely comfortable and satisfied with the tools that were being used at that time," Lissi recalls. And it was this dissatisfaction that led to his experiments with a variety of homemade tools. Some of his friends who were welders suggested that he look at metal-lathe tools."

In the late 70s, the Ølands approached an inventor, Doug Taylor, in nearby Murphy, NC who held patents on a number of medical inventions.

"We explained to him what we were doing and provided him with drawings. He went back to his shop and fabricated the prototypes for the tools we were developing," Lissi said. (See related story on Øland Tools).

Meanwhile, Knud and Lissi were rolling up an impressive list of honors as woodturners. With Knud doing the turning with his unorthodox tools and Lissi doing the sanding and finishing, they were producing an award-winning body of work. Having won the Carolina Craftsmen Grand Award two years in succession, they were accepted into the prestigious Southern Highland Handicraft Guild in 1979.

They were commissioned on numerous occasions to turn exclusively designed pieces. One such commis-

sion came when a historic walnut tree had to be removed from the original Arlington Cemetery on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The tree had been planted near the grave of John Custis IV, a member of the Governor's Council of 1750. To retain the historic symbol, the family requested a bowl or plate be turned from the trunk of the tree. Knud accepted the commission and turned 11 pieces including bowls and plates of various sizes. One piece is in the collection of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities and another went to the museum at Arlington National Cemetery.

Mountain laurel urn

In 1985, the magazine, *Creative Ideas for Living,* a publication of The Progressive Farmer Publishing Company, commissioned Knud to turn a set of salad bowls which were awarded as prizes in a nationwide contest conducted by the publication.

At the same time, the Ølands were traveling almost continuously to craft shows and fairs. Even the birth of their daughter Helen in 1981 did not seem to slow their pace. As Knud observed at the time:

"I find the direct contact with the public, as happens in the shows, sells my pieces better and provides the feedback that greatly stimulates me in my work. Also, it has created a great interest in woodturning."

At that time, Knud was turning about 350 pieces a year and selling about 275 of them on average.

"Knud enjoyed the people and you got lots of pats on the back--we made a fair living with no other source of income," Lissi said.

"We traveled with a trailer and Helen traveled with us and we had a wonderful time," she added.

As the body of work increased, and the pieces became more numerous, Knud began work on a unique 10-sided gallery in 1989. He never explained why he chose the decagon design, although it was similar to a building he had admired in his native Denmark.

He was noted for his different approach to just about everything he did. As a gymnastics instructor in Denmark, he was among the first to teach gymnastics to music, a practice now accepted even in the Olympics.

As Lissi recalls, "He saw things others couldn't see both in life and in woodturning. Even as a farmer, he tried to live gently on the land. Coming to this country and beginning life anew, he was beginning to discover the creative side of his life."

Hollow turned mountain laurel root.

Although his career as a woodturner spanned less than two decades, he was a prolific and exacting turner. Even before he finished building his gallery, Knud was diagnosed with a brain tumor and passed away in 1991.

A visitor to the Øland Craft Studio today will find a woodturner's paradise tucked away on almost 40 acres of rolling hills and quiet meadows with an ample supply of native hardwoods including cherry, maple, walnut, sycamore and persimmon.

The studio and shop remain much as it was when Knud left it and Lissi continues to rough out the blanks and turn them to completion by herself.

The site remains a favorite field trip for woodturning classes at John C. Campbell Folk School.

While showing a recent class her husband's work, she pointed to a large mountain laurel urn in a corner of the decagon gallery.

"Knud always joked that this would be his urn and he said he left this hole in the side so he would be able to keep his eye on me," she said with a mischievous look in her eye. Without further comment, she turned the vessel so that the hole faced the wall and moved along to the next piece in the gallery.

With pride she showed the class a large tulip poplar tray and eight matching identical plates. She explained that this collection had been sold to a gallery in Berea, KY when his daughter, Helen, was very young. Later in life, Helen discovered the pieces in the gallery and bought the entire set to bring it back home again.

Aside from an extensive artistic

collection of Knud's work which Lissi maintains in the now finished decagon gallery, possibly his greatest legacy is a legion of loyal and appreciative students who learned to turn under his direction.

Retired surgeon Jack Dickerson of Waynesville, NC remembers Knud as a kind and helpful teacher who "had me doing things I never would have thought I could do in such a short period of time."

After spending a week at Knud's studio in a woodturning course, Dickerson wrote: "It was such a wonderful experience to be able to work on the lathe under your excellent instruction and watchful eye. My wife has shown my bowls to every friend we have and told our children to get their names on a 'want list' for Christmas."

There were other students who went on to become full time woodturners. Among them was Doug Barnes, a demonstrator at the 2000 AAW Symposium in Charlotte, NC.

"It's very difficult to tell someone to give up a job and the security it affords to take the chance to become a fulltime woodturning artist. And I would never do that. I think it takes the proper type of personality and a great deal of persistence and everyone must make that decision for himself. But I knew that Doug Barnes was that kind of person," Lissi recalls.

Doug also remembers it as one of the toughest decisions of his life. Having risen to managerial positions in the textile industry, and having attained the security that came with it, it was a lot to walk away from to become a fulltime woodturner. Having learned the fundamentals with Knud, he studied with him for several years while making up his mind that one day he would make the break from the corporate world.

"It is the most dramatic break you make in your life that makes the most difference--and it is usually the best for you," Lissi said.

And Doug Barnes would agree.

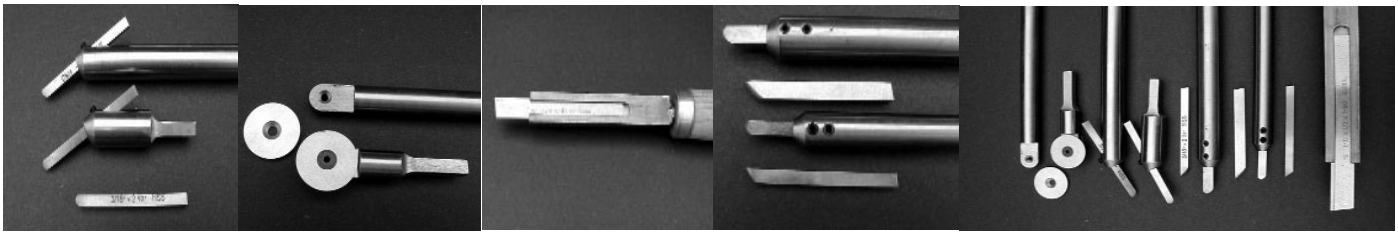
"Having left the 8-to-5 rat race, I've never looked back except to thank Knud and Lissi for saving my life," he said. "If I had stayed in the factory I would probably be dead by now."

