

BAY AREA



WOODTURNERS
ASSOCIATION
A CALIFORNIA NONPROFIT CORPORATION
LOCAL CHAPTER AAW

April 2014

Volume 18, Issue 4



Bay Area Woodturners Association

Pleasant Hill Adult Education, Wood Studio

April 12, 2014: 9:30 to Noon. Greg Ketell & Bill Mellberg

Two members of the International Association of Pen-turners (IAP) will demonstrate the art of resin casting using clear polyurethane casting resins which are filled with colored powders to create beautiful translucent pen blanks. A proven casting technique utilizes positive pressure to collapse internal bubbles and eliminate entrapped air that happens during the mixing process. The equipment and techniques for fabricating these space age materials will be explained during the demonstration. Greg and Bill have many years of casting experience and look forward to sharing their talent and techniques for creating collectable polymer pen blanks for treasured gifts. You will learn about local sources of supply along with tips and tricks for achieving success in your own shop. This club demonstration is focused on the "How To" which will accelerate your knowledge and understanding of resin casting for rapid application to future projects.





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Club Meetings

Meetings are the 2nd Saturday of each month unless otherwise noted.

8:30 doors open for setup, use store and library, swap ideas, view displays

9:30—12:30 meeting and demo

Meetings will be held at the PHEC Woodturning Center, 1 Santa Barbara Road, Pleasant Hill, CA.

See www.bayareawoodturners.org for directions and club information.

BAWA Officers Meeting -

Officer meetings are open to all members. Contact Bill Mellberg if you would like to be on the agenda.

2014 Event Schedule

Apr 12th	Bill Mellberg and Greg Ketell-Casting and Turning Synthetic Pens
May 10th	Ray Key
June 7th	Greenwood: From Log to Lathe (note schedule change)
July 12th	Pens for Troops: The Club Will Be Turning Pens for a Great Cause
Aug 9th	BBQ
Sept 13th	Jerry Kermode
Oct 11th	Larry Lew-Pyrography Illusion
Dec	Xmas Party

The Bay Area Woodturners Association is a local chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. Our purpose is to provide a meeting place for local turners to share ideas and techniques and to educate the general public regarding the art of turning. The Association usually meets the second Saturday of each month. The Association periodically sponsors exhibitions and demonstrations by local and internationally known turners.

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David Ellsworth Demonstration

The March meeting was a rousing success as the club hosted David Ellsworth as our first professional presenter for 2014. A standing-room-only crowd started arriving by 8:00 am, securing the best seats for the rare opportunity to enjoy a full day with arguably one of the most influential artists, teachers and woodturners of this era. David has been a woodturner and teacher for 4 decades, along the way he developed his own style, perspective and technique that are still very relevant today.

Throughout the day, David referred to his signature cuts which are described in his words below. He uses the “Ellsworth” jig to sweep the wings of the gouge back creating a longer cutting edge for roughing cuts yet fine enough for shear-scraping and delicate final cuts



Interior Finishing Cut: The final cuts used to finish the inside of a bowl. Can be made with a gouge or a scraper depending upon the wood’s condition, moisture content and or personal preference of the maker. The finishing cut makes the final cut on the interior surface in preparation for sanding. The bevel must be in contact with the wood throughout the cut. To safely enter the rim, begin in the roughing position, then rotate the gouge counter clockwise to horizontal. The part of the tool that does the cutting is a small area to the left of the tip. The axial pitch of the gouge is at 0° with shaft position being horizontal on the tool rest.

Roughing Cut: The initial step of turning a block into a bowl or vessel using a gouge. The roughing cut removes all of the extra or irregular surfaces. The axial pitch of the gouge is at 45° with shaft position being horizontal on the tool rest.

The interior roughing cut is used to clear mass from the interior in preparation for the finishing cut.

The exterior roughing cut with the Signature gouge removes excess stock on preparing to make a bowl or vessel form. The interior and exterior roughing cuts are very similar, the only difference between their executions being a pivoting action for the interior versus a pulling action for the exterior.

