

The CNEW Skew

Copyright © 2005 Central New England Woodturners

Volume 18 Issue 8

August 2005

Editorial

There isn't very much to the newsletter this month because I have received very little material to put in it. In case anyone is unclear on the concept, the *editor* of a publication (me) does not actually write the entire publication. The bulk of the material is produced by *writers* (that would be you). The editor's job is to correct spelling & grammar and to make the material fit nicely on the pages, removing, rearranging and occasionally adding material as necessary. This division of labour allows the editor to grumble about writers who consistently miss deadlines and produce vast quantities of flowery and stultifying prose, while the writers can complain about an editor who consistently mangles eloquent essays down into little more than classified ads. This way, everyone has someone to blame and everyone is happy.

So what should you write about? Anything vaguely related to woodturning will do - and I do mean vaguely, just look at some of my past editorials. If you have no idea where to begin, see if any of the following paragraphs start you thinking. If you feel you can't write well enough to produce a publishable article, send me your ideas anyway. I can expand it or come back to you for more details until we have an article – and it doesn't have to be three pages long either. Then you get the credit for the ideas and I get the blame for the poor presentation.

Anybody been to Kansas recently? What were the most interesting and useful aspects of the symposium? Did you attend any particularly good (or bad) demonstrations? What made them stand out? Anything new and interesting at the trade show? What was your overall impression – is the AAW doing the right things or is it becoming less relevant to you?

Some of us were at the demonstration by Jean-François Escoulen in Rhode Island recently. Surely I can't be the only one with an eccentric chuck. Which one(s) do you

have and what do you use it for? What is it good at and what is it not good at? If you have one but don't use it, what did you think you would use it for when you bought it and what happened?

If you missed the Escoulen demo, maybe you saw Graeme Priddle at Ken Dubay's place. Anyone do pyrography? Carving? Other forms of surface decoration? What do you do with it and how long does it take to complete a piece? How much equipment would someone need to start with?

I'm sure most of us have a few unusual tools lying around the shop. Which ones turned out to be surprisingly useful? Which looked useful but now just sit around gathering dust? Anyone have a reliable way of sharpening skews? None of the methods I've tried are terribly repeatable and most produce a bevel with as many facets as a well-cut diamond.

Taken a class recently? Was it a one-day group session, a week of intensive 1:1 teaching, or what? What did you learn? Who gave the class? Would you recommend the class to others and why?

Contents

Editorial	1
Club Officers	2
Upcoming Events	2
Next Month's Program	2
Microwave Drying	3
Library Additions	4
Picnic Photos	5

Club Officers and Contact Info for 2005

President, Ray Boutotte
 VP, Internal, Bobbi Tornheim
 VP, External, Reid Gilmore
 Secretary, Tim Elliott
 Charlie Croteau
 Treasurer, Richard DiPerna
 Newsletter, Graeme Young
 Video Librarian, Al Faul
 Book Librarian, Wayne Moore
 Webmaster, Dave Eaton
 Photography, Emilio & Vicky Iannuccillo

president@cnew.org
 internal_vp@cnew.org
 external_vp@cnew.org
 secretary@cnew.org

 treasurer@cnew.org
 newsletter_editor@cnew.org
 video_librarian@cnew.org
 librarian@cnew.org
 webmaster@cnew.org
 photography@cnew.org

Upcoming Events

Fuller Craft Museum

October 22nd – February 19th
 Rude Osolnik exhibition.
 455 Oak Street
 Brockton, MA 02301
 Tel: 508-588-6000
www.fullercraft.org

Totally Turning 2005

October 15th and 16th
 Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany, NY.
 Featured presenters will be Stuart Batty, Nick Cook and Andi Wolfe.
 Ken Evans/Mike Kross
 Co-Chairpersons
 Tel: 518-753-7759
www.totallyturning.com

