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THE CHIP FLYER

ISSUE: 15

MAY 1997

NEXT MEETING

Casual Evening - Members only - MAY 1 - 7:00 pm to 10:30 pm
Formal Evening - Members and Guests - May 15 - 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm

MESSAGE FROM THE PRES.

Josh is in Florida for some well deserved rest and relaxation, although I'm sure he's suffering severe turning withdrawal by now, Maybe he packed his Poolewood on a trailer and took it with him.

He should return in time for our next meeting on May 15.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

As of the end of May, our renewed and new membership is at 65 members. A new membership list will be issued soon. Be sure to contact one of the executives if you don't want your name or phone number circulated to other members.

NEW MEMBER

Welcome to our newest member

Andy Ditomaso of Hamilton

That's right ... he's my brother but don't hold that against him

ANCASTER WOOD SHOW

May 30, 31 and June 1

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, we have been invited back again for the 1997 show and will be given about 40 feet of space to set up lathes and a turning display.

Cliff Rose has offered to coordinate the show for the GHWG, but he needs lots of help.

We will need help to set up the display on Friday May 30, and tear it down again on Sunday June 1. This means moving the lathes, setting up the display tables, banners, etc.

We will also need about 12 turners to demonstrate during the show hours. We need novice, intermediate, and advanced turners, but mostly we need people interested in promoting the art of woodturning. Volunteers should be prepared to stay for about 3 hours on one of the three days of the show. If you don't want to turn you could hand out flyers or discuss the items on display.

We will also have an area to display turned objects, so get out your best work and get it to Cliff. It would be nice if each contributor could include some information on a small card with each object such as the turners name, the wood used, or any background information you feel appropriate. The displayed items will be behind a roped off area and not available for handling by the public. In the off show hours, the show will provide security.

While we will not be selling anything at the show, those members who normally do sell could leave a business card with their display pieces and these cards could be handed out to those interested in buying.

So please don't wait until the end of May, contact Cliff Rose at 388-6164 as soon as possible if you can help out or contribute in any way to this important event.

TURNING DEMONSTRATION

"Cheap and Nasty"

That's how Brian Reynolds, our featured turner, referred to his work at the April members meeting. While most members would disagree with that assessment, I think everyone would agree with the words "Fast



and Economical" to describe what we saw.

Brian is a production turner operating out of his shop in Stratford, Ontario. Originally from Australia where he apprenticed with about 125 other woodturners, he has been in the wood turning business for about 46 years.

And I mean business. Almost all of his woodturning involves making a number of inexpensive, spindle turned, high volume items. He prefers the approach of making the same thing many times and getting very good and fast at it, rather than making something unique and artistic. He feels that the artistic approach, while satisfying, puts the price of the turned item out of the price range of most consumers. In fact he even talked with some disdain when referring to bowl turners. He said that when he was apprenticing, the bowl turning was done by a few older men who

while turning out bowls very quickly, were "too old to spindle turn any more". With the characteristic "Ausie" insults out of the way, Brian proceeded to entertain the group of 50 members, who were predominantly bowl turners.

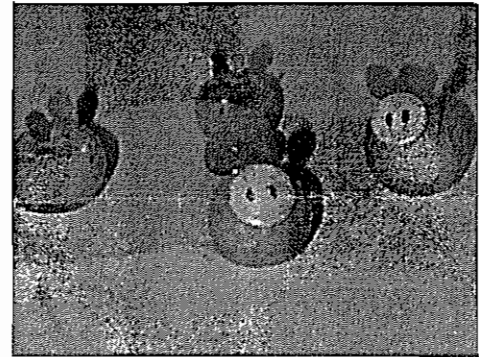
Brian first topic was lathe safety. He was very careful of his body position, rest and tool position and blank mounting. The second topic was safety equipment, which for him doesn't exist since he doesn't wear glasses, mask, smock, gloves or any safety equipment except an occasional face shield when bowl turning.