Scraping Cut: A cut performed with the edge of the gouge perpendicular to the cutting surface. The scraping cut is an exterior cut used to flatten the base of the form in preparation for a chuck, glue block or faceplate. The axial pitch of the gouge is at 85° with shaft position being horizontal on the tool rest.

Shear-scraping Cut: A cut used to finish the bowls exterior when using a gouge or the interior when using a scraper. The shear-scraping cut is used to put a smooth surface on the exterior of a form. The shearing action is achieved by positioning the edge of the tool approximately 45° to the surface being cut. On the bowls interior, the cut begins in the center of base using a scraper and works out towards the rim. On the bowls exterior, the cut works best when it begins at the rim and progresses towards the base using a side ground gouge. The axial pitch of the gouge is 85° with shaft position being at 45° on the tool rest.

Slicing Cut: A cut that fluidly removes waste material during the shaping of the form. The slicing cut is an exterior cut used to shape the form and prepare to the surface for the shear-scraping cut. The front third or half of the tip on the side ground gouge is used to remove in a manner similar to peeling an apple. The axial pitch of the gouge is at 45° with shaft position being 20° to 30° on the tool rest.



(Continued on next page)

The first project of the day was a simple 10" cut rim bowl. David lays out the design of the bowl with a wide spigot (tenon) anticipating that the bowl's foot will be inside the spigot. A wider tenon allows for a more robust grip by the jaws with less chance of failure. Ellsworth emphasizes that you should always pay attention to the direction of the fibers in your blank. When making roughing cuts, one direction will slice cleanly across the fibers while the other direction will jam into end grain resulting in a more violent and inferior cut. Once the tenon was cut and outside roughed out, he flipped the piece holding the 3/8" spigot firmly in the jaws. He completed the final shaping on the outside, finishing the surface by shear-scraping: close the flute, drop the handle slightly and cut down hill. Next time you are finishing a piece, try shear-scraping in both directions and you will see a notable difference in surface quality between the two directions. David then effortlessly hollowed out the bowl again highlighting how the cuts were made; commenting that he is stroking the curve while staying relaxed. Avoid the left hand death grip and put your left thumb on top of the tool – try it and you will feel the difference.



After a quick break, David set up a natural edge bowl to execute quickly before lunch. Ideally he likes the tail stock mounted on the pith line as this will give a round grain pattern on the inside centered on the bottom. Cut the spigot, and rough out the sides but avoid cutting the top part of the wings as this could dislodge the bark. Once roughed out, reverse into the chuck jaws and finish cutting the wings. Getting a good ridge-free cut on the top of the wings is a skill but easily mastered with the right approach. Since you are cutting mostly air as the wings rotate, you have to adjust the direction of pressure on the tool. Whether a roughing cut, final cut or shear-scrape, make sure to put 95% of the pressure onto the tool rest and 5% against the wood - this allows for a very fine smooth cut. Get a practice blank and work on repeatedly cutting the wings being aware of how you are anchoring the tool and applying very light pressure on the wood. With a little practice you can see a huge improvement.

When hollowing the natural edge piece especially working on the wings, David wants you to look at the outside contour and use that as your guide for interior cuts. Follow the exterior curve and you will end up with consistent wall thickness enabling longer sweeping cuts from the wings to the center of the bowl. Again give it a try on the practice blank that you can make repeated cuts without worrying about the final piece. It takes some time and courage to stick a gouge into a piece with the wings flying around at bloody knuckle speed; but once you get the hang of it, that new skill will open the world of natural edge forms.

After lunch, David chose to turn a spherical hollow form with an unusual sequence of steps. He grabbed a hollow form blank and placed it between centers in spindle orientation with the grain parallel to the ways. He specified a whole log, with an 8-10" diameter and 12-14 inches long. Ellsworth quickly reduced the blank to an even cylinder then starting in the center turned hemispheres on both sides. The blank is longer than its width so this allows for a small spigot to be formed on both ends which is removed later.

