

February 1998

FRWT NEWS

Front Range Woodturners

A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

NEXT MEETING MARCH 3, 1998

For our next meeting, Pete Holtus has agreed to share some more of his expertise with us. Pete is an excellent turner and always adds a little humor to his demo.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

CONGRATULATIONS!!!! Everyone in the club should feel proud to have contributed to meeting the challenge grant for buying the TVequipment. (Anyone who missed the chance to contribute-better late than never.) The equipment will be showing up at a meeting in the next month or so. Enjoy-and thank our anonymous benefactor who fronted the first half of the cost.

FEBRUARY DEMONSTRATION

The February demonstration was by Mike Mahoney, from Provo, Utah. Mike is a full-time turner who divides his work between production bowls and hollow forms, and some high-end one-off work. Mike began the afternoon session by turning a natural edge bowl, showing how to orient the wood so that the two high spots are in one plane, and the two low spots, in another plane, so that the finished bowl is balanced. He mentioned making his own wipe-on finish for production pieces out of wax (beeswax or carnuba) melted together in a ratio of 1 part wax to five parts mineral oil. This finish never sets up and isn't waterproof, but is easy to maintain by the average user who can freshen it up with mineral oil or even salad oil.

As an introduction to turning a hollow form, Mike sketched a gourd and showed that many turned forms can be cut from a basic gourd shape. Starting from a shallow cut across the base, then moving upward, you can get plates, open bowls, enclosed forms, and hollow vessels. Mike started the hollow form on a screw chuck with support from the tailstock. He roughed out the blank, then cut a tenon for a chuck. Reversing the roughed form onto the chuck, he shear-scraped to reach the final outside shape.

Meetings are held at Schlosser Tool and Machinery--301 Bryant. Denver 922-8244

As they are kind enough to allow us to use this facility, I am sure they would appreciate your patronage.

February Demo--cont'd

Using a 3/8 inch drill, Mike bored a pilot hole to the final interior depth, then used Stewart tools to scrape out the interior. The initial scraping cuts are made outward from the pilot hole, working from top to bottom. Later cuts move outward toward the walls, also working from top to bottom.

The highlight of Mike's evening demonstration was the use of the McNaughton tool that can cut several concentric blanks from a single bowl blank. This is most useful for making matched sets or for conserving expensive woods. Mike mentioned that this tool is more flexible than it might seem, allowing for many shapes and sizes. He recommend the tool for dense woods that make fine chips, not for lighter woods that make stringy or ribbony shavings that would clog the kerf. He also discussed marketing, pricing your work, and other aspects of being a professional turner.

Mike showed two interesting tool grinds. One was a heavy scraper sharpened to the angle that fits the dovetail on his chuck. With this, he can cut the optimum shape for the tenon at the base of a turning every time. The other tool was a bowl gouge with two different grinds. The left side of the gouge (looking down into the flute) was sharpened to a very steep bevel that works like a skew when hollowing the interior of a bowl. In fact this grind makes it easy to make a single continuous inside cut from rim to bottom with a single pass. The other side of the gouge was less steep, but still short-beveled, and is used to make shear cuts on the bowl's outside.

Mike exhibited his work at last year's Cherry Creek Art Festival and was voted one of the outstanding new exhibitors. This earned him an invitation to this year's festival. Plan to attend this nationally-known, juried art and craft fair, on the July 4th week end, so you can see Mike's work in the flesh. Admission is free and the quality of work is high.

the Classifieds

For Sale:

Nova chuck: includes jaws, screw, and tools to fit 1"-8tpi spindle. Used-like new \$ 130.00

Bob Flaxman 321-2039

THE NEW ZEALAND EXPERIENCE

Gene Kircus

Peggy and I had a five-week old granddaughter whom we had not yet seen. Not that we were indifferent grandparents, but our daughter and son-in-law live in New Zealand. That is a long way from Colorado!

The need for grandparents to hold the precious bundle was too great. We headed to the travel agent, stopping first at the bank to transfer most of our savings to checking.

"Where is Palmerston North?" asked the agent.

"On the north island of New Zealand," we responded.

"OK. I'll try to get you the best rates possible," she said.

