



The Wood Spinner

Central Virginia Woodturners

www.centralvawoodturners.org

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President's Corner

I'm sure we are all in the thick of it with fall activities piling up like the leaves soon to be falling. I know I am. With our big demo over we now look forward to a Christmas ornaments session for the October 21 meeting, followed soon thereafter by the Virginia Symposium Nov. 1-2 right here in Fishersville. I will be sending a final mentors list our later on, as well as the full schedule when they get it to us.

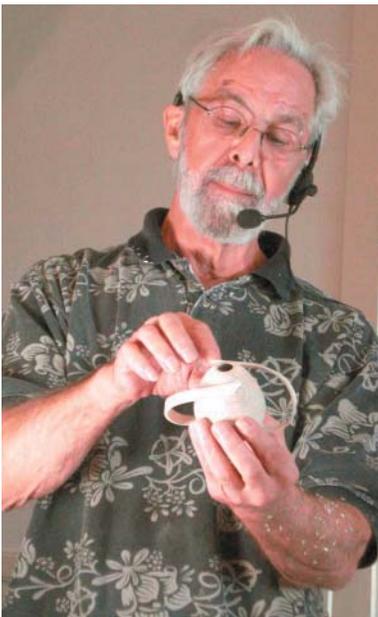
Tom Crabb did a fine presentation of how he makes his fine pieces with curved handles based on classic ceramic shapes from the distant past. He walked through the entire process, so anyone who with time and inspired courage could make one too. It is definitely workmanship of risk, from hollowing that deep column to turning with that sliver of handle spinning right beside your knuckles to bending the boiled wood around a custom jig. We were all impressed as well as entertained by his detailed presentation, and not a little mystified by how he can visualize the necessary steps to make a new shape he sees preformed in his mind. Thank you Tom. We

should have several copies of a video DVD for those who had to miss the event.

And a big thanks to Tom Evans for handling all the necessary food details for the demo. He took care of everything from the coffee to the snacks to the mail meal, all well appreciated. It was an enormous help to have a food czar take care of everything so the rest of the officers could focus on all the other details. Many many thanks.

Ron Dearing had a successful arthroscopic surgery for his herniated disc. But the recovery is stretching out due to referred pain which is abating all too slowly. I'm sure he'd appreciate any visitors to help pass the time until he can get back to turning and other such activities.

Finally, CVW has been represented at the State Fair at the Artisans Center display by Miles Everard and Roger Flory. Roger was there Sept 27-28, Oct 4-5, and Miles Sept. 25-26, Sept 30-Oct 2. Starke helped loading and unloading at Artisans Center of Virginia. Way to go guys. Happy turning, Fred



Tom Crabb talks about one of his unusual pieces.

CVW Silent Tool Auction and Fundraiser

For the November meeting the CVW will conduct a silent tool auction instead of the usual wood auction. Bring those extra tools that clutter up your workshop and hopefully someone who needs them will buy them.

- ◆ Items would likely need to be portable to a meeting for all to see. (Items too large to transport can be offered to club members through the newsletter.)
- ◆ Each seller could place a reserve (minimum bid) on an item if desired or choose to take whatever offered.
- ◆ Seller fills out silent auction ticket with name/item/comments/reserve amount.
- ◆ Seller insures power tools do work or will refund the money.
- ◆ At end of an allotted time period, seller/buyer settle on bid and then seller

pays the treasurer the 20% (hopefully rounded up amount) and the seller the 80%. All on the honor system.

Advertise your Tool Castoffs Prior to the Auction

Advertised in the club newsletter by sending your item description, optional photo, and any other pertinent information to Betty Gruber, bwgruber@comcast.net. Please indicate that item is for the tool silent auction.

For Sale

Riser Block Kit for 14" Delta bandsaw. Adds 6" in height to the cutting capacity. Brand new, unused. Fits all 14" Delta bandsaws except my 63 yr. old one! Paid \$110, will sell for \$75. John O'Neil 540-939-4774 or pjoneil1@mgwnet.com

Demo Ideas Anyone?

If you have a demo that you would like to do for the club, sign up now. Suggestions for what you would like to see are also encouraged. We need to get our calendar filled. Contact: Bert Smith, email woodsmith600@comcast.net.

Show and Tell

Please accept our apologies in advance if anyone, any item, or submission is misidentified. It is not intentional.



Goblets on a natural edge base made from the base of a large red cedar by Don Voas.



