



# Between Turns

A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

June, 2004

Volume 16, Issue 6

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## Meeting Announcements:

- Please note that the July meeting will be held on July 11th this year due to the holiday.
- Pete Buccellato was elected Vice-President by acclamation. Congratulations, Pete.
- Jeff Provost had to resign as the Chapter Photographer due to his voluntary work reassignment to the Iraqi Theater. As an auditor for the D.O.D., Jeff is helping to ensure that the Pentagon doesn't buy any more \$500 hammers. Thanks for your efforts, Jeff. We all wish you a safe journey and look forward to your quick return.
- Chuck Hanners has volunteered (was tapped) to replace Jeff Provost as Photographer. Thanks, Chuck.
- Dick Sing will be giving a 2-day demo in Traverse City on October 2nd and 3rd, 2004. There is limited space available for a hands-on workshop on October 4th and 5th. Contact Lyle Jamieson at (231) 947-2348.
- Al Sadaj and Keith Fulmer provided a few more details about the Chapter's involvement in the South University Art Fair. Dates are July 21st – July 24th. The booths will be in the Church and South University area. We will need volunteers to work 4-hour shifts. The Chapter will receive 5% of the sales. Volunteers will be able to sell their work. There will be a minimal jury process just to make sure work is of high quality. Russ Clinard has agreed to open his shop as a staging area for members to car-pool to the Fair. Parking and shuttle service is also available at the Briarwood Shopping Mall south of town. Contact Pete Buccellato at 248-634-7622 to volunteer.
- We need a volunteer to manage the Chapter's library of books and videos. Once

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## The Taming of the Skew

**“While I don't claim to have mastered the skew, I have managed to befriend it on occasion.”**

**—Basil Kelsey**

Basil Kelsey gave us a great demonstration on the use of the skew, his weapon of choice for spindle work.

Basil recommended the books “Fundamentals of Woodturning” and “The Practice of Woodturning” by Mike Darlow and “Skew Chisels: the Dark Side and the Sweet Side” by Alan

Lacer, available on VHS or DVD for further study. “Michael Darlow can be a bit dry,” he says, “but I learn something new every time I re-read him.”

When first learning to use the skew, Basil suggests selecting an easy piece of wood to

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**Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to provide education, information, and organization to those interested in woodturning. We meet on a monthly basis to share woodturning challenges, insights, and accomplishments. Our chapter accomplishes this through our mentoring program, library, mini-symposiums, monthly newsletters and friendship

# Announcements

*(Continued from page 1)*

the inventory is updated, the job requires only minimal time. This is a great resource, especially for our newer members See Tom Mogford if interested.

- The Chapter is trying to make arrangements to bring Russ Fairfield in for a full-day demo in October. Details TBA. Check out his work at [www.woodturnerruss.com](http://www.woodturnerruss.com) or read his articles on Woodcentral at [www.woodcentral/russ/russindex.shtml](http://www.woodcentral/russ/russindex.shtml).
- Tom Mogford passed around the 15% off vouchers good until July 15th at Craft Supplies.
- Jim Madsen reports he has completed the A.A.W Educational Grant application and mailed it in. Thanks, Jim
- Thanks to Bill Weber for bringing those great muffins. Phil Clevenger will provide the treats for the next meeting.

work allows it.

He gets kiln-dried 8/4 poplar from B & B Heartwoods in Whitmore Lake and makes his own turning blocks, but any knot-free, straight-grained wood will do.

Basil marked the centers of his poplar block and then mounted it between centers on the lathe. Adjusting the rest so the tool would cut slightly above center, Basil proceeded to round the block with his skew in a way that would've made Richard Raffin proud.

“Roughing out the cylinder with a skew is a great way to get comfortable with the tool.” he said, showing how to rapidly removed waste in steps from left to right completing the process with a few planing cuts from right to left.

“The skew is a bevel-rubbing tool, just like a gouge” he said, as he demonstrated how to present the skew to the wood. The key to a good, controlled planing cut is to place the tool flat on the rest and at a 45° angle to the radial axis., with the heel riding on the wood. At this point, no cutting is taking place. Draw the tool back until the instep, or bevel, is rubbing, elevating the trailing edge 1 or 2 degrees from the rest and slowly raising the handle until the tool begins to take the finest cut on the bottom third of the cutting edge. “Nobody ever tells you that you need to apply axial thrust to use the skew properly,” he says, “lean into it and follow through.”



Basil makes it round.

He deftly sized the cylinder with his parting tool and calipers, finishing with planing cuts using the skew until just reaching the depth of the witness marks left by the parting tool.

With the cylinder now of uniform diameter and slightly oversized for the next step, Basil took the opportunity to show us the versatility of the tool.

