

April Newsletter

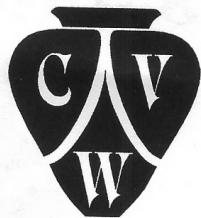
Central Virginia Woodturners

Special points of interest:

- Even Fred Williamson can have problems
- May is our last meeting at the Outlet Village
- First reciprocal demo between CVW and Woodturners of the Virginias
- Joe Berg demo's finishes
- Our own 'Walnut Challenge'

Inside this issue:

Chapter and Verse	1
Presidents Corner	1
Turner's Tips	2
Getting to know our Fellow CVW members	4
Show-and-tell	4
Walnut Challenge	5
Upcoming Shows, Symposiums, Events, etc.	6
CVW Calendar (demo's and special events)	6
Tips	7
Club Want Ads	7
New Members	7



Central Virginia Woodturners
Waynesboro, VA

Editor: Ron Dearing
Contact: rdearing@rica.net

Chapter and Verse

Fred Williamson may be a little embarrassed to see one of the two pictures at the right, but he sent them by email, so now you get to see them too. It just goes to show that what we all suffer, at one-time-or-another, can happen to the best of use. Fred had a beautiful piece of the rose sycamore that he got from Starke Smith almost complete—just one more cut . . . Haven't we all known that feeling.

Joe Berg did a fine demonstration on some of the many alternatives for finishing turned pieces. He did the same demo for the Woodturners of the Virginias at their meeting last month, and it

was just as informative at our meeting. Ron Dearing assisted with a demo of the Beale polishing system and Fred Williamson showed a finish he likes to use.

The 'Walnut Challenge' turned out (get it?) some great results. We obviously have some people in the club who have as much talent for carving as they do turning. See page 5 for pictures of the awesome results.

At least as impressive was the 'show-and-tell' pieces. See page 4 for some pictures.



President's Corner

Take note: May is our last meeting at the Outlet Village. All subsequent meetings will be at the Miller School. With this change, maybe we can put more emphasis on ride-sharing from the Park-and-Ride lot at Exit 99, off I-81.

Be sure to take note of the information on the Virginia Woodturners Symposium in the **Upcoming Shows and Events** column on page 6. It will be held November 4 and 5 in Daleville, about 10 miles north of Roanoke. Details are available at www.virginiawoodturners.org.

The picture at the right is a treadle lathe at Old Salem. Salem (as in Winston-Salem) was founded in the late 1700's, as a religious community by the Moravian sect. All young men lived in a sort of hostel until they were old enough to marry.

They all took an apprenticeship to learn a trade. Turning was one of the alternatives.

The tools on the wall



looked very similar to many of the tools we all use today.

Barbara and I spent a day going through Old Salem last month, after two days in Asheville, thanks to a

(Continued on page 5)

Turner's Tips

Using green wood:

When you cut a tree:

As soon after a tree is cut, it is good to begin making your blank selections. Cut the blanks longer than the tree is in diameter by several inches to allow for some checking. The amount of allowance depends on the diameter of the log and the diameter of the intended turning to come from the log. Fred Williamson recommends allowing at least 6" on a 20" diameter log section to eliminate worrying about checking when he is not going to turn the log for any period of time after cutting. He may reduce this to 2" if he knows that he will be turning the piece reasonably soon after cutting. It is recommended that the log also be cut down the center, through the pith. Making two cuts, one on each side of the pith to completely remove it will go even further to avoid the stress associated with drying that begins almost immediately, although this is not mandatory, so long as there are no obvious cracks and checks parallel to the portion of the wood that will be attached to the faceplate. If you do see any checks and cracks like this (parallel to the surface that will be attached to the faceplate), cut them off immediately with your chainsaw to eliminate any danger of a blank breaking loose when you start turning. You now have a half log a few inches longer than the diameter of the blank. Seal both ends and the center cut face of the blank with any of the acceptable sealers. These include: paraffin; Anchor Seal; tar; exterior paint; etc. Other precautions can be taken to slow the uneven drying process which leads to checks and splits. More moisture can exit the wood through the end grain than through the radial grain. This leads to stress in the drying wood, which leads to splits. Sealing the end grain slows the unevenness of the process. Placing the drying wood in a bag of wood shavings will also help to slow the process. Storing the wood in an environment that is not too hot, nor too dry, also will slow the process and do well to help avoid splits.

