

A JIG FOR PERFECT CIRCLES • WATER-BASED FINISHES • LIGHT AND FAN PULLS

AMERICAN WOODTURNER

Journal of the American Association of Woodturners

June 2014 vol 29, no 3 • woodturner.org

CLAY FOSTER

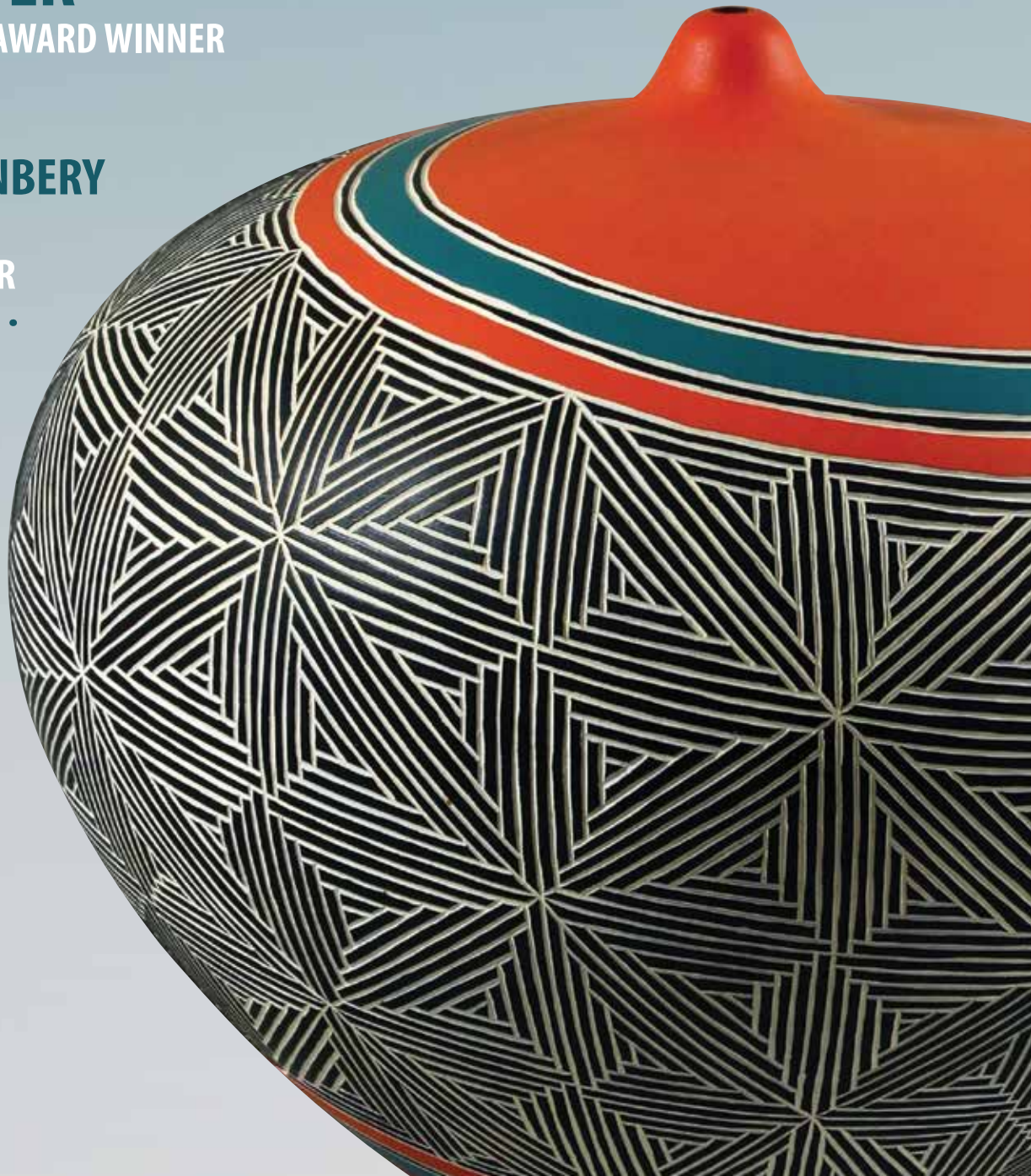
POP EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNER

ALLEN HOCKENBERY

2014 HONORARY
LIFETIME MEMBER

.....
STONEY LAMAR
RETROSPECTIVE

.....
RETHINKING
SHARPENING



Professional Outreach Program Exhibition "Ceremony"

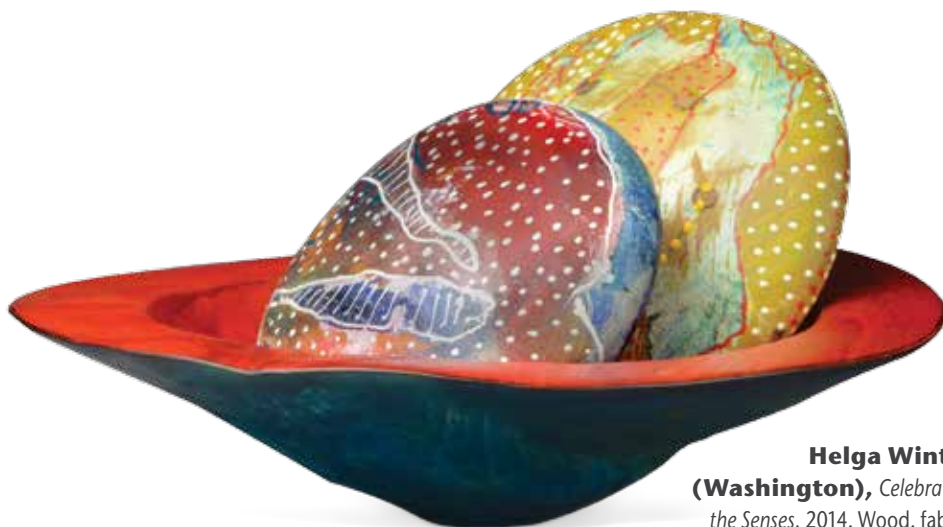
AAW International Symposium, Phoenix

All artwork will be auctioned at the symposium. The auction will also be live via the Internet.

Photos: Tib Shaw



Curt Theobold (Wyoming), *Circle of Life*, 2014, Butternut, 8" x 4" x 2", (20cm x 10cm x 5cm)



Helga Winter (Washington), *Celebrating the Senses*, 2014, Wood, fabric, seaweed, acrylics, oils, paper transfers, 5" x 8" (13cm x 20cm)

Alain Mailland (France), *Shrine for the Rising Sun*, 2014, Juniper burl, 4½" x 7½" x 6½" (11cm x 19cm x 16cm)



Rolly Munro (New Zealand), *Votive*, 2014, Holly, glue, 6½" x 2" x 2½" (16cm x 5cm x 6cm)





Michael Kehs (Pennsylvania), *Ceilidh*, 2014, Basswood, copper, iron nails, metal acid dye, 8" x 5½" x 8" (20cm x 14cm x 20cm)



Jim Christiansen (Idaho), *Connection*, 2014, Cherry, maple, acrylic paint, 8" x 8" (20cm x 20cm)



Nick Agar (United Kingdom), *Viking Arm Ring*, 2014, English sycamore, spirit stain, silver leaf, silver gilt, wax, paint, 4" x 5" (10cm x 13cm)



Marilyn Campbell (Canada), *Master of Ceremonies*, 2014, Holly, resin, M3 metal composite, magnet, dye, 8" x 2½" x 4" (20cm x 6cm x 10cm)





Dedicated to providing education, information, and organization to those interested in woodturning

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email: inquiries@woodturner.org
website: woodturner.org
gallery website: galleryofwoodart.org

Executive Director Phil McDonald
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EDITORIAL

Editor Betty Scarpino
editorscarpino@gmail.com

**Editorial
Advisors** Kip Christensen
Denise DeRose
John Giem
Malcolm Zander

**Journal
Production** **Albarella Design**
Linnea Overbeck
Art Director
Production Management

EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS

Send article ideas to:
editorscarpino@gmail.com

For tips on article submission and
photography requirements, visit
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at inquiries@woodturner.org
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ADVERTISERS

For rates and specifications, contact:

Pierre Productions & Promotions, Inc.
Erica Nelson
763-497-1778
erica@pierreproductions.com

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A NOTE ABOUT SAFETY

An accident at the lathe can happen with
blinding suddenness; respiratory and other
problems can build over years.

Take appropriate precautions when you
turn. Safety guidelines are published online
at woodturner.org/resources/safety.htm.
Following them will help you continue to
enjoy woodturning.

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COVER

Cover – Clay Foster, *Fine Line Vessel*,
1996, Wood, lithographic ink, paint,
11" x 11" dia (28cm x 28cm)

Back Cover – Ron Gerton, *Sitting Pretty*,
2014, Australian red gum burl, cast bronze,
14" x 17" x 13" (36cm x 43cm x 33cm)



From the Editor



I met Stoney Lamar in 1989 when I attended my first AAW symposium in Seattle, Washington. I had been turning for about ten years, but worked in relative isolation—I had no idea work like Stoney's could be produced using a lathe. His magnificent sculptural turnings were my first

hint at the potential of a wood lathe. Throughout the years, Stoney continued to explore the possibilities of turned-wood art and has expanded his repertoire to include metal fabrication. David Fry's superb review of Stoney's retrospective reveals much about Stoney's beautiful journey.

A wooden Irish stone wall? Roger Bennett's article transports us into an Irish setting where a group of wood artists from around the world worked together to seemingly imagine into existence a wooden replica of a traditional Irish stone wall.

Congratulations to Allen Hockenbery for receiving this year's AAW Honorary Lifetime Membership and Clay Foster for being selected for the POP Excellence Award.

This is my last journal as editor. I sincerely appreciate the many woodturners who contributed their knowledge and stories through the pages of *American Woodturner*—it was a pleasurable team effort. My lathe beckons, but who knows, I may submit an article to the new editor, Joshua Friend. I look forward to reading the journals he puts together. I wish him as much enjoyment as I have experienced.

Betty Scarpino

—Betty Scarpino

From the President



As we approach the start of the Phoenix symposium, I want to highlight two important changes: The Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) auction will

happen on Friday evening, and the Professional Outreach Program (POP) auction will take place Saturday afternoon. Even if you cannot attend the symposium, you can participate simultaneously in these live auctions. Go to auction2014.woodturner.org and register to bid on some outstanding artwork.

The proceeds from the EOG auction benefit AAW chapters and members in the form of grants. The proceeds from the POP auction help advance professionalism within AAW. If you or your chapter have received an EOG, I encourage you to support these two programs.

Executive director Phil McDonald and the AAW staff recently completed the conversion to our new website. You will see more frequent updates, additional links to online content, new emphasis on video content, improvements of members' ability to search

our vast archives, and enhanced social media features. The new database will reduce manual input of information and improve our ability to prepare financial reports.

Board member Lou Williams and AAW member Louis Vadeboncoeur are working on our chapter relations initiative. They have put together a group of eight chapter presidents to address two questions: What services are important to the chapters and their members? And, how can we build a solid, supportive relationship between local chapters and the national headquarters? This relationship is important and we are finding ways to strengthen it. We will be discussing this topic at the Phoenix chapter leaders' meeting. I hope you can join us.

The board has voted to renew the John C. Campbell and Arrowmont scholarship program for 2015. This program lets each chapter select one member for consideration for a scholarship. This year, we handed out 27 scholarships. This program is an excellent benefit of AAW membership and we are looking to expand it. The money for the scholarships comes from income on our memorial

endowment; please consider donating to help build this fund.

I want to thank every member who has donated to the AAW. Your support is significant and appreciated. Your dues cover about half of AAW's operating budget. The symposium and journal advertising provide additional income, but there are more requests for program funding than these income sources can provide. If you have benefited from an EOG, a POP program, Woodturning FUNDamentals, a scholarship, or other program, please consider supporting AAW's educational mission by joining at a higher membership level or making a donation.

I want to close by congratulating Al Hockenbery on being selected as Honorary Lifetime Member. Along with serving on the board in the past, Al puts in many hours scheduling demonstrations and events at the symposium. This honor is richly deserved by Al for his dedication and service to the AAW.

See you in Phoenix.

Dale Larson

Dale Larson
AAW Board President

Jerry and Deena Kaplan

One-of-a-Kind Award

Jerome (Jerry) and Deena Kaplan were presented with the One-of-a-Kind award for their dedication and service to the Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Renwick Gallery, the wood art community, and the Washington, D.C., area art and craft community, including the James Renwick Alliance (JRA). They were recognized during Spring Craft Weekend at a gala on March 29 this year.

The Kaplans' contributions to the craft community include significant gifts to the Center for Art in Wood in Philadelphia, and the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh with a gift of 23 major pieces to enhance its craft collection.

The Renwick Alliance has been the Kaplans' primary emphasis—serving on various committees, hosting the first Masters of the Medium award dinner at their home, and contributing to the Lloyd E. Herman Curator of American Craft endowment, the Renwick Gallery renovation project, and the JRA efforts to raise funds to name a gallery for the James Renwick Alliance.

Congratulations, Jerry and Deena, and thank you also for your support of the AAW and longtime appreciation of the wood art community! ■

—Information gleaned from Johanna Thompson's article in *The Quarterly*.



Jerry and Deena Kaplan

Photo by Miriam Rosenthal, originally featured on the front cover of *JRA The Quarterly*.

Bay Area Woodturners Celebrate 25th Anniversary

In June 1989, Paul Spinetti and Keven Segar broke away from a club in the East Bay to form a woodturners club closer to where they lived on the San Francisco Peninsula. The local Shopsmith store in San Carlos opened their doors to the club, which brought in new customers and gave the turners a central location to meet.

Only three woodturners attended the first meeting, but by the end of the year, the club boasted 12 members. Fulfilling a



The Bay Area Turner Society's first-place entry in AAW's 1991 Chapter Collaborative Challenge.

need of local turners, the club grew to 26 by 1990. Today there are nearly 80. The club meets monthly on second Tuesday evenings at a church in Los Alto.

Initially, the club adopted the name The Bay Area Turner Society, which has been changed to the Bay Area Woodturners. The club joined the AAW and in 1991 received first place in the Chapter Collaborative Challenge event with their rendition of an antique automobile.

The club holds a yearly Woodturners Show to educate the public and bring in new members. They regularly have local turners and well-known professionals demonstrate, and occasionally offer hands-on classes on weekends. The primary focus of the club is turning various forms of bowls, including segmented, natural-edged, and closed forms, and educating and promoting woodturning in their community. ■

—Grant Allison

Penturners' Meeting

The Principally Pens Chapter of the AAW will have their annual meeting during Special Interest Night at the Phoenix symposium. As in past years, we will catch up on the latest news, correct chapter-member information, and share stories and events. Bring your pride and joy pens, as



well as your problem pens—a drawing is planned for those who participate in the show and tell.

Kurt Hertzog,
freeform pen

ALLEN HOCKENBERY

AAW 2014 HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBER

Elizabeth and Frank Amigo



Al Hockenbery's involvement with woodturning started in 1975 when he bought his first lathe, a 12" Delta that he turned on in his limited spare time. He and his wife Sherry were busy building shelves, a kitchen island, and furniture for their new home. In the 1980s, Al outfitted his shop with woodworking tools and equipment from auctions in Annapolis, Maryland, that were held when schools were phasing out shop classes. He and a friend would buy the items, fix them up, keep a few, and sell the rest. When all the furniture for his home was finally built, Al became more serious about turning. As many beginners do,

he began with pens and ornaments.

Al joined the AAW in 1992 after Sherry submitted a flier for membership from a

Craft Supplies order.

He hasn't looked back since.

Chesapeake Woodturners

The AAW Resource Directory has long been a valuable tool for connecting woodturners. In 1993, Frank Amigo invited Al to accompany Chesapeake Woodturners club members on their annual trip to Maryland's Eastern Shore, where

the bottom of a bowl. Al has been so encouraging and so generous." Al's next class at Maryland Hall was with David Ellsworth, followed by others with Michael Peterson, Christian Burchard, and Johannes Michelsen. Combining these classes with intrinsic motivation, Al became a



Al Hockenbery is a tireless advocate for the field of woodturning and a terrific resource for organizing woodturning events on national, regional, and local levels.

-Al Stirt

member Temple Blackwood had marked trees that could be harvested on his family farm. Al happily went along, and by the time he returned home, he had seen a demonstration on turning birdhouses, gotten a supply of fresh wood, and become the newest member of the chapter. This was an auspicious beginning for Al's extensive involvement with the Chesapeake Woodturners.

By the time of the Chesapeake Woodturners' second regional symposium, in 1994, Al was an active member and served as assistant to John Jordan during his rotations at the symposium. By then, Al had taken a five-day class with Liam O'Neill offered by Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts in Annapolis, which he says really got him going in turning. The class was held in Margaret Lospinuso's studio in Laurel, Maryland. Margaret, an active member of Chesapeake Woodturners and a long-time friend of Al's, says, "Al was the one who taught me a surefire technique to keep from going through

proficient turner. Over time, he assisted in workshops with Al Stirt, Trent Bosch, Lyle Jamieson, Cindy Drozda, Jimmy Clewes, and David Ellsworth. Meeting and getting to know nationally known turners paved the way for Al's future involvement on AAW's symposium committee.

Al eventually became the coordinator for woodturning classes offered at Maryland Hall. He also taught woodturning there and he and Sherry developed the hall's youth turning program. He was chapter treasurer of Chesapeake Woodturners for four years and served as president for another four years. Al had an individual show at the Maryland Federation of Art on State Circle in Annapolis and was selected for a number of other juried shows. He and Sherry, also a woodturner, were juried in to several craft shows at Quiet Waters Park, a beautiful county facility outside Annapolis.

Soon, Al began teaching outside of Maryland. He taught both hollow forms and bowls at John C. Campbell Folk School in North Carolina. Regional symposiums ►

Dark Storm Rising, 2013, Eucalyptus and Maple, 4" x 10" x 5" (10cm x 25cm x 13cm)

offered another opportunity for demonstrations: Virginia, New York, Colorado, and Florida. When Al and Sherry moved to Florida in 2004, the Chesapeake Woodturners extended them lifetime membership.

Al and Sherry lost no time getting involved in local Florida woodturning clubs. Al worked in the hands-on workshop at the Florida symposium and donated several days of “a day in the workshop.” He continues to host club sawdust sessions in his shop and has given numerous demonstrations for the Pensacola, Jacksonville, Sarasota, and other Florida clubs, including

all-day demonstrations on topics from basic skills to advanced turning techniques. In 2013, he arranged a tour of Florida clubs for Al Stirt, who stated, “Al was a generous host and guide. He and Sherry chauffeured me around on my days off, visiting state parks and other wild areas. They also helped to fulfill my longtime wish of paddling with alligators.”