"Knud taught me a lot by setting the example of what a woodturner should be. I never heard him raise his voice. He was a gentleman in all aspects of the word," Doug said.

"I think all of us who had the good fortune of studying with him try to live our lives as a tribute to the great teacher that he was," he added.

Gary Dickey is the assistant editor of American Woodturner.

The Øland Tools: Imitation is Flattery



From left are the 3/16" 30° angle tool, the M42 round finishing disk, the 3/32 x 5" cutoff tool and the straight tools in the common 1/4" and 3/16" sizes. At far right is the full arsenal of Øland tools.All are made from either M-2 or M-42 HSS.

"I was a woodturner for several years before I ever used a gouge," said Doug Barnes, a woodturner in residence at the John C. Campbell Folk School.

Barnes, who learned to turn from Lissi and the late Knud Øland used the Øland tools exclusively until he took a course from noted studio turner John Jordan. When Barnes told Lissi that he was going to take the course with Jordan, she replied: "Oh, Doug Barnes, you don't need to learn to use 'them googes.'"

And she may have been right. According to those who use the Øland tools, they are easier for beginners to use, virtually impossible to catch and the results are comparable to that attained with more traditional tools.

"There was really nothing new about our tools. In fact, the concept had been patented in the 1800s. We just took the concept and adapted it to woodturning," Lissi said. Since developing the tools, they have been imitated by many other turners.

"We don't mind that though," Lissi said. "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery."

The family of tools are basically tiny scrapers set in relatively massive shafts, used for cutting, not scraping.

The three basic tip sizes are off-the-shelf machinists' tool blanks secured in stainless steel shafts with set screws.

And although she will sell the tools to other turners, she's quick to point out that "If you're good with your hands, you can make your own."

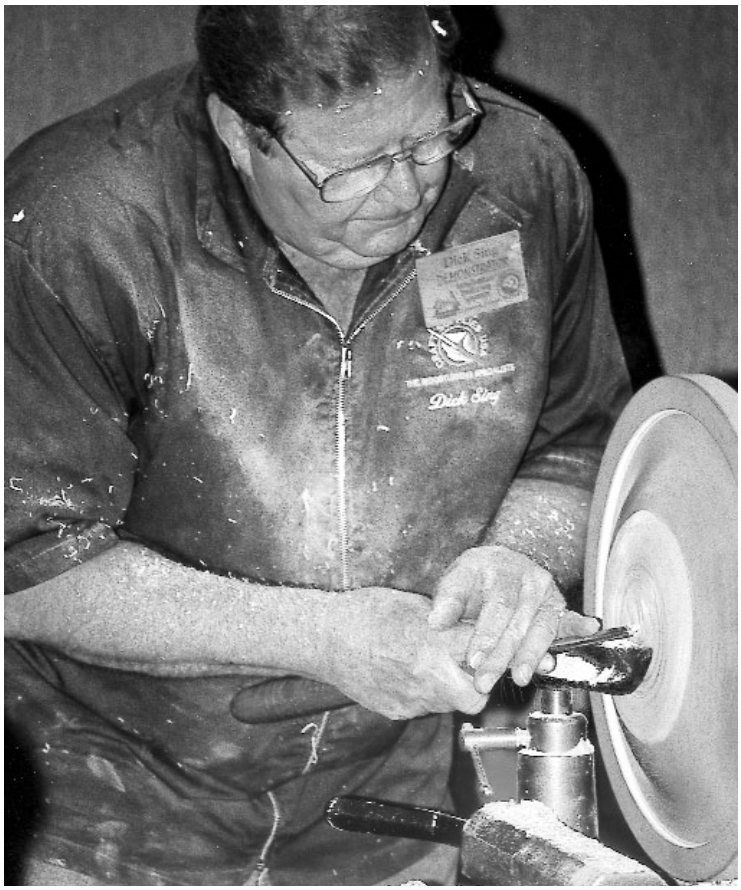
PITFALLS FOR BEGINNERS

Crawl before you walk -- Learn the Basics

DICK SING

ALL TOO OFTEN WE SEE PHOtographs of some turner's most accomplished pieces in magazines or at art shows. After seeing these dazzling displays, novice turners work to emulate them and make their own personal statement by trying to create a one-of-a-kind piece, instead of starting with something that is more simple, although simple is not easily obtained.

We rarely see the mistakes that were made getting to the point of having a piece that is worthy of bragging rights. So it is easy to forget that learning the basics first is essential. This is where we learn to crawl before we walk.



Practice, Practice, Practice

Practice is essential. Even the most accomplished musicians learned to play chopsticks before they played Mozart. They did not sit down and play an ear-pleasing piece of music the first time without practice, mistakes, and more practice. It is the same way with woodturning.

Getting the right proportions of ogee curves or complicated shapes takes time for the eye to understand and the turner to master. This is one of the more common mistakes I have noticed in novice turners. They start by trying to incorporate ogee curves or complicated shapes into their work, mostly in bowls, rather than starting with a simpler form.

It takes practice and time to train the eye to various shapes and forms. It is rare to find a beginning turner whose eye has the ability to proportion the shape into a pleasing form consistently without practice, mistakes and more practice.

Start by practicing on smaller objects such as bottle stops, weed pots, or any of the multitude of smaller objects which are quick and easy. It is very apparent to the eye when the form is not correct or if it is unbalanced and is lacking in that certain pizzazz that we all strive for. Larger forms require more wood, take more time to turn and tend to influence you in a different manner than a smaller form would.

Another craving that is common amongst aspiring turners, is to create a masterpiece out of the most figured and gorgeous piece of wood they can find. This usually depletes their mad money in one shot. Buying an expensive or fancy piece of wood for your initial bowl or project can be a costly and an unnecessary mistake.

Remember, the very qualities that make a piece of wood very showy, can and will create problems in turning them. Inability to cut a piece of highly figured wood cleanly can leave torn surfaces due to twisted or opposing grain patterns. Your skill level may not be what you perceive it to be, and you may sacrifice your investment along with a fine piece of wood.

Another common mistake is orienting the figure on the top of a bowl blank, thinking that this is where the figure will show up the most. In reality, you should orient the figure on the bottom of the piece, so all of that fancy expensive grain does not end up on the shop floor as choice shavings.

Bigger not always better

When orienting a blank for layout, it is often better to use part of the block and make a balanced form rather than try to use the entire piece. This goes against the normal pattern of thinking that we need to get the most out of our material and money by using the entire blank for one turning. Bigger is not always better. Don,t worry, the piece that is cut off can be used for a different project and the end result will be a piece that is wor-

The author demonstrates how to turn the base of a platter, left, then fields questions from participants at the Rocky Mountain Turners symposium in September. A report on the Colorado symposium is on page 6.

thy of your efforts.