Partial turning method:

Bowl blanks can be partially turned and set aside to dry. Turn the blank to a wall thickness of about 10% of the total diameter of the blank (a ten inch bowl would be turned to one inch wall thickness). The goal is to take the blank to as thin as practical to allow the fastest drying, without going so thin as to not have enough material left to true up the blank after it has warped during the drying process. Mount the blank in such a manner during this initial pre-turning process to allow remounting at a later date when the blank has dried. Again, as above, storing the blank in a trash bag, or paper bag, filled with the wood chips from the initial turning will even the drying process. The weight of the blank can be recorded and checked over time. When the weight of the blank stops dropping over about a week period, it is dry enough to remount and finish turning. Two to three months is usually more than adequate for a partially turned blank to be dry enough to finish. Of course, the larger the blank, the longer the drying process. Once the blank has stopped losing weight, you can proceed as you would with a kiln dried blank.

Turning green wood immediately:

It is possible to turn a completely green blank, without any drying process. You will need to take a few precautions to avoid splits in the turning. Turning the blank to a uniform, thin wall thickness in one turning session is the best way to avoid splits. This is best done as soon as the blank is cut as described in the first section above. From the cut blank half section, trim the blank into a rough round that represents the desired shape and mount the blank in your preferred manner (directly to a faceplate, between drive centers, using a sacrificial glued on piece, etc.). Using a sacrificial piece on green wood can present some extra challenge because glue will not always adhere the sacrificial piece well to the blank. On small blanks, blowing off the bottom with a hair dryer to dry the inter face between the blank and the sacrificial piece can help. Using a glue like Gorilla Glue also can help because of its properties for adhering between moist woods. Care should always be exercised in using the sacrificial mounting method for green woods.

Turn the blank down to the desired exterior shape. Fred Williamson does not recommend any sanding at this stage. He feels that getting the piece to the desired shape as quickly as possible at this stage is the key to avoiding any splitting or cracking. He recommends turning the outside as smooth as possible, using a shearing cut for the last pass, and then move immediately to turning the inside.

Start by removing the interior of the top portion of the bowl down to about a half inch thick and then remove the mass of the inner core, but leaving the bottom portion thick enough to not allow any flexibility and warping of the piece. This allows you to get the tool rest into the interior of the piece. Now proceed to thin the upper walls of the piece to no more than 1/4", and preferably closer to 3/16". Fred recommends working down to the final thickness of the walls in 1 1/2" to no more than 2" increments, letting the thickness flare slightly thicker at the bottom of each cut, then blend this flare in as you move progressively down to the bottom of the piece.

Turner's Tips (continued)

If the piece is a wane edge shape (turned with the center of the tree core as the base, which gives a sort of saddle shaped edge to the bowl), be sure to finish the highest edges of the bowl first as you work your way to the bottom. These wane edges, the taller edges that begin to be cut first, will dry quickly as they are cut and the lathe spins. Even the spinning process forces water out of the wood, and the speed of the turning can cause distortion of the edges due to the centrifugal forces on the taller edges. This distortion will make for an oval shape that will catch your tool as the piece rotates; so, consider lowering the speed of rotation when turning the tall edges at the top of the piece to avoid these distortions. Fred recommends turning the wane edges (the portion of the edges above the main sides of the bowl) a little thicker than the desired final thickness, and leaving any sanding until the final shape of the bowl has been completed. Sand these 'wing' with the lathe not turning, using a power disk sander. Leaving the extra thickness will allow the sanding to take place without the wings becoming too thin.

This warping of the shape of the bowl due to the quick drying process and distortion due to the centrifugal forces will make it difficult, to impossible, to come back to re-cut these taller edges as the turning progresses, so it is important to cut them to the desired shape and thickness before cutting deeper into the blank.

Proceed to shape the piece, finishing to the bottom of the bowl. Make your cuts as smooth as possible, working in a continuous cut from as near the top of the bowl shape to the bottom as possible to get a smooth transition shape. Single, fine cuts, with a very sharp tool will leave as little sanding as possible.

If you must stop at any point short of fully shaping the piece, be sure to control any warping and checking by taking measures to slow the drying process. This can be accomplished by covering the piece with a plastic bag. Adding cut shavings from the turning within the bag is an addition help. Seal the bag to retain the moisture and slow the drying.

Cut the finish shaped piece from the base that is being used to hold the wood to the lathe. Make sure that you have achieved a shape that does not have excess thickness at the base. Try to achieve a base thickness of no more than 3/8", as a thicker base will tend to give an opportunity for stress to be set up, which will lead to splits in the base. As you finish the base, sanding to an undercut, a base thickness approaching the 3/16" of the wall thickness, is the goal. However, don't over do the thinness of the base. A too thin base will lead to spitting of the base. Fred warns, "Better too thick in the base, than too thin."

