

WOODCHUCK CHATTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE WOODCHUCK TURNERS OF NORTHERN VERMONT

AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

WOODCHUCKSVT.ORG

August 11, 2022

Volume 19, Issue 08

President: Harvie Porter
Vice President: Dave Buchholz
Secretary: Gary Walz
Treasurer: Brad Jackson
Newsletter Editor: Andrew Duling
Members at Large: Bob Martin, Arny Spahn, Tom Dunne



Last Meeting: July 15th, 2022
Log to Bowl roundtable discussion
Next Meeting: August 28th, 2022
Picnic! Al Stirt Presentation!
Big Show and Tell!
After that: September 21, 2022

TBD

2022 Woodchuck Picnic!

Sunday August 28th, 2022, 11AM
Skunk Hollow Studios - 26 John Davis Drive

This year's annual Woodchuck Picnic will feature a demonstration and presentation by world famous turner Al Stirt. Al will provide a follow-up on last month's tree to bowl roundtable. Al will be working on a twice turned bowl. Al will also be on hand to critique and discuss members' work, so bring your turnings. We will also have an extended show and tell, food, and fun! Please bring some food, and your friends and family, all are welcome! **Please RSVP to Russ (skunkmen@gmail.com) by August 24th. Bring Chairs!**

See photos from previous picnics below!

Below Left: Abraham and Mary relax near Browns River

Below right: John and family have fun in front of Skunk Hollow Studios



Above: Franklin enjoying the fresh Jericho air.
Right: Ronald points out some good looking food to Nancy.



Above: Who can forget the year George and Barbara let their boys run the grill



Michelle does not agree with Barack's jam chucking techniques



Ike enjoying the picnic the year before Russ cut down the palm trees

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Notes from Last Meeting

Woodchucks Meeting Minutes 20-Jul-2022

Meeting was called to order by President Harvie Porter at 7:11 Meeting was held as a hybrid.

Announcements

For the new members: The American Association of Woodturners (AAW) offers a no charge 3 month trial membership. After the 3 months, you can get a one year digital membership for \$56 or a print/digital membership for \$ 67. If you haven't seen the monthly print magazine, it's a great publication. The annual Woodchucks picnic will be Sunday, August 28 at Russ's.

You can come any time after 11:00 AM. Food will be at noon, and a demo by Al Stirt will be at around 2:00.

There will be a show and tell facilitated by Al. Bring your best work, and get feedback from a world renowned wood turner.

AAW will be putting on a virtual symposium on October 15 and 16.

Russ announced that:

Ted Beebe has some donated items he is putting up for raffle, including an air cleaner and a huge router. This is being conducted as a silent offer, and bids will be taken up to and including the day of the picnic

Al Stirt was participating in the Lancaster Morning Coffee House on July 21.

Show and Tell

A number of members shared some of their recent work. Among those were:

Harvie P showed us his small hollow form, his first

Richard M demonstrated how sumac will glow under a black light

Dave B shared several things with us. He had a maple bowl with words burned and filled with a Sharpie, finished with spar varnish. He showed us small bowls each done with a difference finish for comparison purposes. He also made from small plates made from an Asian decking wood he got from a contractor friend of his. These were decorated with stick figures and filled.

Notes from Last Meeting, continued

Russ F talked about and showed us an issue with mildew on some walnut bowls. After some research, he found several treatments that seemed to help, but it was lemon juice that was most effective.

Tom D showed some ash bowls, and shared how he mounts strange shaped pieces using carpet tape on a face plate.

Jake solicited the group's input on how to finish a live edge box elder bowl. Since it was already stabilized, the consensus was that something like poly would be his best bet as opposed to something like General Finishes Wood Bowl Finish that needs to penetrate.

Russ showed us three sumac pieces

Steve talked about a neighbor in Fletcher who was selling pieces of 20 year old cut walnut by the pound (between \$ 2 and \$ 4 per pound) which seemed to be a good deal.

Fred had a platter made from 8/4 Ambrosia with Wood burned song lyrics around the edge.

Tamier Strier (Tom's friend from Israel) who has built his own lathe, showed three different pieces of his work: 1) A flamed box elder vessel 2) A carved spoon and 3) A small dish.

Gary W showed 4 small resin bowls he had made, two were resin/pine cones and two were resin/wood chunks

Raffle The club held its monthly raffle. Thanks again to Russ and any others who donated wood.

Feature Presentation

The topic for July was "Log to Lathe". It was a joint presentation by Russ Fellows, Andy Duling and Tom Dunne.