Brian then proceeded to demonstrate his turning techniques on a number of his most popular items. The first was a bag handle, which is an 8" long cylinder, much like a rolling pin but about 3/4" in diameter with a smooth central section about 6" long and a knob at each end. The idea is to slip the handles of plastic bags over each knob and carry the bags by holding the central section, a good idea. Brian apparently sold about 7,500 of these last year at \$2.75 wholesale at a production rate of one unit in about 2 1/2 minutes.

Brian's approach to making the bag handle was very straightforward; remove the waste, finish cut, apply finish and part off. Removing the waste involved marking the limits of the final shape with a parting tool and removing everything in between. Once the waste was removed, he uses a very sharp gouge or skew to give the piece a single final cut which he tries to do in one motion. Brian says the art of woodturning is in the final cut not in removing

the waste, because this final cut is where the shape of the piece and the finished surface is produced. This was following with a few passes with sandpaper until the items "felt" smooth to the fingers and then finishing with a brush-on lacquer.

Brian's next items were some small "mice" and "pigs". The mice were turned from 1 1/2" maple stock into elongated balls with leather tails and ears, painted



faces and sanded bottoms. The pigs were slightly larger with a snout formed and one end. Both these items were very attractive and had a very nice "feel". Brian pointed out the importance of the wood feeling good in the hand. He said that usually, once a customer picked the item up, it felt so good they bought it. In fact, he said the feel of the item was more important than the finish, since the customer would forgive or not notice a few chisel marks or nicks, but would not buy an item that didn't feel balanced and comfortable in the hand.

Brian's next items were pears and apples. Starting with larger blanks in a scroll chuck, he used the same techniques as with the mice but developed them into a pear or apples shape. After flattening the bottoms and adding stems harvested from leaf stems, they would be sold in the \$8 range. If he made a mistake and gouged the surface, he simply made a smaller pear. No effort is made to make two pieces the same, since no two pears in nature are the same anyway and the individuality of each pear or apple is very attractive to customers.

BUFFING AS PART OF FINISHING by Chuck Luebbers

Several years ago, I attended the large machinery show in Los Angeles. One of the booths had a sequence of buffing wheels and compounds as part of their demonstration. I had always thought of buffing as a means of polishing metal. To my surprise, they were buffing all types of wood and were getting a very high sheen.

I couldn't wait to get home and give it a try. I had a piece of Cocobolo that was turned round and sanded to 400 grit. As you know, getting the circular sanding marks out of Cocobolo is a real challenge. I used a 1/2" thick cotton wheel chucked in my reversible drill and charged it with brown Tripoli. When I held the spinning wheel against the rotating piece on the lathe, the circular marks instantly vanished and a very highly polished surface appeared. With the addition of a coat of wax, this technique produced the best finish I had ever obtained on Cocobolo.

When polishing dark woods, I use the brown Tripoli, and on light woods, I use the white. I have used this method on woods finished first with Ben Matte oil or a sanding sealer, and in all cases the final finish is smooth and glossy.

Tripoli can be purchased at any Lapidary shop.

Horst Remmling's Satin Finish

In need of a finishing tip this month, I called Horst to see if he would share with us the process he uses to achieve the beautiful satin sheen characteristic of his work. Horst uses a product by General Finishes called Sealacell and a companion product called Arm-R-Seal by the same manufacturer. Sealacell is a Tung Oil wood sealer and the Arm-R-Seal is billed as a Oil & Urethane Top Coat. After turning a piece and sanding to 400 grit on the lathe, Horst removes it and applies a liberal coat of Sealacell with a cotton cloth. He allows this coat to dry overnight and then hand sands with 220 grit. On spalted or punky woods, Horst says he will just soak the piece overnight in a pan of Sealacell. After sanding he carefully removes all residue. Horst next applies three or four coats of Arm-R-Seal, allowing each coat to dry overnight, and sands with 220 grit between each coat.

The final top coat is first sanded with 400 grit and then 600 to dull the shine. Horst tops every thing off with a coat of Black Bison paste wax and buffs it by hand.

