



Newsletter May, 2004

Announcements:

- Tom Mogford announced several suppliers offering discounts to members. Craft Supplies will give a discount to a group order of \$1000.00 or more. A signup sheet was passed around. Contact Tom before the next meeting if you would like to add to the order. Klingspor's will be sent a membership roster. If you're on the roster, you should receive a 10% discount. Also, vouchers for 15% off on Mike Mahoney products at Craft Supplies were passed out.
- *The July meeting will be on July 11th this year because of the July 4th holiday.*
- Keith Fullmer announced that the chapter will be co-hosting a booth at the Ann Arbor Art Fairs this year. Members will be needed to staff the booth and perform woodturning demos during the fair. In exchange, booth space will be provided for members to offer their turnings for sale. Details are still being worked out, but should be available at the June meeting. <Hint> Now would be the time to create that Masterpiece you've been meaning to get around to. Fame and Fortune await.
- The Chapter will participate in another Studio 23 show in November, 2005. Details TBA.
- Bill Shelt has been forced to step down from the Vice President's position due to time constraints. Nominations and a vote for a new VP will take place at the June meeting. Thanks for serving, Bill. We hope you can still stay involved with the Chapter.
- Please make the following changes to your membership roster:
Karl Anderson's telephone is 248-348-4715
Colleen's last name is spelled Bruning-Fann
We've added a new member:

Jeff Scott
536 Darwin Street
Westland, MI 48186
734-595-0215

Welcome, Jeff. If you have any questions, just ask.

- Art Varady provided the treats for the May meeting. Bill Weber will provide treats for the June meeting. Thanks to both.
- Ideas are always welcome for program content. Is there something in particular you'd like to learn about? Have you picked something up along the way that you'd like to share? Contact any of the officers and let's see if we can build a program around it.

- Ideas are always welcome for newsletter content, as well. Do you have a tip or technique you'd like to share? Have you been to a demo or a workshop you'd like other people to know about? How about a tool review, or a how-to on Christmas ornaments? Contact Phil Clevenger and we'll get it in print. Ghostwriting available for the linguistically challenged. Or, did you just want to keep track of who brought the cookies?

Program:

The program this time featured jigs and fixtures. A number of people showed things they have found useful.

- Tom Mogford brought in a template he uses to quickly set the appropriate geometry for an Ellsworth-type sharpening jig. Tom also showed a simple thickness gauge made of 1/8" cold-rolled steel that helps to establish a uniform wall thickness.
- Lynn Grenier showed a jig he devised for welding sanding mandrels. He asked for any members interested in making the mandrels in quantity to contact him. He also showed a shopmade faceplate and tool rest, as well as an Ellsworth-type jig he uses for detail gouges. Any members interested in these or similar items should contact Lynn. He has also agreed to mentor members interested in tool-making and fabrication. He doesn't claim to be a machinist, but he usually can get things done. Thanks Lynn.
- Bob Kenning showed a jig he uses to turn trivets like those shown in the November, 2003 issue of Wood magazine.
- Karl Anderson brought in a jig for turning spheres.
- Basil Kelsey showed a tool rest-mounted laser pointer he uses for accurately aligning bowl blanks between centers.
- Ruby Clerdes described a tool rest that she has drilled and tapped every 2 1/2" to receive a bolt that then serves as a fulcrum when roughing out bowls.

Thanks to all who participated.

Feature:

A Day with Mark St. Leger

By Phil Clevenger
Secretary, Michigan Association of Woodturners

A.A.W. Vice President Mark St. Leger visited the Chapter on April 24th, 2004 to share some of his tools and techniques with those attending. Mark has been turning for about 17 years now, and is mainly self-taught. With 14 years experience as a high school woodshop teacher, Mark has developed an easy-going, friendly approach to teaching that, combined with his dry wit and silver tongue, made the day fly and the lessons go easy.