Andy Duling

Andy shared with us his simple but effective log holder.

Rather than trying to turn the blank round on the band saw, he typically just keeps turning and slicing off corners until he has an approximately round piece. This tends to put less stress and wear on the band saw blade.

Russ

Focused on how to prepare a natural edge piece. He likes to turn natural edge pieces thin. If you're turning natural edge thin, if you leave the pith in you will minimize the chance at cracking.

Showed us how to mount a crotch piece for a bowl. He likes to use a "Big Bite" which goes into a 1" counterbored pilot hole. You can also use a spur bit or a screw chuck.

You want 3 points of the bowl in approximately the same plane.

It's important that you keep checking the quill tightness because the big bite will keep digging in. He graciously showed us what happens when you don't retighten the quill.

Wrap Up/Other Business

No other new business

Reminder to pay your dues:

Brad Jackson

14 Rustic Drive

Essex, VT 05452

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary Walz, Secretary

Photos from Last Meeting
Meeting

Show and Tell



Featured Presentation

Tree to Bowl

Roundtable



August Sawdust Session

Recap By Russ Fellows



A big thanks to everyone who came out to Skunk Hollow for Sawdust on a hot August afternoon! It was perhaps the best Sawdust Session yet! Lots of very diverse items on the show & tell table, several mini demos, and many questions asked AND answered. It was just the way we envision these informal meetings to be! Keep up the good work!!

The next one is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 7. Check your mailbox for further details.

Hope to see many of you at the picnic on Sunday, August 28!!



“SKUNK HOLLOW RUMBLINGS & RAMBLINGS”

By Russ Fellows

I had many ideas for the title of this piece! “How much wood could a woodchuck chuck?” “Have chainsaw will travel” (for viewers of 1960s TV westerns) or, “When the Woodchuck sees the shadow of a tree in February, does he have to cut it down in June?” Sorry, I couldn’t resist!

This is a piece about wood generously donated to our club. We have been beneficiaries of this for a long time, but this has been a record year, starting with a huge maple limb and some surprisingly large sumac logs, donated by some Burlington friends in May (see Woodchuck sightings in the June issue of *Chatter* for some pix of our woodchucking for these), to some lovely cherry and maple logs from a family member of mine in Williston a couple weeks later.

There were comical and sad components to this donation. The sad part was that she had only moved into this house last year and the June microburst nearly decimated the hedgerow separating her from her neighbor. (See pic below) Fortunately many were spared too, so there is still a little woods between them.

The comical part was that before we could rally the troops to go cut them up, the neighbor had a tree service come and haul (almost) all of them away! Actually, that’s more sad than comical, but the follow-up was a little funny. The tree service had left a “leaner” standing, (photo below), rootball exposed, but when the neighbor realized this, he insisted on calling them back to finish up, as he thought it too dangerous for us to handle. It was on a Sunday, so a friend and I snuck in while the neighbor was out, attached a chain from a tractor to the trunk, uprighted it, and cut the tree down, gently landing it in OUR back yard, in classic “red neck rodeo” style!

It proved to be a very nice find, beautiful white sapwood, and almost no heartwood. Many of you got a piece of it at the June meeting. The cherry was mostly taken by the tree service, but I did snag a few pieces and brought them back to the shop also. To add to our bounty, a friend in South Hero has just given us another big cherry tree, roughly 18” at the base, and tall and straight.....but leaning precariously over his house. Someone else will get it on the ground for us, and I will call for volunteers to help “chuck” it up. Also, from the same property, there is at least one very nice red cedar. I am not a huge fan of cedar for the “grittiness”, but the contrast between the heart and sapwood is striking, and thus great for natural edge and end grain pieces.

On the horizon: black locust, walnut, elm, yellow birch, ash, and more maple!! Did I say a record year for donations?? I will be accumulating this over the course of the summer and will have it available at the picnic on August 28th. Descriptions for the programs at these meetings are elsewhere in this issue of *Chatter*. (continued next page)



Also generously donated by fellow Woodchuck Ted Beebe and offered in a silent auction at the picnic in August: Porter cable router, a Freud dado set, and two machine base dollies. And if you have anything in your shop that is not getting used, how about bringing it in to add to the auction? All the proceeds go to club activities!

And finally, if you have been the beneficiary of some of these generous wood donations, please think about making something for the donors? Pictured below is some of what we have made for them. It means a great deal to them to have something made from the tree from their own property? Big thanks to those of you who have already done so!