Drawing a pencil line around the middle of the form, he then removed the piece and rotate it 90 degrees remounting the piece with live center and spur drive inserted along that line. Ellsworth carefully turned the spigots away then worked on final shaping of the sphere. He cut a tenon on one side as wide as possible to enable sufficient stability for hollowing. He removed the now spherical shaped piece inserting the tenon into chuck jaws for hollowing. Ellsworth uses his signature hollowing tools which have a basic design: steel rod with inserted small scraper. Sharpening the cutting edge is critical to achieving an efficient cut and smooth surface – treat it as you would a bowl scraper: rounded shape ground to < 80 degree angle. While finishing the hollow form, Ellsworth talked about gouges and the new Powdered Metal tools coming into the market and the shape of the flute. He believes that the new parabolic shaped gouges eject chips faster enabling more aggressive cuts that don't get bogged down with debris. Crown, Oneway and a discount brand found on ebay make parabolic gouges but only Crown makes the parabolic Powdered Metal (PM) gouge. PM tools purportedly have longer edge life and thus require less sharpening allowing the tool to last that much longer.



(Continued on next page)

David also talked about ergonomic aspect of turning. It starts with the setup of your lathe. Historically the standard spindle height was recommended to be at the turners elbow with some choosing to set it an inch higher. David believes a more natural and comfortable position is elbow minus 3 inches for hollowing and elbow minus 6 inches for bowl turning. At first glance this seems crazy but if you work backwards, literally starting with where your right hand should hold the tool handle in a comfortable, ergonomically correct position it makes sense. Since you want to drive the cut from your body's core and not just forearms, you should hold the tool handle at your hip to just behind your hip. This has two benefits: a more relaxed right arm hanging in a natural position and secondly it anchors the tool to your body in a much more stable position allowing the movement of your hips, chest and shoulders to smoothly direct the path of the cut. Try a cut holding the tool behind your hip feeling the power and steering dynamics then reposition your right hand to the middle of the tool handle and repeat the same cut paying attention to the tenseness in your forearms. If you were going to repeat this cut 100 times, which is less taxing? Which uses your core to direct the cut versus mostly arms?

Stance and hip position also play a critical role in each cut. How many times have you traversed a cut ending up totally off balance? Before you begin a long cut, place tip of the tool where you want to end and position your feet so that you can stop in that position comfortably. Now leave your feet in that location, lean your hips and core to right and start the cut. You find that you get more comfortable as the cut moves along gaining stability and ultimately a more confident smooth surface.

David's approach to turning originates in a background in martial arts – keep the position natural, avoid unnecessary stress and use your core strength when possible. This approach has allowed him to keep turning for many decades including years as a production turner – something worth investigating next time we all turn on our lathes. Ellsworth was a fantastic demonstrator providing a trove of information and ideas that we can all test and evaluate for improving our own experience at the lathe.



CRAFT SUPPLIES 10% DISCOUNT ORDER

The 10% discount applies to any published price (including sale items, close-outs, etc.) and there are no tax or S&H charges. You can find full on the Craft Supplies Club 10% Discount Program in the April 2012 newsletter.

Craft Supplies has a new catalog that includes new items, and there have been some price increases as well. Look on-line to pick your loot and check prices.

Orders are placed with Norm Robinson by e-mail: (normrobinson@hotmail.com)

- Fill out an electronic order form which Norm can e-mail to you
- Send Norm the pertinent information.
- Catalog item number, catalog page number if possible,
- Item description
- Quantity ordered and the total price before 10% discount. Please don't use old catalogs as the prices will be incorrect
- Call Norm (415-420-3492) to place an order and follow up with an e-mail to confirm all the information required.
- If you have already placed an order you might send Norm e-mail reminder.