At this stage, Fred likes to slow the drying process. At this point he adds a coat of finish and puts the piece in a draft-free room, especially with no sun, for 2-3 days. After 2-3 days, the drying process can be accelerated by placing the piece above a stove, out in a warm greenhouse, or garage loft. Five to six days in a warm environment should complete most of the drying, although it will not eliminate all of the warping that can occur. The amount of additional drying and warping will be very dependant on the wood used, and its condition at the beginning of the turning process.

So long as the above process is followed, and the wall thickness is reasonably thin and uniform, it is possible to complete a bowl without severe warping of the piece in most cases. Some warping will occur, but it usually adds character to the piece.

Quick, or force drying processes:

There are additional methods to force the drying process. These include: the alcohol soak method; drying in an oven or microwave; kiln drying; and, various commercial soak materials designed to inhibit cracks and checks.

Alcohol Soak method:

Follow the instructions given in the section on partial turning, reducing the blank to about 10% of the total bowl diameter. Shape the piece as near as possible to the desired final shape (plus the extra wall thickness). Remove the piece from the lathe, retaining the original method of attaching the piece to the lathe. Completely immerse the partially turned piece in denatured alcohol. Weight the piece down to make sure that it is completely submerged. Cover the alcohol bath to reduce evaporation of the alcohol.

Leave the blank in the alcohol bath for 24 hours and then remove and weight the blank. Record the weight and proceed as in the section on partial turning, except the drying process will be greatly accelerated. It will probably be completely dried in from 5 to 10 days.

Special thanks to **Fred Williamson** for his review of, and contributions to this article.

Show and Tell



Some exquisite work by **Fred Williamson**



Elbert Dale's "Bear Club"

This is an ongoing column, dedicated to bringing you biographies of our CVW members. Each month we try to bring you at least 2-3 new member's biographies to help us all become more familiar with our fellow club members.

Getting To Know Our Fellow CVW Members

Bio's on the way this month:

- **Elbert Dale**
- **Miles Everard**
- **Phil Armstrong**
- **Dennis Martin**
- **Joe Berg**
- **Bill Woodson**



Walnut Challenge

Here are some of the “Walnut Challenge” pieces. Take note of the handle on the lid of the piece front left. It was carved in place, and swings free of the lid. I didn’t take note of the turner. Let us know for an acknowledgement in the next newsletter. Kirk McCauley’ piece was supposed to be a collaborative piece with his son, Kirk’s piece being the bottom and his son’s the lid. Maybe next month we will get to see the lid? It’s fun to see the variety everyone got out of a simple block of Walnut (well, a couple of us cheated and included some contrast wood—including yours truly with the Locust lidded bowl rear left). If any of you are still working on your Walnut Challenge, be sure to bring it for the June meeting.



Chapter and Verse

Thanks to Ray Tilghman for three years of upkeep of our library. Ray realizes he will have a harder time making the trek to The Miller School and has turned the library tasks over to Joan Baumgardner. Thanks also to Joan for stepping up to this task.

We are trying to get the Planning Committee back into an active roll for the club. Membership has been expanded to add John O’Neil and Ron Dearing (new club officers) and Dennis Hippen (due to his suave, executive air). In addition the committee includes: Miles Everard; Roger Flory; Bill Hamilton; John Heydon; and, Bert Smith. Topics that the club will address in the next several months will include: club direction; club money management; outside demonstrators; offering of classes (both for club members and to attract new members); and, etc. Forward any suggestions for topics you would like the committee to discuss to John O’Neil (pjoneil@mgwnet.com) or Ron Dearing (rdearing@rica.net), or bring them to any committee member at a club meeting.

Three exiting demonstrations were added to complete this years calendar: Elbert Dale will try to top his great “Taming the Skew” demo with a repeat performance at our July 18th meeting; Bert Smith will demo turning a hollow form at the August 15th meeting; and, Miles Everard will get us ready for the Holidays with a demo at our November 21st meeting turning one of his Angels and a Christmas ornament. Thanks to all three for volunteering.

Joan Baumgardner takes over as club Librarian. Thanks to Ray Tilghman for three years of good work at that task.

President’s Corner

Christmas present from our kids. Two days at a nice B&B, plus admission to the Biltmore Estate. We went from Asheville to take in Old Salem and then a leisurely drive back to Staunton. Of course, I made a side trip to a Rockler store for some exotic wood, and Barb went to a giant card making craft store, *The Enchanted Cottage*, both just east of Winston-Salem.

Unfortunately, there has been a glitch in the plans for our first reciprocal demonstration with the Woodturners of the Virginias club. It was to be an all day, pot-luck picnic affair, with Bert Smith and yours-truly doing demonstrations at Pete Shoemaker’s barn. As I have informed the club, unanticipated surgery will preclude my participation. Bert has agreed to still do his demonstration, but the day will revert to a more normal club meeting for the W of the V club. It will be held at Ashton Water’s home, and will be a half-day meeting. Any interested CVW member is still invited to attend. The date for that demonstration is May 6, at 9:00 a.m.