Elsewhere in this *Chatter* is the invitation for the picnic at our Jericho home and studio, Sunday, August 28. Please bring wives, significant others, children, friends, and chairs! We are very fortunate to once again have Woodchuck founding father and world-renown turner, Al Stirt (<http://www.alstirt.com/>) as guest of honor. Al will do a three part demo, that includes re-chucking a dried bowl, texturing a plate or platter, and end with a lively show, tell, and critiquing session! Please bring a recent piece for this fun and informative “finale”!



Like most woodturners, I suppose, I began with many items that did not amount to much along with out-and-out disasters. Cracks and splits were all too common. But could I not repair them?

I tried, I usually failed, having attempted to glue in a piece of seasoned wood into the crack, only to find the crack opened up again shortly after. There had to be another way.

I recently found an early maple bowl that dated from the last century, but which had survived hidden away somewhere. It brought back memories of a piece of advice given by Al Stirt, advice that I found compelling and which I particularly treasure. The bowl had cracked. I had decided to try a new approach and drilled a few holes either side of the crack and threaded a leather shoelace in stitch-like pattern. With mixed feelings I brought it to the picnic way back in the 1990s, where Al was to critique work displayed. He approved of the repair effort, but added that a *black* leather lace contrasting with the light-colored maple might have been more effective. One should not try to hide a defect but instead let it stand out.

In last April, after a very wet snowfall hit Williston, a friend lost part of an apple tree he had planted in 1973 and called me: Would I like it? Could I use it? I went out to see it and found the prospect of turning a large piece of solid apple appealing. He warned me that he had several years earlier joined a split trunk together with wire, which had now broken. One end was just visible. I said I'd return with my own chainsaw and deal with it in a couple of days, and left. The next day he appeared at my place in Burlington with several pieces of the tree already cut up. A contractor working at his place had tried to help and had sawn right through a bolt attached to the wire, around which the tree had grown over the years so that it was invisible. Be careful, said my friend. I looked at the dark stain in the rich color of the apple wood, and assured him that, indeed, I would be very careful.

With chisel and mallet I began to cut out the wood around what was visible of the metal, which seemed to be a quarter inch lag screw. At about an inch and a half, the screw or bolt took a definite turn. More careful chipping finally revealed a ring bolt, which I was able to wrench out. I decided to turn the fourteen-inch-wide slab into a shallow bowl or platter, hoping that there would be sufficient wood beyond the large hole I'd gouged out in removing the bolt—there wasn't!

A familiar dilemma: should I toss a beautiful piece of apple wood into the wood-box? Or try a repair? Clearly, nothing subtle was possible. But perhaps something bold, in-your-face might work. Perhaps I could lay the bolt in the hole and fasten it with epoxy? And then I thought of a clumsy patch, in different wood? Or two pieces of a wood patch, one inside the platter, one on the outside screwed together. And let the screws be visible. But what to do with the lag bolt, which was after all the motivating culprit? I had to feature the ring bolt.

(continued next page)



Inspiration came as I looked at the bolt with its ring. There was still the other half of the trunk, complete with a few of the same dark stains from the metal. The wood was sound (relatively). I turned a fairly deep bowl with two handles. I drilled a hole in one of the handles and screwed in the bolt. I hung it up on a shaker peg in our kitchen and went about my business. Melanie came in and “Wow that’s nice”. Now, if I removed the patch from the platter, I had a hole that I could use to hang it next to its fellow.



How successful this is, I leave to your objective judgment. But there are two accepted repair methods that almost always work—so long as the wood (and the item in question) are worth it: knot hole replacement, and the bow tie. One picture shows a large cherry bowl with a small knot. The punky original lies pathetically in the bottom of the bowl, along with a branch, the end of which now occupies its hole. The fact that it is not cherry seems irrelevant. The other picture shows a large bowl I turned from a blank left in my driveway. The donor, whom I soon identified, had found it with the remainder of a large walnut tree with three major limbs. Whoever had sawn it up had simply cut it into something more manageable in size and weight. It had been destined for the dump. I turned the bowl four years ago just before we flew to Australia for a year visiting our daughter. I did not have time to finish it, and it was too large for the microwave. So I left it on the floor of the basement, hoping for the best, but soon forgetting about it.

When I returned there was a major crack. But the wood was simply too beautiful to burn. The solution? Bow ties, et voila.