Practice on scraps or firewood to make pleasing shapes so that if they were to be painted black and the grain was not apparent, they would still be balanced and pleasing to the eye. Even though you may be using scraps or firewood to practice your turning and increase your skills, when you do come across exceptional pieces of wood, whether road kill or purchased, stockpile them. They will only increase in value. You do not have to water them, feed them, take them for a walk or clean up after them. The only time you have to listen to them is when they are ready and they tell you what they want to be. Seal the wood, learn how drying affects it, and don't let insect contamination destroy it. When accumulating wood, protection is $^{9}/_{10}$'s of the law.

When you do obtain that one piece of wood that rivals the Mona Lisa, (And sooner or later this will happen), instead of letting your hormones dominate your senses, think about it. If its green, protect it from cracks and checking. Set it aside somewhere so that you notice it often, such as in a high-profile area of your shop. This way you will walk around it numerous times. It may take a week, it may take two weeks or it may take a year before you can envision what you really want to make out of it. Patience is a virtue and can turn this once in a lifetime piece of wood into your most hallowed treasure. And then the next day what pulls into the neighborhood ... tree trimmers! Another treasure waiting to be unveiled.

Putting embellishment on turnings is another topic of discussion. Quite often they are distractions rather than an assets, too many beads and decorations are added trying to make one's distinctive mark. Yet, when done properly, they can transform a blase turning into a one-of-a-kind turning.

Embellish with care

A rule of thumb — embellishment on a highly figured piece of wood is not needed or should be done simply and tastefully so as not to distract from the natural beauty of the grain itself. Most of the time, the busier the piece of wood, the plainer the bowl or turned object should be. Some people will like it and some will dislike it. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Another asset is the ability to make a uniform wall thickness. There are times when this is not always true, but having the ability to do so is a necessity. Practice making sharp crisp edges, which I feel is a sign of a true craftsman, as opposed to inadvertently rounding over the edges, which can be caused by lack of tool control or haphazard sanding.

If the opportunity presents itself, seek out the advice and help of an accomplished turner. They will usually be more straightforward about your work in relation to its form, finish and entirety.

At your club critique sessions, I feel the majority of club members will not give an honest opinion because they are afraid of hurting someone's feelings. Many people are thin skinned when it comes to having someone tell them that their latest efforts are not quite right and not the works of art they thought them to be.

Having someone tell you "Wow!, what a nice piece of wood" is a far cry from someone telling you "Wow!, what a beautiful bowl, and would you look at the wood in that."

Save some of your original turnings — somewhere down the line you will want to compare them to what you have done of late. In years to come, when you look at these first efforts in comparison to your latest works, they will be a yardstick of your progress. It's called evolution of the turner.

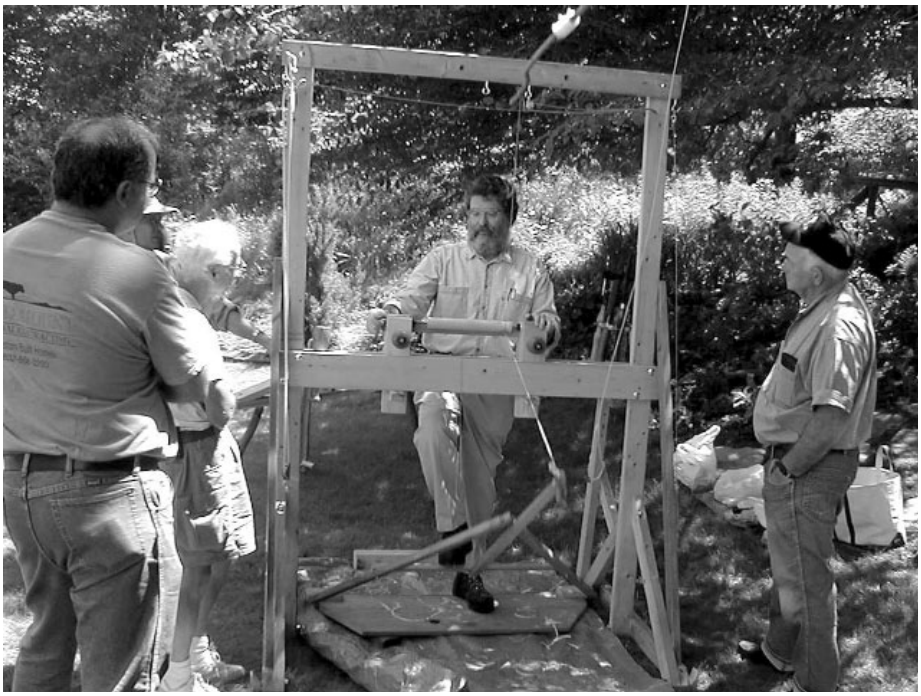
Remember, you are not alone through your trials and tribulations. The best turners in the world will always have their off days. Mondays Happen. In case you are wondering, I have experienced these pitfalls myself. I put my pants on one leg at a time, the same way as everyone else.

Dick Sing is a professional woodturner, teacher and author in Joliet, Il.

APPLY FOR AN AAW GRANT

A Sampling of Successful Educational, Outreach Efforts

The annual auction, and the Educational Opportunity Grants program it supports are an important part of every annual AAW Symposium. For the last several years the AAW has distributed more than $20,000 annually for education and outreach programs proposed by both AAW members and chapters. The applications for next year's grants are in the front of this Journal. To encourage you to apply, here is a sampling of reports from recipients. If you have any questions, contact the AAW office at 651-484-9094.



Dick Montague demonstrates for the Vermont AAW chapter. Photo by Ted Fink.

First, a thank you, as much for the opportunity and incentive to jump into a new area of turning as for the money.

I started by seeing Roy Underhill in Georgia and reading as much as I could find. I used the grant to purchase hand-forged tools from Don Weber after visiting him in Berea, KY and spending two days learning to turn back my 45 years of motor powered lathe experience a few hundred years. I then built and turned a lathe and the accompanying equipment such as an English bodger's shaving horse, mallets for its assembly and adjustment and handles for antique froes found at a dealer in old tools. The lathe is designed to be adjustable for height and to be used with a pole, with pulleys and bungee cord system, and with bow and spindle.