Coming Shows, Symposiums, Events, etc.

The **AAW's 20th Annual National Symposium** will be held this year in Louisville, KY **June 22-24**. Louisville is only about a 9-10 hour drive from us. What an opportunity to see not only the best in the US, but the best in the world. The symposium will have over 140 demonstrations, plus three woodturning exhibits within easy walking distance of the show hall.

The **Utah Woodturning symposium** is the longest running woodturning symposium in the world. 2006 marks the 27th anniversary of this event. It runs **June 15th – 17th**, 2006 at the Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. There will be over 100 demonstrators

given by some of the world's best. For information see www.utahwoodturning.com.

The **AAW** will collect Christmas ornaments at the symposium in Louisville for their **"back to the community"** project. The ornaments will be delivered to the Kosair Children's Hospital for the hospital's fund raising auction. If you have an ornament to contribute, bring them to a club meeting on, or before our June 20th meeting. Dennis Hippen will deliver your donated ornament(s) to the AAW symposium.

The **Virginia Woodturners** (including our own CVW) will host their **second semi-**

annual symposium November 4th and 5th in Daleville, VA, which is about 10 miles north of Roanoke. The symposium will be held at the Greenfield Education and Training Center, just 3.5 miles off I-81 (exit 150B) on US220N. Go to www.virginiawoodturners.org for registration and for special rates on hotel accommodations in the area. This symposium is a **must** for all CVW members. The last symposium, held at the Outlet Village, was great. The coming event promises to be even better.

CVW Schedule of Demo's and Calendar of Other Club Events

May 6—Demo at Woodturners of the Virginias club. All CVW members are invited to join the WOTV club meeting. **Bert Smith** will demo for our first reciprocal demo with the northern VA club. The meeting will be held at Peter Shoemaker's barn. Directions will be given by email closer to the meeting.

May 16—**Fred Williamson**—using a bowl gouge. This will be held at the Outlet Village.

June 20—Open turning at the Miller School

July 18—**Elbert Dale**—"Taming of the Skew—II"

August 5—Woodturners of the Virginias club demo. CVW members welcome. Demo by **Joe Ruminski**. Pot luck picnic at Peter Shoemaker's barn.

August 15—**Bert Smith**—Turning a hollow vessel

September 19—Open turning at the Miller School

October 17 open

November 21—**Miles Everard**—Turning a Christmas Angel and a Christmas ornament

December 19—Open turning at the Miller School

If you have a demo that you would like to put on for the club, sign up now. We need to get our calendar filled. Contact: John O'Neil or Ron Dearing.

Tips

Tip 1

A very good book on pyrography is "*The Complete Pyrography*", by Steven Poole.

Tip 2

A recommended brand of coloring agent for background, etc. after doing texturing or pyrography is **FW Acrylic Artists Ink**.

Tip 1 and 2 come from Fred Holder's article in

the March/April issue of *More Woodturning*, titled, "*Art Liestman Demonstrates at Northwest Washington Woodturners*".

Tip 3

For good wood prices, go to chestnutwoodcrafter.com. Tip came from Dennis Hippen.

Send in any tips to rdearing@rica.net. A published tip will get you two atta-boys and a free rest of the year sub-

scription to our newsletter.

Want Ads

For Sale:

For Sale: Jet model 1442VS lathe with extra drive belt. Less than one year old. \$700. Contact Kirk McCauley (CVW member) home: 434-293-7525, work 434-296-3913. (Kirk has stepped up to a bigger lathe.)

body is made from two layers of MDF (2" thick), 1" - 8 tpi spindle w/ left hand thread on outboard. 24" outboard swing. Heavy duty welded tool rest. \$400 (flexible).

Contact Ron Dearing (540) 248-8887 (answering machine) or (540) 248-2512.

For Sale: Spindle lathe, made from kit, 16" swing x 36" spindle capacity, 1 HP, 8 speeds—jack shaft with two pulleys and four speed pulley on motor, heavy duty,

New Club Members

New Members:

- **Dennis Martin**



Note: If you have joined CVW within the last 2-3 months and have not been introduced in the club newsletter, please send me an email so I can include your name in the new members column.

Send attention: [rdear-](mailto:rdearing@rica.net)

[ing@rica.net](mailto:rdearing@rica.net).

Also Note: We need personal bios from many members for the "Getting to Know Our Fellow CVW Club Members". Please take a few minutes to respond to the bio questionnaire that has been emailed to you. This is much easier than doing

personal interviews with each person. If you don't have email, talk to Ron Dearing about a questionnaire.