

# The CNEW SKEW

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Volume 17 Issue 7

July 2004

## Selling Woodturnings - Part 4 Pricing Your Work—The Cost of Wood

### Special points of interest:

- Selling Woodturnings
- Contact Points for New Officers
- Reports & Coming Events
- Show & Tell Pictures by  
Emilio Iannuccillo

### Inside this issue:

Editorial: Selling Woodturnings	1
Club Officers	2
President's Message	2
Next Meeting Notice	3
Minutes from the July meeting	4
Directions to Reid's House	5
Show & Tell Pictures	6
Coming Events	7
Book Reviews	7
Provo Symposium	7

Last month we discussed the task of setting an hourly rate for our labor. In the following section we will assume an hourly rate of \$20, not the highest but nevertheless respectable. The next issue to be resolved is the cost of the wood we use to make our turnings. It is important not to underestimate this item, especially important not to assume that the wood is free because someone gave it to us or because we were fortunate enough to procure it for one dollar at our great wood swaps.

Unless someone else cuts it to size, rounds it to a suitable blank and mounts it on your lathe, it is definitely not free. As an example, last week I was returning home and passed an arborist about to fell a tree only a block or two from my house. I stopped and introduced myself, and asked if I could have some of the red maple they were felling. The foreman said I could have it all and if I didn't live too far away, he would drop it off when they were finished. I showed him where I lived and two hours later, he showed up and dropped off the 25-foot bole (in two sections) in my driveway. For this kindness, I tipped him \$10. I then called a friend who also turns and we made short work (three hours each) of the wood, cutting it into seventeen

sections and thence into half cylinders, each about 15-18 inches across and about 18-22 inches long. Cleanup and moving of the wood took each of us about an hour more. Total investment so far was eight man-hours and \$10. We split the wood, reserving four good sized pieces for the next wood swap. My friend took his and returned home.

The next day, I spent about four hours reducing two-thirds of the wood sections to manageable weight by trimming the corners and ends to rough octagonal sections. An additional two hours were spent on the balance of the wood. Each of the rough blanks was then band-sawn to more or less round bowl blanks with one flat surface. This took an additional three hours. I ended up with 16 of these blanks ranging from 14 to 18 inches across and from six to ten inches thick. My cost so far was \$10 plus thirteen hours of labor. I have not factored in the cost of oil, gasoline, and chain saw sharpening. Using our hourly rate of \$20, the cost of this wood was \$270 (13 x 20 + 10) or about \$17 each. This before it is even mounted on the lathe. So much for "free" wood. Except for woodswap acquisitions, or gifts from a neighbor, it is useful to figure that

(Continued on page 3)

## Club Officers and Contact Info for 2004

President, Reid Gilmore	508-856-5894	<a href="mailto:reid.gilmore@umassmed.edu">reid.gilmore@umassmed.edu</a>
VP, Internal, George Whippen	978-663-4693	<a href="mailto:gwhippen@verizon.net">gwhippen@verizon.net</a>
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Treasurer, Richard DiPerna	508-358-2471	<a href="mailto:richard@diperna.com">richard@diperna.com</a>
Newsletter, Norm Mancuso	508-653-4195	<a href="mailto:nrmancuso@comcast.net">nrmancuso@comcast.net</a>
Video Librarian, Al Faul	978-534-3683	<a href="mailto:alfaul@gis.net">alfaul@gis.net</a>
Book Librarian, Glenn Randall	508-836-3814	<a href="mailto:ageminus@charter.net">ageminus@charter.net</a>
Webmaster, Dennis Daudelin	978-456-8005	<a href="mailto:dennis@daudelin.net">dennis@daudelin.net</a>

### The President's Message

The July meeting about workshop safety was quite useful, as many different CNEW members mentioned problems that could occur on the lathe. Probably the most important issue we heard about was the importance of checking to make sure that the speed setting on the lathe was reasonable for the object being turned. A recent issue of the AAW magazine had useful guidelines on lathe speeds for objects with different diameters. The second major cause of potential accidents was the method used to hold the piece onto the lathe. Peter Teubel pointed out that a cup center provides a much more stable attachment than the standard live center. David Ellsworth in his video "*Tips for Turners*" makes a strong case for using faceplates rather than chucks for holding pieces to the lathe. Finally, the integrity of the work-piece is important when one is working with spalted woods, objects with cracks or segmented turnings. In most cases, *Superglue* will solve the problems of minor cracks in the bowl blank, but Frank White pointed out that some turners may have allergies or adverse reactions to CA glues.

