



# *North Carolina* **WOODTURNER**

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

Volume 15, Number 12

December 2005



2005 Carolina Symposium - Instant Gallery  
Walnut and Cherry Hollow Form by Bill McInnis

*Visit us on the web at [www.geocities.com/nc\\_woodturners](http://www.geocities.com/nc_woodturners)*

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## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By David Kaylor

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Those of you who missed the Symposium missed a great time. Thanks to the hard work of many of our members, the 2005 Carolina Woodturning Symposium went well. As we were cleaning up, demonstrator Matt Birchfield commented to Glenn and me that he thought it was really an excellent event. Several other people spoke positively about their experience as well.

I hesitate to name names because I am bound to leave out someone, but I must thank several people who contributed significantly. Edgar Ingram did most of the local arrangements, including securing the Statesville Civic Center, which is an excellent facility at a very reasonable price. He also has served as treasurer for the event, obtained a person to make and sell T-shirts and caps, gave me good information and advice when I asked for it, and was always on hand during the entire event to help see that

everything worked out. Mary Bachand as usual was indispensable, serving as registrar, responding to emails, handling all the details at the registration during the show, and in general doing her best to keep us all in line; how could the club survive without her? Ron Mechling and Jack Freeman obtained the vendors for the show, and negotiated with them to supply lathes and equipment for the demonstrators. The vendors I spoke with all said it had been a good show for them and they were pleased with the results. Glenn Mace, assisted by Barb Ward, arranged for room assistants and the needed equipment in the demonstration rooms as well as the cleanup afterwards; that was a large job with many details, and it was very well done. Sam McDowell and his gracious wife Judy opened their home for a delightful evening of conversation and refreshments, providing a welcome much appreciated especially out of town guests. On behalf of the club, I thank you all, as well as those whom I haven't named who did your share.

I don't have the final figures yet, but Edgar was encouraged by his initial tally of the income and expenses. Attendance was down again, however, which might mean we have less money to provide the programs we want to have during the next two years. We will soon begin the planning for the next symposium, looking for ways to increase attendance and improve the event.

We have had lots of special events lately, and it seems a long time since we last had a regular meeting. Our December meeting will again be a special event, with our annual Christmas party as described elsewhere in this newsletter. I hope you can all attend, bringing your tools for the silent auction, and your good cheer for the holidays. Remember that we will have a brief business meeting to elect Board members (see last month's message for details). The Board will meet briefly at 11:30.

David

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### Membership

#### (raw and un-edited)

by Mary Bachand

Not too many years ago whenever we had a guest demonstrator, each member had to pay to attend the meeting. That admission fee helped to cover the expenses for having the guest. And--our members complained loudly. Then along came our symposium and the admission fees disappeared because we made a little from the symposium.

If the number of NCW members attending our November symposium is any indication, maybe we should give up the symposia and go back to charging for demonstrations. As our membership is 126, it is disgraceful that only 30 chose to attend. And--a good third of that 30 was so busy making sure that everything ran smoothly that I doubt if they were able to attend many of the sessions.

What's wrong folks? Many of you attend our meetings and rush out quickly leaving a faithful few to put away your chairs and pick up your coffee cups and other trash. What does it take to get you to participate?

It is my hope that we will have a wonderful turn-out for our December meeting. You know the meeting has been on your calendar all year so I hope that you'll come and have a good time.

### Library News

Remember the library special - don't bring back your rentals until the January meeting.

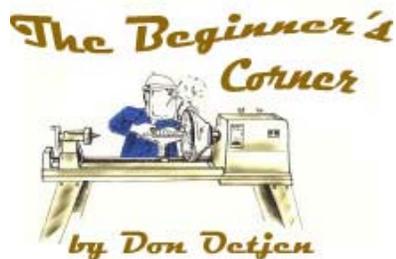
Available at the January meeting, we added a DVD to our library from one of the symposium demonstrators, Joe Ruminski.