Sheep Shearing Day at Forest Home Farm

BAWA will demonstrate woodturning at *Sheep Shearing Day* on Saturday, April 26th from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at Forest Home Farm in San Ramon. BAWA needs volunteers to help with the event to make it a success. Part of BAWA's mission is to "to encourage the craft of woodturning by conducting educational programs for the general public through the exhibition of members' work and demonstration of their skills." Quite frankly we have not done a very good job at the "general public" portion in many years, so here's your chance to help.



This is not a big deal as we simply turn finger-spin tops for kids to color and take home. Sometimes we turn a few pens for the troops if things get slow with the kids, but that rarely happens. It's easy turning, even if you've never tried you can learn quickly. Kids and parents alike are fascinated by turning, and most kids really appreciate coloring their spin top and then getting to keep it as a memento. Kids have proudly shown us tops that they received in past years as they patiently waited for a new one.

Bill Mellberg and I are getting things organized for the demonstration, and will provide everything needed other than your favorite turning tools. We are looking for volunteers to turn and color tops, answer questions about woodturning and BAWA, or just hang out, enjoy the day and have a good time. We could use a bit of help in setting up before-hand, and tearing down and cleaning up afterwards. If you want to participate please send me an e-mail or call, or sign up at the April 12th meeting. You can also bring turnings to sell, commission free.

Background: Forest Home Farm is a working ranch, and sheep shearing is demonstrated throughout the day. Other activities include tractor rides for kids, a tractor museum, farm tours, kids crafts, flower and vegetable gardens, tours of the David Glass home, arts and crafts demonstrations and food booths. The David Glass home was built in the 1850s, and BAWA turned the balusters for the entry way stairs and made the pickets on the front fence.

Forest Home Farm is located at 19953 San Ramon Valley Boulevard in San Ramon.

Regards,
Dean Adkins
Cell: 1-925-998-4111
E-mail: ADKD@Chevron.com



Dublin Woodcraft Closed

If you haven't already heard, our friends at Woodcraft in Dublin have closed their doors forever. Unable to find a buyer for the store in the past year, they decided to have a 'going out of business sale' and get on with their lives.

We'd like to thank Mike and Carol Cunningham for the support and kindness they've shown both to BAWA and all of it's members who have shopped there for years. We wish them good luck and happiness in whatever endeavor they pursue.

They will be sorely missed!

BAWA Classified Ads



We want members and others with items to sell or trade, services to render or if you're just looking to find a specific item from fellow BAWA members. Please send ads to Louie Silva at: banjohead@comcast.net.

You can't beat the price...FREE!!

Membership News

We had a whopping 8 new members sign up in March, partially thanks to David Ellsworth and partially to new turners classes.

They came from local areas and as far away as Rio Vista.

Welcome to you all!

Jim Jordan-Pleasant Hill
Lyn Sacco-Pleasant Hill
Beth Gilliam-Concord
Jim Scales -Brentwood
Richard Woelffer-Walnut Creek
Michele Freeze-Martinez
Gary Hargrave-Martinez
Gary Bingham-Rio Vista

We also had a large group renewing, some we haven't seen in a while. Welcome back!

Karen Rice,
Membership

The May meeting will bring another international star to BAWA: Ray Key.

Ray started turning in the '70s in England, gaining international acclaim by the '80s, now with over 200 exhibitions and workshops across Europe, North America and the Middle East. Ray's work brings woodturning back to its roots, basic shapes exquisitely executed.



Artist Statement: Ever since I started turning, purity of form has been the driving force for my creations. The minimalist approach is embraced in the ongoing quest to produce objects of beauty and elegant simplicity. I am a great believer in the object as a whole; all elements should be in sympathetic harmony with one another, not a disjointed assemblage of different ones. My design's bywords are 'keep it simple, let the wood speak for itself and if in doubt leave it out.'

Wood has always been my medium it has so many nuances: warmth, beauty, colour, smell, unpredictability and tactility just to name a few. I have always had empathy with the late Professor David Pye's statement, 'The difference between the thing which sings and the thing which is forever silent, is often very slight indeed.'