I have demonstrated at two museums, one small and one with an old crafts day where more than 1000 came by. With a chopping block, horse, and the lathe I could show the process from tree section to finished turning. From setup to closing there was always a group watching and asking questions and those who wished had a chance to try. Next year I will spend an additional day working with children from area schools who rotate from craft to craft. I will build a smaller lathe for them to use. This will allow folks to see more than one rope return method at the same time. The smaller museum's program gave me a chance to give a brief overview of turning on Vermont's main TV station. The feedback was positive and I will return next year.

The New England Association of Technology Teachers' conference was hosted in Vermont this year and I was asked to do a day of turning demonstration. With my pole lathe and small Oneway, teachers were able to see a wide range of possibilities. Many gave it a try and asked for plans. Some have come to my place for more intensive learning and at present I am scheduled to demonstrate in two schools. One has requested resources to include turning in their program next year.

Richard H. Montague, Groton, Vt

The NorCal club has had to borrow video and TV/VCR equipment in the past to record turning demos that go into our library for member use. We occasionally have been able to provide TV screen coverage of demonstrations so people sitting in the back can benefit. With availability of the AAW's grant application our board decided it was time to get our own equipment that would always be available when needed. A camcorder, a TV/VCR with tripod and a few accessories were requested. The grant provided the club $725.00 toward this objective.

Bob Adam, Fair Oaks, CA

I have always wanted to attend Arrowmont and may not have if I had not received the $500.00 scholarship.

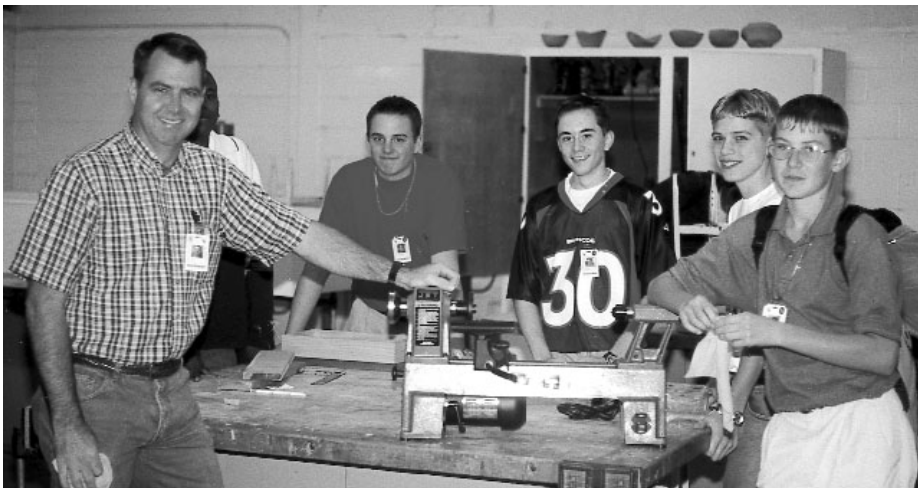
I was pleased with my personal critique and that Ray Key liked the small feet on my pieces and smooth curved lines. I think that I learned a

great deal about design. One of the articles that Ray gave us stated that Ray Key's pieces have "power of clarity." Ray emphasized some statements from an essay written by David Pye in 1981. The article states that "it is not the workmanship that is so difficult, but the design that never gets easier. In design, very small differences make all the difference. The difference between the thing that sings and the thing that is forever silent is often very slight indeed." Ray's personal view is "purity of form, life and lift, is what I like to see in most objects. I do not like heavy ornamentation or the imposition of craftsmanship for its own sake. Good, fluid, elegant design does not need the interjection of elements that interrupt the visual enjoyment of form."

Joe H. Yates, Florence, AL

David Berry and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the American Association of Woodturners Scholarship Committee for approving our Educational Grant. The two Jet mini-lathes have been put to immediate use in our Technology Education classes. David Berry is presently teaching 95 ninth grade woodworking students at our high school campus. David is an accomplished segmented and closed vessel turner. His students will be able to explore his techniques on a smaller scale with this new machine. I will be using our lathe to introduce basic skills to approximately 170 sixth, seventh and eighth grade boys and girls. David and I have been teaching woodworking for a combined total of 41 years and both of us agree that the students would rather be behind a lathe than any other machine!

Jim Glock, David Berry, Pasadena, TX



EOG money provided two Jet Mini-lathes for the Technology Education Classes at Fairmont Junior High School in Pasadena, TX.

Our club is a fairly new organization, and did not have the resources that could be called a library. Several of our more experienced woodturners have personal libraries, and would loan references to each other from time to time, but there was a gap. Our newest members are mostly beginner woodturners, and often needed references to address basic questions. Most of the reference material the more advanced turners had were too specific to address the beginners' needs. With the first installment of our grant from AAW we purchased 12 books and 7 videos which were intended to address the needs of the entire club, but with special emphasis on the needs of our newer members.

At several meetings I asked members to tell me what they learned using our new references, so that I would have material to include in my report to the Scholarship Committee. I wanted to be able to report great and significant things. What I found is that members reported (with minimal arm twisting) the little things; the useful tidbits of information we pick up and use from time to time.

For example, Vance Ford told me he learned about using sheet metal screws instead of drywall screws for faceplate work from the Jordan bowl turning video. Someone else said "Hey, how about that power sanding? I'll bet you can take off a lot of wood in a hurry with that set up." That comment momentarily stunned me, until I remembered that there was a time not too long ago when I was trying to learn woodturning on my own and knew nothing of power sanding. I had learned that hand sanding can easily lead to heat checks, and other basic lessons, such as, you can't turn a bowl with a spindle gouge. So the reference library may or may not be the source of any great revelations to our members, but it is certainly a source of the snippets of information that make turning easier, and makes us more versatile turners.

Another benefit of having established a club library is that members make donations. One member, Larry Skylstad, donated all of his back issues of AAW's journal, *American Woodturner* and *Woodwork* magazine. … So the AAW grant has accomplished its intent, and has enabled our club to establish a core of reference material we can use, learn from and continue to build on. Thank you.

Larry Zarra, Midland, TX

TOOL EXTRAVAGANZA

From monster to midget, a gadget for every shop

GARY DICKEY

Are you in the market for a furniture finishing system that covers half a city block? How about a gang router that turns out 16-inch ,three dimensional replicas of Mickey Mouse in oak by the dozen, each carved in intricate detail in minutes?

These were just a couple of the offerings at this year's International Wood Machinery and Furniture Supply Fair (IWF) in Atlanta -- a four-day extravaganza trade show tailored to the hardware junkie, wood shop owner and furniture factory magnate.

Standing in rapt amazement at the performance of a computer-guided router system that produced components for kitchen cabinets, one bystander commented, "Next year will be the year they throw a log in one end of a machine and a houseful of furniture will roll out the other end."

