



North Carolina **WOODTURNER**

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

Volume 15, Number 02

February 2005



January Challenge Winner - Cherry And Walnut
by J.D. Reinhardt

Visit us on the web at www.geocities.com/nc_woodturners

THE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

By David Kaylor

I want to thank the members of the club for trusting me to serve as your president for the next two years. I owe a great deal to the club for what I have learned during the past six years. I joined as a novice in August 1998, and much of my progress in turning has come directly or indirectly from my association with the members and activities of North Carolina Woodturners. I will do my best to continue the excellent leadership of those who have been president during my time as a member: Jack Stewart, Edgar Ingram, John Winslett, and Ron Mechling.

We began the year on a sad note: the unexpected death of John Winslett. His dry wit and his willingness to assist in any way possible to facilitate the work of NCW have been much appreciated and will be greatly missed.

We all owe a large debt of gratitude to Ron Mechling for his outstanding leadership during the past two years. Chief among his accomplishments was our inaugural Woodturning Show and Competition in October. The event was a great success, due in large part to Ron’s initiative and encouragement of all of those involved.

We have a full year ahead of us, including our biennial Symposium to be held in November, in conjunction with at least two other clubs. Success will depend on the willingness of our members to volunteer in various capacities, about which you will hear more during the next few months.

Our membership continues to grow, as we add a few more to our roll each

month. I want to encourage new members (as well as old ones!) to take full advantage of the opportunities NCW offers: (1) Ask any member to help you with questions or problems you are having with your work; we are all still learning, no matter how long we have been at it. (2) Make generous use of our library, faithfully maintained by Mary Bachand, which contains books, videos and DVDs on both general and specific aspects of our craft. (3) Take advantage of our free mentoring program; names are listed in our journal of those who have volunteered to offer this service. (4) Bring your work to share in the gallery each month; you will provide inspiration for others as well as get suggestions about how to improve your work--AND you will get a nice photo of your work, courtesy of photographer George Wunker. (5) Find the avenue for your own service to the club; you will derive more as you contribute more.

One of my goals for this year is to include all members in the various jobs that have to be done in order for all of us to gain maximum benefit from North Carolina Woodturners.

I wish all of you and yours a happy and blessed 2005.

David

2005 Demonstration Reviewers Wanted

Thanks to Ric Erkes for stepping up and writing the review for the January demonstration by J. T. Barker.

We need more volunteers for reviewing demonstrations this year. Contact John Uteck at 704-395-0728 or by email (john-uteck@carolina.rr.com) to sign up for a specific month.

Program Notes - by Ric Erkes

Ever notice how the pros seem to have a trick for doing just about everything. I’m finding woodturning to be no exception. While we often hear, ‘this is not the only way, just the way I do it’, sometimes there is a little jig or technique that makes ‘their way’ a pretty good way. For our next meeting, three of us, Ron Mechling, David Kaylor and myself will demonstrate three different projects that I know we could all come up with multiple ways of doing them. The projects will be a bottle stopper, a napkin ring, and a simple flower arrangement bowl. The overall goal of next month’s demo is to provide you with some practical projects while enhancing your turning skills. I think you’ll agree we will each present a methodology that just might save you a minute or two while you’re honing your skills. I can also think of other areas in woodturning where some of these techniques will carry over. For example, Ron’s bottle stoppers could easily translate into finials and lid handles. It’s an ambitious meeting, and hopefully we can fit it all in between 1:00 and 4:00.

NCW Calendar of Events

Feb. 12 - Ron Mechling (bottle stoppers); David Kaylor (napkin rings); Ric Erkes (flower arrangements).

Mar. 12 - Jim Miles - bowl demo.

Apr. 9 - Russ Fairfield - Polychromatic platters.

May 14 - Elvie Jackson - hollowing.

June 11 - John Penrod—lidded vessels.

November 5-6 - Carolina Symposium.

December - Holiday Festival.

Next Meeting: February 12th at 1:00 pm

Demonstrator: David Kaylor, Ron Mechling, and Ric Erkes

Demonstration: Napkin Rings, Bottle Stoppers, and Flower Arrangements



Meet at Klingspor’s in Hickory, 856 21st Street Dr. SE (828-326-9663)

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE FEBRUARY 25, 2004

Member News - by Mary Bachand

Our directory membership cut-off date is our February meeting. Then, I will make the new directory, fix new membership cards, and rearrange our name tag boxes. Be sure that you have paid by that meeting.

Please welcome these new members - Bill Roth of Elkin, NC; Steve Willis of Westminster, SC; and, Nell Landers of Mooresville, NC. Steve's dad, Russell, should have collected 5 free raffle tickets for bringing in Steve, and David Kaylor receives 5 free raffle tickets for introducing Nell.