"Sure," we muttered.

A three-week trip was arranged and we began to pack. Since New Zealand is well known for its turners, we felt compelled to make contact with some of them.

The American Association of Woodturners' web site was helpful in locating the web page for the New Zealand Woodturners. Amazingly the secretary for the national organization, Don Tietjens, lives in Palmerston North!

An e-mail to Don with our travel dates brought a quick response. The local club had a meeting scheduled and we would be welcomed.

Upon arrival a phone call to Don produced a warm greeting and an offer to take us to the meeting. It was a memorable evening. Like ours their club is comprised of members with varied and fascinating backgrounds. From farmers to engineers the excitement of woodturning draws them together.

Their president offered me five minutes to address the group. (Could I ever say anything in only five minutes?!) After presenting greetings from the Front Range Woodturners, I displayed one of our aspen bowls, describing the process for turning the bowl and inlaying turquoise.

After the meeting Peggy learned a lot about sheep farming while answering numerous questions concerning inlay techniques and pierce carving.

Of special interest was the club's Colt lathe. Designed and built by Gordon Pritchard, an engineer who is one of their club members, it has a 2" spindle, no threads, a #4 MT in the head and a #2 MT in the tail. A chuck is secured in the head with a #4 MT insert with internal threads for a draw bar.

The lathe comes with a reverse switch. Because of the design, the chuck will not unscrew when the lathe is reversed. The turner can work from either side, an advantage for the left handed. This is a well designed and constructed lathe. Unfortunately it is sold only in New Zealand.

While touring the south island, we encountered Wanderi'n Willy (Willy Nunn) in Mt. Cook National Park. Willy has his entire shop in a trailer. He and his wife travel around the country, working together to produce very nice turnings and other wood products.

In the small town of Hokitika we met a fascinating turner. Des Blanchet was a farmer until an accident paralyzed the left side of his body. Using only his right side he turns exquisite bowls of rimu wood.

Rimu, unique to New Zealand, is a red pine and one of the world's most beautifully grained timbers. Mature trees can attain heights of 200 feet.

Tune in next month for another exciting installment (providing AOL doesn't lose half of it again!!!) My apologies to Gene as this is a very interesting story. Dave

The Cyberlathe

Would anyone like to do a demo for our meetings? Some technique you really like? Making boxes or bowls? Please show us how you do it! Contact Al Cummins and offer your services.

Speaking of Al, he has a really good idea. Instead of throwing away your unwanted woodworking magazines, bring them to a meeting and let others pick through them for something of interest to take home. (Don't have a fit John, these won't be for the permanent collection, just a chance to "recycle" them before they go to the dump.)

One thing I got from Mike Mahoney's demo was this: He doesn't believe that anyone's work "comes from the tool ready for finish." Whew! It's not just me! Mike starts his sanding at 80 grit. I guess you won't feel so bad now about that 36 grit you hide from your friends!

Want to see some interesting wood? Set your surfer for :
<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~woodlink/eugene.htm>

See you March 3 !

Dave

HELP!!!

Turners who offer their time as mentors, teachers, or consultants. If you want to be added to this list, just let me know.

Pete Alderson	934-5168 (lace bobbins only)
Pete Holtus	354-5365
David Nittmann	(970) 493-0851
Les Stern	744-2159
Gene Wentworth	758-4173

FRONT RANGE WOODTURNERS--OFFICERS

President--Abe Flexer 303-604-0605
Vice President--Pete Holtus 303-364-5365
Secretary--Curt Frankenfeld
Treasurer--Henry Williams 303-697-8827
Librarian--John Montague 303-794-1679

OFFICERS-ELECT

These are the people who have volunteered to fill an office of the club for 1999. Please let Abe know if you want to add your name to the list. BTW, we really need people to volunteer to help with program coordinator. If you know a lot of turners or get around to the national meetings or just want to help, please volunteer for this important position. Thanks.

President--Pete Holtus
Vice President--John Perkins
Treasurer--Allan Fulton
Secretary--Abe Flexer
Program Coordinator-- ?
Newsletter Editor--Gene Kirkus
Librarian--Chuck Baldwin