Indeed, much of the machinery being used in furniture production today is enough to boggle the mind of this lowly woodturner and send Luddites at large scrambling for the door. To say that there was something here for everyone is an understatement. Just in the woodturning department alone, the offerings ran the gamut from a pole lathe demonstration at the American Woodworker booth to the computer operated, high speed, precision duplicating lathes used by furniture factories. For the hobbyist and small shop turner there appears to be a wide selection both in numbers and sizes of lathes as several manufacturers chose the IWF as the site to introduce new product lines.

Today's woodturner will find a lathe on the market to match just about any scale of work whether it's a bench top, hand drill-powered, micro lathe which fits nicely under the Christmas tree, or the new behemoth bowl lathe unveiled here by Woodtec. In between these two extremes is a burgeoning field of mini-lathes with add-on beds to increase the distance between centers. And this doesn't scratch the surface of the plethora of accessories and other paraphernalia offered at the IWF this year.

A CAPSULE LOOK AT LATHES:

ZYLISS TURNING SYSTEM

If you are among those still wondering if woodturning is really for you and you want to get a small taste before taking a larger bite, this may be the way to go. Long known for their bench top vise which has been around since the 1940s, Zyliss offers the smallest lathe at this year's IWF in a category that can only be described as micro. Powered by a hand drill (not included) this system clamps to the edge of a workbench and, theoretically, used in conjunction with their vise can turn a piece of wood as long as the bench.

Technology from yesterday by pole-turner Don Webber of California

WOODTEC BOWL LATHE

At the opposite end of the size spectrum is Woodtec's new variable speed bowl lathe. Without accessories this short bed lathe weighs in at just over 700 lbs. with a 20-inch inboard swing and 30-inch bed length. Other components of this modular lathe can be added as needed including an additional 18-inch shortbed extension that brings the total bed length to 38 inches between centers. An optional 40-inch inboard bed extension is also available along with two optional outboard bed extensions with a whopping 36-inch outboard swing.

Power options include a 1.5, 2 or 3 hp DC motor with pulse-width modulated speed controller which maintains torque over the entire range, particularly at low speeds.

DELTA MIDI-LATHE

Delta Machinery has introduced its midi-lathe targeting woodturners of all skill levels. With an extension bed that increases the between centers distance from 14.5 inches to over 33 inches, it is powered by a one-half hp motor. Six speed setting are available by belt adjustment through top and bottom access doors. The unit will sell for under $400.

FISCH TURNING CENTER

Another mini/midi conversion that may be suitable for some turners is the Fisch Turning Center. Similar to the Delta in that its distance between centers can be increased from 15 inches to 39 inches with their Easy Mount Bed Extension, it also boasts a 10-inch swing. It's powered by a one-half horsepower motor, belt driven with six speeds.

POWERMATIC

Notable also at this year's show was the Powermatic Model 4224 which made its debut in June at the AAW Symposium in Charlotte. With 24-inch swing and 42 inches between centers, the new Powermatic offers three horsepower with variable speed and incorporates a number of innovations overlooked in its little brother, the Model 3520. At 1,000 plus pounds, this lathe is one of the heaviest on the market. Unlike the smaller 3520, the new 4224 abandons the sliding headstock feature, lengthens the bed, beefs up the power and provides a hollow tailstock for deep boring.

In other booths

Meanwhile, in other booths throughout the IWF, there was no shortage of accessories for the well-heeled woodturner. Stopping by the Diamond Machining Technology (DMT) booth we chatted with owner Betsy Powell who didn't have to twist our arm to talk us into surrendering our favorite pocket knife for a free sharpening demo. While the sharpening went on, we talked about the process that produces their distinctive "polka dot" pattern diamond hand hones.

Diamonds are electroplated in nickel to steel which is molded to a plastic base. Why the polka dot pattern? "Aside from giving us a distinctive, easily recognizable product design, there is a practical purpose for the polka dots," Betsy said. "The diamond/metal/plastic composite is rigid and distortion free and the dots provide a cleaning function for the hone," she added.

Tools, tools everywhere, from industrial monsters to finely crafted hand tools are the hallmark of the Atlanta IWF show. Photos by Gary Dickey

Betsy and David Powell started the business 24 years ago using a process originally conceived to finish granite and through innovation produced a hone that gave our pocket knife sharper than when it left the factory.

Latest in their line is the DuoSharp a double-sided bench model which comes in two lengths, 8" and 10" with two grits to provide sharpening versatility. For those who have taken a shine to the new Sorby spindle master tool, the DuoSharp is the perfect companion for keeping a keen edge on it.

"Saw Stop"

Then, there was the demo, every hour, that kept us coming back to witness the violent action of the "Saw Stop." This is a handy little add-on feature for table saws demonstrated by a physicist-inventor and his partners--all patent attorneys--which is designed to save fingers. One of the demonstrations went like this:

"We place a hot dog wiener, representing the woodworker's finger on the plywood like this," explained the demonstrator. "Then we feed the plywood into the saw. The saw blade has been connected to the 'Saw Stop' which sensitizes the blade to any material which conducts electricity... like a finger," he explained.

As the blade comes into contact with the wiener... Whammo! The "Saw Stop" which looks about the size and shape of a video cassette slams into the blade bringing it to an abrupt halt. The demonstrator offers up the wiener for examination while we marvel at the minute nick the blade took out of it.

At the end, the demonstrator takes questions from onlookers. The guy on the front row dares ask the question: "So what is this going to add to the cost of our tablesaws now?

"About fifty bucks," the demonstrator says.

I watch the guy next to me walking away looking from hand to hand muttering: "My finger...fifty bucks...my finger...fifty bucks."

Gary Dickey turns wood in Lexington SC and is assistant editor of American Woodturner.

PROMOTING OUR ART

Moving Toward Woodturning As An Art Form

RON VAVRA

A SLOW CHANGE IS TAKING PLACE. It is the movement toward the acceptance of woodturning as a legitimate art genre. Woodturning is an ancient craft that has been traced back as far as the 700's BC. I believe that turning as an artistic pursuit is a modern phenomenon, but I'm sure that over the last two thousand-plus years pioneering turners had worked to achieve the artistic recognition accorded to practitioners in other fields. We might ask ourselves if the glacier of acceptance is moving as fast as we would like.

There are those who say our time is finally now, but why not try to speed the process along? I don't think it necessary to wait until the third millennial anniversary of woodturning to celebrate artistic recognition. We can do it now. Waiting lets fate dictate perceptions and an agenda, or worse yet, no agenda at all.