Furthering his connections to the national woodturning scene, Al initiated a master class program in central Florida by inviting Jimmy Clewes, Cindy Drozda, Trent Bosch, and Al Stirt to give weeklong classes

in the Hockenbery shop. Eventually, the Florida clubs picked up sponsorship of the classes, and David Ellsworth spent a week there teaching. Trent Bosch and Al Stirt have returned for classes. According to Al Stirt, “Al’s understated organizational and networking skills, as well as his understanding of what a demonstrator/teacher needs, have been valuable to me and to many others. I love teaching and demonstrating, but the process of organizing dates, equipment, and materials can be daunting. Al’s attention to all of these things, and his empathic



(Clockwise from top left)
 Al Hockenbery at home in Florida
 Trent Bosch, Sherry Hockenbery, and Al at the John C. Campbell Folk School in North Carolina.
 David Ellsworth, Al, and Rudolph Lopez take a break in the Hockenbery shop.
 Al assists a young turner at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts.
 Untitled, Boxelder, tallest is 11" (28cm)

response to my needs and interests, relieved most of the stress of traveling and let me devote my energies to teaching.” Al Stirt’s recognition of Al’s organizational talents foreshadowed the deep involvement Hockenbery would have nationally with the AAW in future years.

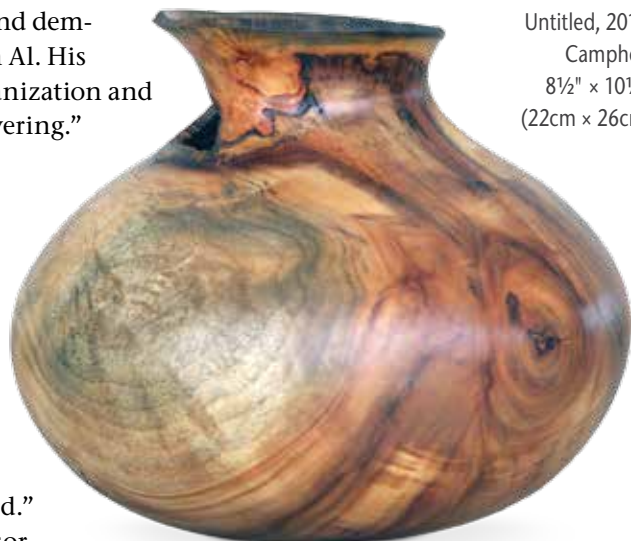
Al was selected to demonstrate at two AAW symposiums—Charlotte, North Carolina, in 2000, where he, along with Sherry, made a presentation on techniques for teaching kids, and in Hartford, Connecticut, in 2010, where he demonstrated turning a ball in a ball and a natural edge Southwest hollow form. He taught a youth turning class at the Albuquerque and Portland symposiums. Trent Bosch states, “I first met Al in 2000 at the national symposium in Charlotte, where we shared a demo room. I did not know it then, but Al and Sherry would later become some of my most cherished woodturning friends. Throughout the past 14 years, I have

had the honor to teach and demonstrate side by side with Al. His commitment to this organization and medium has been unwavering.”

Involvement with the AAW

Al served on the AAW Board from 2006 through 2008 and for several months in 2009. According to David Ellsworth, “Al was a critically important member of the board.”

Al remains a board advisor. Board President Dale Larson states, “Al’s calm demeanor and thoughtful responses were a great help during board discussions. I would come up with some idea and Al would calmly say, ‘Well, you might want to think about....’” Al chaired the nominating committee for one year, was a committee member for one year, an EOG committee member one year, and a youth committee member for five years. Currently, Al regularly participates in the AAW forum and promotes the AAW through activities at numerous national woodworking shows.



Untitled, 2011, Camphor, 8½" x 10¼" (22cm x 26cm)

It is the symposium committee, however, where Al has made his greatest contribution. He has been a member since 2006 and has developed the symposium schedule of room assignments, videographers, and equipment for each symposium since 2007. In 2009, Dale Larson took over as committee chair. He now states, “I figured I would be responsible for all the computer work and scheduling related to the symposium. Al stepped in and said he would be happy to continue. I don’t think our members understand all ▶



Nested Spheres, 2011, Eucalyptus, diameters 5", 3", and 2" (13cm, 8cm, 5cm)



Untitled, 2002, Maple burl, 12" dia (30cm)

Olla, 2003, Spalted maple burl, 13" dia (33cm)



Al and Sherry visiting woodturning friends in Colorado

the work that goes into the master schedule for the symposium or the 14 demonstration rooms and other events. Al understands how one thing at the symposium impacts other events. Al's historical knowledge is invaluable to the smooth running of the symposium."

David Ellsworth terms Al "a master of unruffled, no-feathers-flying efficiency. And that's exactly the type of

person you want to juggle the 'hidden business' of the AAW, working out the intricacies of scheduling demonstrations and lectures at our annual symposiums. And what a mind tangle of a job it is." Trent Bosch adds, "The changes, special requests, and making sure everyone has their needs met is an enormous task and Al has it down to a science." Al improved videography by suggesting the recruitment of

the best videographers from regional symposiums. He continues to develop maps showing AAW membership and chapters for use in planning AAW symposiums. Working jointly with Dale Larson, they created the all-important symposium manual for AAW's procedures and policies.

In Al Stirt's estimation, "Al Hockenbery is a tireless advocate for the field of woodturning and a terrific resource for organizing woodturning events on national, regional, and local levels." And Dale Larson states, "Al puts in time all year round promoting AAW, the symposium, and woodturning in general. People like Al Hockenbery make AAW a great community." Thank you, Al, for your efforts on behalf of the AAW, and congratulations on well-deserved recognition! ■



Transformation, 2004, Black sassafras, 5½" x 9½" x 5" (14cm x 24cm x 13cm)

Elizabeth and Frank Amigo are longtime AAW members.

Book Review: *Why We Make Things and Why It Matters: The Education of a Craftsman* by Peter Korn, David R. Godine Publisher, 2013, 200 pages

Someone once described Peter Korn as a smart man. After reading his new book, *Why We Make Things and Why It Matters: The Education of a Craftsman*, I consider that an understatement. Twenty years ago, Korn founded the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship (CFC) (*AW*, vol 28, no 5), organized it as a nonprofit school, and strategically placed himself within the institution to ensure its ongoing success and his own employment, doing what he loves. On the surface and taken as isolated events, those actions sound simply like good career moves, but in the context of his new book, they represent the culmination of a life punctuated by serious health issues, supported by a persistent love of craft, and open to continually reinventing himself.

Unlike Korn's first book, *Working With Wood: The Basics of Craftsmanship* (Taunton Press), his new book is not instructional, unless considered existentially; *How to Make a Good Life* could well be its sub-subtitle. The overt theme is that the act of making objects, with conscious investment of self, fulfills the human spirit. Korn parallels that narrative with the inspirational story of how he crafted his own life, giving the book depth.

Korn asks big questions framed in broad contexts: What gives objects meaning? How and why do we create those objects? He also discusses the nature of identity and selfhood and how objects inevitably result from a confluence of factors, deftly placing the discussion into historical context.

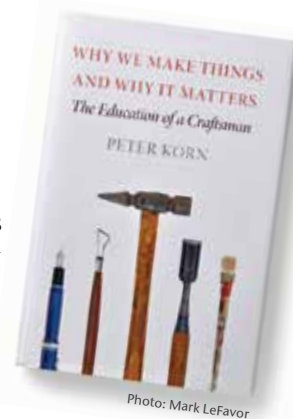
For those involved in creative work—woodturning, furniture making, pottery, glasswork, writing—Korn's initial thesis is not an untold secret. He notes early in the text that students who attend CFC “do not invest time, money, and effort traveling to Maine to cut dovetails with hand tools because they need hardwood benches, which are the introductory-class projects. What lures them is the hope of finding a deeper meaning by learning to make things well with their own hands.” The act of creating is fulfilling and nourishing and makers undergo change in the process: We are the maker *and* the object being made. Creative activity is a vehicle for self-transformation.

Korn is skilled at voicing concepts that many makers and consumers only know intuitively: Objects are the material expression of ideas and values, whether art, craft, or mass-produced. He shines a

spotlight on the designing and making of objects to remind us they are the result of a multitude of decisions on the part of the maker, inevitably influenced by his or her existence in a particular time and place. (And you thought it was just a refrigerator!) Offering these kernels of truth that reside outside of our everyday awareness makes Korn's book a rewarding read.

The ideas in *Why We Make Things* are perceptive and well informed. The tone is erudite, yet accessible to thoughtful readers. Korn had already proven himself as a furniture maker, designer, teacher, writer, and administrator. With this insightful and well-crafted book, he has risked and gained more as an author, and in doing so offers a roadmap toward a fulfilling life. ■

—Joshua Friend



Arrowmont Purchases Historic Campus

Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts is pleased to announce the school's Board of Governors has purchased its historic campus in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, from the Pi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women. “We are grateful to those who have made it clear that they believe in Arrowmont's future as much as they value its rich history,” says Arrowmont's executive director Bill May. Key donors to purchase the campus are the City of Gatlinburg, Sevier County, the Windgate Charitable

Foundation, and numerous individual donors including the Arrowmont Board and staff. Gifts ranged from \$3.5 million to \$5.

“All levels of giving are important,” May adds. “It's the heartfelt donation of \$5 from a retiree or teenage woodturner that helps convince municipalities like the City of Gatlinburg—which contributed \$3.5 million—or foundations like Windgate—which contributed a matching grant of \$2.25 million—that

their larger contributions are necessary, justified and well spent.”

The American Association of Woodturners was born on the front porch of Arrowmont's dining hall 27 years ago. That shared history has been vital and important to both organizations, and benefits a growing international community of woodturners. For more information about Arrowmont or to view 2014 workshop offerings, visit arrowmont.org. ■

Calendar of Events

August issue deadline: June 15

Send information to editor@woodturner.org

Canada

July 25, 26, and 27, Symposium, Walter Murray Collegiate, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Demonstrators are Binh Pho, Douglas Fisher, Michael and Cynthia Gibson, Andrew Glazebrook, and local woodturners. For more information visit hubcityturners.ca.

New Zealand

October 2–5, Woodturning New Zealand International Symposium, Wesley College, Paerata (just south of Auckland). Demonstrators include Cindy Drozda, David Nittmann, Cynthia Gibson, Michael Gibson, Joey Richardson, Ken Wraight, Robbie Graham, Theo Haralampou, Shane Hewitt, Phil Irons, Richard Raffan, Vaughn Richmond, Neville and Emma Walker, and Bruce Wood. For more information, visit sawg.org.nz.

Norway

August 11–14, Woodturning Cruise. Sail along the coast of Norway while taking in woodturning demonstrations by Richard Raffan, Jimmy Clewes, Michael Hosaluk, Nick Agar, Terry Martin, Asmund Vignes, and more. Held every three years. For information, visit woodturningcruise.com.

Arizona

June 13–15, AAW International Symposium, Phoenix. Invited demonstrators are Alan Carter, Jimmy Clewes, J. Paul Fennell, Douglas Fisher, Clay Foster, Todd Hoyer, Rudolph Lopez, Michael Mocho, Christophe Nancey, Joshua Salesin, Neil Scobie, and Michael Werner. Selected demonstrators were featured in the April journal. For more information, visit woodturner.org.

June 12, National AAW Chapter of Segmented Woodturners annual meeting and discussion, Special Interest Night (SIN) at the AAW International Symposium, Phoenix. For more information, visit segmentedwoodturners.org.

June 12, Principally Pens Chapter of the AAW annual meeting, Phoenix symposium, 7:00 p.m. during Special Interest Night.

California

September 12–October 19, 26th Annual “Artistry in Wood,” juried exhibit, open to woodworkers and woodturners. For details, visit sonomawoodworkers.com.

September 14 through March 15, 2015, “In the Realm of Nature: Bob Stocksdale & Kay

Sekimachi,” exhibit at Mingei International Museum, San Diego.

Colorado

September 12–14, Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium, held at The Ranch, Larimer County Fairgrounds. For the latest information, visit rmwoodturningsymposium.com.

Georgia

September 19–21, Turning Southern Style XX, Georgia Association of Woodturners, Northwest Georgia Trade and Convention Center, Dalton. Demonstrators include Ray Key, Michael Hosaluk, Todd Hoyer, Nick Cook, James McClure, Frank Bowers, Vince Welch, John Jordan, Lyle Jamieson, Doug Thompson, and Tom Steyer. Vendors, Instant Gallery, banquet, auction, and spouse lounge. Information and registration at gawoodturner.org.

Illinois

August 15–17, Turn-On! Chicago 2014 symposium held at The Conference Center at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake in Mundelein. This event includes featured demonstrators Trent Bosch, Binh Pho, Nick Cook, Andi Wolfe, Dick Sing, Alan Carter, Lyle Jamieson, Barry Gross, Steve Sinner, and Jason Swanson. Also included are hands-on events, tradeshow, onsite meals, banquet, and auction. For full event information, visit turnonchicago.com.

Minnesota

Ongoing exhibit: “Touch This!” featuring fascinating facts about wood and woodturning, as well as pieces you can touch. For more information, visit galleryofwoodart.org.

Montana

August 23, 24, Yellowstone Woodturners Symposium, Billings. Featured demonstrator is Kip Christensen. For more information, visit yellowstoneturners.org.

Ohio

October 3, 4, Ornamental Turners International biennial symposium, Hyatt Hotel in Columbus. There will be practical, theoretical, and historical lectures as well as live demonstrations on ornamental turning. For more information, visit ornamentaltturners.org.

Oregon

March 6–8, 2015, Oregon Woodturning Symposium, Linn County Expo Center, Albany. Demonstrators include Mike Mahoney, Trent Bosch, Jimmy Clewes, Kirk DeHeer, David Schweitzer, Dale Larson, David Nittmann, Molly Winton, Eric Lofstrom, Nick Stagg, and Sara Robinson. For more information, email gerrost@yahoo.com or visit oregonwoodturningsymposium.com.

South Dakota

June 21, The Siouland Woodturners will celebrate their 10th anniversary with a one-day symposium featuring Alan Lacer, held at the Community Life Center in Sioux Falls. For more information, visit sioulandwoodturners.org.

Tennessee

January 30–31, 2015, Tennessee Association of Woodturners 27th Annual Woodturning Symposium, Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, Franklin. Demonstrators include Nick Cook, J. Paul Fennell, Hayley Smith, Todd Hoyer, and Dennis Paullus. There will be an instant gallery, banquet, auction, and opportunity for attendees to have their pieces critiqued. For more information visit tnwoodturners.org/symposium, email tawsymposium@aol.com, or call 615-973-3336. For vendor space contact mine@tds.net.

Texas

July 11–September 7, “Conversations With Wood: Selections From the Collection of David and Ruth Waterbury,” Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi. For more information, visit artmuseumofsouthtexas.org.

August 22, 23, and 24, SouthWest Association of Turners (SWAT) Woodturning Symposium, Waco Convention Center. Featured demonstrators are Alan Carter, Avelino Samuel, Allen Hockenbery, Keith Gotschall, Mark Gardner, and Rudy Lopez, along with 14 regional turners from the 28 chapters comprising SWAT. There will be an Instant Gallery, banquet, raffle, vendors, special interest groups, hands-on turning, tools-sharpening area, and activities for partners. SWAT supports Beads of Courage program and encourages attendees to donate boxes. For more information, visit swaturners.org.

October 16–19, Fourth Biennial Segmented Woodturning Symposium, Drury Hotel, San Antonio. For more information and registration, visit segmentedwoodturners.org.

Virginia

September 13, 14, Virginia Woodturners Symposium, Expoland Fishersville. This hands-on event features mentors to teach students techniques and projects while turning under their guidance. Featured demonstrators are Stuart Batty and Molly Winton. For details and registration, visit virginiawoodturners.com.

Washington

July 26, Creativity in Woodturning, seventh annual symposium, Lacey, sponsored by the Woodturners of Olympia. Featured demonstrator is Richard Raffan; local demonstrator is Nick Stagg. For more information and to register for hands-on classes, visit woodturnersofolympia.org. ■

Call for Demonstrators AAW Symposium 2015

AAW’s 29th international symposium will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, June 25–28. Between July 1 and September 15 to apply, go to woodturner.org/Events/CallforEntry.

For additional information, call the AAW office in Saint Paul, 877-595-9094 or 651-484-9094 or email, inquiries@woodturner.org.

Recovery from the Flood, Three Years On

In 2011, the AAW donated library materials to the Ipswich Woodcrafts Club in Queensland, Australia (vol 26, no 5). Record-breaking floods had devastated the club's building and this gesture from the AAW meant a great deal, as is told in this update.

In January 2011, the rains began to fall in the state of Queensland. Rivers and creeks overflowed and soon an area larger than the state of Texas was under water. Like everyone else, the Ipswich Woodcrafts Club found itself battling the elements; before long, their clubhouse was under water. As the water cleared, the devastation was evident: machinery caked with foul mud, workbenches that took three men to lift which were snagged upside down on lathes, and the club library destroyed. Despair quickly set in as members wondered, "Do we still have a club?"

That question was quickly answered when people started arriving to clean

up. They scoured equipment, sent motors and switches in for repair and new bearings, devoted hours rubbing oil into castings to force out water, and stripped and renovated chucks and faceplates. Members also took tools home to clean and sharpen, returning days later to start work on another machine. After nearly four months' hard work, the job was finally finished.

The cleanup cost about \$10,000 and depleted our funds considerably, but the word that we were in trouble slowly spread. Another local club helped with the clean-up and another club organized a challenge day, with the funds raised going to us. They beat us that day, but the next year we won.

We learned the AAW and clubs from distant parts of Australia were also donating a large quantity of books, magazines, and videos to rebuild our library. We still feel amazed that

people from the other side of Australia and from around the world were willing to help. Our unreserved thanks go out to everyone for their kindness.

Throughout the rebuilding phase, we never lost a member and a large majority spent much time helping, even though some of them were cleaning up their own homes. Now all of the equipment has had its life extended and friendships have been deepened.

This year our club celebrated its 25th anniversary. We still get laughs out of the great flood, like when someone recently picked up a chair and water suddenly ran out of it. We now have an emergency response plan, some machinery has been put on wheels, and we have short-term storage options. Things have never been better. Thanks again to AAW for all your friendship. ■

—Jim Tutin, Australia

Prescott Area Woodturners Help Local School

On May 15, 2012, the world of woodturning lost Phil Brennon. Phil had been instrumental in organizing our club, the Prescott Area Woodturners (PAW), and was past president of the AAW Board of Directors. Upon Phil's death, his wife requested the PAW handle memorials. It was her hope that funds received could be used for education.

Members of PAW were humbled by this responsibility and considered many possible uses for the money. Last fall, we learned that Franklin Phonetic School, a K-8 charter school in our area, was instituting a woodworking class and was seeking lathes. Members contacted Tom Franklin, chairman of the school, and instructor Tom Bockman to determine the best way for us to help. Using money from what we came to call the

Phil Fund, we purchased two 10" variable speed Turncrafter Commander midi lathes and loaned them to the school for their new class.