This is the second year that Richard Aultman has brought a large bag of walnuts, ready for baking, as a gift. So in the upcoming months, as you eat cookies and cakes, you will know where I got the walnuts. Thank you again, Richard.

Library News - by Mary Bachand

A big THANK YOU to Lee French, John's wife, who helped me put the new address labels on all rentals.

As you will notice, all books have numbers on their spines and all videos have numbers on their ends. These numbers indicate their location in our storage cabinets. The numbers are also on our DVDs. I have bought a box for the DVDs as they get lost among the books. Again, thank you to Jack Freeman for doing all of the cataloging.

Some of you have outstanding rentals. Please return or mail to me at our new address.

Added to our video library are John Jordan's "The Aesthetics and Properties of Wood" (a 2 volume DVD set) and 2 videos by Curt Theobald "Segmented Patterns" and "Introduction to Segmented Turning".

2005 Challenge Projects

February - a gift for someone special.

March - scrap wood project.

April - Celebrate daylight savings time at 2 a.m. on the first Sunday of April - turn a clock or watch.

May - alternative materials - including tagua nuts or banksia pods (available at Klingspors), alabaster, or other.

June - plywood project.

July - 2x4's - use no more than one 8' long 2x4.

August - turn a bird, animal, fish, etc. - either multi-center turning, or multiple turnings joined.

September - then and now! Bring in one of your early turnings, and one of your recent ones.

October - wearables - something to wear.

November - Symposium Gallery.

December - birdhouse ornaments.



**From the
American
Association
of
Woodturners**

(www.woodturner.org)

Be sure and remind your members to register for the Overland Park, Kansas Symposium July 22 – 24 and to register young people 10 years old through 17 years old free if they are accompanied by a fully registered adult. Bonnie Klein will teach the youth hands on classes on 20 Jet Mini lathes donated by WMH Tool Group. 20 complete tool sets have been donated by Crown Tools, 20 Nova Precision Midi Chucks have been donated by Teknatool, and 20 face shields have been donated by Woodcraft. At the banquet, a drawing will be held, with the luckiest 20 registered youths winning a complete Jet lathe, chuck, tools, and face shield.

Want to learn something new about woodturning?

If you are interested in learning new skills, or improving the skills you have, contact one of these NCW members:

- * Dean Amos (Sandy Ridge, NC) 336-871-2916.
- * Gene Dampier (Banner Elk, NC) 828-898-6143.
- * Ric Erkes (Davidson, NC) 704-896-3302.
- * Edgar Ingram (Statesville, NC) 704-876-4576.
- * David Kaylor (Davidson, NC) 704-892-8554.
- * Glenn Mace (Mocksville, NC) 336-751-1001.
- * Sam McDowell (Statesville, NC) 704-871-9801.
- * Grant McRorie (Rutherfordton, NC) 828-288-9572.
- * Ron Mechling (Shelby, NC) 704-487-0506.
- * Jim Miles (Cornelius, NC) 704-661-0600.
- * Dick Nielson (Gastonia, NC) 704-864-1742.
- * Don Olsen (Lincolnton, NC) 704 735-9335.
- * David Propst (Valdese, NC) 828-437-4722.

... or see what's offered at one of these Woodturning Schools

Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts,
Gatlinburg, TN
865-436-5860
(www.arrowmont.org)

Ice House Center, Davidson, NC
(704) 892-7323
(www.icehousecenter.org)

John C. Campbell Folk School,
Brasstown, NC
1-800-FOLK SCH
(www.folkschool.com)

If you want to volunteer as a mentor, please contact John Uteck with your information to include in the newsletter.

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FEES ARE PAST DUE.
IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR 2005 DUES,
THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST COPY OF THE NEWSLETTER.**

Demonstrator Review

Turning Alabaster

by Ric Erkes

JT Barker broke new ground for our club in January by literally turning a piece of million year old ground. I have only seen a few completed pieces, and had never seen



Alabaster turned before. I had envisioned clouds of white dust covering everyone and everything along with chunks of rock flying out in all directions. For me at least, JT took some of the fear out of the unknown. With most new endeavors comes the inevitable outlay of funds. It seemed to me, other than the Alabaster itself, most of us have already made the required investment in tools, and as JT pointed out the skew is not required. Although I can imagine, mounting a 200-300 pound piece of Alabaster might require the optional winch. The price of the material does vary according to various factors, but JT's was delivered in the range of \$2.50/lb. It will take more than just a few pounds though to amount to much of a bowl. JT's pieces were examples of how to enlarge the piece by adding wooden trim elements.

