



North Carolina **WOODTURNER**

Journal of the North Carolina Woodturners Association
A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

Volume 13, Number 8

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Wooden Hats by Chris Ramsey
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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Ron Mechling

Last month's meeting was a different pace from recent meetings. It started with a 10:00 am, pre-meeting training session. Would you believe that we had seven lathes running at one time in the normal meeting area, plus our new grinder and the Wolverine Sharpening system that was given to us by Packard Woodworks. Everything went well. Each of the students had hands-on experience whether they were turning a bowl or learning the basics of hollowing.

Many thanks to those members who brought their lathes: Phil Grebel, Ron Mechling, Dwight Hartsell and The Woodworking Shop for providing a Delta lathe as well. As for the instructors, we'd like to thank David Kaylor, Dwight Hartsell, Dean Amos, Sam McDowell, Edgar Ingram, John Winslett, and me.

We achieved all our objectives in the training session, got tremendous, positive response from the students (members of our club), and plan to do a follow up session on the second Saturday of November.

At the 1:00 pm, regular session, Matt Birchfield demonstrated his thin walled lampshade. All of us were fascinated by Matt's techniques and ability to achieve a lampshade during the meeting.

I checked around to see if we had any casualties after the meeting, and we had none. Even Jesse Wilkinson survived. As many of you know, Jesse is our Property Manager and dutifully

sets up every meeting and oversees the cleanup after each meeting. This job requires the most effort in our club and we need to recognize Jesse's efforts. Please thank him.

The Board met during lunch at the last meeting and discussed a number of issues including safety during our meetings. After reviewing our insurance and discussing some recent accidents at other clubs, we decided to procure a Lexan shield to protect the attendees of our meetings from flying debris. We will also consider incorporating our association to protect the officers and members from personal liability.

Our insurance is provided by the AAW and is for "third party" liability, which protects our club, AAW and members of AAW from claims brought by visitors, a passerby or someone watching a demonstration. The AAW has further stated that "coverage protection is only for those individuals who are members of AAW." (This does not cover individuals giving lessons in their own shops) A prudent thing to do is to become a member of AAW. See Mary for information.

We understand that a new North Carolina Chapter of AAW is being formed in or near Cullowhee, N.C., which is about an hour south of Asheville. We'll give you more information as we learn about it.

Chris Ramsey will be demonstrating the fine art of hat making at our meeting on August 9 at 10:00 am. The Board will meet at lunch time ... BYOL.

Keep on turning, Ron

2003 Carolina Woodturning Symposium

This event will feature local and regional demonstrators and is designed to promote the craft of woodturning as well as renew the goodwill of woodturners and prospective woodturners throughout our region. The mission of this event is to provide an environment for networking and education for members of the regional woodturning community and for promotion of the art and craft from the lathe. Through active demonstrations we hope to provide avenues for expansion in one's woodturning, as well as introducing non-turners to the craft.

The 2003 Carolina Woodturning Symposium will be held on Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday, November 1st and 2nd, 2003 at the Statesville Civic Center (located in the heart of Statesville). The registration desk will open at 10:00 AM in the lobby of the Civic Center. There will be two rotations of four demonstrations on Saturday. The first rotation is scheduled from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM and the second rotation is scheduled from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM. Three rotations of four demonstrations are scheduled for Sunday. The first Sunday rotation is scheduled from 9:00AM to 11:00 AM. The second rotation is scheduled from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM and the third is scheduled from 2:15 PM to 4:15 PM. There will be a vendor exhibit, featuring vendors from throughout the southeast. There will be lathes, tools and wood for sale. Make sure to leave time to visit the vendor exhibit. The vendor exhibit will be open at 11 AM on Saturday.

Demonstrations will include:

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| Scott Ollis | Square Bowls |
| Bruce Hoover | Innovative Sanding Techniques & Ornaments |
| Frank Penta | Turning and Detailing Platters |
| Elvie Jackson | Natural, Top Hollow Vessels & Fluting Hollow Vessels |
| Ric Erkes | Turning Basic Bowl/Natural Edge Bowl Turning |
| Joel Hunnicutt | Segmented Turnings |
| Tom Crabb | Turning A Multi-Axis Piece |
| Chris Howarth | Spheres |
| Brooks Johnston | Boxes |
| David Woodruff | Finishing Techniques |

The next newsletter will include more demonstrator information.