The purchase also included turning tools, pen kits, and other materials for the start-up. The class has been successful.

In fact, it is so popular the school added after-school opportunities two days a week for students who want to learn woodturning, and has also purchased a third lathe with donated funds.

Years ago, Yavapai Community College recognized Phil Brennon's skills as a teacher when he was named Innovative Teacher of the Year during



(L to R): Students Shannon Page, Juan Favela, and Grant Malinowski with new lathe at the Franklin Phonetic School, Prescott Valley, Arizona.



Franklin Phonetic School Shop Teacher Tom Bockman with student Timmy Young

his five years as an instructor. We at PAW hope Phil would be pleased with this educational program initiated in his memory. ■

Jim Muehleisen, President,
Prescott Area Woodturners

Marge Hunt, Secretary,
Prescott Area Woodturners

Tips

Fine tune tenon holes

I turn a number of items that require drilling a hole and fitting a tenon, such as fitting handles to scoops or finials to ornaments. I sometimes discover too late that I made the tenon a bit too large, and after taking the part with the tenon off the lathe, it's too late to adjust the tenon size.

I discovered that a tapered reamer works well for tweaking the hole to achieve a perfect fit for the tenon. It has a removable handle and multiple flutes for smooth cutting. Fine tune the hole by reaming it while off the lathe. I bought mine from Grizzly for less than \$10 and it tapers from 1/8" to 5/8" (3mm to 16mm). Most reamers are in the 1/2" (13mm) size, but 5/8" is more versatile.

—Mike Peace, Suwanee, Georgia



Share your turning ideas!

If we publish your tip, we'll pay you \$35. Email your tips along with relevant photos or illustrations to editor@woodturner.org.

—Betty Scarpino, Editor

Dovetail tenon

I have a dovetail-jawed chuck. It is a bit of a challenge to turn a foot or tenon on a bowl using a bedan or parting tool. To solve the problem, I took an old scraper and ground the correct angle on its cutting edge to fit the dovetail jaws. This tool also works on both ends of a cylinder when making a lidded box or peppermill.

—Bill Kingsbury, Wisconsin



Replicating bevel angles

Regarding Reuben Hufham's tip on replicating bevel angles (vol 29, no 2), it will only work as he outlines with a CBN wheel. If you use a stone wheel, the distance of the V arm will change each time you dress the wheel. Granted, it doesn't change very much each time, but after five or six dressings, the diameter of the wheel gets small enough to change the angle of the grind. If you are using an Ellsworth gouge, for instance, the change can be significant.

—Dan Kozar, Pennsylvania

Finishing pen barrels

My favorite finish for pens is a spray-on lacquer. When I make several pens at a time, it can be a challenge to hold the pen pieces while spraying and drying. My solution is to slide them onto an appropriately sized dowel and separate them with a strip of electrical tape.

I hold the dowel at arm's length and spray the pen pieces, turning the dowel as I go to ensure good coverage around each pen barrel. For drying, simply place the ends of the dowel onto separate surfaces so the pen pieces are suspended and level.

This method works well for all tube-style kits, such as Christmas ornaments and letter openers.

—Joshua Friend, Connecticut



Water for Wood

Don McIvor

While oil finishes have been around for centuries, water-based finishes have only been available for about 50 years. Water-based finishes—also called water base or waterborne—hold only a small segment of the market, but the technology behind these products is evolving rapidly and they do occupy a particular niche. Recent changes in water-based products address concerns over the presence of volatile organic compounds (VOC) in finishes used on a commercial scale and their links to environmental pollution and employee health and safety. Consequently, the current crop of water-based products is easier on the atmosphere and has some qualities that may earn them a place in the turner's shop.

The principal source of VOC has been solvents in lacquer finishes, long the preferred finish for cabinet and furniture makers who can justify the space requirements and expense of spray equipment. With this market segment in mind, finish manufacturers have developed some water-based finishes to fill the niche long occupied by lacquer. Water-based finishes are also an appealing alternative for finishing wood floors; their ease of application, wear resistance, and low odor make them a viable alternative to solvent-laden varnishes. Turners, a small segment of the larger woodworking community, often have to adapt tools to suit our needs. Fortunately, as interest in woodturning grows, so will the number of products designed specifically for the needs of turners.

To make water-based finish, manufacturers suspend droplets of acrylic



1 A spalted maple sample board contrasts thinned tung oil (middle) with General Finishes Wood Turners Finish (top), and Varathane Polyurethane Satin (bottom).

or polyurethane resin in water. These finishes also contain up to 20 percent glycol ether, a solvent that softens the resin and is compatible with water. The water evaporates first after the finish is applied, followed by the glycol ether, leaving behind the resin to coalesce into a continuous film. Once cured, the finish can be softened or re-dissolved by many solvents, but water will not change the solid state of the finish.

As with all finishes, there are trade-offs involved with deciding to choose a water-based product. Water-based finishes are nearly clear and impart little or no color to the underlying wood. In fact, they are so lacking in color that some manufacturers add dye to

approach the warmer appearance of an oil-based finish (*Photo 1*). Water-based finishes are low odor and contain far less solvent than other types of finish, reducing fire and health hazards. Water-based finishes do not yellow with time. Clean-up is easy with soap and water, but sprayers have to be disassembled for thorough cleaning. Water-based finishes cure fairly quickly, facilitating multiple applications within a short time period. The appearance of the cured finish, particularly in matte or satin formulations, might be described as “soft,” primarily because it creates less grain distinction than oil-based finishes.

The lack of color in water-based finishes means they sometimes just ▶

look lackluster, especially on dark wood. The tone imparted to wood is sometimes described as “blue” or “cool.” The presence of water means the grain will be raised by the first coat of finish. Water-based finishes have a somewhat limited range of temperature and humidity conditions in which they will cooperate, and freezing will ruin the unused product. Getting a good finish surface without sags, drips, orange-peeling, or brush marks can be a challenge. Every particle of dust within hailing distance will be drawn inexorably toward the wet finish, but quick curing time makes this less of a problem than slower-curing varnishes. The surface film also means the finish is difficult for a non-woodworker to repair, once damaged. Once cured, water-based finishes are resistant to scuffing and abrasion, but only moderately resistant to heat, solvent, acid, alkali, and water.

As with all curing finishes, water-based finishes are food safe after they have cured. Because of the difficulty of repairing damaged film finishes, I do not use water-based finishes on food service items, but it is worth being aware of their safety status. Standard procedures for working with concentrated chemicals are warranted, including eye protection and chemical-proof gloves. A well-ventilated workspace is sufficient to control airborne contaminants, with an organic vapor respirator as the option for poorly vented workspaces.

Selecting the right product

Finish manufacturers do their best to confuse us, and it can be difficult to know if you are purchasing water-based finish, varnish, or lacquer. In bold letters, a can may proclaim its contents to be polyurethane, varnish, or lacquer, irrespective of solvent or water content. To reduce frustration, study the clean-up instructions on

the product container. A water-based product will call for soap and water clean up. About the only way to know how a product will look is to try it, or if you are lucky, examine some samples in the store. Be aware most products come in a range of surface sheens, from matte to glossy. A few manufacturers market their water-based products in spray cans, making them both easy and cost-efficient to apply.

Each manufacturer provides application guidance tailored to the qualities of their products. Some water-based finishes are specifically formulated for spraying through an HVLP system. Other finishes are formulated for bristle or foam brush application. It is possible to thin water-based finishes up to about 20 percent, but this practice is best avoided as it will affect the product’s self-leveling properties.

I most frequently use brush-applied water-based products for finishing spalted wood. Finishing spalted wood with an oil-based finish can be problematic because the soft wood soaks up the finish and visually reduces the distinction between spalted and solid wood. Water-based finishes sidestep these issues. Water-based finishes formulated for brush or pad application are viscous, giving them some capacity to fill small pockets of torn grain that plague spalted wood.

General Finishes Wood Turners Finish is a water-based product formulated specifically for woodturners. Judging from the characteristics of this product, General Finishes appears to be competing for the attention of oil-based finish devotees. The product is thinner than other water-based finishes, making it easier to apply on the lathe and to curved surfaces. It cures even more quickly than other water-based finishes, providing the opportunity for multiple applications in a short period of time. Its finished appearance is glossy and

the tone lies between traditional water-based and oil-based finishes. Because of its thinner consistency, however, it does not perform as well at filling pocked surfaces. Wood Turners Finish excels on solid timbers. While I am content with the look it imparts to spalted wood, its thin consistency tends to saturate soft fibers and end-grain while residing on top of adjacent dense wood, creating an uneven appearance. Applying additional coats of finish beyond the manufacturers recommended three could help even out the surface appearance and overcome this problem.

Applying water-based finish

Whether finish will be sprayed or brushed, plan to apply multiple thin coats that will minimize sagging and facilitate the finish’s self-leveling behavior. Allow each coat to cure (usually ½ to 2 hours, depending on application method, ambient temperature, and humidity). Sanding with 320-grit abrasive will level out raised grain, remove dust nibs, and flatten drips or sags, but sanding is not required for adhesion between layers. Sanding at this stage is focused on the finish itself, not the underlying wood, so a light touch helps avoid sanding through the finish. Ideally, one need only sand away the raised grain after the first coat of finish, providing a perfect surface for laying down subsequent coats. The reality of errant dust and uneven finish applications can encourage at least light sanding between all coats. Sanding dust should be vacuumed, blown, or wiped off, but not with a tack cloth, which will leave an oil residue that will interfere with the next coat of finish.

Wood Turners Finish can be applied off the lathe using a brush and following the basic guidelines set out in the previous paragraph. Because of its formulation, this product can also be applied on the lathe. The manufacturer suggests using a folded shop towel



2 A shop towel tucked in a nylon footie is General Finishes' recommended applicator for Wood Turners Finish.



3 The dampened applicator is held against the rotating piece. The objective is to quickly apply a thin coat over the entire piece before the finish begins to cure and become gummy.



4 The bowls in the foreground are spalted mountain ash. The one on the left is finished with Varathane Polyurethane (semigloss); the bowl on the right is finished with Wood Turners Finish.

tucked in a nylon stocking (*Photo 2*). In a process much like applying a thinned oil finish, the applicator is dipped into the finish, the excess is squeezed out, and the pad is held against the rotating piece (*Photo 3*). On denser woods, the finish may cure quickly enough that successive coats can be applied back to back, although I find at least a few minutes between coats is usually necessary. I check for raised grain and dust nibs and sand to correct these problems before applying a subsequent coat. The manufacturer indicates this finish may also be applied with an airbrush, but I have not tried this approach. The airbrush could certainly speed production work, but the fuss of cleaning the equipment deters me from using it with only one or two pieces at hand.

Applying water-based finishes to oily tropical hardwoods is a dicey proposition. In my experience, the natural oils in the wood have occasionally interfered with the water-based finish. There are better approaches to finishing a larger piece made from tropical hardwood, but the temptation to pull out the water-base—especially Wood Turners Finish—on smaller items like pens is hard to resist. Odds of success can be

tilted in favor of the turner by quickly wiping the turned object with naphtha or lacquer thinner before applying the first coat of finish, hopefully before the oils rise to the surface again.

Finishing the finish

With the possible exception of very small items, it is almost impossible to get a perfect film finish, no matter which application technique is used. For that reason, it is good to know that film finishes can be manipulated to refine or alter their appearance. Any sort of manipulation is best done after the finish has cured. Smell the finish to see if you can detect any odor; if not, the finish is cured. My last step is usually a visit with the buffer, which helps blend brush marks or other slight imperfections and produces a more uniform surface (*Photo 4*).

More significant manipulations are also possible. Furniture makers regularly rub out film finishes using a series of abrasives and rubbing compounds accompanied by a lubricant such as mineral spirits or oil. The challenge is not to remove so much of the finish that the raw wood is exposed; edges where curves transition are especially

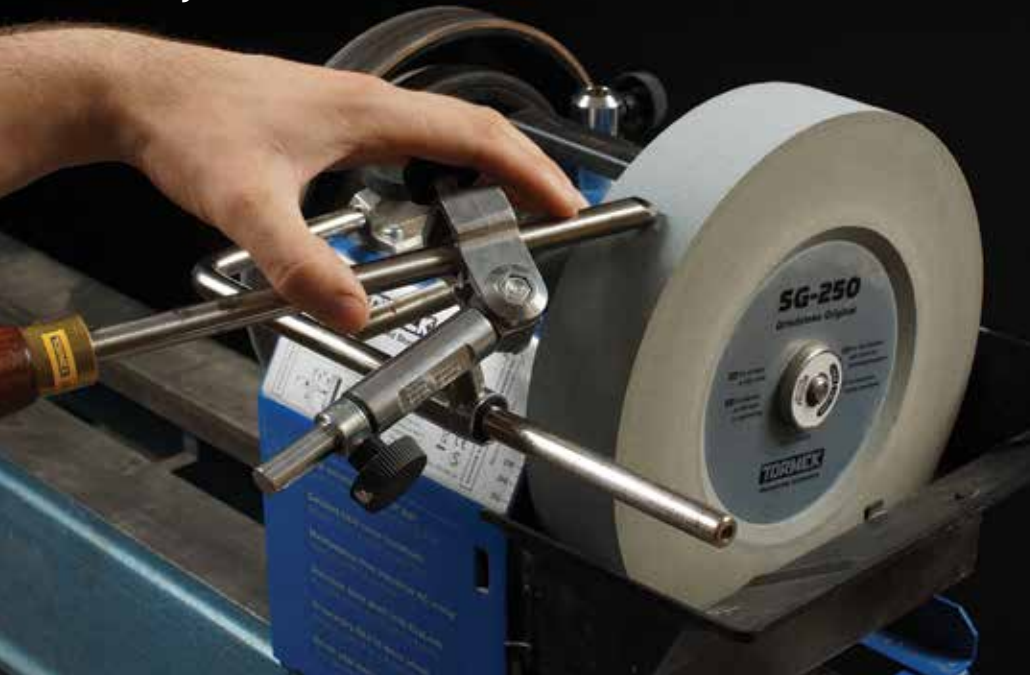
susceptible to breaking through. It is best to start with a fairly fine abrasive, in the range of 320 grit if the intent is to level the surface, and work through finer grits. This process also manipulates the surface sheen. Finishing with 0000 steel wool leaves a satin surface. Sanding through 1500 or 2000 grit and working through rubbing compounds (pumice, rottenstone) will produce an increasingly glossy surface. This is tedious work on a flat piece of furniture, and it is worse on the curved surfaces of a turning, but a piece that can be re-chucked can at least benefit from the mechanical advantage of the lathe's motor. Turners rarely go through this process, but it is worth being aware of the option.

Even if you find water-based finishes unappealing today, it is worth keeping an eye on this segment of the market. The technology for these finishes is likely to continue its rapid evolution as manufacturers work to perfect this young class of materials. ■

Don McIvor is a full-time turner and artist living in Washington State. He is the author of two books and numerous articles, including contributions to American Woodturner and Woodturning Design. He can be reached through his website, mclvorwoodworks.com.

RETHINKING SHARPENING

Terry Martin



Sharpening a bowl gouge

For many turners, the most difficult technique to master is learning how to effectively sharpen turning tools. Or, perhaps I should confess, rethinking our approach to sharpening. More than 30 years ago, an old-school turner showed me how to sharpen my tools freehand on a grinder, and I practiced for years to get it right. I burnt tool edges, ground multi-faceted bevels, and wasted a lot of valuable metal. I considered these efforts a rite of passage and mastered the process reasonably well. I was convinced it was the best way and never saw the need to change.

On a good day, I was able to get an edge that would produce crisp shavings that flew off the tool in long ribbons. When asked, “What angle do you grind your tool bevels?” I would

joke, “What day is it?” With the development of jigs for sharpening, I was approached by manufacturers and offered a chance to try their equipment. My response was always, “No, I’m fine, thanks. I can do what I want quickly and easily, and I don’t need a jig to do it.” In reality, although what I did was sufficient, it was not as good as it could be.

Change of thinking

A set of unusual circumstances combined to change my mind. I traveled to Ireland to demonstrate at Glenn Lucas’s woodturning school, where he and I discussed the comparative merits of different grinds. He showed me how his grind does exactly what he wants every time. He then told me something that really affected me: “I

get return students all the time, but they don’t come back to learn to turn. They come back to learn to sharpen. It’s far and away the most difficult thing a beginner has to master. That’s why I always teach them to use a jig, so they can concentrate on doing what they want to do—turn wood.” Glenn showed me how effectively he uses his wet grinder, and although I did my demonstrations with my regular grind, the seed had been planted.

It might have ended there, but back in Australia, I was watching Theo Haralampou demonstrate turning to a large crowd at a tradeshow. The main thing he was asked was how he got his tools so sharp. When he explained he always uses a wet grinder and showed them how he does it, they were deeply impressed. When Theo asked me if I wanted to try a wet grinder, I declined. My reaction was just the kind of habitual response that came from set-in-my-ways thinking.

Theo insisted and invited me to his shop. A week later, he showed me how to grind and hone my bowl gouge, and I learned I had been wrong. He reproduced my preferred grind exactly using the wet-grinder’s jig. We mounted a piece of wood onto the lathe, practiced a few cuts, and I could not believe how easy it was. After just a few passes, I turned to Theo and said, “I feel like I’m cutting twice as well!”

I now have my own wet grinder, a Tormek, and I was able to master the sharpening process quickly because of the excellent handbook and demonstration DVD that comes with it. Also, there are helpful tutorials online covering every aspect of wet sharpening. Even better, I found objective evidence to support my impressions that wet grinding is superior in an article by Robbie Farrance, originally published in *Woodturning* magazine (issue #70). Farrance addressed all of the questions on comparative quality



The wheel rotates away from the tool's cutting edge.



The leather honing wheel removes the grooves from the wet wheel.



The edge of a gouge sharpened on my dry grinder



The same edge after wet sharpening and honing

of edge, durability, and quality of cut. His conclusions are backed by microscopic analysis and timed cutting tests with the results shown in graph form. It is a thorough investigation and technically minded readers will appreciate his commitment to unbiased analysis: (tormek.com/en/leaflet/pdf/wet_or_dry_en.pdf)

Farrance's conclusions can be summarized:

- After initial shaping, wet grinding is simple, quick, accurate, and repeatable.
- Wet grinding creates a polished, burr-free edge, does not overheat the tool, causes less friction in use, and so extends the life of the edge.
- Tool life is prolonged because less material is removed.
- Wet-ground tools produce cleaner cuts with more than double the turning time between sharpening.
- In one test, after 18 minutes of continuous turning, the wet-ground tool was cutting 3.5 times faster than the dry-ground tool.

I agree with Farrance's conclusions. The more I have learned about wet grinding, the more enthusiastic I become. Dry grinding is likely to affect the temper of your tools and even if you don't burn the edge, the heat has an effect on the integrity of the metal. After wet grinding, you are cutting with metal that has not been substantially altered from its tempered state. This means the tools stay sharp longer, so you don't have to sharpen as often. Some people have never experienced using a truly sharp tool, but when they do, they will find it takes less force to cut and it cuts so cleanly that the savings in abrasives alone are significant.

