



CUMBERLAND WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION

A Chapter of the AAW
NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2005

President: Jim Bentley
Treasurer: Bill Westerbeck

Vice President: John Lucas
Secretary: Teresa Paar

Activities/Program Committee: Randy Trentham & Jake Niedling

The Cumberland Woodturners met on November 30, 2005 at the workshop of Bill Westerbeck. President Jim Bentley called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. There were 16 members present.

PREZ PAGE by Jim Bentley

Wasn't that a superb meeting the other night? Yes it was! John Lucas' bowl turning demo was a "one of a kind" demo. All members who saw it came away from it as better turners. John and his bowl demo will be long remembered.

It was announced at the meeting that running for office next year will be: John Semelsberger - President, Ken Warrick - Treasurer. Thanks to these members for volunteering. We will be voting during our Holiday Party on December 14. It may not be a shoe-in for them though: nominations can still be accepted from the floor.

Arrangements for the party are being made. Wait until you see Dave and Marjorie Phillippe's home on Lake Dartmoor! Many thanks to them for hosting this year's party. I am looking forward to seeing all of you (and your significant other) there.

jim bentley

MONTHLY PROGRAM

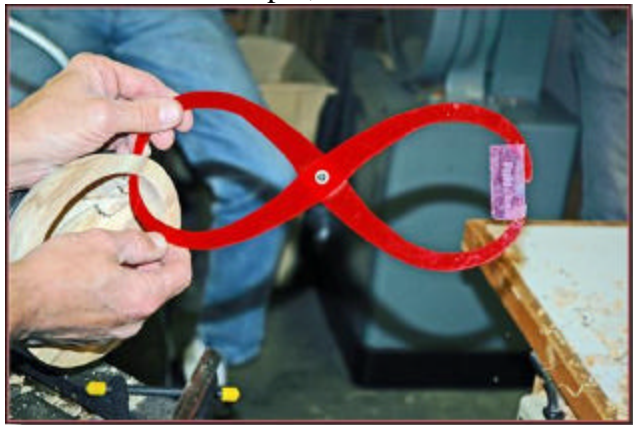
John Lucas gave a very informative demonstration of turning a bowl from rough blank to finished piece. Some highlights:

- John showed how the angle the tool approaches the wood can have a big impact on how smooth the cut is. Pointing the tool handle down, and starting an outside roughing cut from near the foot instead of straight in from the side, will give smoother cuts.
- A steeper angle tool edge can work better near the bottom of a bowl as it flattens out.



- Punky wood can be improved by putting oil, thinned lacquer, or CA glue on the wood, letting it dry, then taking a smooth cut across the area.

- You can make calipers for measuring the bowl thickness with a section of ruler attached to a caliper, as shown below.



These are just a few of the many tips and tricks that John shared at the meeting. John's detailed explanation is attached at the end of this newsletter.

Thanks, John, for all that you do for the club!!

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

December Holiday Party (details below)

MONTHLY CHALLENGE

The monthly challenge was for an ornament. Randy won with his beautiful entry below.



UPCOMING CHALLENGES

December No challenge due to Party
January Bowl, any size

WOOD O' THE MONTH

Ken Warrick brought in a beech log as the Wood of the Month; it was won by Bill Westerbeck.

INSTANT GALLERY



SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR

Holiday Party

Time: Dec. 14 @ 6PM

Place: David Phillippe home

Activities: Potluck Dinner & Turning exchange

Bring a wrapped turning (one per turner) for exchange with others. (This is optional, only if you want to participate.)

A map is available on the club website:
www.cumberlandwoodturners.com

OFFICER ELECTIONS

We will hold officer elections at the December holiday party. Candidates are:

President: Jack Semelsberger

Treasurer: Ken Warrick

CLUB LIBRARY

The Library materials will be kept at Bill Westerbeck's shop until the January meeting. Contact Bill if you'd like to check something out during this time.

EXOTIC TURNING BLANKS FOR SALE

A letter received by the club:

We would like to promote our new web site for turning blanks. We have done our best to get onto the search engines but have been unsuccessful so this is the only way we know to get the word out. All the blanks shown are available for immediate delivery.