For those who missed the July meeting, we had a huge wood-swap thanks to the participation of at least six members who brought in a wide variety of wood. Hopefully, we will have another good wood-swap at the September meeting. In August we will be having the club picnic at my house. I haven't lined up a speaker or planned a demo, so hopefully the weather will cooperate and we can have a great day outdoors. Of course, my shop will be open and there is enough room for CNEW

members to take a look around.

(Ed. Travel instructions are repeated on page 5; see last month's newsletter for additional information and check with Reid to see what you can bring to the party.)

Reid Gilmore

### Scenes from the July Meeting



## Next Regular Meeting Thurs. Sept. 2, 2004!

Peter Teubel will demonstrate deep hollowing of vessels. As usual, *Show & Tell* and the perennial *Wood Swap* will be featured after the business meeting. Bring your work and some wood for the club.

### Selling Your Turnings: The Cost of Wood

(Continued from page 1)

each rough bowl blank will cost between \$15 and \$20.

Probably you would core these blanks, rough turn the resulting bowls and then find some appropriate method to dry the wet bowls. Bagging them for several months (changing the bags from time to time) is one way. Boiling them for an hour each and allowing them to dry for several weeks is another way. Each of these processes will require an additional period of time, not always easy to accurately determine. Depending on the process used, you will have an additional hour or two per blank to factor in. Finish turning and finishing is another hour. Figuring it in the most advantageous way, each bowl costs you \$30-\$45 depending on size. Note that we have not figured in shop overhead (lights, heat, insurance), materials cost (sandpaper, tools, finishing and other materials) and finally profit, you will come to appreciate the fact that you can't sell that bowl for less than \$35 to \$50m again depending on size.

You will also have to consider whether you want to work for \$20 per hour, whether your work is top quality or mediocre, and other factors that effect the final price, but the fact remains that determining the selling price is not so easy as one first expects. The most important lesson is that the wood is rarely free. Equally important is the fact that overhead and profit, regardless of how small, are also important and must be considered. Finally you will note that no mention has been made, so far, of the costs of marketing your products.

Whether you are retailing or wholesaling your

turned goods, the only accurate method of pricing your work is the following:

$$\text{Material+Labor+Overhead+Profit} = \text{Selling Price}$$

Overhead is a difficult issue. One rarely considers the time spent in cleaning the shop, purchasing and sharpening tools not to mention keeping track of these items. Judy Ditmer offers some good advice on these matters. She is quoted in Kerry Pierce's book "*Visual Guide to Pricing your Work*" and I was quite surprised to see what is included in her rather complete list of items falling into this category. Marketing costs will also usually be included in Overhead. Nevertheless, this should not be ignored. Someone has to travel about from shop to shop selling the work or traveling to shows to exhibit the work. In the latter case there are fees associated with renting the space to show your fine work. Time spent manning the booth, money spent nourishing your weakening body, etc. In both cases, there are automobile costs to bear as well.

If you are selling both ways (retail and wholesale), you will have to resolve the issue of unfair competition with your other outlets. Failure to do this will ultimately cause your other outlets to reassess their relationship with you. It is the differences in the third and fourth terms of the above equation that will be the cause of problems as we have seen in the last installment of this article. These facts will no doubt be disputed or remain unappreciated by some. Others may be totally surprised by the approach taken above, but will ultimately agree that it is at least relatively accurate. Finally, others will take the position that this approach is unduly complicated. Whichever position you take, it is appropriate to discuss any differences of opinion and I invite your comments.