Additional benefits in safety are worth considering. There is none of the hot and dangerous debris that flies off a dry grinder. Slow-speed wet grinders never disintegrate, so there is no need to wear a faceshield. Theo made a good point about the relative safety of the two systems: "If you accidentally touch a spinning wet wheel, nothing happens, but if you touch a dry wheel..."

The only drawback of wet grinding is that initial shaping is very slow. My Tormek's black wheel is relatively coarse and makes the process quicker, but there is a place for pre-grinding to speed up the process of reshaping a tool. To facilitate using a dry grinder before wet sharpening, Tormek produces a bench-grinder mounting set that will give you exactly the same shape you can then take to your wet grinder for finishing. This jig works well. For grinding to reshape a bevel, I would use a ceramic wheel, or one of the more recent CBN wheels.

There are other wet grinders on the market—Grizzly, Delta, Makita, Work Sharp, JET, Northern Industrial—and they will also do a good job. I am certain any of them will produce a better result than dry grinding. Because Tormek regularly improves its system, that's the brand I selected. Try wet sharpening; like me, you will be amazed how much better your turning experience is. ■

Terry Martin is a wood artist, writer, and curator who lives and works in Brisbane, Australia. He can be contacted at eltel@optusnet.com.au.



How sweet it is!



A selection of four-jaw scroll chucks and spindle inserts.

Scroll Chucks AND THEIR MAINTENANCE

Geoff Whaling

The self-centering four-jaw scroll chuck has become synonymous with woodturning. The typical turner's shop is more likely to contain several examples than none at all. It is easy to take this indispensable fixture for granted, but the four-jaw chuck has only been with us since the 1980s—long enough for a lot of them to get gummed up and need routine maintenance.

The four-jaw chuck evolved from the three-jaw chuck, an invention patented in 1862 by Colt Fire Arms patternmaker Austin F. Cushman. The three-jaw chuck was designed for and remains in use by machinists. While woodturners used the three-jaw chuck, it was less adept than the four-jaw chuck would become at holding wood blanks in both expansion and

contraction modes. It was more likely to mark the blank and it excelled at extracting chunks of flesh from body parts that got too close to its spinning jaws.

In its relatively short history, the four-jaw chuck has evolved to become affordable, durable, convenient, and safer to use than its predecessor. The simple and robust design of the four-jaw chuck ensures components remain recognizable across various manufacturers. Significant design refinements over the years include two-piece jaw sets—jaw slides with interchangeable accessory jaws—and the spindle thread adaptor insert that allows a generic chuck body to fit variously sized spindles. Both features reduced outlay costs, improved flexibility, and permitted swapping jaw

sets between chucks. Plating components inhibits corrosion and enclosing the back reduces maintenance requirements. Recent innovations include chuck zoom rings (Vicmarc VM150 and Sorby Patriot), quick-change accessory jaws (Nova Infinity and Easy Chucks), and Axminster's stainless steel Evolution chuck with SafetyJaws.

A lever-action chuck contains fewer than a dozen significant parts; the geared scroll chuck has about 20 (*Photo 1*). Most designs consist of a backing plate, scroll ring, gears, and a chuck body, which may thread directly onto the spindle or incorporate a spindle adaptor, jaw slides, and the accessory jaws with fasteners, springs, and clips to hold the components together.

Scroll chucks operate efficiently and with little care, but eventually succumb to dust, debris, and moisture while becoming progressively stiffer. The frequency and level of maintenance required is dependent upon the chuck's design, its environment, and how it is used. Moisture, salt air, and green wood are particularly hard on chucks. My chucks require regular maintenance because of the tropical environment where I live, and I do a lot of through-drilling which directs fine debris into the chuck.

Maintaining a chuck requires a basic tool kit, including eye protection, T-bar or lever bars, parts diagram, Allen (hex) keys, marking pen, adjustable wrench, nylon or brass wire brush, small engineer's hammer, small flat file, retaining ring pliers, pin punches, and a non-marring hammer. Optional but helpful tools include a center punch, screw extractors, locking pliers, and a drillpress and bits for stubborn or damaged cap screws. Shop consumables including rags, penetrant spray (such as WD-40), light oil or dry lube, light grease, petroleum jelly, and kerosene or mineral spirits for cleaning and degreasing are also useful.

Disassembly

If you have never disassembled a chuck and you have the option, it is best to start with a lever chuck such as a Oneway, Vicmarc VM90/140, or a Nova Precision Midi as they are less complicated than the pinion gear chucks. Snapping digital photos before each step and keeping notes will boost your confidence and help you reassemble the pieces. Lay out parts in a logical manner and keep track of small items.

Chucks may require either metric or imperial tools depending on their origin, so be sure to use the appropriate tool set to avoid damaging components. Avoid ball-end Allen keys and make sure keys have good, square shoulders.

Locking grub screws in the side or rear of the spindle insert or in the chuck body need to be backed out to prevent thread damage (Photo 2). Separating the chuck

from its spindle adaptor is best done with an appropriately sized wrench while the chuck is on the lathe with the spindle lock engaged. A Taper-Lock insert requires a slightly different approach. Remove the M5 x 20 hex socket screws and then screw them back into the adjacent tapped holes. Alternately, tighten them to coax the insert from the chuck body (Photo 3). Before removing the screws from the insert, check for thread damage and repair if required.

Using compressed air and a stiff nylon brush, remove debris from the chuck body, base, and jaws. Pay particular attention to cleaning the hex sockets in the cap screws. Loosen and remove

the clean cap screws and separate the accessory jaws from the jaw slides. With the chuck face down, use the retaining ring pliers to expand and remove the retaining ring (also called a ring clip or circlip) (Photo 4). Retaining rings are notorious for taking unexpected flight, so be sure to wear safety glasses.

Remove the grub screw and the underlying washer from the side of the chuck (Photo 5). These screws adjust or lock the scroll mechanism, although not all chucks have them. Use an engineer's hammer and a pin punch to gently drive out the jaw slide stop pins (Photo 6). Note the jaw number (#4) in the stop pin or screw position for the reassembly sequence. ▶



1 Components of the Nova Precision Midi Chuck.



2 Inspect your chuck for locking grub screws and back them out to avoid thread damage.



3 A Taper-Lock spindle adaptor is removed by alternately tightening hex screws against the chuck body.



4 Removing the retaining clip from the back of the chuck.



5 Check for a grub screw that regulates the scroll action and remove it if your chuck has one.



6 Removing the stop pins that prevent the jaws from backing out of the chuck body.

Rotate the scroll mechanism until the jaw slides expand and stop moving (*Photo 7*); then you can remove the jaws from the body. Separate the scroll ring from the main body by lightly tapping the face of the chuck with the non-marring hammer. If you started with a lever chuck, you should have a completely disassembled unit at this point (*Photo 8*).

A geared chuck requires a few more steps. Remove the backing plate to expose the pinion gear mechanism, followed by any pinion-dowel-securing grub screws (*Photo 9*). Hold the chuck with the pinion dowel down and use the non-marring hammer to gently tap the chuck so the dowel falls out. After removing all the pinion dowels, remove the pinions and then the scroll. Remove the inner retaining ring that secures the scroll. With the scroll facing down, gently tap the chuck with the non-marring hammer to dislodge the scroll (*Photo 10*).

Cleaning

Clean all the parts well with a stiff nylon brush; a toothbrush is ideal. Remove the bulk of grime, paying attention to the

corners of the scroll, jaw slides, and the body. Check your chuck manufacturer's recommendations before using solvents and take care not to remove pen marks if you labeled the components. Regularly maintained lever-style chucks rarely require more than a squirt of penetrant spray and a wipe-down before lubrication. Oneway recommends soaking the chuck in a bath of mineral spirits and 10 percent oil and then blow-drying the components. I prefer kerosene, but solvents are usually required only for heavy deposits or solidified grease. Stubborn gum deposits may require soaking in lacquer thinner.

General maintenance

Check the accessory jaws and chuck body and remove any nicks or burrs with a flat file. If your chuck is not plated, this is a good opportunity to improve safety by rounding off any sharp burrs. Look for these on the out-board corners of the jaw slides and the outer corners of the accessory jaws and smooth them with a grinder or a flat file. Remove light rust with a Scotchbrite pad or 000 steel

wool lubricated with a little WD-40. Wet/dry sandpaper will scratch the steel and should be avoided. Heavily rusted chucks may require proprietary rust removal products or an electrolysis bath; check the Internet for tool restoration tips. Be aware some of the solvents and aerosols used in the maintenance process are flammable and should be used with good ventilation and lung protection.

Lubrication

Coat the thread and countersunk underside of each cap screw with grease, petroleum jelly, or anti-seize compound to prevent binding. Geared chucks require an application of light grease to the pinion and scroll ring gear (*Photo 11*). Apply a light coat of oil or spray-on dry lubricant—grease would capture dust—to the scroll, jaw slides, and slide ways. Avoid over-applying oil or any product that remains liquid or contains silicone; it will fly off the rotating chuck and could interfere with wood finishes.

Stuck screws

Infrequently removed screws may bind and decline to be removed. Treat these first with penetrant spray; move to lacquer thinner for stronger measures. A firm tap to the cap screw head with a hammer and pin punch may break the bind. Avoid impact drivers as they can destroy the hex socket and cause more problems than they solve.

A worn or damaged hex socket will require Rob McKee's trick. Recruit some help to firmly hold the correct Allen key in the damaged hex socket. Use a hammer and center punch to spot the metal of the cap screw adjacent to all six faces of the Allen key, spreading the metal and tightening it around the Allen key (*Photo 12*). Maintain downward pressure and use vise grips on the Allen key to loosen the cap screw. If this process fails, you may have to resort to drilling out the head to receive a screw extractor. You can also drill the head of the cap screw off and remove the screw shaft with vise grips once the accessory jaw has been removed.



7 The jaw slides are ready to be removed by hand.



8 A disassembled VM 90 lever chuck.



9 Exposed inner workings of geared chuck. Note the small grub screws that secure the pinion dowels.



10 The geared VM120 chuck, disassembled.

It is best to use the original manufacturer's replacement parts for hex screws. There is a surprising amount of variation in head diameter and screw length, and poorly matched components will lead to excessive wear, alignment issues, and potential safety concerns. If a trip to the local hardware store is tempting, take an original screw and Allen key to make the proper replacement selection.

Reassembly

For most chucks, matching the jaw slides with the correct slide position and the accessory jaws with their corresponding jaw slides is essential for a proper fit. Most manufacturers stamp these parts with numbers (or dots) so everything can be put in order. Easy Chuck components can be positioned in any order.

Place the chuck body on its face and insert the scroll face down (*Photo 13*). Gear teeth should be face up for a geared chuck. Gently insert the lubricated pinions into their housing and match to the scroll ring gear, ensuring they mesh correctly (see *Photo 11*). If your model has them, insert the lightly oiled dowel pins into the pinion and reinstall their setscrews.

Expand the retaining ring and fit it to the chuck body (see *Photo 4*). Fit the rear back plate, but do not force it into place. Vicmarc and Nova use the back to retain the dowel pins and pinions. Insert the cap screws and tighten. Verify the pinion and scroll ring rotate freely. If not, remove the back and recheck the pinion gear alignment.

Lay out the slides for reassembly by placing jaw slide #4 in the position with a stop pin with the machined recess oriented outward. Slide #1 is the next position clockwise from the stop pin position for the VM90, counterclockwise for the VM120. Rotate the scroll until the start of the scroll thread is in the number one position. Insert jaw slide #1 and advance the scroll to engage the slide. Repeat in order for slides #2, #3, and #4 (*Photo 14*). Verify the jaw slides meet on the outer rim and in the center. If not, make sure the jaw slides are in their correct sequence.

Install the roll pin stop or screw (see *Photo 6*). Oneway chucks have two stops. Nova chucks generally have a tab on the end of one slide.

Install the washer and action adjustment grub screw in the side of the chuck body (*Photo 15*). Adjust the tension for your preferred scroll friction.

Open the scroll slightly to fit the accessory jaws to the jaw slides in the correct order and secure them loosely with cap screws. Close the jaw set to bring the jaws into alignment and then tighten each cap screw.

Install the spindle thread adaptor, ensuring threads and mating surfaces are clean. To fit the Taper-Lock adaptor, align the holes in the adaptor with the threaded holes in the chuck body. Insert the hex socket screws and tighten them alternately and evenly to pull the adaptor into the body. A slight gap between the chuck and the adaptor is normal for Axminster, Nova, and Taper-Locks, but not for Vicmarc-style screw-in or Axminster bolt-on styles (see *Photo 2*). Refer to the manufacturer's manual, as poor registration of chucks, inserts, and the lathe spindle can be a potential hazard and a cause of runout.

Fit the remaining spindle adaptor locking grub screws. Perform a final performance check and make sure all screws are firmly seated, the scroll action adjustment grub screw is set to your preferred tension, and you have not generated a pile of spare parts. The chuck is now ready to use.

Maintaining your own chuck requires a little time, patience, and attention to detail. The payoff comes from the pleasure of working with a smoothly operating tool that performs its duty. Treated with a little respect and periodic maintenance, a quality chuck is a sound investment that will give a lifetime of service. ■

Geoff Whaling lives near World Heritage-listed North Queensland icons in Australia. He is a surveyor, enjoys reef/pelagic fishing, and likes linear-laminated and thermed woodturning. He has a keen interest in reducing risk and injuries in woodturning. His email is mobyturns@bigpond.com.



11 A light coat of grease, light oil, or dry lubricant keeps wear to a minimum.



12 Carefully directed blows can clench a deformed screw head around an Allen wrench.



13 Reassembly starts with the scroll ring (lever chuck) or gears.



14 Reinstall the jaw slides in sequential order.



15 Setting the washer and grub screw to establish resistance in the scroll mechanism.

A JIG FOR PERFECT CIRCLES

Ken Rizza



Plywood, some simple hardware, a pen bushing, and a cutting board combine to make a safe, easy-to-use jig for cutting bowl blanks.

When a local church asked me to make 100 bowls from trees it was cutting down on its property, I knew I would need a circle-cutting jig to make the blanks. Commercially made jigs have their limitations: overhead supports that get in the way, designs that restrict the size of the blank, or high cost.

Thomas Edison said that after many attempts to invent the lightbulb, he was not a failure because he had discovered 10,000 ways *not* to make a lightbulb. Fortunately, I didn't need that many tries to come up with a simple jig to cut perfectly round turning blanks. Using a jig is a lot safer than trying to cut a blank freehand, and having round blanks will save time by eliminating air-cutting bumps while turning.

The jig is basically a sled, riding in the miter slot of a bandsaw table that allows the wood to be rotated past the blade in a full circle. I devised a Lazy Susan that fastens onto the bottom of the log and provides a stable, secure way to pivot the wood into the saw blade (*Photo 1*). The size of your bandsaw table will determine the size of the sled. I have a

19" Grizzly, so I was able to make an 18" × 24" (457mm × 610mm) sled.

Make the base

Do not make the jig too big—the bandsaw's throat size will limit the jig's depth (the direction perpendicular to the blade). The jig's width (the direction in line with the blade) should be limited to the table width, minus 2" (50mm), which provides room for an adjustable stop to center the blank with the blade. The sled and Lazy Susan discs will reduce the cutting height of your bandsaw by a bit more than 1" (25mm).

Once you have settled on a size, cut the sled base from $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm) plywood or medium-density fiberboard (MDF). Align the base on the saw table and attach a runner that will fit into the miter slot. Make a runner from hardwood or buy one made of aluminum or polyethylene. Either way, be sure the runner is a tight fit in the slot with no movement. Position the runner so that when the blade cuts into the base, there will be at least 6" (150mm) of base all around the blade to support the Lazy Susan.

Mount a miter track perpendicular to the blade. It should extend from the edge of the sled to within about 1" (25mm) of the blade. This track determines the maximum radius you can cut. My track is 11½" (29cm) long, so I can cut blanks as large as 23" (58cm) in diameter.

Riding in the track is a pivot pin made from a $\frac{1}{4}$ " × 1½" (6mm × 38mm) hex-head bolt that is sharpened to a point (*Photo 2*). Add washers so the top of the nut is a hair higher than the base.

Add a second layer of plywood or MDF, this time in separate pieces to end up with about 1" of space around the track with the bolt (*Photo 3*). You could omit the second layer and cut a slot for the track with a router. I like the extra wood because it makes the base more rigid.

Make the stop

The stop ensures the pivot pin will be properly aligned with the blade. You could ▶



1 The jig has a runner to fit in the saw's miter slot. A disc made from a cutting board fits over a bolt in a track perpendicular to the blade.



2 The track holding the pivot pin. Move the pin back and forth to cut blanks of different diameters.



3 Add a second layer of plywood, leaving space around the blade and pivot track.



4 A bolt threaded through a piece of angle iron makes a stop to fine-tune the jig's alignment.



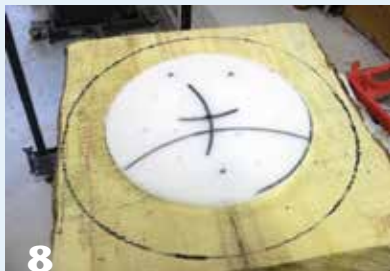
5 Use the jig to cut a circle from the cutting board.



6 Drill counterbored holes in the discs to serve as mounting holes for the wood blank.



7 Measure the radius of the blank to be cut and use a socket wrench to lock the pivot pin at that point.



8 Outline the circle you want to cut, center a disc, and screw it to the wood.



9 The jig allows you to rotate the blank smoothly into the blade.



10 Perfect every time.

simply line up the pivot pin and attach a clamp to the saw table to serve as the stop. If the clamp moves at all, however, it will throw off the cut. And, as I learned the hard way, that can cause all kinds of problems. I spent a lot of time cutting away wood with a reciprocating saw to free a blade that got bound in the cut.

After that, I made a simple adjustable stop. I took a small piece of angle iron, drilled it, tapped it to accept a 1/4" (6mm) bolt, and mounted it onto the fence guide on the far side of the saw table using two screws. The bolt allows me to fine-tune the position of the pivot pin; I have a knob on the bolt to lock it in place (Photo 4). The angle iron is held with two screws, so I can easily remove it.

Make the Lazy Susan discs

I made my discs from a 15" x 20" (380mm x 508mm) high-density polyethylene cutting board, which will yield at least two large circles or several smaller ones. Turning blanks need to be a larger diameter than the polyethylene circles to avoid cutting the plastic.

Lay out the circles. I use a compass with a waterproof marker in place of the pencil. Drill a 1/4" (6mm) hole partway through the center of each circle. From a Slimline pen kit, take the shorter of the two 7mm bushings and carefully grind a slight bevel on its edge. Drive the bushing into the hole until it is nearly flush with the bottom of the disc, using a soft mallet or piece of wood to avoid damaging the metal. The bushing should not go all the way through the plastic.