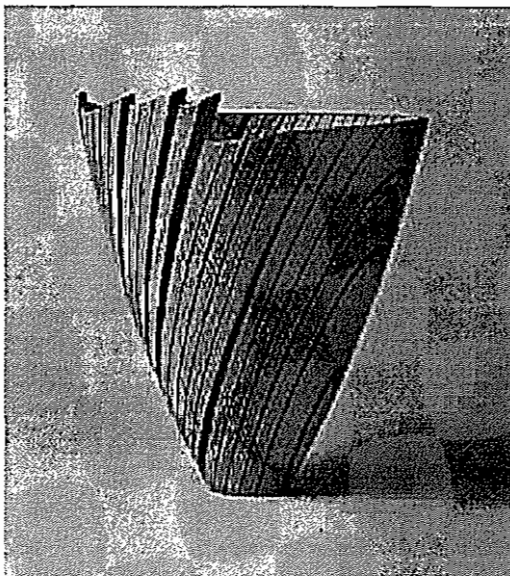
Sealacell is available through the Woodworker's Store.

The previous was taken from the newsletter published on the web by the San Diego Woodturners. You can visit this site at <http://home.abac.com/aceking>

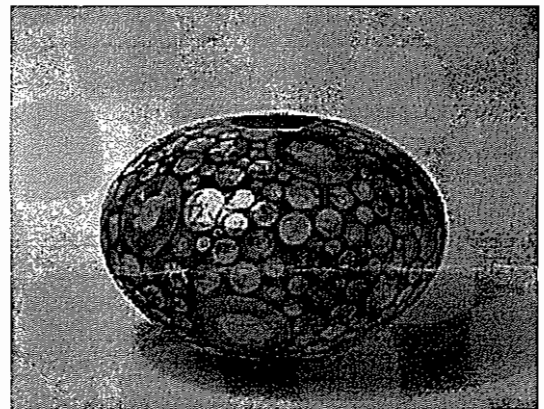
The following images are from the National Museum of American Art, White House Collection.

<http://www.nmaa.si.edu/whc/>

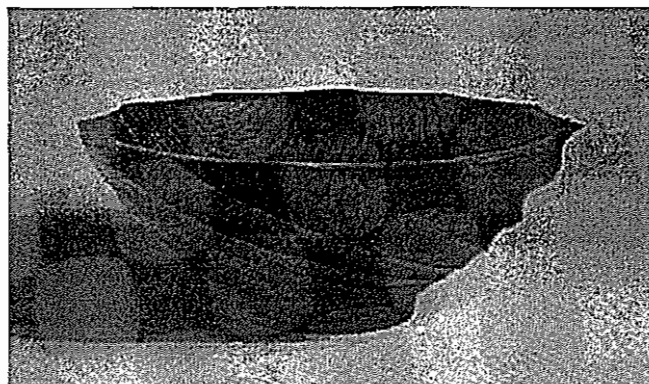
Virginia Dotson - Sunlight #4



Philip Moulthrop - White Pine Mosaic Bowl



Alan Sirit - Spiral Fluted Butternut



OSKAR'S PLATTER FINISH

Oskar Kirsten makes, among many other items, presentation platters for various technical societies with which he is associated. Most of these platters are made from Goncalvo Alves and are about 10" in diameter. He uses a process on them which leaves a fine marble like finish. Following is his step by step finishing procedure.

"I power sand, if shaping, starting at 80 grit. If I like the shape and have not torn end grain, I start at 120 or 150. The initial sanding is done with sticky paper on 5" diameter foam pads. I have several pads which allows me to progress rapidly towards 400 grit. I then look closely, using a backlight, for visible scratches. If everything is OK, I brush the platter clean of sanding residue. I might add, that after every grit change, I use a 2" wide paint brush to clear away any remaining grit of the previous grade. This prevents including a rougher previous grit with a subsequent finer one as I ascend to the finest. The last sanding is with 600 grit followed by 0000 steel wool. I have spent only 15-30 seconds on each sanding step thus far.