# Taming of the Skew

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work. Basil prefers to use a 1” skew with a radius-ground tip if the size of the



Basil Kelsey models the latest in protective gear.

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“The skew is worth the time and effort to learn because it can do so much for you,” he said, “and the burnished surface left by a sharp skew needs little, if any, sanding.”

He showed us how to do a paring cut using a  Clearance Angle of about 2° and controlling the amount of axial thrust to control the depth of cut. He showed us the skew can plane in either direction and with either point leading. “All of these cuts are legitimate. Get familiar with them and learn when to use them,” Basil suggests.

Basil continued the demo by laying out evenly spaced lines using a template for the next step. “Cutting V-grooves is a three-step process. Cut 1 is with the long point down and the tool on edge and dead vertical or at the 12 o’clock position. Arc the tip into the wood and apply axial thrust to achieve the desired depth. Cuts 2 and 3 are made from each side of Cut 1 with the tool presented at a 45° angle to the work. To avoid a serious catch, make sure to tilt the tool to 1 o’clock if you’re cutting on the right side of Cut 1 and 11 o’clock if you’re cutting on the left side of Cut 1. The Sharpening Angle is the practical limit to the depth of cut.

After cutting the all of the V-grooves he had marked out, Basil began to demonstrate the use of the skew for rolling beads. The only real difference between rolling beads and performing Cuts 2 and 3 for the V-grooves is that the tool must traverse the toolrest to achieve the desired shape. Rolling a bead can be done with either point leading. Basil starts with the

heel of the skew rubbing in the center of the bead, adjusts the presentation until the tool just begins to take a

light planing cut,

traverses the toolrest while rolling the skew up so that it is dead vertical, or 12 o’clock by the time it arrives at the V-groove. All done in one fluid motion with only the bottom third of the tool doing the cutting.

“The more you concentrate on riding the bevel down to the bottom of the cut while keeping the cutting action on the bottom third of the tool the fewer chances you have of a bad catch.” he says .

He showed us the tied underhand grip in which the forefinger of the left hand is anchored underneath the rest, while the thumb and remaining fingers wrap around the tool. “This grip is best for detail work” he said.

Basil suggests that people not worry too much about making a row of identical beads. “Your beads are made by human hands. There will always be some variation.”

After completing a few beads, he peeled down a couple to show us how to cut a cove.. “All of the same principles apply.” he says, “Cutting in from both sides will leave a smoother surface. If you’re making smaller coves use a smaller skew.”

The demo ended with a challenge to make our own storysticks and bring them with us to the July 11th meeting for a brief critique and troubleshooting as needed.

A very helpful demo. Thanks, Basil.



Basil lays out some V-



Basil rolls some beads



Basil's storysticks

## Changes

Clifford Jones' new address is  
2384 Island Hwy, Charlotte, MI  
48813.

We have a new member:

Jo Bigham

4480 Lake Forest Dr. W.

Ann Arbor, MI 48108

734-668-6411

Jo Bigham@comcast.net

Welcome, Jo...If you have any  
questions please ask.



### Chapter Mentors

#### General Woodturning:

Russ Clinard 734-663-9689

Basil Kelsey 734-572-9216

#### Metalworking

Lynn Grenier 734-475-2305

#### 16th Century Woodturning:

John Becker 248-851-0437

If you have developed skills that you would like to share with our members, please contact Phil Clevenger at 734--761-8737

## A Short Tutorial on the Termite Hollowing Tool

By Hermann De Vries  
Reprinted with permission



This is the Termite tip. You can see that the outer rim is slightly beveled. Both edges, upper and lower, are sharpened.

The lower edge is much more aggressive due to the bevel, so most cutting occurs with the upper edge. All of the pictures that follow show this edge cutting.



This is a piece of red oak, about 10" in diameter and 3 1/2" thick. You can see that the cut will be straight into the end grain.

grain.

The hole is plunged into the center using a 3/8" gouge. In this picture a slight hollow has been turned into the bowl. There's still a hole in the center, it just happens to be plugged with shavings.



The cut starts at the hole, dead center. The cutter is vertical when I place it into the hole, and then turned clockwise until the cutting

edge begins to slice the wood. At this point I have the tool turned from 12 o'clock to about 2 o'clock, and I am pulling the cut from right to left with my left hand. The speed of the cut is directly proportional to how hard I pull.



Half way through the cut. You can see a sizable shaving coming from the cutter. Keep in mind that this is red oak. The lathe is turning fairly slowly, only about 250 rpm. The Termite does not like high speed, nor does it need it. Note that the cutter is just above center.

Finishing up the cut at the rim of the bowl.



You can see that this was a fairly aggressive cut. There is no way I could hollow out this end grain as well with a bowl gouge. To get the inside of the

bowl this far took less than 2 minutes, with Karen taking the pictures.