I am an artistic turner among other things, but before that I was a marketing and advertising executive. I know that it is possible to create awareness and trial for almost anything. Once that is accomplished, continuing success is based on a credible product that lives up to expectations. I have had the jobs of creating awareness for banking services, soaps, chewing gum and electric razors, to name a few. I have spent millions of client dollars in efforts to create markets for new products.

Those that succeeded were good products that delivered on the claims being made about them.

Increasing Awareness

Turned wood will have no problem delivering on its promise of being a legitimate art form because there already exists a body of work by master turners that is as good as art gets, in my opinion. This makes the job of raising its awareness and ultimately increasing demand that much easier. That increase in demand will result in artists seeking higher plateaus of artistry and more unique routes of expression. The reaction to those advances will be heightened public interest and perception, more awareness and more demand and so on.

In the Fall 2000 Journal woodturning pioneer David Ellsworth presented a thought-provoking view of where turning has been and where it is going, a journey that has been a central part of his life for decades. In this issue Connecticut turner Ron Vavra discusses his belief that the journey toward acceptance of turning as art can proceed on a faster road, following a road of our own choosing.

There is, and always has been, a ready market for objects of art. You may not see originals and you may have to lower your definition of 'art' in some cases, but you would be hard-pressed to find a home without it. Even if the artistic expression is only hanging on the refrigerator door. People always have had, and always will, a desire to adorn themselves and their surroundings. The bad news is that you will rarely find turned artistic pieces. The good news is that the situation can be changed.

It is true that there is a huge difference in the accessibility of say, an inexpensive reproduction art print and a one-of-a-kind turned piece. But if we can increase interest and demand, more turners will enter the arena, competition will be stiffer and the quality of work will reach new heights. The best work will command higher prices while the more mundane will find a market among those with less to spend. The rising tide will lift all boats, increasing accessibility to many more people.

Let's assume that there is agreement and desire to take a proactive role in our own destiny. We start by being very clear about our goals. As I have said so many times to marketing clients who want to create awareness for a consumer product; let's first decide what we are trying to sell and what we want people to think about it. Next, we need a brand name and a decision on what will be included in our product line.

For our product, turned wood, we ask these similar questions: How do we want our work to be perceived? What should we call our art? And what art objects should be included in the genre? The fact that we won't have millions to spend on advertising makes it all the more important that we make clear what our product is and how we want people to think about it.

Art versus craft

If the perception we wish were to have our work considered as legitimate art, then we will finally have to put to bed the perpetual agonizing over what is art and what is craft. David Ellsworth succinctly states the relationship in his address to the Collectors of Wood Art published in the Fall issue of American Woodturner, "craft is the foundation from which art can grow".

To me that means you can not have art without craft, but you can have craft without art. Therefore it seems sensible to think that when the word 'craft' is used, it implies that the step toward art has not yet been taken. In other words, craft is not art. And whether some people may like it or not, the word 'craft', in modern vernacular, suggests stuff you find on tables at the church bazaar. It is my

opinion that artistic turners, especially those who are already recognized masters, should diligently avoid referring to their work as 'craft'. Perhaps the word seems cozy or quaint to those who utter it. Regardless, calling artistic turnings craft doesn't help the cause. There is an ironclad rule in marketing: stay on message.

As important as it is not to vary the message, it is perhaps a greater sin to play it loose with the brand name. In other words, pick a name or label for the genre and stick to it. The public needs to hang the perception we wish to develop on something tangible and unchanging.

Problems with labels

There are concerns with just about every label I have encountered. 'Wood art' includes more than turning. 'Wood sculpture' doesn't tell us that it is turned. One hears and reads 'studio woodturning' and 'turned wood art'. I don't know what makes sense, but the fewer the words, the better. 'Turned wood,' which includes utilitarian and functional turning, just may be adequate if used in the proper artistic context.

Once they have a good brand name to promote, marketers need to decide what makes up the product line, or in our case, think about what work should be included in the genre. Let's assume for purposes of discussion that the art form will be labeled simply 'turned wood'. If the problems with labeling or branding are difficult, the issues surrounding what can and cannot be classified as 'turned wood' are confounding at best.

But why tackle this issue at all? The simple answer is to minimize confusion in the public's mind about that which we are trying to offer as art. Any artist can and should go wherever his creativity takes him, of course. The issue at hand is not what should be done, but what, if anything should be excluded when this art form is exposed to the public eye and critical review.

"Few would argue that a turner's intent will dictate whether a piece is craft or art. But if intent is the only criterion for inclusion in the realm of turned wood, we have a good chance of confusing the people we are trying to reach. Something is wrong if we are not creative enough as turners to produce exceptional work that is done mostly on the lathe. The issue of where the line should be drawn may be problematic, but nevertheless, it shouldn't be ignored."

In books on turning and show reviews published in American Woodturner I have seen pieces which appear to barely have gotten mounted on a lathe yet are being included, apparently only because the artists submitted them. Do galleries have water color shows that include works done mostly in oils?

Few would argue that a turner's intent will dictate whether a piece is craft or art. But if intent is the only criterion for inclusion in the realm of turned wood, we have a good chance of confusing the people we are trying to reach. Something is wrong if we are not creative enough as turners to produce exceptional work that is done mostly on the lathe. The issue of where the line should be drawn may be problematic, but nevertheless, it shouldn't be ignored.

We are talking about perceptions, not placing restrictions on what is done. We can't communicate with the outside world unless we are able to define the subject matter. It is quite possible that this will be deemed a non-issue. I can only hope that, if this is the case, it was for reasons other than just not wanting to deal with it.

The exposure problem we face is that our art is invisible to most people. Galleries and museums largely ignore it out of ignorance and because there is too little demand. There is too little demand because the public doesn't see much of it in galleries and museums or read about what we are doing and learn of its value.

Public relations and publicity campaigns can change this but it is well beyond the scope of this article to suggest a plan, and it would be premature to attempt it. To be effective, a plan must be well conceived and meet the needs of everyone with a stake in the outcome.The job should be ongoing and involve a structured effort. If it were decided that "we'll just try to do more", I suggest doing nothing at all until there is a decision to do the job right. There is the possibility of doing more harm than good by making efforts that appear insincere, half-hearted or off-message to our target.

Thorough discourse is a logical first step and I can think of no better a vehicle for it than the Internet. A moderated forum can result in a fast and focussed discussion.

It could also be used to collect votes to proceed, to set up an initial structure and outline a plan of action. It is vital that such discussions involve recognized turners.

In addition, thought might be given to setting up a society within the American Association of Woodturners which has the goals of creating greater awareness and appreciation of turned wood art among galleries, collectors, museums, art critics, the media and academic decision makers. I think a separate structure within the Association will help maintain focus on the goals.