All turning blank purchases prior to Christmas will have a 25% discount.

We feel we have the most unique line of turning blanks available. I also would like to mention that in the next three months we will have a full line of kiln dried S4S lumber available from 1/4 inch to 2 inch thick in 20 species of very beautiful woods.

Our web site is www.exoticwoodworld.com.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bill Westerbeck gave the Treasurer's report as follows for October/November:

Previous Balance	\$2,065.18
Income	\$ 210.50
Expenses	\$ 54.00
Ending Balance	\$2,221.68

MEETING REFRESHMENTS

January – Jim Bentley

NEXT MEETING

WHEN:	December 14 @ 6PM
WHERE:	David Phillipe home
PROGRAM:	HOLIDAY PARTY

MORE INSTANT GALLERY

Everett describes his bowl



Jim shows his walnut platter



JOHN'S BOWL TURNING NOTES

I'm not going to cover every thing I did in my bowl turning demo in this article because you can check out the Bill Grumbine video and see it almost word for word. I checked it out after the demo and took it home to see how Bill's technique differed from mine. I swear you would have thought we were reading from a script and we've never met and I've never seen his video. So if you forgot some of the stuff just check it out when I return it next meeting.

Turning a bowl doesn't have to be hard or dangerous. I was trying to show in this demo ways to make it easier and safer. I start most of my bowls between centers. Rough out the bottom, turn it around, rough out the inside and then put them up to dry. I rough them out to a thickness of about 1/10th of the final diameter. For a 12" bowl this would be about 1". I leave the bottom a little thinner because the wood won't move as much in this area and I don't want to leave the tenon any bigger than necessary. A thick tenon invites checking. I seal the endgrain portions with endgrain sealer. My friend Komli just puts a plastic bag on the tenon and stacks all the bowls together. I let them dry for 6 months or so and then re-turn them to final shape.

For Natural edge bowls I usually turn them to completion in one session. I turn them to 3/8" or thinner on 10" bowls to reduce the amount of checking. One roughed out bowls or thin bowls it is really important to keep the wall thickness the same throughout. If you want to turn a really thick walled bowl you will need to slow down the drying considerably. Put it in a plastic bag and then turn the bag inside out every day for about 6 months. Then you might be able to pull it out and let it dry in an area with little air movement. Thick wood is much more likely to crack than thin so take all precautions.

Roughing the bowl

We will be taking about side grain bowls. This means the grain runs roughly perpendicular to the lathe bed. If you start roughing the bowl with the tool rest parallel to the bed you will be cutting end grain on 2 sides. This is very difficult cutting. This is also dangerous because if there are any protrusions they can catch the tool quite violently and if you didn't rotate the piece before turning on the lathe (shame on you) you risk breaking the tool rest. For this reason I start with the tool rest parallel to the bottom of the bowl

and cut from the center out. There are 2 reasons for this. You are cutting parallel to the grain or down hill to the grain. Both are easier than cutting end grain.

Cutting Air

When you are roughing a bowl it probably isn't round. In fact sometimes because of limbs and voids and rough bark it may be very very out of round. This can be really dangerous. To get around this danger I use what I call a pivoting cut. I anchor the tool to the rest with my left hand and then pivot the tool into the work by moving my body. You should probably have the flute of the bowl facing about 45 degrees to the left and the handle down about 45 degrees. (this is not a hard fact based on all the different gouges, sharpening techniques and styles but will get you in the ballpark) This pivoting action lets you take a very controlled bite out of the wood. Start with a very light cut, move the tool forward a little and make another pass. After one or two you will get a better feel for how big a bite you can cut without getting into trouble. You want to go from cutting air through the wood to cutting air. This guarantees that you have cut off any unseen protrusions. When the wood is spinning a single bump or limb will completely disappear and can grab the tool. Buy cutting from air to air you have removed any and all protrusions from that path. You can keep on cutting like this until you've removed all the really high spots. Then you can switch to another style of cutting to refine the shape.