We will feature an instant gallery similar to those of the national symposia. Attendees are encouraged to bring up to 3 pieces. The instant gallery is open to the public.

The Future Business Club at Mitchell Community College will have snacks available on Saturday. They will also have lunch on Sunday for an additional fee. Reservations for Sunday lunch may be made by including payment in addition to symposium registration fee. Keep your eye open for the registration brochures in the mail.

NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 9th at 10:00 am

Coming Events - by Ric Erkes

Aug. 9 - Thin is in. At least for one more month. Chris Ramsey will be demonstrating his hat making techniques for us in August. Chris turns hats of many styles and all are works of art. Take a look at his web site, and you'll see why his hats are in some of the finest galleries around. The meeting will run from 10 - 4. www.knot-head.com

- Sept. 13 - Phil Brennon - southwestern style instructions.
- Oct. 11 - Charles Farrar (tentative).
- Nov. 1st & 2nd - 2003 Carolina Woodturning Symposium.
- Nov. 8 - Hands-on demo.
- Dec. 13 - Christmas party.

The 'hands on' portion of July's meeting was well received by all those that participated. For those of you who were not able to make it, we have decided to schedule another hands on demo for our regularly scheduled November meeting. Since the symposium is the first weekend of November, we were not planning on a regular 2nd Saturday meeting. We will use that meeting time, from 1-4, to provide another instructional opportunity. A sign up sheet will be posted in the next few months. I would like to thank those of you who volunteered to instruct and also those who provided the lathes.

I am starting to fill in the schedule for next year's demonstrators. If you have a topic you would like to see please email me. I also need for someone to think about replacing me for the year 2005. I would like to assist this person in scheduling 3 demonstrators for next year to make the transition a little easier.

2003 Challenge Projects (challenge entries will be printed on the color pages of the next newsletter)

- August - Something whimsical.
- September - Mushrooms.
- October - Whistles.
- November - Bring your gallery pieces to the Symposium.
- December - Bring your gallery pieces to the annual Christmas party and auction.

Library News - by Mary Bachand

A special thank you to Bruce Whipple for taking care of the library for me. — Surprise!! The long ago ordered videos from Craft Supplies finally arrived. So-"Bowls for Beginners" and "A Course on Spindle Turning" both by Ray Jones will be available at the August meeting.

Member News - by Mary Bachand

Please welcome returning member Mark Sakatos of Newton, NC and new member Joe Morris of Glade Valley, NC. — I truly missed being with each of you at the July meeting. I promise to be in cookie baking form and will try to make-up for the last two months so watch your calories the week before the meeting.

Other Symposia - Tennessee Association of Woodturners 16th Annual Symposium, August 22nd – 24th, 2003, featuring Frank Sudol, Lyle Jamieson, Dave Collier, Bobby Clemons, and Willard Baxter, at the Woodshop at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, TN. For registration information, call Bill Gray at 615-269-0049 or email at bgray1@mindspring.com.



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Demonstrator Review - by David Kaylor

Matt Birchfield attributes his love of turning to his teacher, our May demonstrator Mark St. Leger. Those who have seen Mark at work appreciate the economy of movement and material in his act of turning. Matt has obviously learned much from Mark, including the insight that one can devise a technique and design a tool to accomplish whatever one can imagine.

Matt got his inspiration for turning lampshades from seeing Johannes Michelsen demonstrate his hat-turning techniques. When Michelsen turned off the house lights and turned a hat thin enough for light to come through, Matt thought "lamp shade!" He had been wanting something that was uniquely his own, and he turned more than one hundred lamp shades before he kept one or told anyone about them.

Matt's favorite wood for turning shades is poplar, although almost any wood can work. His least favorites are wild cherry and black walnut. Some woods become translucent when turned green and lose that quality as they dry. He had with him a natural edge ash which had lost its translucency. He thinks that if he had turned it thinner, it might have worked.