Ray made a quick video talking about boxes on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAuhunGPqOU>

More to details to come – it should be another great presentation



FUN ON THE FARM

San Ramon Historic Foundation presents...

Sheep Shearing Day 2014

Forest Home Farms Historic Park

19953 San Ramon Valley Blvd, San Ramon

April 26, 2014

11:00 am to 3:00 pm



Sheep Shearing Day is a unique opportunity to experience a day on the 16 acre Boone family farm. This event has quickly grown into one of the San Ramon Historic Foundation's largest annual fundraising events drawing over 1,000 community members. This year the monies raised will go directly to restore The Old 1850's Barn. The Old 1850's Barn is one of the oldest structures in San Ramon. Its outstanding architecture has survived 164 years and it is in need of restoration.



Order Early Bird Tickets at SRHF.org
Early Bird (before April 20)
Adult \$9
Children (12) \$3 (under 3 free)
SRHF Member \$3

Also April 20 and at the gate:
Adult \$7
Child (3-12) \$5 (under 3 free)
SRHF Member \$5



www.SRHF.org

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The California State Fair competition and exhibit for California artists and artisans

Division 140 - Wood Art

Class 1 - Wood Carving

Class 2 - Wood Turning

Class 3 - Woodworking

CALIFORNIA CRAFTS 2014 CALENDAR

Friday, April 25, 2014 – **Entry Deadline**

Friday, May 16, 2014 – **Shipped entries due**

Friday, May 16, 2014 – **Hand Deliver Entries between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.** Saturday, May 17, 2014 – **Hand Deliver Entries between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.**

Wednesday, May 21, 2014 – **Judging**

Monday, May 26, 2014 – **Show selection notification**

Friday, May 30, 2014 – **Pick-up non-selected entries 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Saturday, May 31, 2014 – **Pick-up of non-selected entries 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Saturday, July 12, 2014 – **Awards Ceremony** – all exhibitors will receive detailed info

Friday, July 11 – Sunday, July 27, 2014 – **The 161st California State Fair**

Friday, August 1, 2014 – **Pick up exhibits 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Saturday, August 2, 2014 – **Pick up exhibits 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Monday, August 4, 2014 – **Return shipping of exhibits shipped to us**

To contact us:

Carol Buchanan, Exhibits Coordinator

(916)263-3161

cbuchanan@calexpo.com

The Ellsworth Workshop

David returned after the club demo for a spectacular three day hands on workshop focusing on the projects he demonstrated on Saturday. 7 BAWA members and 3 West Bay members won the lottery selection to attend the oversubscribed workshop. Participants worked on cut rim bowls, natural edge pieces and hollow forms over the three days as Ellsworth circled the room providing one-on-one advice and discussion as projects developed.

It was a fantastic opportunity to work on honing the skills David presented while he watched and assisted. Each day ended with a half hour wrap-up session that was equally as informative as the group discussed problems, techniques and tools in addition to David providing insight into his experience and thoughts. For those who couldn't make the workshop, Ellsworth offers small 3 day classes at his home in Pennsylvania that would be a fantastic experience as well.



BAWA Finances

1. 2014 Membership is on track, currently we have collected **\$7285** (Oct2013-Mar2014), budgeted was \$7000.
2. Ellsworth Workshop – overall a wonderful success. We made a slight profit due to the donation by David of a percentage of his sales.
 - a. Revenue \$4220
 - b. Expenses -\$4246.45
 - c. Donation \$168 (David donated 10% of his Sales)
 - d. Net **\$141.75**
3. Chevron donated \$500 on behalf of Dean Adkins due to his volunteer efforts with the club in 2H2013.
4. We had a record Wood Raffle in March-- **\$169!!**
5. Overall our cash-flow and bank balances are on target.

President's Message

April 2014



I hope everyone enjoyed David Ellsworth's demonstration on March 8th. The all day demonstration and workshop that followed were very well attended and was signature Ellsworth with the natural edge bowls and hollow forms. David had a very busy schedule with more than a half dozen club demonstrations on his tour through Northern California which was facilitated by BAWA club members and other local program chairmen. David will be back to the west in mid June to attend the AAW Symposium and Exhibition in Phoenix, AZ.