PULL CUT

What I call a pull cut is where the handle leads the cut. For this cut you need a side ground bowl gouge. I start the cut by placing the gouge on the wood so it is rubbing the bevel but is not cutting. Rotate the tool with your right hand until it starts to cut and then pull the gouge out from the foot of the bowl taking off wood and shaping the bowl. As you proceed around the bowl you will probably find the cut is easier with the gouge in your left hand. If you are able to lower your tool rest enough you may be able to get the gouge handle really low. This cut almost eliminates catches because the wood is pushing the gouge down and away from itself. The more horizontal the tool, the more likely a catch, unless you really control the cut by staying on the bevel and not taking too big a bite.

PUSH CUT

A push cut is just what it sounds like. You push the tool into the work with the point ahead of the handle. This is done with the flute about 45 degrees to the left and the handle a little below horizontal. You are cutting just below the tip of the gouge. If you don't force the cut, this can be an extremely smooth cut.

These cuts should be from the foot toward the lip of the bowl so that you are always cutting down hill on the grain. Sometimes you simply can't cut in that direction, either because of the shape of the bowl or because you have really swirly grain. If you have tearout in one or two spots, try cutting in the opposite direction. Take very light cuts. This will often solve the problem.

PUNKY WOOD

If you leave your wood out for very long it will eventually get rotten and too soft to use. Trying to spalt your own wood by letting it sit on the ground is tempting this process. It is important to stop it at the right time. This is something I don't know much about. When I get wood I want to spalt I first seal one end. Then I split the wood at the heart. Then place the other end on the ground. I let it sit like this for a few weeks or maybe a month or more. This starts the spalting. Then I will try to stack the wood to keep it off the ground and seal the end that has been on the ground. Sometimes you may have to cut a little off the end to see how the spalting is going. Sometimes it's pure guess work. Like I said I'm not very good at this. The idea is to get really good spalting without getting some rot. The problem is when to stop.

You will usually get some sort of rot or punky and soft wood in the pieces. There are 4 or 5 ways to do this. I've only used 3. One is to soak the area with thin CA glue. Don't use accelerator. It takes a while to dry so go have a beer or something. This method works very well but can be expensive.

The method I use most often on larger areas is to soak the area with a mixture of Lacquer and lacquer thinner. I mix mine about 50/50 but it's not critical. A thinner mixture soaks deeper quicker. This does take a while to dry, so go have another beer. This method works great for me and is compatible with the finishes I use.

For really large areas I use a mixture of white glue and water. Mix it 50/50 and soak the bowl

for an hour or more. This takes over night to dry so forget turning and go drink the rest of the sixpack.

There are woodhardners that you can buy and there are 2 part epoxy restoration process's that professional restorers use. I haven't tried these because they are pretty expensive.

Ok now you've turned the outside between centers and shaped your tenon. The tenon should be short enough to fit in your chuck but not long enough to bottom out. The shoulder of the tenon where it goes into the bowl should be square. This allows the bowl to sit on the face of the chuck and in the jaws and is much stronger than just gripping the tenon. To make the tenon this short and shape your bowl accurately, you may have to turn away most of the area between the tailstock and tenon. I leave this on the bowl but turn it down small enough to fit inside the center of my chuck.

Then I reverse the bowl, mount it in my chuck and turn the inside.

I put the bowl up to dry and when it's done the bowl will have warped. I again mount it between centers but this time I place a rubber sink stopper over the chuck and put the opening of the bowl over this. The tailstock will fit in the little bitty tenon you left on the bottom. This allows you to true up the big tenon, which is now oval. Once the tenon is true you can either continue on with truing and shaping the outside or you can put the bowl in the chuck and then turn both the outside and inside in this position. This is probably the best way to turn a very thin bowl because if you turn the outside and then reverse the bowl it almost never aligns perfectly. Sometimes really close but seldom perfectly.

I true up the outside of the bowl and then shape the inside. If you are turning a thin bowl it is important to turn it to the thickness you want a little at a time. If you try to turn the whole bowl really thin going from the rim to the bottom you will eventually get it thin enough to cause chatter. Turn the bowl thin about 1 inch down and then cut some more of the center and turn another inch.

I hope this answers some of your questions. If not feel free to ask, or check out the video by Bill Grumbine.