Two turned and carved vessels by Joan Baumgardner



Vessels turned by Fred Williamson from a very old poplar downed on the property of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. Wood was shared with the club with the stipulation that it can not be advertised and sold as



Lidded Vessels and Mirror by Jim Oates



Bowls by HB Salomon



Turned hat by Kirk McCauley



Lidded Vessel with carved leaves and handle by Jim Oates



Ornament and bowl by Jay Lindhjem



Figured bowl.

Tom Crabb's Featured Guest "Turned to Bend" Demonstration



Tom Crabb creates curious turned vessels with a twist. These objects are each created from a single piece of wood and incorporate handles, stands, and curious visual puzzles. Tom explained the theory behind wood bending. After turning his basic shape, he goes through a number of steps to create the appendages and then prepare these appendages for bending. He makes forms to stabilize and set the shape. The bending actually occurs through the use of heat and water. The object may be steamed or boiled.



Above left: A sampling of vessels, from classical to contemporary, illustrate some of the variety that can be achieved.

Right: Tom uses a variety of tools to complete the shape.

Coming Shows, Symposiums & Events

Virginia—2008 Virginia Symposium, November 1 & 2, 2008 in Fishersville, VA. Format is 10-12 "Hands-On Learning Centers". Mentors and volunteers needed. Contact Peter Toch (540) 774-4152, email: ptoch@comcast.net

Arizona—The Arizona Woodturner's Association will hold its **Third Desert Woodturning Roundup**, February 6, 7 & 8, 2009 at the Mesa Convention Center, Mesa, AZ. For details please go to: www.desertwoodturningroundup.com

Klingspor's will be one of the vendors at the Nov. 1&2 Virginia Symposium.

Club Events

October—Christmas Bell

November—Photographing your pieces

December—TBD

Tom Crabb's "Turned to Bend" Demonstration summarized from explanations by Jody Evans



Tom Crabb, well known for his imaginative eccentric or off-center turning, drove from Richmond this morning to the Crimora Community Center as the guest demonstrator for the Central Virginia Woodturners Club. Tom spent the day showing how he creates the various bent handles that adorn his hollowed vessels.

To get a full appreciation of this narrative, we invite you to print it off as a guide to follow as you look through the accompanying pictures that are also posted on our www.woodturnersofthevirginias.org website.

Tom has been turning since the early '90s and has been combining "bending" with his turning for the past two years. To get the overview, just remember green wood and this order: turn, cook, and bend. Sounds simple so far?

But first, how does his mind work to think of such ingenious ways to stretch his turning skills to create shapes that don't even occur to most of us? Tom won't tell us specifically, other than that he is inspired by ancient shapes such as Greek-inspired amphoras, the two handled vases with long necks narrower than their bodies, and some of the vases associated with the ancient and highly sophisticated Minoan culture that thrived on Crete over 4,000 years ago. Beyond these muses, he simply likes to try new things to see where one idea or shape might lead into another. And living up to his dry sense of humor, he confessed that when the muse doesn't move him, he can always clean the shop.

Back to the beginning, though, a very good place to begin, especially when you don't know where you're going or how you're going to get there. Most of us can turn a spindle, this time about 12-14" long and 2 1/4" in diameter. (This particular cylinder came from a branch of Hackberry, the easiest wood to bend according to the U.S. Forest Service. See the list at the end for the woods from easiest to hardest to bend). Now all you have to do is start to shape

a cup form on the bottom, leaving lots of waste wood to let you part it off easily. Then comes the horizontal boring with a 2" Forstner bit down the flange to where the hollow form begins. When you do the math, you get a very thin wall of 1/8" thickness.



Although he laughed about not always having a plan, he stressed the importance of studying the grain closely before selecting which part of the flange to keep for his handle or handles (smart idea is to have two handles in case one breaks!). To achieve the strongest handles that will bend best without breaking, go with the grain, not against it. Look for quarter-sawn cut "faced grain" in comparison with "tangential faced" grain.

He then marked out his selection and rough cut it with a jig saw while still on the lathe...whew!



Handle is marked



Now picture the hollow form with this 3/8" wide, 10" or so long flange or "handle in the rough" protruding out of it.

Anyone who has ever turned any scoops with handles rotating swiftly around perilously close to one's hands and tools

will appreciate that the incipient handle must be pushed or pulled aside in some way not to impede the hollowing of the vessel. How to do this? Simple... everyone's old friend to the rescue... DUCT TAPE!



Since the handle has some flexibility to it, he was able to attach one end of Duct Tape to the tip and the other to the base of the hollow shape near the chuck to pull it back a bit to allow him to continue his hollowing. Don't forget, though, to check that tape occasionally, since if it slips, watch out! By the way, Tom insisted that he always uses the professional silver Duct Tape and never the sissy colored stuff. Makes all the difference.