If you plan to attend this year's American Association of Woodturners (AAW) Symposium being held at the Phoenix Convention Center, you might want to visit this website for details on the 3 day event. <http://www.woodturner.org/page/2014PhoenixHome> . A new addition to the Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) live auction on Saturday (6/14) is the tradition of bringing pieces to the Symposium and entering them in the auction at the event. This year photos of all entries will be submitted in advance on-line, as AAW plans to use a juried process and there is no entry fee for entered pieces. This is an opportunity for all members who want to exhibit and sell their work to participate. This approach will translate into greater visibility for artists submitting work, and should maximize the prices for the auctioned work due to increased competition. Members may opt to receive up to 50% of the auctioned price. The deadline for applications and photo's is April 7th and should be coordinated through the new AAW website.

If you have not visited the new AAW website recently you should know that your "user name and password" need to be changed. Using you registered Email address you can receive a new username and create a password which is required based on upgrades to security requirements for the new site. There is also a new feature where you can pay your yearly dues using your PayPal account.

Another upcoming symposium is the Utah Woodturning Symposium at the Utah Valley University campus in Orem Utah. It will be held May 15 – 17 and includes a tribute to Dale Nish, with many of the early demonstrators returning to pay tribute, along with the exhibition of the Dale Nish Collection of pieces from some of the worlds best woodturners collected by Dale over many decades. For more information, the website is: <https://www.utahwoodturning.com/>

At our May 10th meeting we will host Ray Key as our second professional demonstrator for the year. Ray is on his way to the Utah Symposium and has offered to conduct a one day demonstration for us. Ray does not maintain his own website, but I found this site <http://www.wizardryinwood.com/RayKey.php> that has many of his pieces and he also talks about his love affair with wood over many decades as a turner. This will be a "do-not-miss" meeting as Ray comes to us from England and he has reduced his travel over the years, so this will be a once if a lifetime opportunity to see one of the best turners in the world.

As spring arrives you should be spending more time in your own shop and there are lots of opportunities to network and expose yourself to new ideas and turners with world class talent. Please bring your latest creation to the meeting in April for show and tell, along with wood to share for the raffle. The store has more green wood sealer for sale so get out and process some turning blanks for future projects and sharpen up those gouges for making chips.

*Respectfully,
Bill Mellberg, BAWA President*



Trees of the Bay Area #3 *Malus spp.* or APPLE

By John Doyen and Tony Wolcott

Dale Nish once said that if you really must turn fruit wood, then work only with the heart wood. In our humble opinion working with apple wood is a joy. Not to drop too many names, but Richard Raffan described an equal trade of London plane tree with a nearby apple orchardist. Equal parts London plane (some call sycamore – *Platanus hispanica*) with old orchard apple wood. Raffan was able to process the apple in half the time with better results. Although hard and brown in color, apple wood turns easily and has a great finish often with swirling grain and incipient decay markings.



Dealing with the scientific names can be troublesome due to the over 2000 named cultivars. For fruiting trees it is common to order as ‘Apple’, ‘Apricot’, ‘Peach’ and so on. However, you better know the cultivar like ‘Mcintosh’ or the most widely grown ‘Red Delicious’, or you may get almost anything. The accepted name now is *Malus pumila* for edible apples (synonyms *M. communis*, *M x domestica*, *M. sylvestris*, *Pyrus malus*). Crabapples are often ‘sports’ from *Malus floribundus* and are usually named as *Malus ‘Liset’* for example. There are forty species in the genus *Malus*, the edible varieties originating from the Caucasus and Southwest Asia. Some crabapples originate from temperate zones of North America. They are mostly inedible, crabapple jelly is possible but most crabapples are genetically chosen for their flower display. Here in Albany under the BART track there were over a hundred *Malus floribundus* with a pink to white blossom. Stunning display in early spring but all apples are prone to decay from the inside out (heart rot). Fireblight is another problem with apples, causing large branches to decay. There is a ‘burl’ type growth usually at the base of an apple caused by wooly apple aphid. This is not worth the trouble in our opinion.