The final step is to apply my finish of choice. With the lathe stopped or very slow, I spray lacquer from an aerosol can to cover the piece. While the lacquer is still wet, I rub in a healthy dose of dark wax. Before it can dry, I speed up the lathe to about 600 RPM and literally burnish in the coat of wax. A single application gives a very nice finish to a closed cell hard wood such as Goncalvo Alves. This finish may initially be splotchy in a less hard or open grain wood and may require several lacquer coats before the final wax and lacquer combination. Each coat is "wooled" with 0000 before another application and the lathe speed must be very slow so as not to streak burn the previous coat.

Because I finish the foot side of the platter first, I repeat each step for the inside when I reverse mount it. Try it, I think you'll like it."

JIM YOUNG'S "ONE STEP FINISH"

Jim calls this his "one step, quick finish. Mike Mahoney, our Provo,Utah member, also uses this finish almost exclusively. I'm not sure who came up with it originally.

The finish consists of a concoction of mineral oil and beeswax. Jim uses one half pint of mineral oil to a half pound of beeswax. He places the two ingredients in a tupperware bowl and nukes them in the Microwave until the mixture liquifies. He then pours the liquid into a can or other lidded container and allows it to solidify into a soft paste.

Jim applies a liberal coat of the wax and oil mixture to a finished piece with a cotton cloth (diapers are excellent) and allows it to sit for a few minutes. He then turns on the lathe and buffs the wax dry. This process produces a durable, non-toxic, food safe finish with a

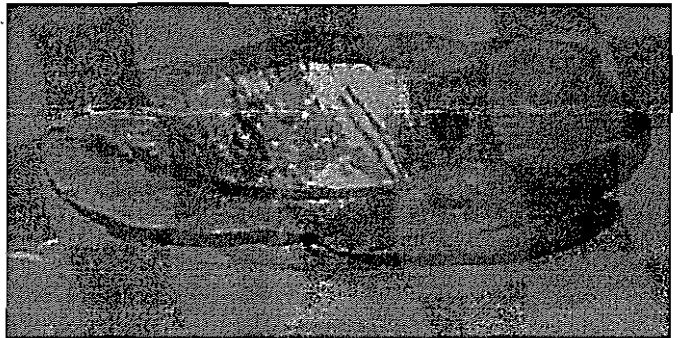
satin sheen. It is especially good on hardwoods such as maple, walnut, cocobolo, etc.

MY FAVORITE FINISH by Gene Reynolds

I use a finish called French Polish. I am not sure that it is the correct name for this finish, but this is what Nan called it. I first came across this finish by winning a bottle at the first San Diego Woodturners meeting I attended. I believe Nan was the one that made up this particular batch for the raffle. It is made by mixing 1 part denatured alcohol, 1 part boiled linseed oil, and 1 part clear shellac. You can purchase all these components from Standard Brands Paint Store. I buy the 8 oz. size of clear shellac all ready mixed in a denatured alcohol base as it makes it easier to mix the rest of the ingredients. You can use a quart plastic bottle with a sealed top and use 8 oz. of each ingredient for a total of 24 oz. Be sure to shake the bottle before each use as the ingredients tend to separate after sitting.