Also, give the turning a dry run to ensure you don't hit the tool rest and ruin your work (someone mentioned we might need a "break" soon, but Tom said he never uses that word when demonstrating the delicate art of turning or bending).

Tom then proceeded to hollow the vessel, starting with a 3/4" bore and avoiding the whirling handle. Since he was going into end grain, he said the Kelton hollowing tool is good to use. The thinner the better, since the vessel will have less chance of splitting when it finally goes into the cooker if there is very little mass remaining. He finished with a Sorby tear drop cutter using a push and pull motion without swinging the gouge handle too far to the right which might collide with the vessel handle.

All finished, he then sanded both sides of the handle smooth, taking off the ridges and irregular saw marks, refining

Crabb Demo *(continued)*

the lines and leaving the same thickness across the 3/8" width. It is best to do all this finish work down to 400 or 600 grit now when it's easier and the wood more accessible.

With all the tedious "unfun" part behind him, Tom then showed us his system of clamps and jigs to bend the wood and hold it in place as it dried. We also got a rundown on the theory of how all the boiling of wood allows it to be bent without breaking. Just remember that there are two qualities to wood—

- ◆ **plastic**—lets it bend and the
- ◆ **elastic**—brings it back



Then comes the neat imagery of the cells slip sliding to the side when heated in water. The lignum cells literally move as they slide over one another and then tend to stay in a new place when cooled. He started by placing the vessel in a pan of water which he boiled for about 10-15 minutes with the lid on. Then carefully using oven mitts and tongs, he retrieved the vessel from its hot bath and clamped on a mold to provide the form the handle would take. Picture him then slowly bending the handle with the tension side up and the compression side down. Slowly, slowly he works so as not to crack the wood.

To facilitate the work, he uses an old section of a belt sander as a back strap to spread out the stress and hold the handle securely. Tricky part here is to take your time and coordinate all three of your hands so as to secure the various clamps as the handle progresses around the mold. Try to look for all the jigs and

stop blocks in the pictures to get an idea how the handle takes its shape in "tight and severe bends" and is held in place to dry. Best to leave it there overnight for good results. Finally, the handle is attached with a dollop of medium CA glue. If you don't secure it, it will act like a weather barometer and spring back or bob with changes in the humidity.



Although we had a slight break in the handle the first time through, Tom glued it and used a novel "sandwich" of wax paper on each side to contain the glue in the break. He then immersed the wood into the boiling water a second time to regenerate the wood's plastic qualities.



Much to our delight, the handle held, and a faint scar where the break occurred

remained visible in the Hackberry he was using. It was a teaching positive experimenting in how to salvage a piece rather than discard it.

He then finished the bowl by clamping it into a large Jorgensen clamp (ideal for this work, since it assumes so many shapes) and refining its lines with a power sander. It's always tricky to finish with the same shape on both sides, but Tom showed us how lovely the final contour can be with some practice and an eye to detail.

He uses a Watco finish for visibly grained wood and Krylon 1311, a clear fixative with matted gloss finish, for lighter woods, especially Holly that yellows with most finishes.

In conclusion, he spoke about signing his work which he tries to keep as simple as possible. He said there was much to praise in a "neat and tidy bottom" (not just in woodworking). No reason to include the name of the wood, since woodworkers already know and collectors usually don't care.

He left us with the promise that vessels, especially classically shaped ones, with handles seem to sell well. Go forth and may your handles never break.

Best Wood Bending Stock

Stock Selection: The US Forest Service has evaluated 25 hardwood species for relative bending quality. In their testing, the best start in the left column and move to the right:

Hackberry (Best)	Beech
White Oak	Elm
Red Oak	Willow
Chestnut Oak	Birch
Holly	Ash
Dogwood	Sweetgum
Magnolia	Soft Maple
Pecan	Yellow Poplar
Black Walnut	Hard Maple (Worst)
Hickory	

Note: Don't waste your time on any conifers.

This ranking represents the results from one evaluation; variation in the results can be expected from tree to tree and site to site.



Item clamped and drying. The back strap has been released in this image.