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### 2006 Challenge Projects

- \* January - bottle stoppers, napkin rings, or flower holders.
- \* February - crotch turning.
- \* March - texturing, carving and finishes.
- \* April - polychromatic, layered, laminated, segmented, pegging, inlays, or stave construction.
- \* May - Alabaster turning (main challenge); natural edge bowl (secondary challenge).
- \* June - bowl (but not just any bowl -- make it "special", and tell us why!).
- \* July - hollowing.
- \* August - lidded vessels.
- \* September - toothpick holder or pen/pencil holder.
- \* October - goblet.
- \* November - Multi-center or offset turning.
- \* December - finials.



I attended the Klingspor Extravaganza on October 29<sup>th</sup> and I have a few observations that I hope will be of interest to you. First let me say that if you weren't there you should make a point to go next year. There were literally hundreds of turnings that you could examine for both their good and bad features. I was personally disappointed that I saw some pieces of work that were poorly done. In our booth and in those of the other clubs there was some work that should not have been on display. I am not talking about minor tear out or sanding scratches but flaws that I would call major.

My main criticism was that in some of the pieces little or no attention was paid to a carefully turned foot or bottom. On some the proportions of the work were out of balance. The foot was much too big for the size of the bowl or vessel and little thought seemed to have been given to making the base attractive. Some of the bowls were "clunky" with a non-uniform wall thickness. Now before you think I'm jumping on our less experienced turners let me assure you that turners who I'm sure regard themselves as accomplished did some of this work.

Apparently even a few experienced turners aren't comfortable with reverse turning. In the March 2005 article I showed you one way to safely reverse turn a bowl, giving complete access to the bottom to allow any design you might want. If you no longer have that article send me an e-mail and I'll forward a copy to you.

I don't think there is any design of bowl or vase that with advance planning can't be reversed turned. If you think you have one lets talk about it to see if we can come up with a solution. Or contact one of the mentors listed in the Journal. In any event don't stop turning on a piece before you do the complete job. To do otherwise is to cheat yourself.

A few of the hollow vases had rough insides. There is always a way to get inside a vase to smooth the surface to at least a long finger depth. You might need a

scraper with a bent end and if you do, you get one. If you don't want to go to the extra effort to smooth the inside then make the opening too small to allow a finger to be inserted. You can hollow from the bottom or make the top a separate piece.

I guess in this article I sound like a grouch but I truly can't help it. I absolutely hate to see a turning that shows carelessness or a lack of attention to detail when with just a few more cuts it could become a worthy piece. If your goal is to become a better turner you need to examine your own work from the perspective of form and finish and compare it to other work on display. One book that should be in your shop for frequent reference is Richard Raffan's *Turned Bowl Design*. Even if we have a copy in our library you should have your own so that you can often refer to it. Amazon.com has a new copy for only \$12.50

At one time we used to have a critique of pieces in our instant gallery for anyone who wanted it but as I remember it our members weren't comfortable with the open forum. Maybe we could make it a private discussion. If you are willing to have someone critique your piece take it to another member whose work you admire and ask him or her for an evaluation.

My goal in writing this harangue is to help make our club the best in the state. I don't believe the best is determined by having a few top turners but by having a whole lot of very good turners. As always, if you want to add your own thoughts to this subject send them to me and I'll see that they are published in a future article either with or without attribution, your choice.

*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 [donotjen@aol.com](mailto:donotjen@aol.com).*



## The Turning Point

by Ken Bachand

I don't suppose you're the least bit surprised that *turning point* is defined as that point at which a decisive change takes place. And if you were to write your life story, the highlights would focus on those times when things happened that turned your life in a certain direction. They were either good or they were bad. Sometimes they were the result of forces over which you had no control, while at other times they were the result of choices you made—forces and choices that put you where you are, made you what you are, and left you either glad or sad for it all

Now, as this is the time of year when the leaves have reached their turning point and are giving us that annual spectacle of reds and browns and golds, I'm reminded of "The Road not Taken," the poem by Robert Frost that tells of a traveler who one autumn morning came to a fork in the road, mused long over one leaf-strewn path and then decided to take the other, saying: *I kept the first for another day, yet knowing how way leads on to way, I doubted if I should ever come back.*

So it is with each of us. Either by circumstance or by choice we've followed certain paths and are either happy or sad with the result. And since woodturning is the thing that has brought us all together, I'll tell you about the turning point in my life that led me to woodturning and how that eventually contributed to my becoming a published author.