Fifth Annual Florida Woodturning

Symposium

January 13th – January 15th, 2006
 At Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center just north of Eustis in central Florida.
 Featuring Bob Rosand, Cindy Drozda, Phil Brennion and Frank Sudol.
 Cost \$95
 Frank Sospenzi, Chairman 352-746-5805
fsos@digitalusa.net
 John Russell, Registrar 863-424-7941
jrusse6@tampabay.rr.com
www.floridawoodturningsymposium.com

Southwest Association of Turners (SWAT) Symposium

September 30th – October 2nd
 Three full days of demonstrations by such well known turners as Bonnie Klein, Malcolm Tibbets, Mark Sfirri and Alan Lacer.
 Wichita Falls, Texas
 Cost \$75
www.swaturners.com

September Program

The next meeting will be on Thursday September 1st beginning at 6:30pm, at the usual place. For the September meeting Charles Turnage will demonstrate turning fossils. There will also be Show & Tell following the regular business meeting so bring some of your recent work, assuming you have not spent all of the past few weeks at the beach!

Australian Burls For Sale

My name is Jim Syvertsen. I'm a woodturner, fellow AAW member, and recently started importing and selling burls from Australia. I find them to be among the most beautiful burls in the world and have a large variety to choose from. If you have a chance, take a look at my site at www.aussieburlsales.com or www.jimsyvertsen.com. I offer a 10% discount to first-time buyers.

Jim Syvertsen
 Chesapeake, VA
 757-816-5622
jsyvertsen@cox.net

Drying Wood in a Microwave Oven

Bob Howland

The object of drying any wood is to bring it from a green state to one of defined dryness in a *controlled* fashion. This can be done to wet bowl blanks by air drying using a number of methods to control the rate at which the moisture leaves the wood. Some of these are coating the wood with paste wax, painting the wood with greenwood sealer, placing the wood in a brown paper bag, and placing the wood in a pile of damp shavings. Drying time using these methods is usually 3 to 12 months depending on the wood species and thickness. If you are in a hurry you might want to try Microwaving. [Editor's note: In the interests of showing some of the variations possible, I have inserted a few comments to show how my microwave drying technique differs from Bob's. This is not to imply that one way is better than the other, just that as is often the case, there is more than one way to achieve the desired result. Bob's writing is in the usual Times New Roman typeface (like this) while my comments are in Gill Sans, like this.

Using a microwave oven, you can dry an 8 x 3 bowl, roughed out to 1 inch thick, in one evening. You can also split wood beyond usefulness and start a wood fire in your kitchen unless certain methods are followed. Note that the microwave method will (usually) get the piece dry without cracking, but it will not prevent warping. In fact, with a thin piece you can sometimes use this technique to make the wood warp *more* than it otherwise would. Here is what I have developed over time using trial and error methods:

1) NEVER, NEVER use full microwave power. This can overheat the piece and set it ablaze. Instead, use the defrost setting or 30% depending on your oven controls. The microwave I use only has two power settings (on and off) but is very small and about as low power as you can get.

2) The size of the piece determines how long to nuke it. A good rule of thumb is to set the timer for one minute for each inch of blank diameter. As soon as the oven stops, take the piece out and let it cool down out of the oven. Handle with care! It can be very hot. I don't cook it for more than about a minute at a time, regardless of

the size. I generally leave it in the oven with the door closed to cool down. A good reason for keeping the cook time short: less temptation to wander off and allow the wood to catch fire.

3) As soon as the piece is completely cooled off, put it back in for another cycle. Repeat this as many times as necessary to get the piece dry. It is dry when it comes out of the oven hot, but no steam is visible. You can also weigh the piece to determine when it is dry: when it stops losing weight, it's dry. You need an accurate scale for this – I use one that is accurate to 1 gram. Or, wrap the piece in paper towel. When the towel comes out dry, the wood is dry too.