Chapter General Meeting — September Meeting Notes

Sept, 2008 at 10 am - 3 pm
Crimora Community Center

Officers in attendance were:

President: Fred Williamson
Roving Vice President: Starke Smith
Treasurer: Dennis Hippen
Newsletter Editor: Betty Gruber
Video Chief: John O'Neil
Librarian: Joan Baumgardner
Secretary: Joan Baumgardner

Absent officers were:

Programs Vice President: Bert Smith
Webmaster: John Heyden

General Members: 27

Guests: 8

Fred Williamson called the Central Virginia Woodturners (CVW) meeting to order at 10 am. The meeting's feature would be our guest demonstrator Tom Crabb and the business portion of the meeting would be abbreviated. The following items were discussed:

Ron Dearing had a herniated disc operation.

Treasurer Report

The Tom Crabb Demo day income/expenses were \$575 income (\$505 admissions + \$53 silent auction + \$17 sandpaper raffle) and \$560 expense (\$350 to Tom Crabb + \$210 club provided lunch). We broke even with +\$15 for the day. No new members joined, but a guest or two may at a later date. In addition to the Tom Crabb funds, other expenditures for the month included \$100 to Ruritans for rest of year (4 mos) room rent fee, Video supplies for \$64+ a new boom for mic of about \$88, and minor name-tag supplies. The current Club fund balance is \$1165.

The club will participate in the AMC Hospice of Shenandoah fundraiser: 1st Annual Festival of Trees at Fairfax Hall, Waynesboro, November 14-15. Dennis Hippen will assist in collecting items

donated by CVW. Reminder to please bring your turned donations to October 21st meeting. We will have a sign in type sheet to record your respective turned items. Tom Evans has volunteered to assist with collection and delivery of your donations. Thanks Tom!

Members' turned items will be placed in the Christmas Gift Shop for the event. (Items likely under \$50 value). Should your donated items NOT be sold during the AMC Hospice Fundraiser, these items will be given to Shenandoah Valley Art Center (SVAC) in Waynesboro to sell during the holidays as fundraiser to support SVAC programs. Should a member prefer NOT to pass to SVAC, advise Tom or Dennis at October meeting sign in.

There is poplar on the silent auction table from a huge, old tree at Monticello. Pieces made from this tree can not be marketed as "Monticello" wood. We held a Silent Show & Tell and the Silent Auction, due to the focus on the featured demonstration.

The next meeting (October 21 in the Crimora Community Center) will be on holiday ornaments.

The meeting was adjourned.

About Central Virginia Woodturners

Central Virginia Woodturners is a local chapter of the AAW with over 69 active members. Club meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 9:00 P.M. Meetings are held at the Crimora Community Center.

Directions—to the Crimora Community Center on Route 612 just west of Rt. 340 in Crimora.

From Staunton and points north—

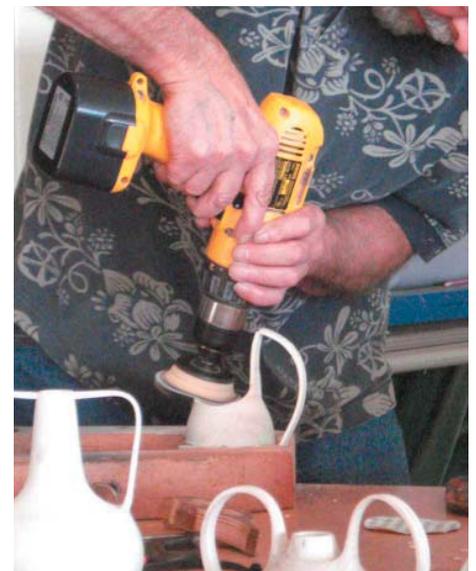
From I-81 take the Rt. 612 exit (Verona Exit) east, or
From route 11 just north of Verona, turn east onto Rt. 612, across from Burger King.
Stay on 612, for 10-12 miles.
As soon as you cross South River, the Crimora Community Center is on your left.

From Charlottesville and points east, from I-64—

Take Exit 96 (Lyndhurst Exit) and go north on Delphine Street.
After a mile or so you will cross 250E at the Hess Station and join 340 north.
Alternatively you can take Exit 99 at the top of Afton Mountain and get onto 250 West.
Go 3 miles to turn right at the Hess Station, 340 north.
From there it is 6 miles to Crimora.
Turn Left on Rt. 612 at the BP gas station.
Go about 1 mile crossing RR tracks. The center is on the right just after the RR tracks.

Contact information:

For information on attending CVW meetings or joining CVW, contact: Fred Williamson, CVW President, f1w2@cville.net; Bert Smith, CVW Vice President—Events, woodsmith600@adelphia.net; Starke Smith, starke@cfw.com; or, Dennis Hippen, CVW Treasurer, Hipwood@comcast.net.



Demonstrator Tom Crabb shapes the upper edges of his demo piece.