Alabaster, a crystalline form of Gypsum, has some nice turning qualities. There is no grain structure, so you can cut both uphill and downhill equally well. It can be sanded to a highly polished sheen. The stone is translucent, and while it doesn't have grain, it does have stress lines and color variations similar to marble that add character and interest to a piece. Since it is a stone it doesn't move with temperature and humidity changes. Because it has been stabilizing for a few million years you don't have to wait another six months to finish turn it.

One drawback of Alabaster is that it is not found in the woods locally. There are numerous places in the country that supply Alabaster and a Web search for Alabaster supply will yield numerous hits. Unfortunately, just like ordering wood through a clearing house you might end up

with the dreaded 'leverite' variety of Alabaster. It has all the same characteristics of the 'leave her right there' variety of wood.

JT discussed ways of cutting the stone for the initial mounting on the lathe. Air chisels, a band saw and a bow saw are among some of the options. What ever you use, consider using a second hand blade to start with, since a good blade will quickly become a second hand blade. Hidden inside Alabaster might be a piece of quartz, which will make the cutting go even slower. When orientating the Alabaster on the lathe, its layering characteristic should be taken into account for the best visual effect. Once the Alabaster is mounted, it is very difficult to change the alignment of this layering.

One mounting option is the use of a pin chuck. A little hard to describe, but it looks like a dowel partially cut in half. On the flat half sits a pin whose diameter makes the diameter of the dowel complete. When inserted into a hole and twisted the pin shifts position and locks the pin chuck into place. (Do a Google image search for a pin chuck and you'll see a picture, saving me a thousand words.) JT suggests a carbide masonry bit to drill the hole into the Alabaster.

For our demo piece, JT used a waste block glued onto the bottom of the Alabaster similar in fashion to one glued onto wood. The recommended glue was Weldbond. This glue, available at Ace Hardware, has some flexibility when dry. This flexibility helps hold the bond between the movement of the wood and the non-movement of the stone. In addition, soaking the stone in this glue diluted with 3 parts water helps to penetrate and solidify imperfections.

The actual turning involved the use of scrapers to do the cutting. From my observation, it seemed the beefier the scraper the easier the cutting. Grinding a certain angle of bevel was not as important as just moving the tool handle up or down and finding the sweet spot where the cutting action was optimum. Cutting is a slow process void of the familiar large ribbons of shavings. The shavings were a fine gypsum powder. A good dust collector would quickly become a must have item in the shop. Since the stone does not give, all the cutting force must be directed back into the tool and tool rest to avoid breaking the stone or knocking it off the glue block. This required a careful non-aggressive approach to cutting the stone. The stone dust has a

tendency to dry out your hands, so protective gloves are recommended. Once the outside is shaped the inside is turned. Final thickness is a compromise between strength, fragility, weight, and aesthetics, all probably determined by skill and bravery. To work the piece down to its final thickness, work from the top going in sections down to the bottom.

JT added contrasting wooden rims and bases to his pieces. This may help the survivability of the piece if the rim got knocked, but primarily he adds the wood for the cosmetic accent. Because the bond is between wood and stone JT recommended building the rings with segmented pieces. The segments help minimize the movement of the wood. JT uses an Incra cutting jig to accurately make his segments. One of the most important elements of a good glue interface is to make sure the stone and the wood surfaces are as flat as possible.

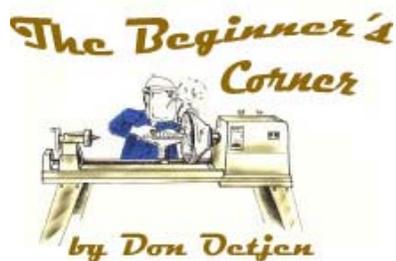
Sanding the stone seemed relatively simple if not easier than wood. A drywall sanding screen can even be used for the initial sanding. It is obvious that higher sanding grits could really put a nice sheen on the stone. A good dust mask is a necessity. Care is required to keep the stone dust from impregnating the pores of the wood. Mineral Spirits helps to clean out this stone dust.

Remember, the stone will not flex so reverse turning requires extra vigilance not to try and compress the stone. Jam chucking can work, but vacuum chucking is probably the best option.

A gel varnish can be applied to finish off the piece. Buffing with wax alone will also yield a nice finish. Since Alabaster is translucent, avoid too many coats of a finish like varnish that might yellow with age. Alabaster is not waterproof and will dissolve over time.

Nice job and thanks JT for taking the mystery out of this area of wood (stone) turning.





While we're waiting for our bowl to dry let's make a couple of tools and a jig that will be very helpful when it comes time to do the finish turning. These items are quite inexpensive to make.