Norman R. Mancuso



## Minutes of the July 8 Business Meeting:

The July meeting of the Central New England Woodturners was held on July 8th. President Reid Gilmore called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM with 35 members and guests present. Reid talked about a wood dump in Marlboro that we may have access to. He will look into it further.

The Craft center appreciates our Wednesday evening work parties. So far they have consisted of Reid, Joe Harbey, Norm Mancuso and Tim Elliot. They cleaned up shavings and dust from rafters to the floor, some painting, and are looking for some donations of turning tools. We will be there the next two Wednesdays to finish up. Thanks to all who participated as this is in lieu of rent for our meeting site. The center has been good to us over the years.

We have rented a booth for the fall craft show which is always held on the weekend following Thanksgiving Day. This year it will be the 26th through the 28th of November. We will pay \$500 for a 10 x 10 booth. The show runs from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM Friday and Saturday and from 10:00 to 4:00 on Sunday. As usual we need sign ups to run the booth as well as to set up and take down. We will again charge any member selling a flat entry fee of ten dollars and if anything sells, a pro rata share of the booth costs.

The *Totally Turning* Adirondack mini symposium is scheduled for October 30 and 31st. *Arrowmont* is seeking to build more totem poles from donated turnings. The contribution must fit into a 21 inch high by 21 inch deep cylinder with a 3.5 inch hole in the center to mount it. Phil Bowman made a 20 x 20 eight sided holder so 6 x 6 turnings of members could be fixed to CNEW's original contribution to the original pole which evidently is being replaced and/or others added.

We have about two thousand dollars in our treasure. We took in \$1,440 and spent \$1,500. We are good Americans.

*The Philadelphia Woodturning Center* is seeking a club donation again this year. We will donate the one hundred dollars approved by the membership in attendance. Wendy Wilson, our past treasurer had sent the same donation in with a request for eight publications. We will see if we ever got them before ordering again. We had a huge wood swap consisting of a wide selection of wood of many different species

We will again get two free tables and rent one table at the Carver's annual show and meeting. We will display on the free tables and demonstrate and sell on the third. That event is on October 17, 2004 at the same location as last year, Middlesex Community College cafeteria. About 350 attended last year.

The ART woodturning club will sponsor Luke Mann on August 14th from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. It is open to a total of fifty people. The cost is twenty dollars and includes lunch.

We are copying purchased tapes in order to rent out the copies and save the originals to prevent their loss as we are replacing tapes that are either worn out or never were returned. About thirteen members participated in the "give-a-pen-take-a-pen" grab at the meeting. An impressive and varied selection were exchanged and discussed. See our photos.

We had a lengthy discussion on shop safety with "war stories" and tips. Reid told about a piece of found wood, that was of varying density, blew up on the lathe and broke his tool rest. Chris warned not to hold something in your drill press freehand unless you like to hurt yourself. Dick warned to make sure the lathe remote speed control is right side up so when you think it is at zero it is, instead of upside down and 3,000 rpm. Phil warned not to put your finger between your grinding wheel and the shroud unless it is unplugged. The grinder, not your finger! Peter warned to always wear safety glasses. Mike warned not to hold the piece when cutting off the nub at the bottom with a carving tool. You could lose a digit that way. Other tips included cautions to watch out for paper joints that split apart. I think basically it can be said to use your noggin for something other than a backboard for flying wood. Think aHead.

*Bob Iuliano*



Items from the Pen Swap



Rare photo of Bob I. in a quiet moment (would you believe it??).



Boy! Here I was afraid they wouldn't have anything to say! This is not gonna end!



Shop safety...sure..is... interesting....ZZZZZZZZ.



Hmm...where does Bob get all this bullshit?



"First liar never has a chance!"



"How the hell am I going to describe this in the next newsletter?"

low under "From Worcester MA".