In 1981, because of a visual disability, I had to retire from public school teaching. But as I was just fifty years old with a big chunk of my life left to live, I wasn't ready to become a late-sleeping couch potato and decided to take up woodworking, a thing I'd always fancied but had never had the time to do. I bought myself a table saw, a drill press, a planer, a radial saw, a router, and one of those multi-purpose woodworking tools made in

Taiwan that looks like a *Shopsmith*. Within a few months I was making a variety of things to sell at craft shows. And though that multi-purpose tool had come with a set of five turning tools, for more than a year they remained in their box while I turned out a variety of things like breadboards, knife blocks, lazy Susans, and clocks.

Then one day a friend gave me a craft book that had a whole chapter on woodturning, and I was hooked. I unpacked those turning tools, stuck a piece of wood on a screw center, and.... Oh well, back to the book.

Believe it or not, I had attended a technical high school and apprenticed as a machinist, so I knew what to do with a metal lathe. But when you turn metal, you lock the tool in a fixed tool post, set the calibrations for depth and speed, switch on the power, lift the half-nut lever, and then just stand there and watch the shavings come off in long, finger-biting curls. But what the heck do you do with a woodturning tool? Even more perplexing was the fact that I didn't know a bowl gouge from a parting tool, and I'll bet the same thing happened to you.

Well, as I said, I was hooked, and so I picked up a tool, laid it across the tool rest, and stuck it to the wood. Should I bother to tell you what happened? Lucky for me the block of wood only caught me on the shoulder and not between the eyes, and so the lesson I learned first is that you don't start turning with a skew chisel and you sure as hell don't use one for roughing out a bowl blank! But amazing as it may seem, I did turn a pair of matching saucer-like candlestick holders, and from then on the only kind of woodworking that appealed to me was the kind you do with the work instead of the blade going around.

But my woodturning career got nipped in the bud when we made the decision to sell our home near the surf in Florida and build one on a mountaintop in North Carolina. And so

for the next four or five years, the only woodworking I did was felling trees with a chainsaw, cutting construction lumber for framing walls, building staircases and decks, and casing and trimming doors and windows.

In 1986 I noticed in *Fine Woodworking* that a new organization had formed out in San Marcos, Texas, called the American Association of Woodturners, and a year later I joined up. Then in the summer of 1990 I got a telephone call from a guy in Conover who was interested in starting a woodturning group in North Carolina, and so on September 4<sup>th</sup> of that year, eighteen of us met at Bradco Wood Products in Hickory and organized the North Carolina Woodturners Association. That night at a little restaurant near the shop, three of us appointed ourselves as the temporary board of directors and chose Tony Bradley, owner of Bradco Wood Products, as our president. As I had just written the bylaws for a property-owners association, I was "appointed" to do the same for NCW.

We got right down to business and had our first demonstrator on a Sunday afternoon in October. That was Dennis Stewart, designer of the Stewart System of turning tools. Before the year ended we had applied for our charter with AAW, and in January of 1991 we had our first all-day demonstration with about 100 would-be turning masters watching Rude Osolnik, the grandest of all the grand masters, work his magic in wood.

Later that year I became editor of what was then a one-sheet newsletter and



Natural-Edge Holly (14"Ø x 9" h)  
May 1995

within six months turned it into an eight-page journal with photographs and technical articles in every issue. Also that year, Mary, the idol of my life, the one who keeps you happy and smiling with cakes and cookies each month, became our librarian and later NCW secretary. (Without her, I don't believe either NCW or I would be doing quite so well.)

Let me say that thanks to all those dedicated fellow turners who provided me with wonderful things to print, our journal soon became a model for woodturning chapters throughout the country; and at the AAW symposium in New York in 1993, I was privileged to share the podium with Rick Mastelli, the new editor of the *American Woodturner*, in presenting a program on how to produce a quality chapter newsletter.

In the years that followed, I wrote articles that appeared in *American Woodturner*, *Woodturning* (the magazine published in England), and in *World of Wood*, journal of the International Wood Collectors Society.