None of what I have suggested is radical or unusual. Other art forms have been promoting themselves this way for decades and we have every bit as much to offer, maybe more. Our voice should be heard but it won't be unless we start to speak up.

Ron Vavra is a turner in Weston, CT.

PHOTOS FROM THE MAILBAG

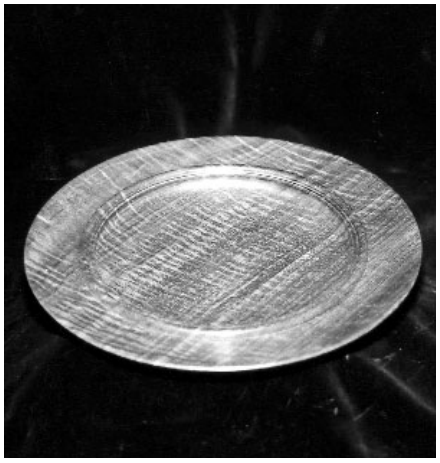
"Tuxedo Vase", right, made from a maple burl measures 4.5-in. D and 11-in. H and was turned by Ed Zbik of San Diego, CA.

Pecan vessel, above, measures 5-in. D and 11-in. H and was turned by Dale Brobst of Gulf Shores, AL

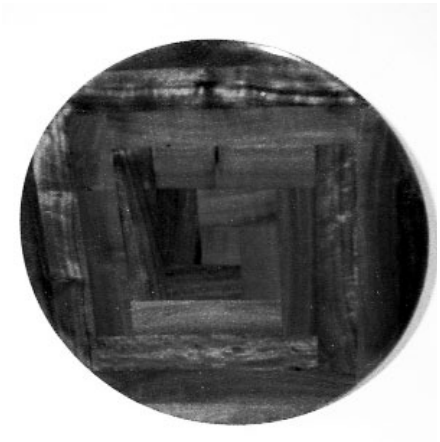
Sycamore bowl, above, measures 12-in. D and was turned by Ben Swartz of Des Moines, IA.

PHOTOS FROM THE MAILBAG

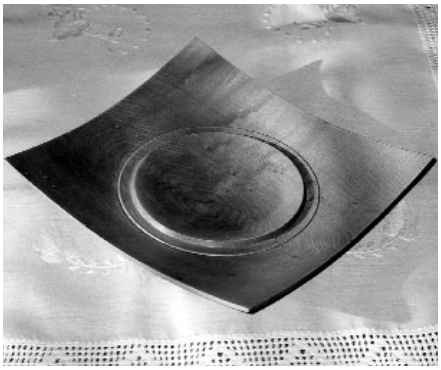
A Sampling of Platters



Large walnut platter turned by Norm Hinman, a current AAW Board member who lives in Yuba City, CA.



Pink Ivory Platter: 15-in.D , $^{3}/_{8}$-in. thick on the bottom with a $^{3}/_{16}$-in thick edge, by Robert Deal of Jamestown, CA.



Square-edge bowl by Jose' L. Berrios, Houston, TX. He became interested in this technique after seeing Stuart Batty demonstrate in San Antonio, TX.

Have a photo or slide of your platters or other objects you'd like to share with other AAW members.Send to Dick Burrows, AAW Editor, 929 Maynard Ave, Knoxville, TN 37917

Platters and More From an AAW Grant

The pieces on the right were turned by Tom Dunne of New Orleans, LA, while attending a class with Ray Key at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, TN He was able to attend because he received an Educational Opportunity Grant from the AAW.

For more information and related articles about the EOG program see pages 42 and 43 in this issue. An application for the grant program is included with the inserts in the front of this Journal. For more information call the AAW office in Minnesota.

Work above is part of Tom Dunne's output during a class with Ray Key at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts.

SMUGGLED WOOD A WORK OF ART

AN AUSTRALIAN FRIEND, STANLEY, passed on some stories of the kindness and cunning of AAW members. He swears that they are true accounts in every detail, but I have changed his name to preserve his anonymity.

During a holiday in the U.S.A. he stayed in Colorado Springs, CO, and was befriended by a fellow named Dick Failing. Dick is a generous man and gave Stanley several pounds of pink ivory in the form of small cut-offs. This wood has a distinctive, sometimes bright-pink color and at $75 board foot, is one of the most expensive species available.

Stanley decided to share his bounty with the woodturners he met during his holiday, but he wanted to take a little back to Australia for miniatures. He knew that without the requisite paperwork, the Australian customs officers were likely to impound the wood as a possible source of contamination. This was galling as the wood had already been approved for import into the UK and the USA.

Stanley came up with an ingenious ruse. Hoping that Customs would not question a work of art, he glued some of the cut-offs together randomly, with a minimum of glue so that they could easily be separated later, and asked Dick to suggest a title for his five minute sculpture. Dick immediately wrote 'Early Flight' on the base in a bold hand and signed his name with a flourish. On arrival in Australia, Stanley was pretty tense and felt sure he looked guilty as he explained to the customs officer that he had a sculpture to declare. The officer glanced at the piece and waved him through. Shortly after Stanley grabbed a hammer and smashed the sculpture into its more valuable state.

A few years later Stanley saw cholla for the first time, in the high desert of New Mexico. It is a woody bush in the cactus family with a striking skeletal appearance. He was staying with artists Bob and Jane Clancy and they offered to send some cholla to Australia. Stanley explained that the Australian Customs were strict and recounted the story of the pink ivory.

"Lone Bloke" started out as three piece of Bocote looking for a trip to Australia and ended up a work of art, thanks to Bill Haskell of Placentia, CA.

Bob and Jane quickly started throwing ideas around. They collected ten sticks of cholla and microwaved them to ensure that any bugs were destroyed. Jane bound them together into a tapestry with leather strips and red cord and then Bob added an abstract pine 'platter' that he had turned. The ensemble was titled "Homage to an Ancient Pinon." Three months after Stanley returned to Australia he received a parcel of cholla, or a piece of art, depending on your point of view. Stanley was very keen to start working with the cholla but "Homage to an Ancient Pinon" was beautiful and it took two weeks for him to find the will to dismember it.

On another trip, Gary Smith of Boise, Idaho, gave Stanley two small blocks of African ebony and Bill Haskell of Placentia added three of Bocate. Stanley asked Bill to unleash his creative spirit and to incorporate them into a sculpture, so he could get them through Customs. Bill pondered for a while then stood the five blocks on end and glued them 'shoulder to shoulder' in an irregular line. He named the piece "California Stonehenge - Cosmic Interlude 3" and attached a label pricing it at $180.