**From Worcester MA:** Drive south on Rt. 140 or Rt. 122. These roads merge in Grafton MA, and then re-split. Lake Ripple will be on your left when the roads split. Continue on Rt. 140 for 6.9 miles. The only tricky part is when you are driving through the town center of Grafton, where the road turns left in front of the library. After 6.9 miles you will come to a stoplight at the corner of 140 and West Main St. Follow the instructions below (From Northern MA), starting with the right turn onto Mendon St. after 0.3 miles.

**From Northern MA** (North of Mass Pike): Drive south on Rt. 495 until you get to Exit 21B (Upton Exit). Turn right at the bottom of the ramp and drive west on West Main Street until you reach the 2nd traffic light, which is at the corner of Rt. 140. Turn left (south) onto Rt. 140 and drive for 0.3 miles. Take the first right onto Mendon Street and drive for 0.8 miles. Turn right onto West River Street. There are two entrances to West River Street that are located on either side of a house on Mendon Street. Drive 2.1 miles on West River Street. You will cross the West River at one point. After 1.8 miles (or so) you will see a street sign saying that you are now on Moonhill Rd. Don't Panic! You are not lost (yet). Our house is on the border of Northbridge and Upton, so at this point you will see some mailboxes with numbers that are rising (192, 194, 196 and 198), while other numbers are in the 400's. Our house is on the left side of the road, blue, and set back in the forest. There are 198 signs on the mailbox, and on a wooden sign on a tree next to the driveway.

**From Rhode Island:** I don't have exact mileages for this route, but it is more direct than heading north on 495. Take Rt. 146 North until you get to the Sutton/Northbridge exit which is called the Central Turnpike. Proceed east on the Central Turnpike towards Northbridge. When you come to the intersection with Rt. 122. Turn right onto 122 and then an immediate left onto Sutton St. which ends at Quaker St. Turn right onto Quaker St. and proceed until you can turn left onto Moonhill Rd. See the section above about how we are located on a town border. If you have questions feel free to call me at 508-234-3188.

Reid Gilmore

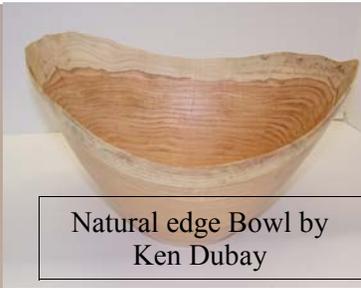
**Annual Picnic \* Sat., August 10, '04**  
**Travel Instructions to Reid Gilmore's**  
**198 West River Street, Upton, MA**  
**(508)-234-3188**

**From Eastern MA:** Take the MASS Pike west to Exit 11A, the exit for Rt. 495. Proceed south on Rt. 495. Follow the instructions below under "From Northern MA"

**From Western MA:** Take the Mass pike East to Exit 11 (Millbury). At the end of the exit ramp turn right onto Rt. 122. Drive on Rt. 122 until this merges with Rt. 140. Follow the instructions be-



Vase by Ken Dubay



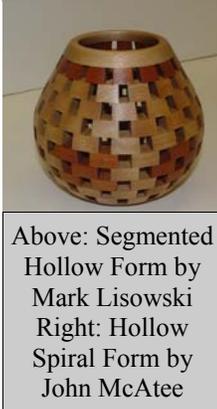
Natural edge Bowl by Ken Dubay



Manzanita Root Bowl by Ken Lindgren



Above: Two Bowls by Frank White



Above: Segmented Hollow Form by Mark Lisowski  
Right: Hollow Spiral Form by John McAtee



Four Hollow Forms by Frank White

# July 2004 Show & Tell



Left: Richard DiPerna

Center: Al Fauls

Right: Steve Resnek



Natural Edged Bowls by Joe Harbey



Nested Bowls by Ken Dubay



Box by Reid Gilmore



Bowl by Rick Gonzalez



Rick Gonzalez describes his bowl



Below left: Charles Turnage and Steve Reznek observing the Show & Tell



Three Bowls by Graeme Young



Pictures courtesy of Emilio & Vicky Iannuccillo

We are always looking for articles, book & video reviews, etc. Send them via mail or email (see page 2) to the Editor. The deadline for ALL inclusions to the monthly newsletter is the 15th

## Coming Events

### Sat., August 10, 2004 Annual CNEW Picnic.

12 Noon. See page 4 for directions to Reid's.

Sat., August 14, 2004 Luke Mann Demo sponsored by ART. Demo to be held at the Middlesex Community College in Bedford MA.