In time our membership grew to more than 290, and several other woodturning chapters were started in North and South Carolina, the nucleus of each one coming right out of NCW.

In 1995, now working with a General 260 instead of that rickety multi-purpose tool, I turned twenty trophies for an international Bill-fishing tournament in the British Virgin Islands and thought I was on my way to at least modest success. But just a

year later, with my sight growing worse, I turned my last piece of wood, a pedestal vase from Norfolk Island pine. In 1997 I turned the editorship of the *North Carolina Woodturner* over to Bonner Guilford, who later passed it on to John Uteck, each of whom has made significant contributions toward keeping it as one of the finest chapter newsletters in the country.

I suppose then that the only claim to fame I really have is that I'm the only original member of NCW who has never let his membership lapse and am thus the longest-standing member of an AAW affiliated chapter in either North or South Carolina. And I also suppose that a dollar might get me a cup of coffee at a cheap restaurant.

So what does a guy do when he has to give up the thing he loves most next to his wife? I thought a lot about that and decided that since I'd been a history teacher, I'd start living it instead of teaching it. So for nearly a decade now I've been wearing the uniform of an officer in both the Union and Confederate armies and participating in Civil War reenactments both here in NC as well as in faraway places.

But as that involves little more than one weekend a month, I still had to deal with the fear of becoming a couch potato. And so as I had also been an English teacher, I fancied that I might just write a short story or two just to keep my brain from vegetating. Well, one short story turned into two good-size novels, the first of which was published earlier this year. I've since

written two others and am about halfway through a fifth.

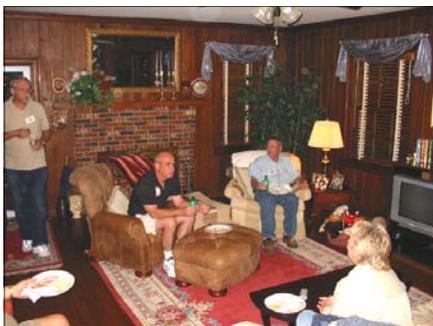
It really wasn't as big a switch as you might think, for it actually meant changing just one letter. You see, I'm now working with WORDS instead of WOODS. Best of all, I don't have to wear a mask or run a dust collector, and when I make mistakes, I can just erase them and start over.

(Editor's Note: Ken will have copies of his novel, *The Legend of the Big Rock*, for sale at our December meeting, and will give 10% of all sales as a donation to the club.)



Ken and Mary Bachand  
Battle of Bentonville, NC  
March 2005

**2005 Carolina Woodturning Symposium - Social Gathering**



### Sharpening Tips - Vari-Grind Templates

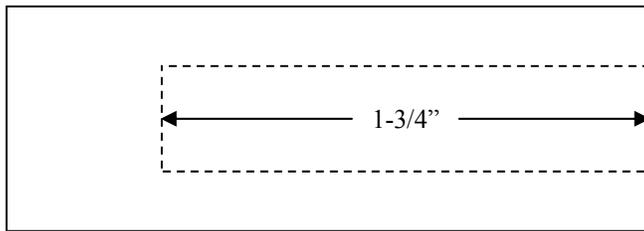
Presented by Joe Ruminski at the 2005 Carolina Symposium, and re-printed with Joe's narrative below. Joe can be contacted at Green River Woodworking in Fairview, NC, at 828-628-1738 or email [joe@GreenRiverWoodworking.com](mailto:joe@GreenRiverWoodworking.com).

When setting up the grinder for consistent sharpening with the One-Way Wolverine system, three things need to remain the same:

- 1: The distance the tool extends from the Vari-Grind;
- 2: The angle of the Vari-Grind arm; and,
- 3: The distance of the arm from the grinder.

The following templates assure that these stay the same. You may want to have different templates for different tools. I suggest that a person finds a grind that they really like and is efficient for them and then make the template that fits.