That done, Bill tackled another problem — how to combine three slender pieces of weathered driftwood from British Columbia so that Stanley could get them back to Australia to carve. Bill's solution was half way between whimsey and pure corn. First, the pieces were microwaved, then Bill glued two pieces horizontally to form a base for the third piece which was positioned vertically. He attached two doll's eyes near the top of the vertical piece and named it "Lone Bloke."

Back in Australia the customs officer quickly okayed "California

ART KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES

Stonehenge - Cosmic Interlude 3" but made a prolonged inspection of the weathered driftwood.

As the seconds passed, Stanley began to feel nervous and started to sweat.

What if the officer was suspicious? What if he investigated the origin of the piece? Could he do that?

The officer eventually looked up, waited a beat then said, "This 'Lone Bloke'. it's.....great. I really like it. I am a woodworker myself and I think this is terrific."

HAVE A STORY TO TELL? You know — something about the offbeat, often humorous happenings that makes turning and turners so fascinating. Let us know. Write to Dick Burrows, AWW Editor, 929 Maynard Ave., Knoxville, TN 37917

After Stanley's heart stopped hammering he decided that he liked it too; liked it way too much to break it up.

He also decided that the next time he wouldn't ask an artist to whip up a sculpture, not if he really wanted to get his hands on the wood.

— Ernie Newman is a writer, teacher and turner living in Blaxland, NSW, Australia.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

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

Distinctive Visions at Connell Gallery

The Connell Gallery in Atlanta, Georgia last Summer presented eight artists with differing and distinctive visions. The common language that speaks to us in these works is through the use of wood, which gives the viewer a base in which to start the visual experience. The artists involved included: John Skau, Darryl and Karen Arawjo, Christian Burchard, Betty Scarpino, Merryll Saylan, Michael Lee, and Norm Sartorius.

These visions are reflecting how the imagination of the artists has traveled. Each has mastered the simple vessel form of woodturning, which is essential to this media. Surface decoration, which has continued to incorporate so many new ideas, says "what is next" to the retinue that follows. Basic woodturning is not just basic, but must save room for the mixture of materials that are becoming part of the artist's perception. A turned object is no longer just a turned object as once a rose was a rose. Imagination is part of these exhibits and the participants are utilizing their creative forces to the fullest.

John Skau, using veneer strips, has made baskets that seem to have motion. The relationship to woodturning is through the turned rims and feet. The pastel pink and bright purple weave of the reed-like wooden strips suggests we revisit these lovely shapes. They are large but appear light in weight. As baskets go they are not, as I would hate to store fruit in one of these.

Vessels by Merryll Saylan.

Baskets and gourds by Christian Burchard. Photos: Stan Harris

Merryll Saylan's large wall "patterns" give visual attraction with her mix of carving techniques. They are simple and textural. Merryll continues to find new colors and shapes to stimulate our eyes. She is giving a tribute to Hans Coper in her series of simple bowls with bases. This message might be how she controls the use of oil stain, aniline dye, oil color glaze, paint, and oil finish to accomplish these results.

The work of Betty Scarpino continues to be exciting. She is always exploring and discovering. Her "Mother's Bridge" is a relationship of soft curves which suggests a mother's protection over her young. These two arches are placed in close proximity to each other and yell out "we were made to be together." They have synergistic rhythms. Betty's "nests/eggs" show her control of a theme and the ability to communicate her ideas. The larger vessel has three small turquoise wooden eggs inside the bowl. It is carved as two incomplete vessels, one emerging from the other. The grooves she applies to the piece suggest a continuous flow of motion. Her work always offers beautiful surface design with remarkable techniques.

Darryl and Karen Arawjo have taken monofilament a long way away from the angling world. The braiding of the "line" allows the light to pass through the vessels. This light changes color as the room light changes in intensity. The feet and rims being turned, act as frames for the very fragile looking pieces. These objects appear to be soft sculpture, but stand so sturdy on their pedestals.

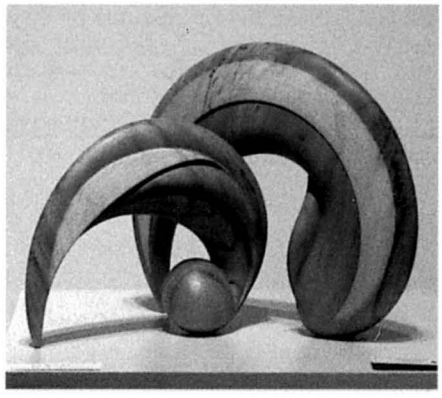
Christian Burchard's baskets and gourds are always intriguing. They lay there in the positions they take on a surface---as if they are tired from being filled with their burdens.

DISTINCTIVE VISIONS

I was trying to see which piece of the madrone burl gave rise to the next. The pieces are all so friendly. They are all warm and inviting whether natural, bleached, or ebonized. These soft sculptures are turned green and so thin I decide not to ask "How did he do them" and accept that he is an artist with great range and control.

Norm Sartorius has created his beautiful spoons from oyster wood, desert ironwood, amboyna burl, and curly koa. Norm has distinctive visions for his spoons, but I surely would hope that they are never to be used with foodstuffs. The elaborate handles take our eye down to the bowl and leave us with our imagination. Thank you Norm for such treats to the eyes.

Michael Lee has designed his pieces "Lagoons", "Rock-a-Bye Tako", and "Ammonite Pod" with secret openings and secondary openings allowing light to enter the vessels. By texturing he gives his work a leathery look. His "Rock-a-Bye Tako" looks like a real animal or possibly an insect. The surface gives one a chance to commune with nature to see if he has ever actually seen one. "Ammonite Pod" must have come from the sea, but definitely not from the lathe. Michael certainly has an imagination, which fields his creative bent.



Sculptural works by Betty Scarpino

The visions of this show are definitely distinctive and unusual. Each artist has taken the 'norm' a step further. Wood is very much part of the artistic process which is expected to be seen in galleries today. It is the media that is saying come on in as the water is fine. It is inviting and pleasing. We need not expect these artists, with their distinctive visions, to lead so we cannot follow. We as turners will need to go our respective ways as we explore these visual trails so beautifully blazed for us.

— Stan Harris, Atlanta, GA

Tea and Turning

Sensual, Challenging Invigorating

Saucer or Pedestal?

Sculpture or Utensil?

An Invitation to touch?

Jacques Vesery's exquisite tea cup was a natural for jurors for an exhibit sponsored by the Celestial Tea Co. in Boulder, CO. The Damariscotta, Me, turner says the piece began as a drawing he didn't want to copy, then evolved into what he calls "inviting art that begs to be touched and challenges the senses." He discusses his creative process on Page 27. Photos by Dennis Griggs.