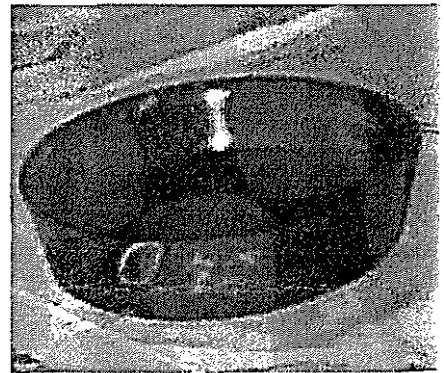
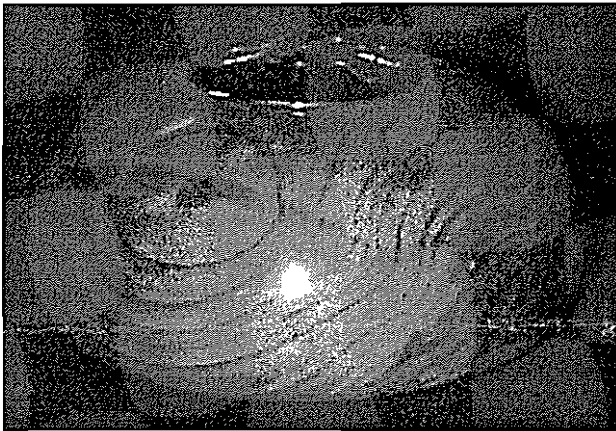
The way to use this French polish is to sand to a fine finish, 320 or 400 grit depending on the wood used, then while the lathe is spinning at a slow speed, apply the finish with a rag such as an old tee shirt. I keep the rag moving so there won't be any lap marks in the finish. Put on just a light coat at first, and let this dry. It only takes a minute for this finish to dry and that is why it is my favorite finish as all the finishing can be done at one time. I then sand the finish with a very fine mesh sponge, which can be bought from Craft Supplies in Provo, Utah, or from Woodworkers Store. You can also use 0000 steel wool, but steel wool has a tendency to stick to the finish and later to rust if it gets any moisture thereby staining your bowl. I then either put on another light coat and build up seceding coats until I reach a high gloss finish, or stop at one or two coats and then put a wax finish on for a slightly duller sheen. Sand between each coat of French Polish to keep the finish smooth, and to allow each seceding coat to adhere to each other. I have found that after years of using this finish I can control it better than any other, and you don't have to wait for the finish to dry over night or worry about foreign particles sticking to it while it is drying. It seems to be very durable, and also if you want you can wax the surface after sanding the last coat of finish, this leaves the wood feeling good to the touch with a more natural finish. I also feel that this finish is a good sealer coat for the wood if that is all you want to use it for, and then wax or do what ever finish you like. One minus is that even though you use the clear shellac, this finish tends to give the wood a slight yellowing effect, but I don't find this objectionable in most cases. Give this finish a try and you will come to like it, as it is inexpensive, dry's extremely fast and provides excellent protection for your projects.

Brian McIntosh brought in 5 bowls, some done in the style of an excellent turner from Quebec that he saw at the "One of a kind craft sale" in Toronto last month. He roughed up a ring around the outside or inside with a dremel tools to give added texture to the piece. This effect really improved the appearance of an otherwise drab wood and added that "feel" that Brian Reynolds mentioned was so important. Brian tried adding the texture both with the piece turning and with it stopped. While it takes a lot longer to do with it stopped, the results are far better.



Brian Graham brought in an Aromatic Cedar potpourri bowl which was to be the lottery prize for this month.

There were also a number of other items on display whose owners chose not to speak up. These are shown below.



Brian then turned a couple of small bowls just to prove that a spindle turner could turn bowls. Amidst jibes and jokes about bowl turning in general, Brian made what he would consider a saleable bowl in about 4 minutes. Again, he pointed out that the customer who pays about \$12 for a nut dish, doesn't care if the finish is perfect, but that the bowl has a nice shape, some texture which he adds with beads even on the inside and a good balance. He always places a edge on the bowl that aids in holding it, pointing out that if the bowl is difficult to hold, it will not feel right in the hand.

Brian then discussed production turning in general. An example he used was in making about 100 stair spindles. It didn't matter if there was a 1/4" difference between the fattest and thinnest of the lot, since most shops would put them in order of size and number

them. In this way, the bottom spindle would be very close in size to its neighbour while it might be quite different from the spindle located at the top of the stair. By placing the spindles in order of size, the small differences in size are not noticeable. As long as the tenons and mounting lengths are all the same, the customer will be happy. The same thing applies to making candlesticks. They would make hundreds of individual candlesticks, and when finished, sort them by size to make pairs. The candlesticks were never made in pairs. This of course required buying enough wood at the same time to get consistent colour, but even a small variation in colour is tolerated by the customer if the item looks good and has a good feel.