Like most schoolteachers, Mark has had to learn to make a dollar go a long way. Some of the most interesting things he shared with us were about making our own jigs, fixtures, and tools with materials at hand or inexpensive to obtain. In the course of the day, we saw him making or using his own drive center, collet chuck, disk sander, eccentric chuck, and more. He got us thinking about ways of fixing and orienting the work that were new to some of us, and the way he's gone about developing his work was of value to all.

Executive Spin Top:

Starting with a 1 3/4" X 1 3/4" maple blank between centers, he turns it round and using a shopmade bedan tool puts a nominal 1" diameter tenon 3/16" long on one end. He drills a 1" hole through the center of a 2" square of 1/2" thick Corian then carefully turns down the tenon for a friction fit. With the Corian now mounted on the tenon, he turns the Corian round, trues the face, chamfers the edges, and sands to 600.

Now he removes the Corian, cuts a v-groove about 1/2" from the end, then extends the tenon another 1 1/16" or so to accommodate the thickness of the Corian and allow a 1/2" or so for the string to wrap around, trues the face of the tenon, marks center with a skew tip and drills a 3/16" hole about 1/2" deep which will receive the "handle" which will be fashioned out of a piece of 3/16" brass rod. He lubricates the hole with a little wax using a Q-tip.

He then cuts another V-groove at the base of the tenon to accommodate any excess glue, ensures that the shoulder of the tenon is square so that the Corian disk will seat true, and then glues on the Corian disk with CA glue. The Corian disk should sit flush with the 1st V-groove, with about 1/2" of the tenon extending beyond the V-groove.

With the blank still between centers, he roughs out the bottom of the, er, top and parts it off using a modified butter knife (He recommends against using SWMBO's best silver).

He then chucks the, well, top of the top into his shopmade collet chuck and finish turns the bottom, leaving a flat. He then CA glues onto the flat a block of Cocobolo or similar dense hardwood, turns that round, then fashions a 3/16" diameter tenon on the end of the Cocobolo that is 1/4" long. He then parts off the Cocobolo, marks the center point of the top, drills a 3/16" hole in the body of the top to receive the tenon of the Cocobolo tip. The tip is glued in place with CA and then tapered to a point with light cuts.

He uses a shopmade chatter work tool to texture the maple body of the top, burnishing the chatter work with a piece of Cocobolo to add some color.

Mark uses flyfishing "fine line backing" for the string, ties a knot on each end of the string to prevent fraying, grinds a notch into the middle of a piece of 3/16" brass rod and ties one end of the string to the "pull."

Lynn Grenier clocked the demo top's spin-time at precisely 2.5 minutes, which Mark suggested was the outer boundary of the typical executive's attention span... well within the design parameters.

Balancing Pod Box:

Starting with a 3" X 3" X 1 1/2" block, Mark marks the true center on both sides. Then he measures up the same diagonal 1/2" on both sides and marks an offset center. He mounts the block between centers using the offset center and turns a tenon to fit his scroll chuck, while maintaining the crosshairs of the true center. He does not round the blank at this point.

With the block now mounted with the offset tenon in his scroll chuck, Mark hollows a small, straight-sided bowl using a shopmade handle fitted with a double-ended 3/8" ball end mill.

He then textured the top surface of the box with a Sorby texturing tool and a thin parting tool, then broke out a small butane torch to add a little charring for interest.

Mark then removes the box blank, removes jaws 1 and 3 from his scroll chuck, and marks the center line on a 1 3/4" square X 4" long waste block. He then mounts the waste block in the scroll chuck and turns a straight-sided tenon on the waste block that will become a jam chuck that fits the hollow of the box.

He mounts the box on the jam chuck and then aligns the true centerline to the waste block centerline by loosening the scroll chuck and sliding the waste block up so that the tailstock finds the true center of the box.

With the box now revolving on its true center, he turns the bottom of the box to a spherical shape, resulting in a round-bottomed form with an offset hollow on top with eccentric texturing on the top.

He then fashions a lid for the box in the usual way.

Rock-a-Bye Bowl:

After a lunch featuring Tim Morris's savory White Chicken Chile (worth the price of admission all by itself) Mark began the afternoon session by encouraging us to look at things in a different way and as an example showed us a different way of fixing our work.