Use the jig to cut the circles. Set the adjustable stop so the pivot pin aligns with the back of the gullets on the blade's teeth. Measure the radius of a circle. Set the pivot pin that distance from the blade and lock it down with a socket wrench. Pull the sled back. Invert the polyethylene sheet over the pivot pin so the pin fits inside the bushing. Push the sled into the blade until it hits the stop. Rotate the polyethylene to cut it into a perfect circle (Photo 5). It should

rotate smoothly and not hang up. Repeat for all the other circles.

Drill holes all over each circle, and countersink them so the screw heads can be recessed (Photo 6). You will use two or three of these holes to screw the disc onto the wood blank. The more holes you have, the easier it will be to work around high and low spots on the wood. Once you screw the wood onto the disc, it will not move.

Cut a circle

Use the marker-equipped compass to draw the largest circle you can on a wood blank. Mark the center, measure the radius, and set the pivot pin to that distance (Photo 7). Screw a wood blank onto one of the Lazy Susan discs so it is centered on the circle drawn on the wood (Photo 8). Fit the disc over the pivot pin and pull the sled back so the wood is clear of the blade.

When I have a really large blank and need to slide the sled way back to mount it onto the pin, I set a roller stand to the height of the bandsaw table and place it next to the saw. This gives the sled some support until I can push it into the blade.

Hold the wood firmly and push the sled into the blade until it hits the stop. Turn the wood clockwise slowly and steadily with your hands on either side of the blade (Photo 9). You will get a perfect circle every time (Photo 10).

Last but not least, use the right blade. I highly recommend the Timber Wolf AS series, which is designed to cut 6" to 12" (15cm to 30cm) hardwood and softwood, wet or green. The one I use is 3/8" (10mm) wide, .032" (.80mm) thick, and has three teeth per inch.

If you mark the blank's center when putting the disc on the wood, mounting the wood onto the lathe will be a snap. You will be able to shape the bowl almost from the get-go. ■

Ken Rizza has been turning for seven years and is secretary of the Atlanta Woodturners Guild and a member of the Georgia Association of Woodturners. Ken can be reached at krizza0815@gmail.com.

SAFETY MATTERS

From the Eye of a Survivor Lynne Yamaguchi

“ Pretty safe” would have been my answer two years ago if asked how safe I was while turning. I follow safety guidelines: I dress appropriately, wear a respirator, and wear a faceshield except when sanding. I stand on a platform so I can work ergonomically (I’m short). I keep my tools sharp and equipment maintained. I read manuals carefully, including warnings. I would not dream of working after drinking a beer. I like imperfection, so I take calculated risks turning unbalanced, irregular, and flawed wood, but I also take extra precautions and countermeasures. I am clumsy and distractible but not reckless, and I am experienced: turning has been my full-time occupation since 2003.

On September 21, 2012, I learned I was not safe enough.

I was turning an endgrain hollow vessel from a short segment of badly cracked mesquite, about 6½" long (16cm) and 10" (25cm) in diameter at its shoulder. I had chosen a cracked log to fill an order for vessels with turquoise inlay—12 of which I had already safely turned. The wood was obviously dangerous, and I had been treating it as such, shaping the exterior at low speeds (150 rpm to 450 rpm) between centers and wrapping duct tape around the shoulder and body before hollowing. I had mounted the vessel in a chuck to hollow it, using speeds up to 550 rpm. Because of the cracks, I deliberately left the wall substantial, 1¼" (32mm) to more than 2" (51mm), planning to reduce it further after finishing the interior.

As I finished hollowing, I turned up the speed to 1200 rpm to make a few cleanup passes. This speed did not feel unsafe. There was no vibration, and I was



Turning with the wire guard in place, wearing my riot helmet and respirator. The piece, which has multiple cracks, is wrapped in plastic stretch wrap for reinforcement.

Photo: Karen Barber

out of the line of fire. Although I normally dial the speed up from and down to zero every time I start or stop the lathe, in this case after I found the sweet spot—a smooth fast speed that allowed a clean cut on the interrupted surface—I used the power button to stop, check my cut, and restart for another cut or two. I stopped and restarted once or twice, possibly three times.

Then I stopped to answer a phone call.

Without the interruption, what would likely have happened next, based on previous experience, is this: I would have sucked the shavings out, taken a last look, and, deciding I was ready to start filling the interior cracks, I would have reached over to turn the speed back to zero without turning the lathe back on.

Interruptions happen

Answering the phone call interrupted my normal sequence. Further, it changed the protection I was wearing. Up until that point, I had been wearing a half-mask respirator, my glasses, and a full faceshield. To answer the

phone, I took off my faceshield and dropped my respirator. After hanging up, I straightaway pulled the respirator back on, out of habit. Instead of putting the faceshield back on, however, I took a moment to look at the vessel.

I had cut as much as I dared from the interior. The exterior curve at the mouth was not quite as I wanted, so I decided to look at the vessel spinning to see past the duct tape, to check the rest of the curve. I pulled the power button on.

I cannot blame the interruption for what happened. Interruptions happen, and I knew from experience the hazard of turning the lathe on when the speed is high. I had, in fact, been trying to train myself to check the speed dial position before turning the lathe back on after an interruption. This I failed to do—my foul, my harm.

When I turned the lathe on, the high speed did not trigger alarm—I often turn at high speed, working on smaller, more delicate pieces. And I was only looking, after all.

The irony is that my next step would have been to turn the lathe off. I have a ▶

clear image of the piece as I last saw it, wrapped in duct tape: I could not have touched up the exterior surface even if I had wanted to. Also, the tool I held was not the right one, and I had not even raised it for use. If I had, my forearm might have provided some protection. As it was, I was just looking.

Impact

I heard the wood give, and something slammed my face. I stepped back off my platform and dropped to my knees. I could feel warm liquid begin to flow from my face. I was extremely dizzy and faint.

I pulled my respirator off, dropped it, then stood up. I looked at the garage door and dismissed the likelihood of reaching it and wresting it open. I took the few steps to my toolchest, turned off the radio, and groped for the telephone. I returned to my original spot and collapsed back to my knees. I felt strongly that I might pass out. If I dialed 911 and lost consciousness, EMS would have difficulty locating me and getting in. My partner works a mile away, next door to a hospital. I dialed her work number, and to the woman who answered, I said clearly and forcefully, "Tell Karen to come home right now," and hung up.

I stayed down for a moment trying to collect myself. I saw my glasses lying next to where I had dropped my respirator. I picked them up and stood up, made my way to the doorway, turned out the lights, locked and closed the door, and crossed the back porch to the kitchen door. I stopped; I couldn't remember if I'd locked the studio door. I turned around and went

back to check. I had. As I was walking back, I noticed blood drops on the floor, so I picked up the corners of my apron to catch the blood. I locked the kitchen door behind me, walked to the refrigerator, and grabbed a dishtowel, holding it to my face, still clutching the corners of my apron. I passed into the living room, picked up my purse, and went out the front door. I had just turned to lock it when Karen pulled into the driveway.

I walked to the passenger side, got in, and told Karen to go lock the front door, which I had to repeat, because she didn't understand. She got out, did so, got back in, backed out, and drove. I did not attempt to buckle my seatbelt. I huddled in the seat, clutching the armrest to keep my balance. I could hear Karen debating which hospital to go to. I couldn't answer. Karen thought I had passed out. I heard us pull up, heard her leave to get help. Someone opened the car door, and people helped me into a wheelchair.

At that point, I surrendered control. That's the last I really remember of that day.

The damage

All of the bones in the left side of my face, from above my teeth up through my eyebrow, and from beside my nose to my temple, were fractured; it took four titanium plates to reconstruct my face. The bone at my temple was pulverized, with not enough left intact to even attach a plate. My eyelids were split through and hanging loose. My lower eyelid did not survive; my brilliant surgeon has since made me a new one using cartilage and

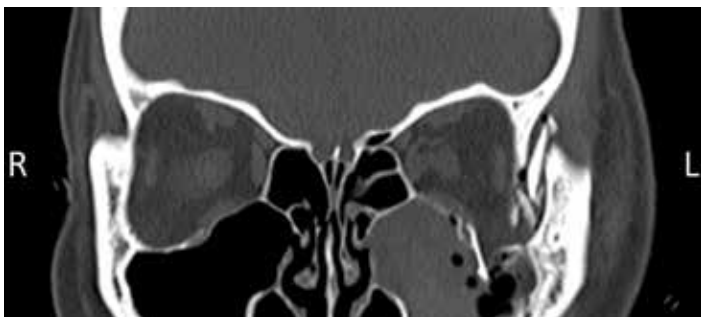
skin from my left ear. My eyeball did not rupture, but my lens was knocked perpendicular and had to be removed. My iris ruptured, so my pupil is permanently blown. My retina detached soon after, necessitating two surgeries, and my macula is deeply scarred from hemorrhaging, leaving me without central vision in my left eye. The nerves of my cheek and around my eye were damaged and are still regenerating. My eye does not drain properly, so tears spill out constantly. For months, my eyelids would not close properly, leaving my cornea dry and painful. I have had six surgeries, and counting.

Given the severity of my injuries, I wondered how much difference my faceshield would have made. Not much, I discovered to my surprise.

Faceshields

In the United States, the safety standards for eyeglasses and faceshields are specified in ANSI Z87.1-2010. Under those specifications, to be rated impact resistant, a faceshield needs to withstand an impact of about four joules of kinetic energy and a penetrating impact of about six joules. The vessel I was turning broke into three pieces, and the one that hit me weighed one kg (2.2 lb). Traveling at nearly 16 m/sec, it struck me with 127 joules of kinetic energy, more than 30 times the high-impact and 20 times the penetrating-impact standard.

Europe (EN 166:2001) and Australia and New Zealand (AS/NZS 1337.1:2010) have higher impact standards, with the highest rating ("high energy impact" and "extra high impact," respectively)



CT scans of my face right after the accident. Compare the left and right sides to see the bone damage and swollen soft tissue.



The vessel that broke apart while turning, finished. The segment that hit me is to the left, delineated by the turquoise.



My riot helmet and half-mask respirator

Photo: Karen Barber

requiring resistance to more than 15 joules. Even with those higher standards, I would not have been protected. What's a woodturner to do?

The solution I came up with is a riot helmet, which is required under the NIJ 0104.02 standard to withstand an impact of 111 joules (88 joules for a penetrating impact). That number is still short of 127, but at least it is in the same order of magnitude. To meet this standard, the helmet's faceshield has to not only remain intact under the impact, but also not contact the face it is protecting. I reason that the faceshield may deform with a greater impact (polycarbonate is not supposed to break) and I may receive some injury, but it will be considerably less than without it—or with a standard faceshield.

The riot helmet is affordable, less than \$100 on sale, and it accommodates my half-mask respirator. For comfort, I chose the lightest one; it weighs 2 lb 3 oz, little more than a powered respirator. The faceshield itself measures about 0.162" (4.1mm) thick, compared to 0.043" (1.1mm) for my Bionic faceshield. You can get riot helmets with thicker faceshields if you are willing to go heavier; too heavy, though, and you might find yourself reluctant to wear it. The next step up would be a ballistic helmet, with three times the weight and 10 times the cost. If you feel the need for a combat-grade

helmet, perhaps you should rethink what you're doing at the lathe.

I don't wear my riot helmet all the time. I weighed some pieces and ran sample numbers: the kinetic energy of a 0.05-kg fragment (less than two ounces) from a 7" bowl spinning at 1200 rpm would be about three joules; at 2200 rpm, more than 10 joules. A fragment of the same weight from a 12" platter spinning at 1200 rpm would hit with nine joules of energy; a larger fragment—say, 0.2 kg (seven ounces)—nearly 37 joules. Most of what I turn is under 7" diameter with little mass, so my regular faceshield suffices. But now I know how to more realistically assess the risk, and I choose my protection accordingly.

P-r-o-t-e-c-t

I have also installed the guard that came with my lathe, and I use it as much as is practical. It does obstruct my view when I am trying to perfect a curve, so I lift it in the final shaping phase, but otherwise I hardly notice it. What else do I do differently? I always check that speed dial. I answer the phone only in between tasks. I use plastic stretch wrap, layers and layers of it, not duct tape, to reinforce iffy vessels. I turn at slower speeds.

The biggest change in my approach to safety is attitude. People say, "Safety first," but how often do we mean it?

Instead, time, money, expediency, or convenience dictates our actions.

I have learned a lot about eyes: Human eyes are made to focus on one thing, then another, then another. It's not just easy to miss the big picture; it's hard to see it unless we actively attend to it. Safety is part of the big picture, and this smack in the face got my attention.

Among the lessons I have learned is this radical concept: I am worth protecting. I am worth the time, effort, and money. It does not take a lot: An extra moment to assess what I'm doing before I begin a task, a few seconds to stop the lathe before moving my toolrest. Minor investments in additional equipment: the riot helmet, chainsaw chaps (I already had a helmet), safety glasses. Afternoons spent building a sawbuck and rip and crosscut sleds for my bandsaw.

There is much more at stake than my physical well-being. The physical cost of my accident is obvious; the psychological and emotional cost to my loved ones cannot be measured: Karen seeing my destroyed face; my family and friends hearing the news, not knowing the prognosis; my need for support throughout my long recovery. The financial cost is considerable, even with insurance, and it continues to mount. Professional costs include lost momentum, time, income, and ability.

I have faith we will eventually recover. And great blessings, life-changing gifts of grace, have come with all this. But do I wish I had learned the importance of safety from someone else's mistake? Abso-damn-lutely. Here's your chance. Will you embrace it? ■

Lynne Yamaguchi is a professional woodturner who specializes in sculptural vessels that reflect her Japanese heritage. In between surgeries, she is back to turning in full-time. She continues to find redemption in imperfection and is learning to live without depth perception. Find out more about her work and accident at lynneyamaguchi.com.

Two charts are available on AAW's website at woodturner.org/?page=safety: Assess Your Risk and Comparison of Kinetic Energy Values.

The Rookery Project

Rookery: A breeding ground or haunt for birds of gregarious nature.

David Lutrick

The artEAST organization in Issaquah, Washington, initiated the Rookery Project based on one of nature's most graceful and unmistakable works of art, the great blue heron. Standing motionless at lake's edge, herons are an artistic flourish in any landscape. The 2012 Rookery Project paid tribute to the Lake Sammamish heron rookery near Issaquah. Thirty local artists began with the same metal frame outline of a heron. Some built their bird directly on the frame; others took off in directions as amazing as the birds themselves. The completed birds were all for sale and the proceeds supported artEAST's community art programs, including workshops, artist lectures, exhibitions, and demonstrations.

Initially, I could not figure out how to turn something that might fit the theme, but remembering a turned vessel I had cut in two and glued back together in an S shape triggered the key idea of how to turn the parts for the distinctive neck of a heron. Soon, I was drafting a full-sized heron that was to be on the "realistic" side. I must have examined 500 pictures of

herons posted online while completing my design. As I worked on the design, I tried to visualize how to turn separate parts for the body, breast, neck, head, and legs. Making realistic heron wings was a challenge—I finally decided that a healthy dose of artistic license applied to the wings would be in keeping with the spirit of the project.

All the major parts of my heron were turned. The body and wings are black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), hence the name Robinia (or Robi) for the completed piece.

Body and wings

I turned the body as a hollow vessel, in an elongated teardrop shape. The wings started essentially as a copy of the body shape, but with a larger diameter, as they needed to fit over the body. The challenge in hollowing the vessel that would become the wings was to match the internal curve and diameter of that vessel with the external diameter and shape of the body vessel. I then cut the wing vessel in half lengthwise to check the fit over the body vessel. Determining I needed a better fit, I glued the two wing-vessel halves back together and turned them again for a closer match to the body (*Photo 1*). With the wing vessel re-cut in half, I shaped the two wing pieces on the



Robi completed and looking forward to landing in a new home.

bandsaw and hollowed out the inside of the wings using small sanding disks to further improve the fit to the body vessel.

The neck, breast, and head

To make the heron's characteristic S-shaped neck, I started by turning a sycamore ring about 2" (5cm) in cross section, and then cut the ring in half. Then I turned a second ring for the upper part of the neck, this one about 1½" (40mm) in cross section. A dowel joined the upper and lower neck half-rings into the S shape. A combination of rasps and sanding disks helped match the transition between the two different diameters (*Photo 2*).

The natural tan color on the holly breast is quite close to the color of the sycamore neck, with white highlights (*Photo 3*). The breast piece is bolted to the body vessel. A tenon turned on the front of the breast piece fits into the lower neck and is also countersunk for the nut holding the breast to the body.

A padauk beak and holly cranium make up the head. I turned the pieces as separate spindles, cut at an angle, and joined together using a dowel. The beak and front of the head were then turned as a cone on the long axis. Enough wood was left near the back of the head to rotate the blank 90 degrees and make a tenon at a right angle to the cone's long axis. This tenon, on the bottom of the head, was gripped in a chuck to turn a post at the top of the head to add a blackwood ring for the topknot, fitted around the post. I then turned the bottom tenon off and sanded the piece to achieve the final head shape shown in *Photo 2*. The head is glued to the upper neckpiece using dowels.

Multi-axis turning the legs and toes

The legs and the toes, turned from pear, required multi-axis spindle turning to achieve shapes approximating those of a real heron. Each leg started with a round spindle and required two separate axis



1 A heavy boring bar is positioned to cut deep inside the re-glued wing vessel.



2 The completed neck, head, and beak.



3 The holly breast piece and the lower section of the sycamore neck are both turned.



4 Off-center turning of a toe. The tenon cut for joining the toe to the foot pad is visible on the left where the toe joins the blank.

adjustments to achieve the completed oval turning. Moving the center on one end of the spindle about ¼" (6mm) to a new location established the first off-center axis. After reshaping the blank in this new orientation, I moved the center at the *opposite* end of the blank ¼" off axis, in the *opposite* direction from the first axis adjustment. I left a cylindrical "foot pad" at the bottom of the legs as an attachment point for the four toes. The legs are attached to the body using hanger bolts.

I turned the toes so that they would appear to be bent (with only one knuckle), as the final display would be the heron perched on a round limb. The bent toes were turned from a square spindle blank considerably thicker than the completed toes were to be. The additional stock allowed for off-axis turning from opposite corners of the blank, producing a satisfying bend in the completed toes (*Photo 4*). A chemical treatment that reacted with the natural wood produced the coloration I was seeking for the legs and toes.

Finishing the bird

While the head, beak, neck, and breast are the natural wood colors, finding the right finish for the body and wings required a lot of experiments. Ultimately, wood bleach, followed by grey leather dye, gave me the color I was looking for.

For final assembly, I bolted the legs to the body vessel, followed by the breast piece. Then I glued a bleached plug into the body vessel opening, sanding it to match the curved profile and applying dye to match the body. The head and neck assembly came next, glued in place on the tenon. The two thin feathers—called *aigrettes*—extending from the back of the topknot are the only elements I did not turn. I found them in a floral arrangement at a neighbor's garage sale and dyed them black before inserting the ends into holes drilled in the black topknot. The completed piece stands 34" (86cm) tall on its log pedestal. ■

David Lutrick works part time as an environmental consultant to industry and lives in Washington. He is a member of the Seattle Chapter of the AAW.