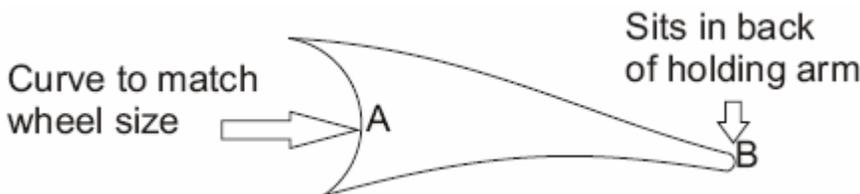
1. Drill a 1-3/4" deep hole in a block of wood, large enough for your gouge that will be used with the Vari-Grind. Slide the tool through the Vari-Grind and into the hole, placing the front surface against the edge of the block. When the tool is



touching the bottom of the block tighten the holding knob. Some people place a penny in the bottom of the holding block to keep it from wearing away. If you do this be sure to take that into consideration in making the hole depth.

2. The angle on the Vari-Grind arm sets the side angle as the tool is rotated. I prefer to keep my the same for both the spindle and bowl gouges, and have glued it in place. Many people mark a line on the Vari-Grind so they can set this different for different tools. This is a personal preferences.

3. The angle for the bevel is changed by how far the arm that holds the Vari-Grind is from the wheel. I made spacer sticks that will go between the wheel and the back notch of the arm. The reason for measuring from the back of the holding arm to the wheel is so as the wheel size changes, the bar moves appropriately.



As a starting point I use 6-1/4" for my spindle gouge, and 7-1/2" for my bowl gouge. Remember to make your template to fit what angle is working for you. The David Ellsworth bowl gouge is a completely different set up. You can make your templates to fit his measurements as well.

### 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.
- \* 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.

*... 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](http://www.arrowmont.org))

**Ice House Center**, Davidson, NC  
(704) 892-7323  
([www.icehousecenter.org](http://www.icehousecenter.org))

**John C. Campbell Folk School**, Brasstown, NC  
1-800-FOLK SCH  
([www.folkschool.com](http://www.folkschool.com))

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

### NEWSLETTER ARTICLES NEEDED

*REQUEST FOR PHOTOGRAPHS, REVIEWS, TIPS, FEEDBACK. SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH OTHER NCW MEMBERS*

*E-mail me at:  
[john-uteck@carolina.rr.com](mailto:john-uteck@carolina.rr.com)*

# *NCW Christmas Woodturning Festival*

## *December 10, 2005*



Location: First Presbyterian Church  
Hickory, N.C.

Time: 10:30 until 1:30 (bring tools for auction between 10:00 and 10:30)

Activities: BBQ chicken & pork lunch with variety of sides  
Silent and Active Auction for tools and supplies  
Turned Christmas decoration contest (judged by spouses)  
Door Prizes  
Lottery for Christmas Turnings  
Music by pianist  
And fun until you can't stand it anymore!

Reservations Please ... Call Mary Bachand – 828-890-4451 or Ken Phillips – 828-728-3927.

Directions to the First Presbyterian Church, Hickory

From I-40, take exit 125 (Lenoir-Rhyne Blvd.). From Statesville, go left two blocks, or from Asheville, go right two blocks to US 70. Turn right onto US 70 traveling west. At the intersection of Hwy. 127, (McDonalds on corner), turn right traveling north (on South Center Street). Continue on South Center St. into downtown Hickory. Cross railroad tracks to 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NW. Turn left on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NW, go 1 block to 2<sup>nd</sup> St. NW. Church is on opposite left corner.

**For the turners, please remember to bring items for the silent auction and at least one holiday decoration to be judged and given to the spouses through the drawing. (Two would be nice.)**



### ***NORTH CAROLINA WOODTURNER***

**Journal of the North Carolina Woodturners Association**

Published Monthly by the  
*NORTH CAROLINA WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION, INC*  
296 Laurel Park Place, Hendersonville, NC 28791

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**President:** David Kaylor  
**Vice President:** Sam McDowell  
**Treasurer:** Glenn Mace  
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**Journal Editor:** John Uteck

(704) 892-8554  
(704) 871-9801  
(336) 751-4693  
(828) 696-8372  
(704) 871-9801  
(704) 395-0728

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(Term exp. 2007) (828) 438-5026  
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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](http://www.geocities.com/nc_woodturners)

**2005 Carolina Woodturning Symposium - Instant Gallery**



**NCW Christmas Woodturning Festival: December 10th at 10:30 am**