He began his demonstration with a piece of poplar limb between centers. Fresh-cut wood is preferred, the fresher the better. Using a roughing gouge, with lathe at relatively slow speed, he tapered approximately half the length of the log toward the tailstock, forming a tenon to accept a chuck. The end of the log was squared with a gouge, and the shoulder of the tenon was squared with a parting tool. The tenon end will be the top of the lampshade. Matt explained his technique of keeping the gouge handle against his hip and using his body movement to control the movement of the gouge. Finding the gouge a bit dull, he honed it with a small diamond stone, explaining that he grinds very little and keeps his tools sharp by honing most of the time.

He chucked the piece, so that now the top of the shade is now at the spindle, and it will remain in this position for the rest of the turning. He explained that he often uses a face plate rather than a chuck. When he does he uses lots of long screws, which means he loses more wood. For that reason he uses a chuck on smaller items. He brings up the tailstock for support and continues to shape the outside of the lampshade, still using the roughing gouge. He gives the final shape to all the lampshade, except for the few inches that will be the actual top. He squares the bottom of the lampshade (at tailstock end), making sure he has a clean cut for the final bottom edge of the piece, which he will not touch again.

Before hollowing the shade, he does the final tool work on the outside, using a homemade scraper, held vertically. He keeps the handle low, against his hip, gently touching the surface and removing extremely fine bits of wood, too fine to call shavings. With this technique he avoids using any sandpaper at all.

With a bowl gouge he begins removing waste wood from inside,

leaving a post for the tailstock until he has reached the optimum depth for the bowl gouge. Removing the tailstock and breaking off the post, he used the bowl gouge to make a recess to center a one-inch twist bit chucked in the tailstock.

Using a homemade hook tool, Matt rapidly removed waste wood, down to a wall thickness of about one inch. Then he more gently removed wood from the first few inches, leaving a wall about a quarter inch thick. He put a lamp on the outside, with a small halogen bulb, which he explained is cooler than an incandescent. He warned that you must not let the piece stand still long or the heat will cause it to warp. To get the wall thickness on this part of the shade, he might use a bowl gouge or a scraper, depending on which works best on a particular piece of wood. On this one he first used the bowl gouge, then switched to a scraper. Leaving extra thickness on the rim, he continued to remove wood until the light shone through. He determines the final thickness of the piece not by measuring but by listening to the sound and by observing the color and brilliance of the light shining through.

His technique for scraping was similar to the one used on the outside, but with a tear-drop scraper blade. With the handle on his hip, the scraper is held high and almost vertical, just gently touching the wood, and removing the finest of particles.

He continues this process, step by step until he has formed the inside to the depth corresponding to the portion of the outside which had received its final shape. With his hook tool he hollowed the remaining internal portion its final contour and finished it with the tear-drop sheer scraper. Then putting the light on the inside he moved to the outside. He removed wood until the light shone through, and sheer scraped that portion. Cutting with a parting tool until the light is almost white, he almost parted the piece, but to avoid damaging it he used an exacto saw for the final cut.

Since time was running out, he only explained how would finish it. Instead of sandpaper he used a mixture of dishwashing soap and water applied with a Scotchbrite pad. He applies Watco danish oil over a period of 2 weeks, for a total of 15 to 20 coats.

Matt gave an informative and inspiring demonstration. I was especially impressed with the method of sheer scraping and the expertise he demonstrates in using it. That to me was an aesthetic experience in itself. While most of us might not want to turn more than one hundred lampshades before we get one to keep, Matt's demonstration can inspire different approaches to bowl turning as well. His tool-making is also worth learning from. I recommend watching the video for clearer instructions on how to do it.

From the Editor - sometimes we don't realize what we have until it's missing. Unfortunately our photographers were absent during the July meeting, so we are without demonstrator and gallery photos in this newsletter. Feel free to start submitting your own articles, ideas, book or video reviews, tool tips, etc., to help this newsletter stay informative.

Remember, our meetings are always at 1:00 on the second Saturday of the month at Klingspor's Woodworking Shop in Hickory unless otherwise noted in the Journal.

NEXT MEETING: August 9th at 10:00 am