Light and Fan Pulls

Mike Peace

Attractive cutoffs can be turned into one-of-a-kind light or fan pulls to replace the plain ones that typically come with a fan or pull-chain lamp. They make great gifts and are excellent for developing turning skills.

Prepare the blank

Select a length of hardwood from 1½" (38mm) to 3" (76mm) and about ⅞" (22mm) to 1¼" (32mm) square. Using a drillpress, drill a ¼" (4mm) through-hole, which will accommodate a typical ⅛" (3mm) beaded chain (*Photo 1*). If you are using the pull on a cord, use a ⅛" drill bit. Counterbore a second hole, ⅝" (8mm) diameter and about ⅜" (10mm) to ½" (13mm) deep. This hole will conceal the end of the chain or a knotted cord. The larger hole also holds the blank onto a mandrel for turning.

Mount the wood between centers

Mandrels function well to easily mount small projects between centers of your lathe. A simple and effective approach for making your own mandrel is to insert a ⅜" (10mm) dowel into a Jacobs chuck, projecting about 1" (25mm). This dowel length allows you to shape around the bottom of the pull and avoid touching metal with your tools. Taper the end of the dowel slightly for a friction fit into the ⅝" (8mm) hole in the blank (*Photo 2*). The Jacobs chuck will deform the

end of the dowel and likely prevent it from running true if removed and remounted, but just make another one.

If you are without a Jacobs chuck, turn a reusable wooden mandrel with a Morse taper to match your lathe's spindle (*Photo 3*). The manufacturer of my four-jaw chuck advises against using it at speeds greater than 1440 rpm, so I recommend not making a mandrel for a four-jaw chuck if you plan to turn at high speed.

Mount your drilled blank onto the mandrel and bring up the tailstock using a 60-degree cone live center. If you do not have a cone center, turn one to fit over your live center (*Photo 4*). Do not use excessive tailstock pressure.

A short toolrest allows you to get in close for safe tool support. Use a spindle-roughing gouge to turn the blank to a cylinder and slightly taper it toward the tailstock end (*Photo 5*). I typically use a ⅜" (10mm) spindle gouge to turn my desired shape. You

Commercial supplies for light pulls

Light-pull kits are available from various woodturning vendors. These kits generally have a metal finial in different finishes with a matching 3" (75mm) to 4" (100mm) length of chain. Some kits require the use of a pen mandrel or a special mandrel. Commercial light-pull mandrels are available from woodturning vendors. Generally, these use a Morse taper to match your lathe and have a series of steps at ⅛" (3mm) intervals. They could also be used for other small spindle projects.





will get your best results if you take light cuts and move the gouge slowly across the wood.

Design and embellish

Unleash your creativity to come up with your own designs, but keep in mind that form follows function. Make the base a larger diameter than the top so it is easily grasped and pulled.

Embellish with beads, coves, V cuts, texture, or burn lines. Add finish, a bit of chain or cord, and you are ready to install the light pull.

Short lengths of chain in nickel or brass are available from some woodturning vendors. They typically have a chain coupler on one end and a 1/4" (6mm) ball stop on the other to secure them inside the counterbored hole. Your local hardware store is also a convenient source; they typically sell chain by the foot and sell the couplers and other fittings that can be used instead of a ball stop (Photo 6). An alternative is to glue the chain into your pull using CA glue or two-part epoxy.



1 A wooden parallel clamp with a pair of opposing notches cut out will firmly hold turning blanks for drilling.



2 A 3/8" (10mm) dowel inserted into a Jacobs chuck serves as a mandrel to hold the turning blank.



3 If you do not have a Jacobs chuck, turn a mandrel with a Morse taper to fit your lathe.



4 If you do not have a 60-degree cone center, turn one to fit over your existing live center.



5 The initial roughing of the wood can be done using a spindle-roughing gouge.



6 Beaded chains.



Mike Peace is active in several woodturning chapters and enjoys teaching and demonstrating in the Atlanta area. You can see pictures of Mike's work and his previously published articles at MikePeacewoodturning.blogspot.com.



Improvisations on the Theme of an Irish Wall

Roger Bennett

It appears to be some sort of sleeping animal, gray-headed, its long tawny body stretching gracefully across the art gallery floor. Viewers stop, unsure, trying to get its measure.

They climb the steps, approach, and the nature of the beast is revealed. It's a stone wall! Rocks — limestone or granite? — at its tumbling-down end, then lighter ones, difficult to identify, in its sinuous, undulating length.

A typical Irish dry stone wall, its rounded, weathered rocks seemingly gathered from fields, selected for shape and size, carefully stacked and fitted. No foundations, no mortar. Traditional, practical, familiar. About 20 feet long, waist high, strong and

sculptural, a confident presence in the spacious gallery.

A few steps closer, however, viewers realize it is not stone, it's wood, the rocks are made of wood! An Irish dry wood wall! They move in to examine it, smiling at this subversion of the expected. The surprises continue.

Trompe l'oeil rocks merge into wooden rocks, all different shapes and sizes, rugged and sensuous, traces of carvings here and there. At the far end, a gatepost—an ancient “granite” monument incised with ogham markings. A bit of broken gate hangs from an iron hinge. As in real field walls, cracks contain hidden or discarded objects—shards of pottery, a broken bottle, a key, a brooch,

The team gets inspiration from the dramatic Carlow landscape, especially its stone walls.

a lipsticked cigarette, a clay pipe, a feather. It is living and organic, with moss, lichens, and ivy; a snake slithering for cover; a determined snail; a spider poised beside its web. Everything made of wood! Words are scattered on the rocks: history, shelter, posterity. A flash of blue through a crack, it's the ghost of a woman, her arms crossed. A rickety door opens to reveal an extraordinary carving of a horse and dragon on a golden disc.

What was the genesis of this amazing piece of art? The viewers stand back, try to imagine its making, all the intense physical and emotional energy. A video playing on a screen tells the story.

The story began with a meeting of minds and a leap of courage. In 2012, Terry Martin—an Australian wood artist, writer, and curator—spent time teaching and traveling in Ireland. Over dinner with woodturner Glenn Lucas and his wife Cornelia McCarthy, the conversation turned to the question of what woodturners could do to stimulate new ways of thinking about and working with wood. Ideas and what-ifs bounced back and forth. Terry thought it would be stimulating to bring a group of wood artists from abroad to work on a project with their Irish peers. Terry has deep Irish roots and had fallen in love with Irish walls: “When I think of the Irish landscape, I think of its walls—especially in the West. They define Irishness. . . . So I said, ‘Why don’t we build an Irish stone wall?’ It was one of those ideas whose time was right.”

Building a wall would be a collaborative project, but with an essential difference: There would be a single common goal, instead of the usual practice of small groups working on disparate pieces.

The timing *was* right. Cornelia had recently joined the board of the local (Carlow) Arts Festival, and at their next meeting she proposed the concept. To her delight, director Hugo Jellett and the other members accepted with enthusiasm. A group of wood artists, with Terry as leader and curator, would come together for a week at Glenn’s workshop to build a dry stone wall out of wood and exhibit it during the 2013 festival in the spectacular Visual Gallery in Carlow. Thus began the adventure “Improvisations on the Theme of an Irish Wall.”

Getting started

So much to do, so little time, so many questions! Where to source wood—it

would be impossible to get enough dry wood in less than a year. How to build the wall? There was no blueprint for a dry wood wall. How big should it be? Who would build it? How could it be funded? Was it even feasible to build it in just a week?

Terry, Cornelia, and Glenn remained in constant communication across the globe. They drew on all their experiences, Terry’s as facilitator, curator, and erstwhile stage manager, Cornelia’s as arts administrator and project manager. Ambrose O’Halloran and Brid O’Halloran in Galway became key members of the planning and logistics team.

Glenn sourced wood locally: beech and sycamore, with some oak, chestnut, and redwood. They would make do with unseasoned wood—after all, rocks do crack. Invitations were sent out, applications called for, and the group took shape: twelve Irish and ten international artists. Woodturners were complemented by furniture makers, several of them superb colorists and carvers; grizzled veterans and wood artists building careers; two students; and Xiang Dong Wang, a master carver from China, recommended to Terry by the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Master* Mr. Feng Wentu.

Funding was always on a shoestring. The Arts Festival provided a modest budget, and some sponsors came on board. The Turners Without Borders committee of the AAW contributed generously; Mike Hou’s International Wood Culture Society (IWCS) enthusiastically funded Mr. Wang, as well as a film crew from Taiwan to record the

event. Tool companies lent equipment to Glenn; local businesses helped with food supplies.

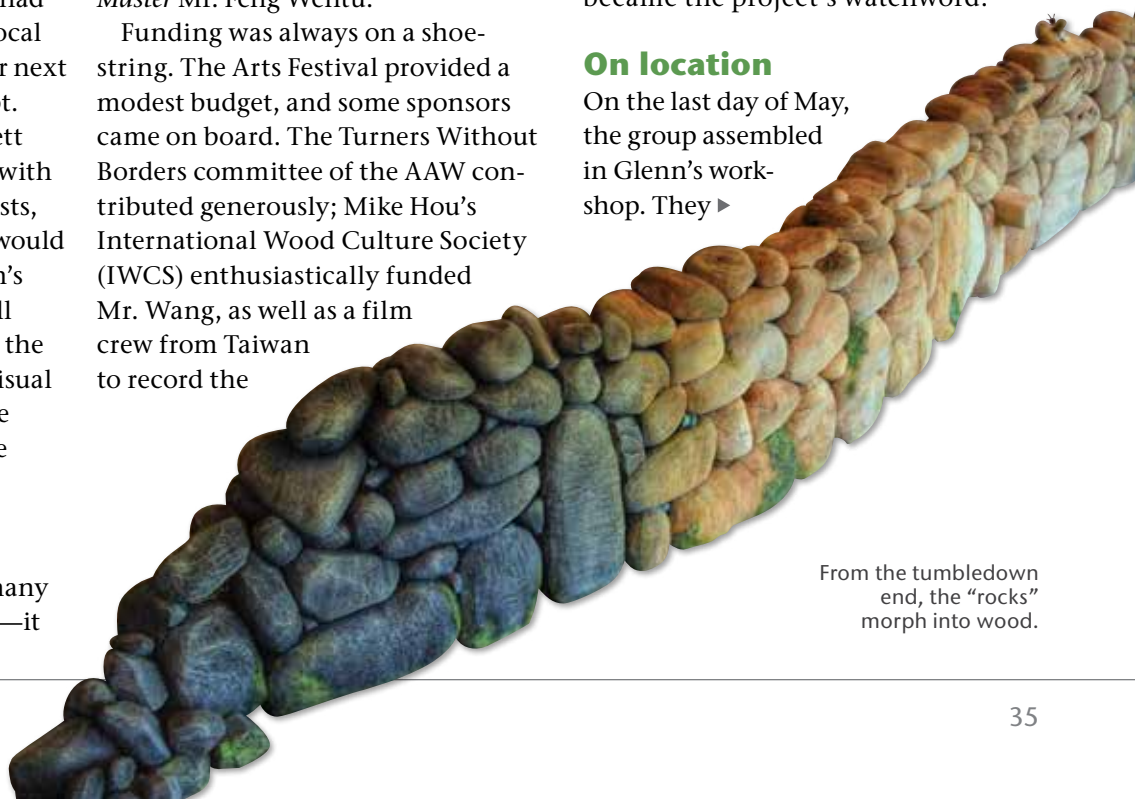
Team planning

With the team announced early in 2013, Internet brainstorming ensued: flurries of emails, ideas pinging through the ether, big questions tackled. Should the wall look like wood or stone, or as Jacques Vesery suggested, couldn’t it transition from one to the other? What about shape? John Lee poetically described how Irish walls weave and undulate with the landscape, a concept he uses when curving furniture. How to construct it? Should it be continuous, or could a door, a gate, a stile, or a window breach it? How could it be made to look natural, alive? Will-o-the-wisps, leprechauns, a broken Celtic cross, 3-D holograms, ogham writing, found objects, animals, vegetation—a myriad of ideas, some stillborn, some eventually realized. The possibility of an art-craft fissure was a gnawing worry—the wall must not look folksy.

Ambrose and Brid introduced the non-Irish to the concept of *meitheal*, of neighbors helping each other at tasks such as harvesting. *Meitheal* became the project’s watchword.

On location

On the last day of May, the group assembled in Glenn’s workshop. They ▶



From the tumbledown end, the “rocks” morph into wood.



(Top to bottom, left to right)
The wall silhouetted against the gallery's expansive window.

Terry leads a discussion in the marquee.

Cillian and Brendan position a rock in the wall.

The "stone" gatepost with ogham inscription and remains of wooden gate.

Glenn chainsaws under a gloriously blue sky.

Glenn delivers fresh supplies of wood.

Jacques embellishes the rusty tailpipe.

Art, Sharon, and Adam paint rocks.



had all come together for the first time the previous afternoon, to view the gallery and take a guided tour of local stone walls. As if the challenge weren't big enough, they decided the wall needed to be doubled in length to fill the expansive gallery space. Glenn's firewood pile would have to be raided.

Terry outlined the task ahead. A short discussion, then an explosion of action, all that pent-up nervous energy released. Chainsaws, bandsaws, power carvers, belt sanders, hand sanders—a shattering cacophony of noise.

Initially, people gravitated to what they felt most comfortable with: outside, the rock shapers; in the marquee, the construction team; in Glenn's big green workshop, the carvers and colorists, makers of found objects and of flora and fauna. The first rocks were chainsawed, power carved, sanded. Rounded shapes seemed most natural, and in fact are typical of many local walls. In the marquee, a team laid a rope along the floor to define the curving profile of the wall. They drew chalk lines for a plywood base to be jigsawed into shape. The building began.

The impossible deadline focused minds. One by one, the group came to decisions through experiments, urgent meetings, and/or show of hands. They explored several ideas for constructing the wall, but in the end adopted the simple solution to follow the method of stone wall builders: pile rock on top of rock. The rocks would be fastened

with hidden screws, and the capstones secured with epoxy and threaded bars. The wall would be two rocks wide, with a single row of capstones. At one end it would be "stone"; this would morph into wood, with a stone gatepost fixing the far end. The door/gate/stile debate was resolved by inserting a long through-stone to make an inviting stile, and with the inclusion of a small weather-beaten door, inspired by one Christian Delhon had photographed in France.

For seven days, twenty-two artists worked intensely. Miraculously, the sun shone the entire week. The noise of the machines became a familiar background tune, raucous and jazzy. Against it, ceaseless conversations,

discussions, occasional arguments; connections made, friendships forged, skills exchanged; constant joking and laughter. Everybody busy, everybody contributing.

Small work groups

Whenever I wandered around the site, I witnessed a series of mini-dramas. Outside, for example, I saw Liam O'Neill in his element, tirelessly chainsawing; Ambrose and Brid cheerfully black-faced from a session of scorching wood; Michael Broly finishing rocks on the belt sander; Emmet Kane and Alan Meredith shaping the gatepost; and Liam Flynn carving "Good fences neighbors" in ogham script on the post—an ▶



John sandblasts the wall, late at night.

Photo: Terry Martin



A pile of "rocks," some raw, some finished.



Michael, Christian, Alan, Emmet, and Liam O'Neill shape rocks.



Liam Flynn carves a pattern.

appropriate nod to Robert Frost's line "Good fences make good neighbors." In the green workshop, studies in concentration: Louise Hibbert creating a stippled snail, and Sharon Doughtie carving a Celtic knot on a rock; Art Liestman shaping a door key; Mark Sanger replicating a traditional Celtic brooch; Christian, on the lathe, turning a tube that Jacques magically transformed into a section of old rusty tailpipe; Jacques coloring; Neil Turner carving the imprint of Christian's hands around a rock; Adam Doran engrossed in cutting out a spider's web; Mr. Wang chiseling his horse-and-dragon coin sculpture.

In the marquee, the wall slowly took shape, painstakingly, block by block. Three furniture makers accomplished almost all of the construction, John, Cillian Ó Súilleabháin, and Brendan Hogg. The work was unfamiliar, yet not that different from normal, as John explained, "I'm so used to working precisely, worrying about a half-millimeter gap, but in a way we have the very same problems here, because every block has to be interlocked."

They carefully selected from the growing pile of rocks, examining each one for size and shape, discarding unsatisfactory ones or adjusting others with

the bandsaw or belt sander. Developing a rhythm, they anticipated each other's requirements. The team became "Hogg and Sons," their slogan "like clockwork."

Throughout the week, Terry moved from group to group, cajoling and suggesting. He led group discussions and usually addressed the entire team over lunch. Dillon and Jerry tirelessly filmed, building up material for their video, and Harry Reid quietly, courteously photographed it all. Glenn, high up on his fork-lift, shifted wood or trash, and checked that everything was in order. In the kitchen, Cornelia, her friend Ann, and Neil's wife Suellen performed daily miracles, preparing memorable gourmet lunches.

Gradually, people moved out of their comfort zones, learned from each other, tried new techniques and tools. Everybody worked on rock-making at different times. Glenn did his first carving, a double-bowled pipe; Liam O'Neill carved a bunch of ivy; Mr. Wang put down his hand tools and had fun with a power carver; turning tips were swapped. Jacques shared his coloring and texturing techniques, continually encouraging others to have a go. Several people talked about how they had been in a rut with their own work, and how this interaction was shaking them up. People surprised themselves. Louise found herself "ordering people about," her experience of house-building giving her the confidence to take charge of the rock shaping. Cillian's communication skills defused a potential row.

As the deadline approached, the pressure grew. The wall had to be installed in the gallery Thursday afternoon. Late Wednesday night, the builders declared it ready for sandblasting. The sections of wall were fork-lifted to the floodlit blasting area, their interiors sprayed black. John the master-blaster, hooded like a beekeeper, meticulously worked over all the exposed wood, softening the edges for a weathered look. Ribald hilarity erupted from the team of helpers, giddy with exhaustion.



The rusty tailpipe in the wall.



Sharon releases the snail.



Finished! Group photo before the wall is moved to the gallery

(L. to R.: Glenn Lucas, Brid O'Halloran, Michael Brolly, Mark Sanger, Ambrose O'Halloran, Sharon Doughtie, Alan Meredith, Louise Hibbert, Art Liestman, Terry Martin, John Lee, Xiang Dong Wang, Roger Bennett, Emmet Kane, Brendan Hogg, Adam Doran, Liam O'Neill, Cillian Ó Súilleabháin, Christian Delhon, Jacques Vesery)



A spider, a brooch, a skull, all made of wood, “found” in the wall.



A feather, carved and colored, lies on a rock.