Flattening out the bottom of the bowl. This is



when you might want to turn the cutter over and use the aggressive edge, but be careful. To use the "mellow" edge, as I

have done here, you have to cut below center



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unless you raise the tool rest.

To thin the sides of the bowl, start where the bottom meets the side. Note that the Termite is vertical. It cannot cut in this position, nor can it catch.



Just starting the cut. The Termite has been turned to about 2 o'clock here, and I'm using a very light touch to begin with.



Once the tool begins to slice the wood, I bear down a bit on it to cut more aggressively, since the wall is still quite thick here. The cutter, at this point has been turned to between 2 and 3 o'clock.



*Editor's note: Check out more of Herm's tips at his website: [www.hdv.net](http://www.hdv.net). Herm also administers an excellent forum on the*

*web called the World of Woodturners which has a wealth of information and critiques from some of the worlds best turners. See Basil Kelsey or Phil Clevenger for an invitation to join this group.*

## Member's Gallery



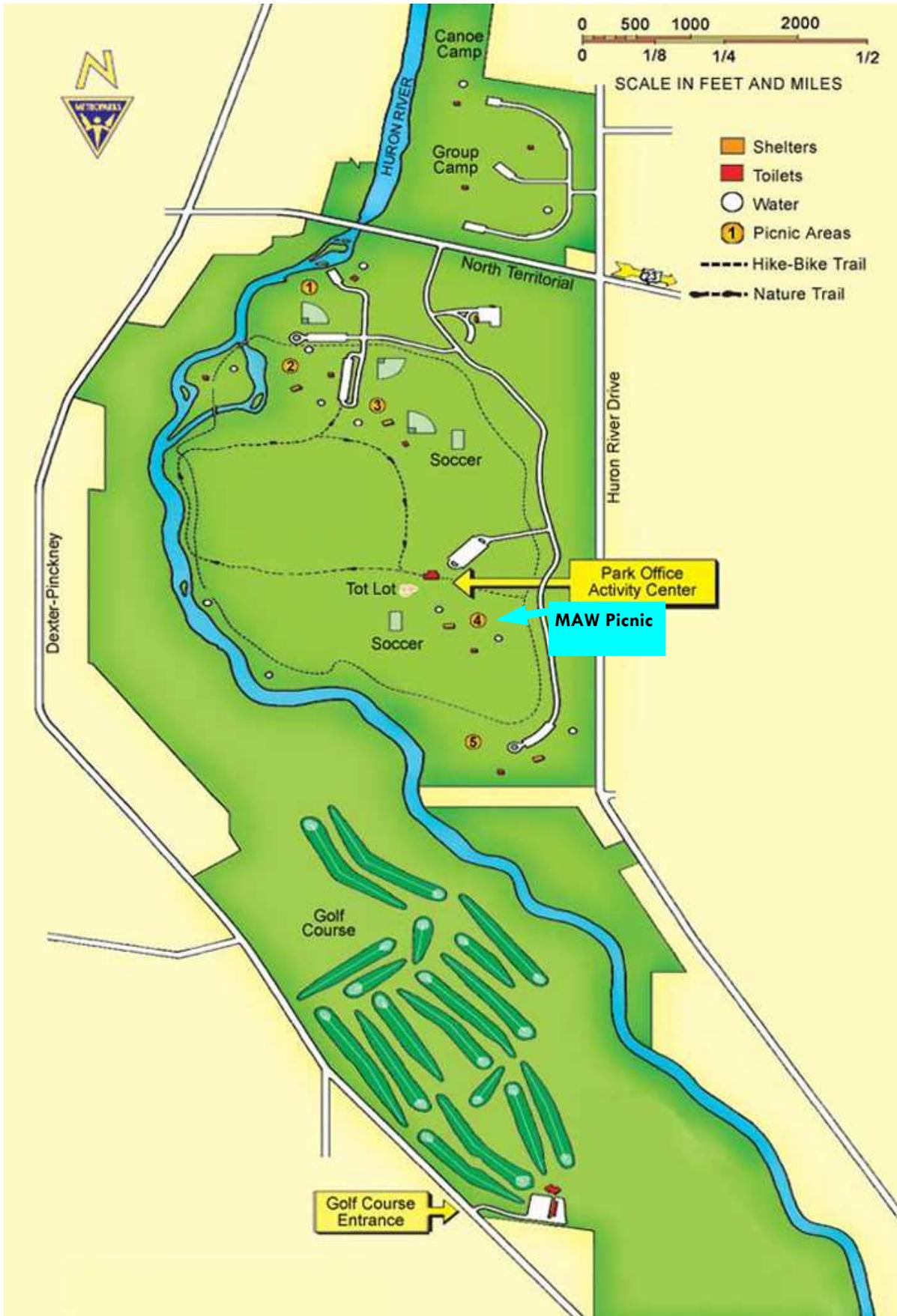
A carved bowl by Joe Agosta



A textured and charred bowl by Joe Agosta

**Dues:**  
\$95.00/year, includes A.A. W. Membership. Remit at the January meeting or by mail to:  
Timothy Morris, Treasurer  
1673 Woodlake Circle  
Brighton, MI 48116