It's pretty important to know just how deep the inside of the bowl is relative to the bottom of the outside. Many a turner has cut through the bottom of a bowl. There is no joy or pride in doing it only agony.

This is a piece of 1 x 2 about 22" long. Drill a 1/4" hole off center so



that there is wood 8" on one side and at least 14" on the other. These dimensions are for use with a 16" swing lathe. Buy a piece of 1/4" curtain rod about 10" long. Using a saber saw cut out some wood about 2" on either side of the hole. This will allow the wood to flex holding the rod tightly in position when the thumbscrew is tightened. In use the long side is placed across the bowl rim, the

rod is positioned to the desired depth by sighting along the bottom of the rod. Then move the jig so that the rod is on the inside. This will tell you how much more wood can be safely removed. Remember to true up the rim before taking this measurement and if you take any more cuts on the rim be sure to reset the rod.

The top scraper in the bottom picture has a short 10" handle with a 2" x 1/4" section of hardened steel but a piece of thin planer blade would work just as well. With it you can scrape the outside of a bowl and because the scraper can pivot you can scrape by moving the cutter in either direction. Sometimes the larger diameter will be close to the head stock and sometimes nearer the tailstock. Scrape uphill if you can. The rod is short only 4 1/2" for good control, 5/8 cold rolled steel. Use your grinder and a coarse file to

create the flat where the scraper rests. It should be smooth so the scraper can pivot easily. Grind a relief at the back to facilitate pivoting. Drill and tap for a 1/4 x 20 bolt.

The second scraper shown is useful for the inside of a bowl. Therefore it needs to have a long reach, 10" out of the handle. The handle needs to be long for good control in this case 19". The scraper itself was ground from a shaper blade purchased at Sears. Similar shear scraper cutters can be purchased from the catalogues. The cheapest I've seen is \$17. That's too much for me. Find an old planer blade and shape it using one of those fiberglass impregnated silicon carbide metal cutting discs then grind it to suit.

I'll bring these tools to the February meeting so you can see them.

Next month we turn the bowl and sand it, all but the bottom. In the April article I'll show you how to finish the bottom without using a vacuum system.

Each month Don will have tips, techniques and suggestions which will be of most interest to those members who are in the early stage of their turning career. If any member has a question or subject they would like to see covered send an e-mail to Don at donoetjen@aol.com.



JANUARY GALLERY - Photos by George Wunker

Dogwood



David Kaylor

Maple Burl



David Kaylor

Walnut crotch



Don Olsen

Lignum Vitae



Gary Ritchie

Apple



Russell Willis



Unknown (missing name card)



Unknown (missing name card)

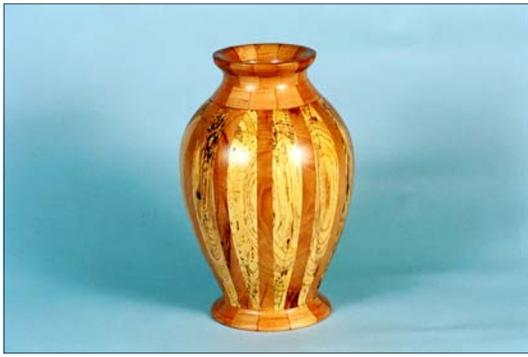


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JANUARY GALLERY

Photos by George Wunker



Unknown (missing name card)



David Kaylor

White Pine



Cherry

Gary Ritchie



Unknown (missing name card)



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OFFICERS

President: David Kaylor
Vice President: Ric Erkes
Treasurer: Glenn Mace
Secretary: Mary Bachand
Program Chairman: Ric Erkes (interim)
Journal Editor: John Uteck

(704) 892-8554
(704) 896-3302
(336) 751-4693
(828) 696-8372
(704) 896-3302
(704) 395-0728

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(Term exp. 2007) (828) 438-5026
(Term exp. 2007) (828) 728-3927

Past President: Ron Mechling (704) 487-0506

Journal Editor: John Uteck
11421 Brook Meadow Place, Charlotte, NC 28214
(704) 395-0728 john-uteck@carolina.rr.com

Internet: www.geocities.com/nc_woodturners groups.yahoo.com/group/new

Pine 2x4 from old family home



Don Hildebran

Spalted Dogwood Stump



David Kaylor

Walnut crotch "Cross & Chalice"



Don Olsen

Cherry / Walnut



Gary Ritchie

Wild Cherry



Edgar Ingram

Spalted Maple



Jack Edmonston

Spalted Maple



John French

Alligator-Juniper



Russell Willis

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: February 12th at 1:00 pm