Although hard to find good size apple wood, this is an excellent wood for turning, also for small interior carpentry jobs. You will lose some wood to cracking in the drying process, but then the wood is quite stable. The luster and smooth finish is quite rewarding. The apple tree and its fruit are held in high esteem in many cultures. Do not underestimate its fertility powers.

Ritter, Matt “A Californian’s Guide to the Trees Among Us”
Hatch, Charles R. “Trees of the California Landscape”
Hageneder, Fred “The Meaning of Trees”

Newsletter Articles

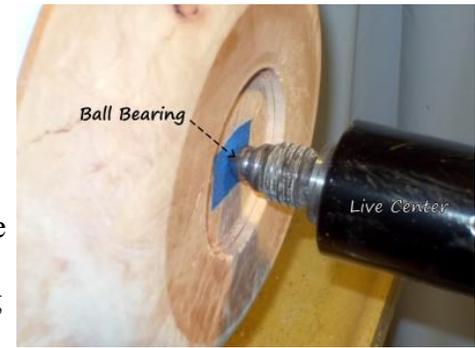
Got a great idea you want to share with your fellow Woodturners? Whether it is a turning tool, turning technique, finishing process or anything at all related to turning, your BAWA newsletter can always use an article. If you have pictures, all the better. If you need help writing it up or taking pictures, we’re here to help. That’s what our club is all about - sharing.

Contact either club president or newsletter editor
Bill Mellberg Louie Silva
Email: jbmellberg@comcast.net Email: banjohead@comcast.net

Ball Bearing Live Center

By Bob Gerenser

There are occasions where I need a “third hand” to hold a bowl or platter, or whatever, in place while I bring that piece up to the “faceplate” I’m using. Most often the “faceplate” is a Longworth chuck that I want to center the piece on and there is no centering divot on the piece. Here’s the issue: I need to hold the bowl against the Longworth chuck while I’m using two hands to tighten the chuck. A pointed live center won’t work, because of the point. Ditto for removing the point and just using the cup center.



What I have done in this situation is to remove the inner point from the live center (the large point on a live center is like a splitting wedge, so I usually don’t have it on) and place a 1/4” diameter rod rare earth magnetic into the cup bore. Put a suitably sized ball bearing on the end of the magnetic and, Bob’s your uncle, you have a non-marring live center. Of course, if you tighten it gorilla tight, you’re going to mar you piece. But, use a light touch and it won’t leave a mark.

You’re probably saying to yourself “Well, that’s just swell, but what is a 1/4” diameter rod rare magnetic and where do I get some?” And “what is a suitably sized ball bearing, eh?” Well, bunky, read on.



Rare earth magnets are incredibly strong magnets available in a wide range of sizes and shapes. Due to their inherent high holding power, they come in handy for all manner of jigs and fixtures, along with holding ball bearings onto live centers. Lee Valley, <http://www.leevalley.com/us/home/Search.aspx?action=n> has a nice selection, in particular the “50 piece magnet sampler.” Magcraft, <http://www.rare-earth-magnets.com/c-11-rod-magnets.aspx>, lists a huge variety of sizes and shapes.

As for the ball bearing; it is from, of all things, a magnetic building toy. Originally the toy had a bunch of ball bearings and an equal bunch of magnetic “sticks”. The idea was to connect the balls and sticks and build shapes. Anyway, what’s left of the toy is in my junk box and provided the right sized ball bearing. If you don’t have one in your junk box I’m pretty sure you can buy one at Applied Industrial Technologies, 255 E Brokaw Rd., San Jose, CA 95112-4206, PH: (408) 436-5464.