Xiang Dong Wang’s carving: Irish horse, Chinese dragon

Photo: Roger Bennett

In the morning, the final frantic push. The last capstones in place, the tumble-down area assembled, Jacques and his team colored the stone end using a delicate feathery brushing of light over dark. Decisions about which of the found objects and creatures would be included, and where to put them. Lichen and moss applied—of sawdust and glue, painted and dried. Louise and Sharon airbrushed stenciled words, selected from dozens submitted by the participants to convey what the wall meant to them.

Delivery and installation

Early afternoon, with the wall finished, a team gently lifted the sections into three vans and drove them to Carlow. In the gallery, last-minute problems were solved with fitting the sections seamlessly together, and coaxing the electrics into displaying Michael’s hologram woman.

Opening night was an emotional affair. There was sadness that it was over, new friends scattering away. Everybody felt a bursting pride at the sheer achievement of it all, like a parent showing their new baby to the excited guests. The process was as valuable as the product. The experience had been deeply enriching, personally, culturally, and professionally for everyone. As they hugged their goodbyes, everybody spoke of their hope that this would not be a once-off, and that it could inspire similar events in other places, at other times.

The wall is currently installed in Dublin Airport, where it will be on view for much of this year.

Photography by Harry Reid, unless otherwise noted.

Youtube video link: [youtube.com/watch?v=UND1bkq4VIs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UND1bkq4VIs)

Roger Bennett is an Irish woodturner; he specializes in bowls, vessels, and jewelry that he colors and inlays with silver. He is a former teacher of English and French. rogerbennettwoodturner.com.

Participants:

Artists: Roger Bennett (Ireland), Michael Brolly (USA), Christian Delhon (Fra), Adam Doran (Ire), Sharon Doughtie (USA), Liam Flynn (Ire), Louise Hibbert (Wales), Brendan Hogg (Ire), Emmet Kane (Ire), John Lee (Ire), Art Liestman (Can), Glenn Lucas (Ire), Alan Meredith (Ire), Ambrose O’Halloran (Ire), Brid O’Halloran (Ire), Liam O’Neill (Ire), Cillian Ó Súilleabháin (Ire), Mark Sanger (Eng), Neil Turner (Aus), Jacques Vesery (USA), Xiang Dong Wang (Chi)

Video team: Lin Cheng Hui and Chang Chih Yuan (Dillon and Jerry)

Photographer: Harry Reid

General Manager: Cornelia McCarthy

Curator/Artistic Director: Terry Martin

CLAY FOSTER

Professional Outreach Program's 2014 Excellence Award

The Professional Outreach Program gives biennial merit awards to individuals selected by the committee who have shown exceptional development in their careers as artists, and whose artworks have directly influenced or had a significant impact on other artists within the field of woodturning. Clay Foster is this year's worthy recipient because of his exemplary, consistent, and significant contributions over many years, not only with respect to his art but also as a teacher.

Kevin Wallace

With a calm, confident voice, Clay Foster's work echoes centuries of indigenous makers. The simplicity of line and form belies thoughtful craftsmanship underlying the making, beckoning viewers to experience with pleasure. "My work has what I call casual execution," Clay says. "That doesn't mean it's carelessly made, but that there is a collaboration between the scars and flaws of a piece of wood and the relaxed execution of a practiced hand. I believe there is a place for the imperfections that serve as a metaphor for the reality of life and the greater truth of the flaw."

The originality of Clay Foster's work is due to myriad influences,

including ancient architecture, utilitarian objects from Africa, and the weathering of surfaces. With diverse content seamlessly integrated, these influences manifest in a variety of ways. *Narrow View*, a recent sculpture, is informed by Saskatchewan grain silos, Bhutanese temples, and rock art calendars, yet offers a singular experience, inviting the viewer's interpretation.

While many artists squeeze as much meaning as possible into their work and gladly share the depth of their ideas, Clay is not so forthcoming. In fact, he prefers the viewer find relationships and meaning in his work, and if some amount of mystery remains then all the better.



Temple Bowl Series, 2008, Wood, stone, wire, tile grout, 54" x 18" (137cm x 46cm)

"The Baule people of Africa believe too much clarity can hinder some kinds of enlightened understanding," Clay says when asked about the content of his work. "My art combines elements and sources to capture the essence of things that are old, things that last, and things that endure. Ancient voices speak to our hearts in modern times; these are the things that give us comfort and courage. I'm inspired by temples and towers that point to a higher plane; religious objects that have an aura of sacredness; a tool handle polished smooth by generations of makers' hands. The distinction blurs and their story becomes our story."

Life and art merged

Clay Foster was born in 1954 in Austin, Texas, to parents supportive of his desire to understand how things were made: "One of my earliest toys was a board that my father started nails in, and I would hammer them home." For his fifth birthday, he was given his own handsaw. While his father looked after his initial experience with woodworking, his mother taught him how to use a sewing machine and embroider. This early and expansive approach to materials and processes, and the ensuing desire to create, led him to art school, where he studied weaving and fabric design.

"Patterns have always caught my attention," he says of this early interest in fiber art. "I learned a lot in the three years I was in school, but quit before I got a degree. I needed to make things more than I wanted a diploma." With a restless curiosity about the world, he has continued his study of art as an autodidact.

His interest in ancient architecture, primitive household objects, and weathered natural objects is integrated with his embrace of daily life. "Making art, building furniture, preparing dinner, brewing beer, building a structure and raising chickens—it's all just life, not somehow separate." A chest that features a portal and reliquary began with a place to sit and put on shoes. Art is born out of daily life.

Professional career

Clay's career as a woodturner began 25 years ago when he first encountered the work of Dale Nish and Bob Stocksdale. He was intrigued by the potential of wood as an artistic medium, the idea that a piece of tree could become a work of art. "I didn't realize how seductive that would be until it was too late," he says. ▶



Narrow View, 2013, Wood, concrete, sheet metal, 20" × 10" × 10" (51cm × 25cm × 25cm)



Painted Cave, circa 1992, Wood, stone, desert detritus, 8" × 7" × 8" (20cm × 18cm × 20cm)



Polynesian Pipe, 2013, Wood, metal, string, 6" × 10" × 8" (15cm × 25cm × 20cm)

Made in collaboration with Graeme Priddle.





Art and life merge on the kitchen wall in Clay and Jennifer's home.

Clay's work first came to the attention of a wider audience with his turned natural edge bowls that measured up to three feet in diameter. Even at that large scale, they possessed a quiet beauty. The voids he incorporated into vessels activated Clay's interest in exploring the concept of windows into interior spaces and portals into trees, which became an essential aspect of his Painted Cave series. "The window reveals a replica of rock painting on the interior wall of the vessel," he says.

Aspects of Clay's life became part of this series after he participated in a project mapping and describing Anasazi ruins in Utah where broken bits of pottery were one of the main diagnostic tools for dating sites. Within Painted Cave vessels he placed sand and pieces of broken turnings.

Ancient Native American pottery forms and decorations are a source of inspiration for many craftspeople today, but the rock art is an even more fascinating mystery. While in Utah, Clay explains, "When the shadows of the evening begin to steal across the cliffs and the wind in the canyon trees becomes a gentle whisper, the veil between the past and present is lifted. The images painted and pecked on the rocks come to life and ancient voices from days gone by break their silent vigil to speak softly to us stories saved on stone."

The Painted Cave series led to the Effigy series, an exploration of how far the vessel can be pushed to assume human appearances: "I began to ponder why vessels have such a universal appeal throughout time and place. I came to the conclusion

that one reason is because vessels are such a wonderful metaphor for our human bodies."

African art influence

The influence of African art is sometimes obvious and other times a subtle element. "Objects from Africa seem to have a spirit that is most accessible," he explains. "The religious objects have an aura of sacredness, and the functional household items glow with a patina of lifelong, loving use."

The love of pattern, which is common in African art, shows up in a series of work from 1994 that utilizes quilt patterns, combined with a printing technique for applying ink.



Fine Line Vessel, 1996, Wood, lithographic ink, paint, 11" x 11" dia (28cm x 28cm)



Precious Metal, 2012, Sheet metal, brass rivets, 3" x 10" (8cm x 25cm)

As the viewer's attention shifts from place to place on the surface of the vessel, different arrangements of the pattern's elements emerge and recede into focus. Clay says of this body of work, "This kaleidoscopic shifting of awareness corresponds to how we interpret events in our lives, developing different understandings of their importance because of the changing perspectives of time and accumulated experiences."

His *Fine Line Vessel* from 1996 combines a form inspired by the baskets of Zulu women with the patterns from Acoma pueblo pottery. The visual paths around the vessel represent the rhythms and cycles of life, as well as perspective: "Just as the Earth is tilted on its axis and as the days of the seasons get longer and shorter, the pattern changes shape and size as it navigates the vessel at an angle. A single line on the vessel is arbitrary and without context. When it is combined with other lines to create a pattern, rhythm and order emerge."

Current work

Today, Clay incorporates various elements that are balanced to create a whole. He spends relatively little time turning a bowl compared to the hours spent texturing, decorating, and combining it with other components. A turned vessel, intentionally displayed, creates meaning and significance.

Clay's Connection series, inspired by Mayan temples, represents a culmination of a lifetime of images, shapes, textures, and materials. "Almost 30 years ago, I visited the Mayan ruins at Tikal, Guatemala. The pyramid shape of two temples at opposite ends of a courtyard dominated all the other structures. Their presence embodied the essence of structures that last, materials that hold up, and designs that endure."



Rattle Pot, 1994, Wood, graphite, raffia, shell, buttons, string, 8" x 8" dia (20cm x 20cm)

The memory of their forms is something I put in my pocket years ago, and it is a design element for almost everything I make."

Despite having created an impressive body of work over the last quarter century, Clay continues to pursue an ideal that only nature can provide for. He is still searching for the perfect piece of wood and perfect stone to make a piece he had a dream about six years ago: "Somewhere out there is a rock that has been waiting 60 million years to become a piece of art. Somewhere out there is a tree that grew just to become a piece of sculpture. I am just here to bring them together."

Kevin Wallace is the Director of the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts in Ojai, California. He has guest curated exhibitions for a number of museums, is a regular contributor to international publications, and has authored and co-authored a number of books, most recently *Shadow of the Turning* with Binh Pho.

Herb Container, 1999,
Wood, beads, brass
brads, 6" x 2½" x 4"
(15cm x 6cm x 10cm)



Clay Foster with Lucinda, who turns out perfect eggs.

Balancing *on a* Hard Edge

Stoney Lamar finesses gravity and the predictable



at the Asheville Art Museum

David M. Fry

In Stoney Lamar's studio, the tracks of the lathe tool have rarely seemed content in comfortable orbit and have tended to slash sideways, veer into larger sweeps, plunge off center, or end abruptly. Twenty-five years ago, Stoney was one of a handful of makers, including Mark Sfirri and Michael Hosaluk, who began to abandon the relentless concentricity of conventional woodturning for multiaxis forms. Today he is still exploring the implications of actively seeking imbalance in his work and resolving it on a more complex level rather than eliminating it at the first opportunity.

Last spring and summer, the Asheville Art Museum celebrated Stoney's singular career with a retrospective exhibition aptly titled "A Sense of Balance," which was curated by Andrew Glasgow. Almost a third of the 40-plus works were made during the two years leading up to the show, and nearly half were completed since Stoney was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2009. The oldest featured piece dated back to 1985. As with any good résumé, the retrospective led with the latest work, with earlier sculpture arranged somewhat chronologically in the back galleries.

Moving on

For those who hadn't seen Stoney's sculpture in the last decade, first sight of this show might have come as a shock. Out front, instead of the polished tabletop turnings of his early career, raw or wildly surfaced columns of wood stood at head height and above, alongside cored log sections scattered across the floor. Metal was visible—albeit discreetly—in virtually every work in the front hall. The shapes, colors, and textures of these pieces diverged markedly from those made during his rise to prominence. Few forms in the room suggested an ▶

Spacious front gallery installation featuring helical sections of ash and steel and tapered figures of painted wood.

Photo: Asheville Art Museum

origin on the lathe, even when one had been used.

Rising 9½' (3m), the hollowed *Helix Tower* dominated the entrance with its canted and "stacked" rings of debarked white oak hovering atop one another. Anchored steel spheres served as spacers in the widened saw kerfs, providing structural stability but improbably hinting at a gigantic rolling ball track. Weathered sapwood dressed the exterior, its subtle grain

and surface checks jumping the helical voids. Overall, it appeared to be Stoney's direct and imposing tribute to the axis mundi (world pillar) symbolized in many cultures. Perhaps today's most familiar expression of this link between heaven and earth is the DNA double helix, the filament of life. Yet in Stoney's massive helix, the single spiral sagged almost to horizontal, shutting out views of the interior. A downward taper, slight

tilt, and abrupt lap joint near the base brought the forces of balance front and center. This listing body held its secrets tightly.

In the stubby log fragments of *Helix 3* and *Arches*, however, issues of balance and obscurity resolved in favor of gravity and exposure. The tension here was inside the material itself, fallen but still straining and cracking against coiled steel bands lining the raked cores. Secured with bolted studs,



Shibori, 2012, White oak, steel, milk paint, each of five forms, 68" x 9" x 5" (173cm x 23cm x 127mm)
Courtesy of the artist

Photo: Scott Allen

Opening reception
Helix Tower, 2013, White oak and steel, 114" x 32" (290cm x 81cm)
Courtesy of the artist

the arcs of black metal vividly displayed the fight against disintegration.

Against these rough-hewn works stood clusters of tapered, beveled, and gently radiused columns with edges so sharp and shapely as to resemble poised blades. As with the *Tower*, ensemble works like *Shibori* were mysterious, but the stance vigilant. Sheet metal shoes kept the 6' (2m) pieces standing, even when externally attached. Many of the spires had begun as conical split turnings, which were then scored diagonally and scorched to help scour out the softer early wood. The resulting relief in the char provided cross-patterned reservoirs for milk paint, a favorite finish of Stoney's that he sometimes brightened with acrylic paint. Longitudinal lines of contrasting colors frequently separated zones of different markings. Ring porous woods like ash and white oak predominated among these works, although less coarse woods like walnut

also proved receptive to the surface treatments. The exhibition thoughtfully included a sampler of finishes so that visitors could closely examine and feel the transformed material.

The early years

Once beyond the entry hall, visitors could revisit the familiar wood-proud turnings featured in recently published catalogs of works collected largely before 2000. These included *Suspended Wire Walker*, one of Stoney's efforts to outmaneuver symmetry in a vessel. A partially hollowed vase hung askew from its grounded arms, already anticipating the focus on vertical balance in his later sculpture. *Last Vase*, however, embraced its classic form and grounding, but its shoulder bore fine tracks of missed and crossed connections. The mouth gaped downward to the scored neck. Was this piece intended as his final statement on the vessel?

Two other works—*Torso Reclining* and *Lady in Waiting*—also relied on a vessel profile, but almost invisibly. These wall hangings, ostensibly composed of overlapping panels in figured woods, were essentially unhollowed vortex forms with interlocking reshaped outlines and gently crowned faces. A sideways glimpse of the hidden multiple feet revealed the maker's ingenuity and underpinning to the magic. Photographs don't do justice to the subtle topography of these compositions. ▶



Suspended Wire Walker, 1988, Cocobolo,
8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " × 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 4" (21cm × 35cm × 10cm)
Courtesy of Fleur S. Bresler

Photo: Chris Bartol

Last Vase, 1996, Maple,
18" × 8" (36cm × 20cm)
Courtesy of Charlene Johnson

Photo: Chris Bartol



Lady in Waiting, 1995, Maple,
24" × 6" (61cm × 15cm)
Courtesy of John and Robyn Horn

Photo: Chris Bartol

As Stoney drifted away from the conventional vessel, he continued to rely on the woodturning lathe the way an experimental poet might work within the ancient sonnet form, a device conveniently on hand but highly restrictive. For both writer and sculptor, the traditional device dictates structural options that an artist might not otherwise feel inclined to pursue, and in the process it may lead to new territory, some worth claiming. How likely would Stoney's multiaxis figures have emerged from mallet and chisel or angle grinder?

The early abstractions of the body departed from not only conventional woodturning, but also the approach of others adding axial curves and appendages to their lathe art. Rather than obscure the interrupted cuts by blending discontinuities, Stoney displayed his licks in sharp relief. His asymmetrical pieces typically emerged as smooth, contoured figures

or landscapes bound, slit, and cratered with hard edges. Despite the sharpness, their compactness and warm finishes exuded a certain intimacy.

Torso for WT and *Muse Madrone* represented early offset abstractions of the human form, this time straddling the air on tiptoe. These pieces conspicuously exhibited Stoney's early signature—plunging side cleavage and eccentric cavities and channels in the face grain. Crisp edges, fleeting arcs, and receding hollows conjured the openness of a keen imagination or the body's vulnerable core. Remarkably, the torso presented almost identical features on both sides.

Transition

In the late 90s, Stoney started adding metal to his work. Usually coated with black or bronze milk paint, steel provided another set of options for holding his pieces together and upright. Meanwhile, his stylized

triangular figures in wood grew taller and relatively thinner, and his deference to natural wood finishes faded behind white streaks and swirls of thin milk paint. With angular profiles, stiletto footing, and neutral colors, *All Dressed Up* and *Cape and Cane* strutted their sophistication. The severe geometry and machined surfaces confirmed their status as secular art rather than exalted embodiments of nature.

These pairings of wood wedges and metal supports continued for several years during the 2000s, with the proportion of wood to steel ranging widely. *Balancing Act* stood out for its top-heavy, off-center turning mounted on a precariously slender tripod, while *Green Eyed Girl* featured an enclosed steel body substantial yet elegant in its height, facets, and taper. The madrone head of *Girl* brought back strong color and grain definition to the wood.



Torso for WT (William Turnbull), 1997, Ash, 13" x 8" x 4" (33cm x 20cm x 10cm)
Courtesy of the Asheville Art Museum
Gift of John and Robyn Horn

Photo: Tim Barnwell



Muse Madrone, 1996, Madrone, 11" x 4" x 5" (28cm x 10cm x 13cm)
Courtesy of John and Robyn Horn

Photo: Scott Allen

Balancing Act, 2006, Madrone, steel, milk paint, 29" x 9" x 6" (74cm x 23cm x 15cm)

Courtesy of Barbara and Robert Seiler

Photo: Tim Barnwell



Back story

The Asheville Art Museum did a splendid job of putting Stoney's work in personal and artistic context by publishing a handsome, readable catalogue. Every narrative in the front matter proved to be pithy and revealing. The biographical sketch provided by columnist Howard Troxler, for example, outlined with refreshing detail his subject's meandering route to woodturning acclaim: Stoney "learned geometrical theory in a pool hall... [and] set out in a career direction [commercial cabinetmaking] that he neither liked nor decided he was much good at; he

almost by accident discovered what he was good at."

Troxler also articulated the painful incongruity of intensely physical creativity undermined by debilitating illness: "Parkinson's is the cruel and perfect nemesis for a sculptor, in a way that a composer might go deaf or a painter blind. For an artist whose life's pursuit has been the captured expression of kinetic energy, the study of controlled line and frozen motion, what challenge could be more profound?"