4) To control the rate of drying, you can coat the piece with wax or a greenwood sealer, but these materials do get cooked off and could contaminate your oven. Microwave pizza that tastes like cheese, sausage, and bowling alley wax is pretty awful. The best way I have found to control drying is to wrap the piece in plastic wrap or seal it in a Ziplok bag. Steam may build up in the bag and pop it open, but it is a very small pop. I've never tried wrapping it in plastic but I do sometimes wrap it in paper towel.

Quick review:

- Wrap piece in plastic or place in a Ziplok bag.
- Microwave at 30 or on defrost.
- Use 1 minute per inch of blank diameter.
- Remove and cool blank outside of the oven.
- Repeat cycle until no steam is seen coming from the blank.

I sell unique bowl turning stock--thick, wide elm, cherry, etc. I have a new website that gives some examples at www.quartersaw.com. I am also willing to custom saw my own logs into any thickness for turning--red and white oak, hard maple, ash, cherry, red elm, eastern cedar, birch, etc.

Jim Gregory
220 Wilber Road Box 739
Schoharie, NY 12157
518-295-7716
foxview@midtel.net

New Videos Dave Eaton

Our video library continues to grow with new selections. If you haven't rented a VCR tape or a new DVD you don't know what you're missing. There is a ton of interesting information on these volumes and many contain project ideas or techniques that will pique your imagination. You can modestly entertain yourself watching or educate yourself. Some can even help you fall asleep at night! Whether you are a green bowl turner, segmented bowl tuner, ornament, pen, spindle, box, platter, hollow vessel or other kind of turner, there's sure to be a video that will interest you. Check out the updated listing on the website at http://www.cnew.org/video_list.htm then see Al Faul, our video librarian to rent one or two. The latest additions include:

Turn Around with Jimmy Clewes

CNEW # 90 DVD - 133 Minutes.

Jimmy is an internationally known professional woodturner and teacher who has a great ease of style to his turning and teaching. In this DVD he shows spindle turning, turns an endgrain vase, colors a platter and turns an exotic oyster box. It is easy to see what he is doing due to multiple camera angles and almost any turner will learn from this presentation. This is an interesting DVD.

Open Bowl Turning with David Ellsworth

CNEW # 91 DVD - 105 Minutes. (We now have this in DVD & Tape).

The classic highly informative Ellsworth video where David shows in plain and simple manner how to turning an open bowl from green wood. This video also covers sanding, jam chucks, sharpening, faceplate design and function.

Two Ways to Make a Bowl by Mahoney & Batty

CNEW # 92 DVD - 75 Minutes. (We now have this in DVD & Tape).

This video is taped in front of a live audience at the Pasadena AAW Convention. It shows there is more than one way and style to turn a bowl. These two are professional woodturners and share their respective techniques in this informative and sometimes humorous presentation. The topics covered include: Five Basic Rules of Woodturning, Proper tool grinding, Push Cut vs Pull Cut, Drying, and other Helpful Tips. This DVD is useful for beginners as well as experienced turners.

From Tree To Table by Mike Mahoney

CNEW # 93 DVD - 72 Minutes. (We now have this in DVD & Tape).

Mike shows how to make functional plates and bowls from green wood to finished product. Locating wood, cutting blanks, turning, drying, sanding and finishing are all covered in detail. He includes tips and tricks to please both the beginner and the advanced woodturner. Design, vacuum chucking and coring are also covered. This is a pretty good video for those interested in turning green wood.



Baby Zoe Boutotte



Hummingbird feeder by Al Faul



Al Faul's cane



Reid Gilmore's Gnome

*Photographs from the Picnic
by
Emilio Iannuccillo*



Piñata filled with woodturning goodies



Plant stand
by
Joe Harbey



Flowers by Emilio





Baby Rattle
by
Joe Harbey



**CENTRAL NEW ENGLAND
WOODTURNERS**

Central New England
Woodturners
c/o Worcester Center for Crafts
25 Sagamore Road
Worcester, MA 01605

Phone: 508-753-8183
Fax: 508-797-5626
Email: treasurer@cnew.org



*Central New England Woodturners
A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners*



On the web: www.cnew.org