(Article and photos courtesy of Silicon Valley Woodturners)



Trees of Taiwan

By Tony Wolcott

Sometimes new places bring unexpected discoveries. Certainly this is the case for Taiwan. Taiwan is mostly one large island with high mountains jutting out almost from the seashore. The weather patterns include a typhoon season in the hot and humid summer. Such a large amount of concentrated rain causes great river flows of boulders and trees. In the drier winter these rivers look like endless rock quarries, with very little river visible. In talking to the wood carvers I soon discovered that wood is something gifted by the weather and at the whim of the government.

When the typhoons hit, water swells with tremendous power. Boulders as big as houses are tossed around like beach balls. Trees, branches and roots ride the surface of the rivers, as if they were the river, out to sea in a glut. Once in the ocean the mass of wood piles onto the shore. It is strictly against the law to help yourself to any of this wood. However, aboriginal people like Siki Sufin, an Ami aboriginal are allowed to take some. Often times the wood is so plentiful, the government will open up a free for all over a few days.

Much to my chagrin, when I ask wood carvers and wood turners what kind of wood they are working with, they did not have a clue. Nobody cuts their own trees and what washes up to shore is hardly recognizable. There are a few exceptions to this.

Hinoki cypress, *Chamaecyparis obtusa* is Japan's rather famous lemon scented Hinoki cypress. Taiwan has its very similar Hinoki - *Chamaecyparis obtusa* var. *formosana* (syn. *Chamaecyparis taiwanensis*). Cypress is considered a 'soft wood', easy to work, especially to carve. The wood is unmistakable – you only have to smell it. In fact Taiwanese are fond of selling wood by smell. They turn eight foot tall round hollow forms except they are not hollow. At the top is a snifter that can be removed and inside is a small hollow with the natural wood exposed for its odiferous quality. I bought a small example of this for show and tell – Taiwanese juniper. The smell is recognizable. On the outside of these urns are many coats of a toxic shellac. It gives a very bright surface, but not something you could smell through. The Hinoki cypress is normally carved and left natural as it is decay resistant and smells so sweet.

Another wood I could identify is *Chamaecyparis formosensis* – Taiwan Red Cypress or orange cypress. This is quite similar to *Chamaecyparis obtusa* var. *formosana* except it is much taller and faster growing, and has an orange hue to its heart wood not unlike *Cupressus macrocarpa* (Monterey cypress). The orange cypress takes 100 years to reach three feet in diameter. The Hinoki takes three hundred years. Not surprisingly orange cypress is softer and very easy to work. I picked up an old blank tossed away along the road in Sanyi, Taiwan. It turned like butter with the only problem being the end grain that liked to flake away. I saw a great many tables made of this wood.

Last but not least of the recognizable woods was *Cinnamomum camphora* or camphor tree. It is native and prolific in Taiwan. The Sanyi area is famous for camphor and is the reason that Sanyi is called the wood carving capital of Taiwan. The size of all of these woods is astounding. The museum in Sanyi has solid tables over 30 feet long and one camphor burl estimated at over a thousand years old and over 15 feet tall. I have pictures!

On the east coast of Taiwan there is Taroka National Park and the beaches around Dulan and Taigun. I wrote down over 200 species of trees from a book in Mandarin (but Latin nomenclature). On the southeast region I hiked into tropical forests with bamboo and a multiplicity of native vegetation. Twice monkeys crossed my path, not much smaller than I and none too pleased to see me. It was a pleasure to see truly native woods, not an invasive plant in sight, except perhaps those terraced rice paddies.



March Show and Tell



Harry Levin showing off a colored bowl



Larry Lew with a book of his collected turnings (a gift to the library)



John Doyen and a New Zealand lace bark bowl



Lloyd Shomo and a pedestal bowl



A decorated platter crafted by Donna Luzon



Bob Gerenser describing his bowl from a board with a magnetic base



Brad Adams with a madrone bowl



An Easter basket and ornaments by Brent Stout



Vegetable peelers and a pepper mill by Cindy Navarro