### Oct 30,31 Adirondack Woodturners Symposium

Empire State Plaza Convention Center. 518-753-7759 or [kevans1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kevans1@nycap.rr.com) for information.

### Thurs. Sept. 2, 2004 CNEW Meeting

Deep hollowing of vessels by Peter Teubel

### Thurs. Oct. 7, 2004 CNEW Meeting

Christmas ornaments and other small turnings by Frank White.

### Thurs. Nov. 4, 2004 CNEW Meeting

Pepper mills by Dennis Daudelin and George Whippen.

### Thurs. Dec. 2, 2004 CNEW Meeting

Annual Holiday Party with gift swap.

## Book Reviews

*Woodturning Projects: A workshop guide to shapes*

Mark Baker

Guild of Master Craftsman Publications

ISBN 1-86108-391-2

*Woodturning - A Fresh Approach*

Robert Chapman

Guild of Master Craftsman Publications

ISBN 1-86108-119-7

At first glance these two books are very similar. Both have a short first chapter on wood and tools, followed by chapters on turning boxes, bowls, hollow forms and natural edge work. Both provide detailed instruction on how to approach each type of piece, then show more examples of the same type.

Beyond the overall structure however, the two books are quite different. Baker gives detailed in-

structions for the first piece in each chapter, then shows a number of other pieces of the same type with only minimal instruction accompanying each. Chapman gives detailed instructions for each piece but includes fewer in each chapter, and the gallery section at the end of each chapter is largely variations on the same pieces. I found Chapman's instructions more useful, including the best explanation I have seen yet of how to approach a hollow form.

For each of his full explanations, Baker uses about thirty small photographs with a sentence or two on each, describing each step in the process. This is the same style as used in *Woodturning magazine*, which is not surprising as Baker is editor of that magazine. Chapman uses fewer, larger photographs but spends a lot more time explaining the tricky bits, like the importance of getting past the rim of a natural edge piece in one go. I found Chapman's explanations much more helpful.

Both authors have their peculiarities. Both advocate using a screw chuck for roughing out a bowl - without tailstock support! Chapman uses a traditional grind on his bowl gouge, holding it upside down for a shear cut, and considers reverse chucking a new-fangled novelty. Baker *starts* sanding the inside of a box at 400 grit! I usually call it a day at 240.

Of the two, I found Chapman's book much more useful because of the discussions on how to use the tools and advice on turning the more difficult bits. Baker would be more useful if you were interested primarily in a range of design ideas - I found some of the pieces seriously lacking in explanation as to how they were achieved.

Graeme Young

## 25th Anniversary of the Provo Symposium

In June, your editor was fortunate enough to be able to attend this event in Provo, Utah. Sponsored by *Craft Supplies USA* and *Brigham Young Univ.*, it can be described in one word: "**Humbling**".

(Continued on page 8)

The CNEW SKEW

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Central New England Woodturners

A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners



**We're on the Web!**  
[www.cnew.org](http://www.cnew.org)

Fold line

# Provo, Utah Symposium

*(Continued from page 7)*

Many of the world's foremost woodturners were there and presented some wonderful demonstrations. Aptly titled: "*Beneath the Bark*", the symposium honored the many presenters over the history of the symposium. Their work as displayed was truly astonishing in both its scope and workmanship. It was impossible to attend all of the presentations in each of thirteen rotations. I managed to attend eleven and parts of four others. What a difficult choice! See the pictures at the right.



Dale Nish



Allan Batty



Niko Siragas



Jacques Vesary



Giulio Marcolongo



Richard Raffan



Rolly Munroe



Siragas' Work



Richard Raffan



Stuart Mortimer & Blank before and 45 Min. after!