As Stoney suggested in his acknowledgment, he didn't want Parkinson's to define him, but he ▶

Green Eyed Girl, 2008, Madrone, steel, milk paint, 53" x 11" x 12" (135cm x 8cm x 30cm)
 Courtesy of Francoise J. Riecker

Photo: Scott Allen



Cape and Cane, 2005, Walnut, steel, milk paint, 40" x 12" x 20" (101cm x 30cm x 51cm)
 Courtesy of Asheville Art Museum

Gift of John and Robyn Horn

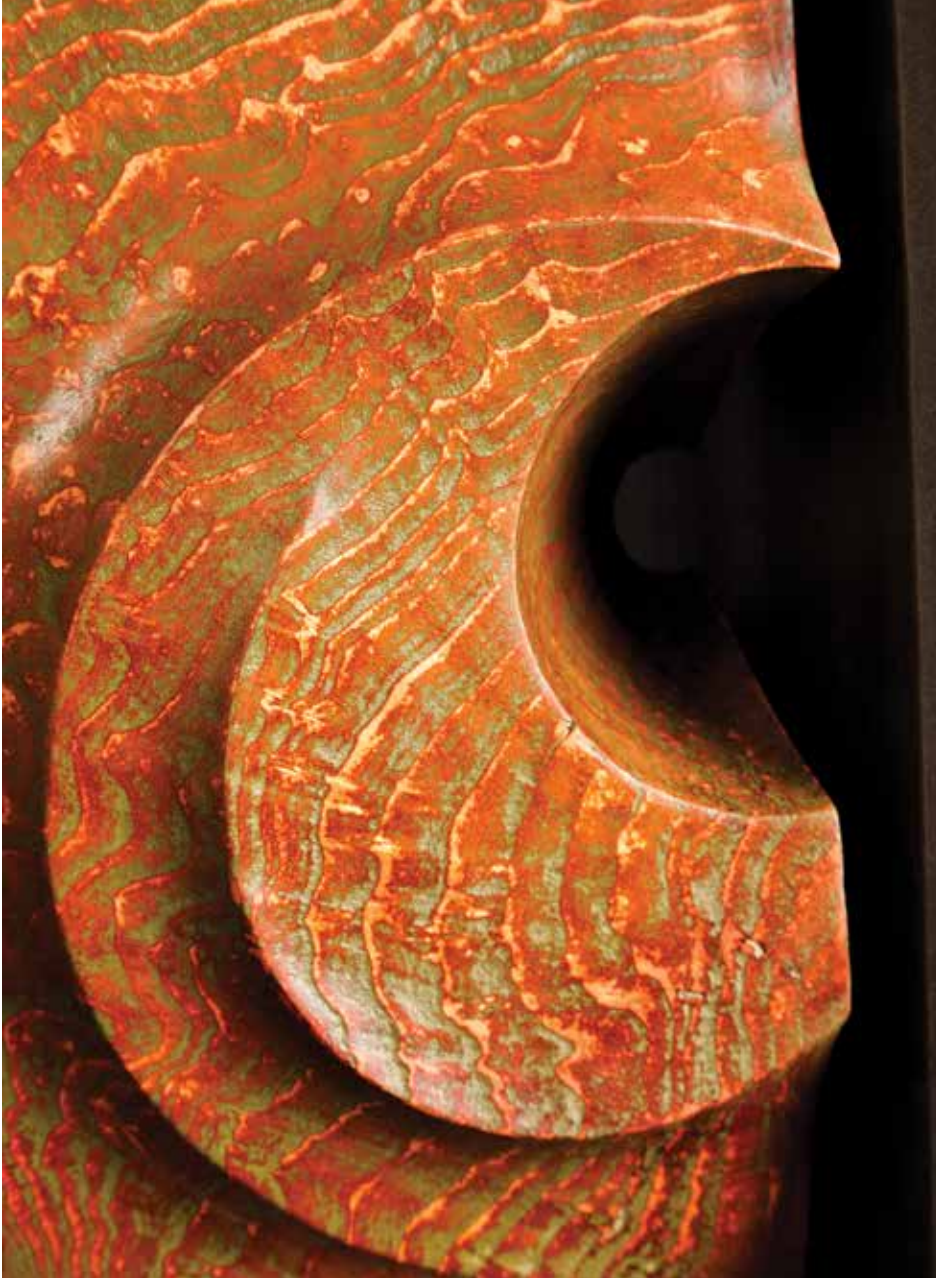
Photo: Tim Barnwell

All Dressed Up, 2003, Madrone burl, steel, milk paint, 22" x 14" x 6" (56cm x 37cm x 15cm)
 Courtesy of Arkansas Arts Center

Foundation Collection, purchased with a gift from John and Robyn Horn

Photo: Tim Barnwell





Shibori (detail)

Moroccan Trio, 2012, Madrone, steel, and milk paint

Collection of Charlotte Medical Center

Photo: Scott Allen



also realized that he couldn't ignore its limitations. The solution was to embrace a collaborative approach in the studio. For the last two years, Cory Williams and Shane Varnadore have joined him as co-makers, enabling the production of many new works. The scale of the pieces has grown even larger.

This is not to say that Stoney currently functions only as designer and supervisor. He also works hands-on at times, even with the increased risks. As woodworker/essayist Matthew Hebert pointedly noted in the catalog, Stoney "has been turning one of the symptoms of his disease into an opportunity for

aesthetic expression... [By] setting his stance in such a way, he can allow the tremor in his hand, the Parkinson's symptom that he actively struggles to negate, to take control and guide the marks made by the saw" while the lathe is running. Sometimes the results follow his aim, sometimes not. Although such uncertainties may lead to what Stoney calls "raku moments" of serendipity, not all exhibition viewers would agree with Hebert's linkage of him to composer/painter John Cage. Unlike Cage at his most radical, Stoney has not ceded virtually everything to chance or asked an indifferent world to fill a void he created. Far from it, "A Sense

of Balance” suggested a lifetime of creative intentions even when exploration and improvisation were also in play.

This sense of purposeful, evolving themes is evident in the photographic record of the slim catalog, which conveniently presents individual works chronologically, interspersing vibrant close-ups among the full-view images. The high-contrast enlargement of surfaces captures the richness of wood treatments and metal finishes that might escape notice under museum lighting. The visual force of several cropped photographs, such as those of *Helix 3*, *Bloom Too*, and *Shibori*, rivals or surpasses that of the larger frame images. Unfortunately, the stunning close-up of *Moroccan Trio* on the cover was not uncropped for inclusion among the full-size color plates inside.

Influences and originality

Like a number of other sculptural woodturners, Stoney has looked outside his immediate field for inspiration and assimilated new materials and techniques. Beyond the incorporation of metal in his work, he began to develop slab and columnar forms reminiscent of Isamu Noguchi and David Nash. He has used some of the same tools—torch and chain saw—that Nash applies to burn, shape, and texture his pieces. Both artists have often made diagonal markings on pyramidal forms. The slanted texture of Stoney’s *Shibori*, however, had a more explicit connection to the Japanese tradition of dyeing bound or twisted cloth. (One particular style, arashi [storm] shibori, recalls the wind-driven rain.) Also evident in various works are cross-hatching and dot patterns common to aboriginal raark paintings.

Starting with his highly stylized torsos in the 1980s, Stoney



Standing in Forest, 2012, Ash, steel, milk paint, 65" × 13" × 19" (165cm × 33cm × 48cm)

Courtesy of the artist

Photo: Scott Allen

established a certain kinship with the abstract expressionism of the 1950s. The movement’s thrust was to distill perceptions of the objective world down to their emotional and spiritual essence. One of its practitioners, Barnett Newman, developed a “zip” style of painting that has infiltrated some of Stoney’s recent work. This approach employed thin lines of contrasting pigment to separate and yet ultimately unify adjacent fields of color. In some of Stoney’s sculpture, the ragged zip lines can be viewed as boundaries between

wellness and illness, control and acquiescence.

To varying degrees, other woodturners pursuing sculptural careers undoubtedly influenced Stoney as well. Multiaxis pioneers such as Jean-François Escoulen and Mark Sfirri were also coaxing new shapes from the lathe. Even with the shared interest in eccentric turning, however, their offset renditions of the spindle—many with an antic twist—did not find obvious expression in Stoney’s anatomical abstractions. ▶



Sunshields, 2013, Cherry, steel, milk paint, 66" × 10" × 8" (168cm × 25cm × 20cm)

Courtesy of the artist

Photo: Scott Allen

What *has* manifested itself during his later career has been the aesthetic sway of Stoney's studio mentor, Mark Lindquist. By the 1980s, including the period of Stoney's apprenticeship, Lindquist had already moved beyond his polished fat vessels to rugged sculptures with patterned chain-sawed marking. His soaring columns occasionally added color and bore Japanese titles. The scale and grouping of pieces seemed increasingly designed to fill public spaces. Similar features have also appeared in Stoney's more recent output.

Of course, this shouldn't suggest that Stoney lost his artistic identity along the way. Fair curves, crisp lines, and the occasional eccentric wedge still appear in his work. But new elements like imbedded pigment, liberal surface marking, and minimalist slab faces have sometimes made it more challenging to distinguish his pieces from others'. Fifteen years ago, Stoney's multiaxis works were instantly recognizable. When his aesthetic shifted toward classical vertical forms, the competition dramatically increased. Beyond Nash and Lindquist, sculptors Emilie Brzezinski, Constance Bergfors, and others have created profuse variations on the solid wood column and helix. The abundance of these forms in the world of art obviously complicates the achievement of originality but also testifies to their enduring power.

Divining a direction

What was most striking about this exhibition was the diversity of work coming out of Stoney's studio in the last two years: hulking sections of banded logs, troupes of finely

tapered and patterned figures, beveled metal spires with wood pennants, and standing columns of reinforced bark. The surprising range may reflect the presence and synergy of three heads in the studio. It also confirms Stoney's ongoing explorations beyond woodturning. The lathe does still play a role in some works, especially for split turnings and therming (shaping and remounting multiple spindles in a holder). Overall, though, the lathe seems remote in today's finished pieces.

It seems likely that Stoney's future as an artist will be influenced by his struggle with Parkinson's. The productivity evident in this show nevertheless suggests his stamina remains high. If his condition informs the content of his art, it has not quelled his exuberance for life. Nowhere is this more apparent than in his broad-sided split columns with abundant surface area for expressive coloring. Bent but graceful, *Standing in Forest* displays its verdant, light-dappled grain with startling intensity. Less arboreal, the colorfully painted *Sunshields* captures the vitality of early human culture with bold decoration and color. The hard edge and saw's bite remain, but the spirit invites celebration. ■

David M. Fry turns wood and writes near Washington, D.C.

In 2014 and 2015, "A Sense of Balance" will appear at the Museum of Craft and Design in San Francisco, the Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum, the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock, and the Center for Art in Wood in Philadelphia.

MEMBERS' GALLERY

Jérôme Blanc, Switzerland



*(Top) Architectonica Maxima II, 2013,
Ash, bleach, 3½" × 6¼" (16cm × 9cm)*

*(Bottom) Abyse III, 2013, Walnut,
3½" × 5¾" (9cm × 15cm)*



*Mountains, 2014, Walnut,
9" × 20" (23cm × 50cm)*

Dick Sing, Memory Box

Occasionally a turning project becomes a memorable, satisfying, and personal venture. This happened for me when the family farm where I was born and raised was being sold.

My grandparents purchased the property in 1905, starting the Sing homestead. My father was born in the farmhouse and grew up on the farm. After he married my mother, my two sisters and I came along to complete the family. Our younger years were spent enjoying farm life and learning the discipline required to be called a farmer.

My sisters and I married and moved away, but our roots were firmly embedded in the farm. With the homestead about to become history, I decided to give my family a lasting memory of our heritage. I removed some of the

original oak woodwork from the farmhouse to cut into pen blanks, which I had stabilized so the pens would hold up with use. I took additional woodwork, cut it into boards, and shipped it to Gary Gardner in Georgia for making into pen boxes.

During the 1950s, my parents purchased an aerial photograph of the farm, which hung in the living room until they passed away. It represents fond memories of the original farm site. Images made from this photograph would embellish the boxes.

Gary has a dye sublimation machine that uses ink, heat, and pressure to apply a picture onto metal. We reduced a copy of the farm picture to be replicated onto metal and inlaid into box lids. Gary also owns a laser, which he used to inscribe

“Sing Family Farm, Est. 1905, Image circa 1950s” onto the lids. On the inside of the box, I had laser-engraved, “Pen and box made from the farmhouse woodwork, Dick Sing.”

I made Jr. Gentleman II screw-top roller-ball pens and placed one inside each box I would give to my closest relatives. For spouses of my siblings and great-grandchildren, I made Sienna ballpoint pens.

Everyone now has a unique piece of the farm. This surprise project, presented at a Christmas gathering, started a round of remembrances of years past. In the years to come, my siblings and I will share more memories from this farm we called home. Fortunately no one has noticed the missing woodwork.



Tony Kopchinski, Wisconsin

I am always looking for ways to enhance decorative plates and vases, and combining a variety of items and substances with wood offers interesting opportunities for contrast. Glue joints, even between two pieces of the same wood, are visible, so why not use contrast to create an intended focal point? To enhance those glue joints, I add strips of acrylic, clear or colored, sandwiched between Baltic birch plywood.

On the rims of platters, I fill grooves with a water-clear polymer compound such as Envirotex Lite and embed glitter for color or fabric for trim. In earlier attempts, I used epoxy glue to set the glitter and trim, but that was too cloudy.

To create the critters that appear in my turnings, I use a variety of materials: leather, wood shavings, beads, pipe cleaners, and the ends of plastic toothpicks, which resemble fossils. Motifs, finials, and color combinations are limitless and exciting.



Colorama, 2013, Birdseye maple, walnut, mahogany, spalted maple, cherry, plywood, acrylic, 11" x 3½" (28cm x 9cm)

Photo: Roger Zimmermann



Ocean Motion, Birdseye maple, walnut, mahogany, spalted maple, cherry, plywood, acrylic, 12" x 3½" (30cm x 9cm)

Photo: Roger Zimmermann



Untitled plate, Birdseye maple, cherry, fabric braid, Envirotex Lite, 9" (23cm) dia

Photo: Roger Zimmermann

Ron Rupert, New Mexico

After buying a lathe in 2009, I studied a book by Richard Raffan and began turning wood. I still work full time, which doesn't leave much time for woodturning, but joining the New Mexico Woodturners has provided a great deal of help learning about woodturning. I am now moving on to pencil pots and bowls, but still enjoy making spin tops. I decorate these with the idea that they blend and change colors when spun.

The tops are two-piece construction with the outer disk made from hard maple (softer woods make poor spinners). I drill a 1/2" (13mm) hole in the center into which I fit a spindle-turned stem made out of hardwood. To make painting easy, the disk has a mild taper. Sometimes I cut shallow grooves to use for paint guides and index marks. I also embed a sharpened 1/8" (3mm) rivet in the point. The finished tops are about 2 1/2" (64mm) in diameter and will spin for about two minutes with a good pull.

I outline the patterns with pyrography and use opaque paint markers with the colors matched to give a particular effect. For example, red and blue in the same orbit look purple when the top is spun. I give the tops away with a thimble and pull device of branch wood and trolling line.

Photos by Peter Frazier-Koontz



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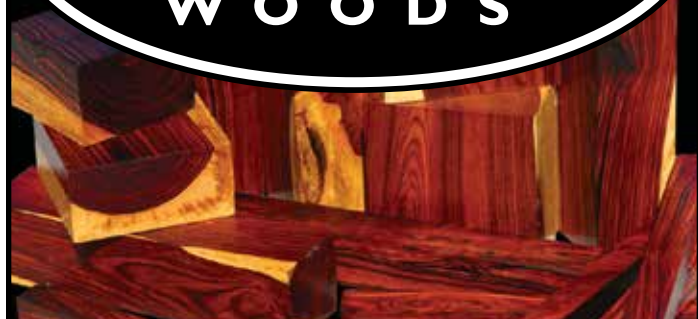
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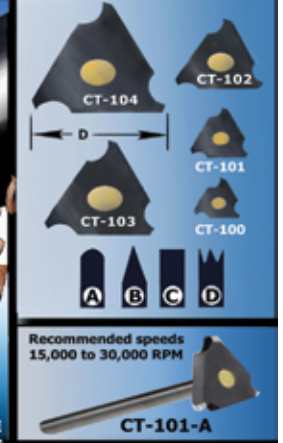
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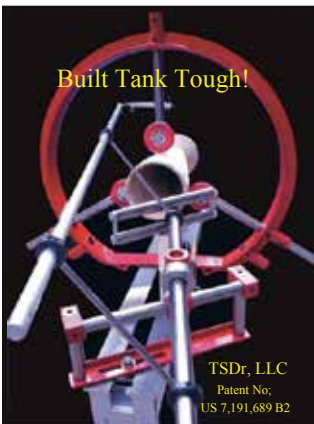
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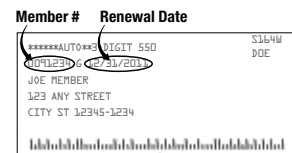
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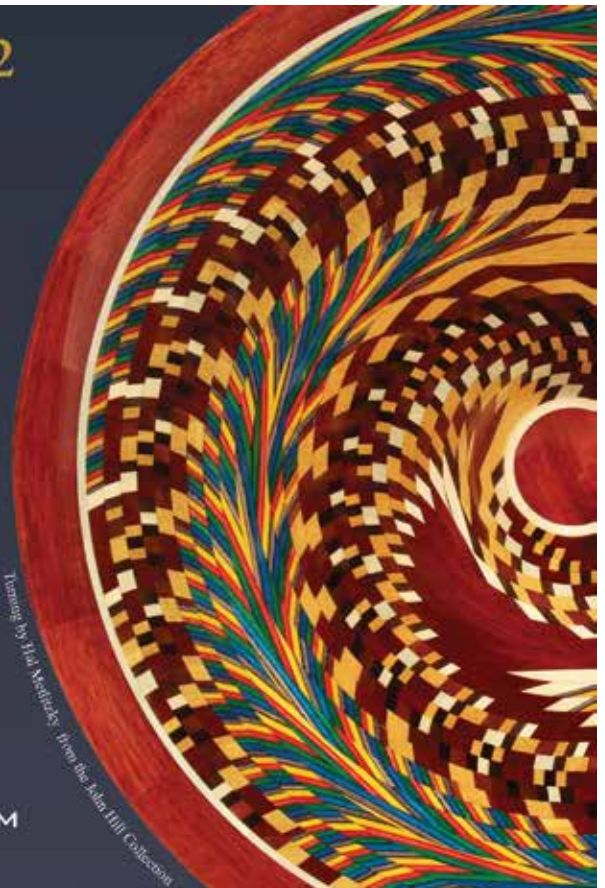
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