In conclusion, Brian drove home the points I think he was most intent on getting through. That the

item we are making must be tailored to the customer's expectations and that while it is nice to spend 4 hours making a perfectly finished bowl that can stand the critical inspection of other turners, the public cannot afford to pay for it and would not buy it. While it may be possible for a turner/artists like Virginia Dotson to create exceptional pieces of art that sell for high prices, the rest of us craftsman likely cannot, at least not enough to pay the bills. However, we can create beautiful pieces of turned objects (spindles and bowls, Brian) for our own pleasure (and as gifts) and make a few bucks by taking Brian's advice, turning for the customer.

Thanks Brian for a thought provoking and thoroughly entertaining evening.

ART ON THE LATHE

A few of the members brought in their latest pieces to our "show and tell".

Cliff rose brought in a pine bowl to show it could be done. Since it was pine he left the sides fairly thick to add strength and feathered the top to give it a lighter look.



The Wood Raffle

The wood raffle table was overflowing this month with donations from most of the fifty members who attended. The raffle raised \$179 toward the Guild's future needs. As usual Wally Mugford was barely able to carry out all the pieces he won, we had to pump up his tires a bit to carry the load. Get turning Wally.

The finished item, an Aromatic Cedar potpourri bowl was made by Brian Graham and won by Michael Hoffman. This is the second time Michael won since he also won in January. Even though he only bought one ticket, Michael couldn't hold back the "fickle finger of fate"

WOODTURNING LESSONS

Novice, intermediate, advanced.
in SPINDLE: legs, bud vases, ornaments....

BOWL: green, dry, natural edge.

HOLLOW VESSEL: Jordan Tech.

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FINISHING

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(referred to the GHWG by Mark Salusbury of the CWA)

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Marilyn Campbell

Our guest turner for the May meeting will be Marilyn Campbell, current president of the Grey Bruce Woodturners Guild. She is a self taught turner who has been turning for about 15 years, and despite sabbaticals for child rearing has developed into an accomplished woodturner. Most of her pieces now are "one-of-a-kind artistic pieces". For further information on Marilyn Campbell and pictures of some of her work, see the Canadian Woodturner Newsletter, December 1996, Volume 5, No. 2.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

If you have any articles, ideas, articles (wood, tools, etc.) for sale, articles wanted, etc., please contact me and I will add it to the next newsletter.

Frank Ditomaso, Editor
905-335-5391 (Evening)
905-548-7014 (Weekdays)

UPCOMING EVENTS

AT GHWG

May 15
Marilyn Campbell

June 19
Norm Brunton

ANCASTER WOOD SHOW

May 30,31 and June 1
Ancaster fair grounds
Hwy #53

DURHAM WOOD SHOW

August 8,9,10 1997
Durham, Ontario
Junction of Hwy #6 and Hwy # 4
South of Owen Sound
(519) 369-6902

WOODTURNING ON THE WEB

FINISHING TIPS

Below are a variety of Finishing Tips and Techniques offered by various members of the San Diego Woodturners. Additional tips will be posted here as they appear in future Newsletters.

NAN'S FAVORITE FINISH

Nan Bushley passes this finishing technique along that she learned from Wally Dickerman of Seattle, Washington. She says it's best suited for woods such as Walnut, Olive, Maple, etc., and not the high resin content exotic species such as Cocobolo. Here are her instructions:

After finish sanding, liberally wipe on a coat of Deft Clear Wood Finish, don't wait for it to dry but follow immediately with a coat of Ben Matte Tung Oil finish applied with 4-0 steel wool. If the surface is unbroken (no defects, or bark inclusions), burnish in with the lathe running. Allow to become slightly tacky, (5 to 10 minutes; do not allow to dry), then wipe off.

Allow to stand over night then apply another coat of Ben Matte and wipe off as before. Repeat this process 4-6 times to build up additional luster as desired. You can top everything off with a coat of paste wax after the oil is completely dry, but this is a personal choice and is not necessary.

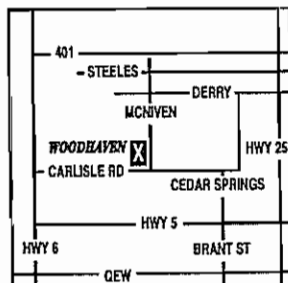
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