Southern Yellow Pine

By Ross Mitchel

I acquired a few sections of old Southern Yellow Pine beams – hauled back from Rhode Island by my wife who was there visiting friends. They are the “waste” cutoffs from beams salvaged from mill buildings by a company that turns them into vintage flooring. The aged surfaces didn't reveal anything but the cut end showed promise and I am delighted with the grain that emerged when turned. The piths are way off center and there are some big cracks to work around, all of which makes for some interesting asymmetrical patterns. I know from construction projects that Southern Yellow Pine is hard, but I have also heard that these old beams harden with age. This must be the case here because this stuff is rock hard. Turning it is a dusty affair but it cuts cleanly, sands nicely and takes well to my current favorite finish, which is three coats of General Finishes Wood Bowl Finish.



Notes from Ya boy
Andy Duling

Last Friday Luc, Russ and I traveled up to Berkshire to cut up a large maple tree that Luc had acquired for the club. We had fun and loaded Russ' truck with a full load of beautiful mature maple. I packed my Honda Fit with a full load too. The wood was so nice that I needed to turn it before it cracked. I took a break from my endless sanding to turn a few bowls. I have been sanding pretty much constantly since April, and turning a few bowls was nice break. It reminded me that wood turning is fun, who knew. Hope to see you all on the 28th.



Mentors

These Woodchucks are able and willing to help other Woodchucks wanting some hands-on instruction.

Dick Montague: General turning, all aspects plus tool sharpening.
802-584-3486
Montagueturn@gmail.com
Groton

Russ Fellows: General, segmented, & multi-axis turning
802-343-0393
russfellows@outlook.com
@fellowswoodart
Jericho

Ted Beebe: Segmented work.
802-849-2436
Teddy.beebe@gmail.com
Fletcher

Tom Dunne: Hollow turning, etc.
802-388-6981
jthomasdunne@gmail.com
Middlebury

Dave Buchholz
General turning; advanced embellishments

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Treasurer's Report

August 2022 Treasurer's Report

Bank Balance forward
4693.99

INCOME

Dues	25.00
Raffle	41.00
Sale of Helmet	<u>70.00</u>
Total	136.00

EXPENSES

Al Stirt	200.00
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Bank Balance ending 4629.99
Cash on Hand 25.00

Brad Jackson/Treasurer

The Board of Directors of The Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont gratefully acknowledges the payment of dues from the following members for **2022**:

Jsy Bailey, Lori Barg, Wayne Beauchemin, Ted Beebe, Dale Bergdahl, Chris Bishop, Bradford Blaisdell, Joyce Blaisdell, Robert Bouvier, Bill Breen, Dave Buchholz, George Cacchio, Sara Campbell, Sal Chiarelli, Janet Collins, Karen Cutler, Michael DeWeese, George Disney, Karen Drennan, Tom Dunne, Andrew Duling, Cheryl Ferry, Dave Ferry, Joe Fortin, Joe Gaines, Barry Genzlinger, Carl Gerner, George Gibson, Mike Glod, Jim Goodwin, Rick Hamilton, Damon Hartmon, Peter Hebert, Linda Hollingdale, Brad Jackson, Pam Jedlicka, Kevin Jenness, Scott Johnson, Eddie Krasnow, Joe Laferriere, Ted Lattrell, Luc Lefebvre, David Lein, Kevin Liddiard, Chris Lumbra, Bob Martin, Gerry Martin, Ross Mitchel, Kevin Murdough, Ted Nelson, Patrick Nevers, Elsa Oppenheimer, Mickey Palmer, David Papin, Jeff Petter, Harvie Porter, Randy Ramsden, Brian Reed, Barent Rogers, Robert Schumacher, David Scrase, Edwards Smith, Marilyn Stohlb-berg, Wes Volk, Adam Wager, Gary Walz, Mike Washburn, Fred Walters, Bob Zelif (70)

Scott Bennett, Russ Fellows, Ted Fink, Michael Mode, Dick Montague, Nick Rosato, Hav Smith, Arny Spahn, and Al Stirt are Honorary Lifetime members (9)

If you have paid your dues for the 2022 year but do not see your name listed above, please contact me at BradJackson234@gmail.com to correct that error of omission. Dues for 2022 are \$25. Checks should be made out to "WTNV" and sent to: Brad Jackson, 14 Rustic Drive, Essex, VT 05452

Please note: The following privileges are only available to dues-paying members: Video library use, mentoring program, bulk purchase discounts for CA glue and Anchor Seal, and 10% discount on purchases from Klingspor, Penn State Industries, and Rare Woods USA. To ensure your discount, Klingspor requests you login **before** you order. PSI requests you mention the club. Rare Woods USA requests you order using coupon code WOODCHUCKSROCK or mention the club.

Reminder: As previously advertised, unless you have paid your annual dues by April 1st your name must be removed from the discount list.

Classifieds

None this month!