Starting with a 2" cube he flattened two opposing corners which became the new plane of orientation. He located the centers of the two flats and mounted the piece between centers. He then partially formed which would become the bottom of the bowl and then formed a tenon for the chuck.

With the piece now in the chuck, he completed the concave side and hollowed a small bowl in the center. Next, he fashioned a jamb chuck to fit the bowl and brought up the tailstock for support while he completed the sphere for the bottom. He suggested raising a burr on one side of the skew for a final shears scraping cut.

The most important thing about this form seems to be the layout. You must start with a true cube, find accurate centers on the flats, take light cuts with sharp tools, and sneak up on the corners so they don't break off. A little tweaking of the final form is possible at the sander.

Urn Box with Threaded Lid

The last demonstration showed us how he hand-chases threads. Mark began with a 1 3/4" X 1 3/4" X 4" inch blank. He knocked off the corners so it fit in his scroll chuck, then mounted the blank in the chuck for final rounding. He trued the face, found the center with the point of his skew and then drilled out the center with a 5/8" Forstner bit.

First, he defined the outside shape. Then, he used a skew to sneak up on the diameter of the hole so it will receive a 1/2" length of 3/4" PVC pipe. When he found the proper fit, He CA glued the PVC and turned it flush with the top of the blank. After turning away about half of the wall thickness of the PVC for clearance, he chamfered the inside edge.

Using (what else) a shopmade thread chaser, he proceeded to strike the inside threads. After the first threads are established he tries to keep the same motion going to fully define them. Mark says that he prefers to chase threads at 150-300 rpm, but since most of the lathes he finds himself demoing on have a minimum speed of 500 rpm he's had to change his rhythm.

After completing the inside threads he proceeds to hollow the vessel using a re-shaped planer blade as a scraper. The vessel is then parted off. He turns a tenon to fit the inside diameter of the PVC and CA glues it on. He then turns the outside diameter of the PVC to fit the inside diameter of the female threads plus about 1/16". Then he chamfers the front edge, strikes the threads and completes the process, sneaking up on the final diameter until he has a good fit.

The parts are screwed together and the piece is completed.

Mark uses a variety of techniques for surface embellishment, starting with woodburning and rotary carving work. A particularly compelling texture on some finished boxes he brought in was the result of using a chisel-tipped woodburning pen to apply a "crackle" pattern all along say, the bottom of the piece. The resulting surface just begs to be handled.

He often uses acrylic paints and aniline dyes for color. Although he sometimes uses lacquer as a finish, he often just buffs his work using the Beall system.

In all, it was a great way to spend a day. Mark St. Leger is an excellent teacher who enjoys sharing his knowledge. Thanks, Mark.

Classified:

- **Eric Blom has an older Oliver bandsaw, nominal 28" throat, 14" resaw capacity, available. It may need a new motor. (734) 663-8008.**
- **Colleen Bruning-Fann is looking for a Oneway 2436 lathe in good condition. (517) 655-3415.**
- **Jim Madsen always has wood for sale. Catch him after the meetings, or for a little hog heaven check out his ranch in Potterville. (517) 645-4594.**

Upcoming:

- The June 6th, 2004 meeting will feature a Taming of the Skew demo by Russ Clinard and Basil Kelsey. Come and learn how to finesse this sometimes-intimidating tool.
- The July 11th meeting will feature a discussion led by Jim Madsen on chainsaw selection, use, and maintenance. Weather permitting, we might be able to persuade Jim to demo some chainsaw carving.
- The August 1st meeting will be a social event! Spouses and Spawns welcome. The Chapter will provide the meat and soft drinks. Please bring a dish to pass. No charge. Also, we would like to do a big Show and Tell with prizes awarded in 3 categories. **Further details TBA.**

Meetings are held the 1st Sunday of the month at Russ Clinard's workshop, 2892 Bateson Ct., Ann Arbor, Michigan. Telephone: 734-663-9689. **Meetings start at 1 p.m.**