**Meetings:**  
are held at 1 p.m. On the first Sunday of the month at the workshop of:  
Russ Clinard 2892  
Bateson Court Ann Arbor, MI 48105 734-663-9689

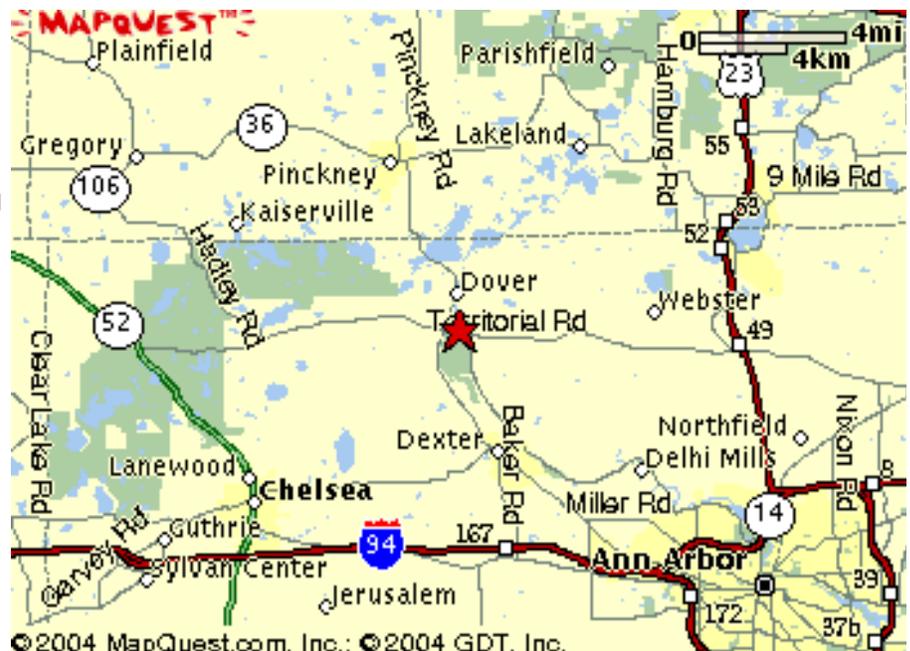




## Summer Picnic

- Who: Members and their families**  
**What: Family Picnic and Woodturner's Show-and-Tell**  
**When: August 1, 2004 Noon till 5:00 p.m.**  
**Where: Hudson Mills Metropark, Picnic Shelter 4**

Picnic Shelter #4 is adjacent to the Park Office and Activity Center. Bring a dish to pass. The Chapter will provide the burgers and hot dogs, buns, condiments, and softdrinks. Soccer field, playground, horseshoes, flush toilets are close to the shelter. Show-and-Tell with prizes for winners in Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced woodturner categories. Daily Permit will cost you \$4 if you don't have an annual Metropark sticker.





925 Duncan Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Visit our Website: [www.MichiganWoodturner.org](http://www.MichiganWoodturner.org)

## Do you have something to sell? Something to buy?

Listing is free to members.

Please contact Phil Clevenger 734-761-8737 or [PhilClevenger@comcast.net](mailto:PhilClevenger@comcast.net) by the Friday following the monthly meeting.

## Classified Ads

**Shopsmith 520** with band and scroll Saws, belt (6" X 48") and strip sanders, jointer, and all miscellaneous equipment. Includes power station. Asking \$2000. Contact Norm Blake at 517-626-7083.

**Wood?** Jim Madsen has it. 517-645-4594.

**Nichols lathe**, 3 HP. Variable speed Leeson motor, 52" bed, 32" swing, 1HP Gast vacuum pump (John Nichols says it will hold a 30" bowl at 3000 rpm). Weighs > 800 lbs but on casters-can move with one hand. Many faceplates. Cost new \$7300, asking \$6100. Contact Bob Shepherd at 517-655-3967.

## Upcoming Events

**July 11, 2004:** Presentation by Jim Madsen on chainsaw operation and maintenance and a demo of chainsaw carving, weather permitting. **Please note date change due to holiday.**

**August 1, 2004:** Chapter Picnic and Show-and-Tell. Hudson Mills Metropark. Spouses and kids are welcome. Bring a dish

to pass, the Chapter will provide the burgers and dawgs, and softdrinks. Show-and-Tell will feature prizes for woodturners of all skill levels. Maps and more details on pages 6 & 7.