

Woodchuck Chatter



Volume 2, Issue 7

Special points of interest:

- Photos of Last Meeting
- Random Shots: Woodnet Gallery Opens
- Woodchuck News
- The Pen Project
- What's Coming Up

Inside this issue:

Woodchuck Board Info.	2
Random Shots	2
Book Review	2
AAW News	3
News From Away	3
Demo Schedule	4
Ted's Turn	4
Woodchuck Sightings	4
Brad On Burls	5
Future Sightings	6
The Pen Project	6
Michael Mode Stacks A Bowl	7

July 9, 2005

Meeting on July 21

This month's meeting demo will be by Peter Smith on wood finishing. It will be interesting to compare our finishes and techniques with what Peter does, as he is from away.

Remember to bring any finished pens or turned pen barrels to the meeting so we can fulfill our promise to the Vt.

Guard.

Any donations to our raffle would also be helpful.

Your latest work will make Show' N Tell lively. I recently discovered that having a critical (but kindly) eye cast on your work is helpful in reaching a higher level of craftsmanship. In dog showing, it's known as

"kennel blindness"; the ability to see your own work as perfect and a sure winner.

Secretary's Report –Meeting of June 16

22 members present.

Peter Katonis in Elmore has a bunch of burls in cherry, maple, and birch. The decision was made to approach him about a group purchase rather than negotiating as individuals. Ted will follow up. Watch your e-mail for developments.

Ted is updating the members list. Check with him to review your contact information for correctness.

Next meeting is July 21st with a presentation on finishing techniques.

The annual Woodchuck BBQ & Turned Work Roast will once again be hosted at Herb's in St. Albans on August 20th. Grilling basics will be provided out of all the raffle revenues that Ted extorts out of us monthly. Al Stirt will once again be on hand to critique your work. Take advantage of this opportunity to bring

your work to the next level by having Al look at your work with the eyes of a judge and expert turner. Also on hand Ralph will demonstrate his use of a chain-saw in stock preparation.

The Champlain Valley Fair is looking for demonstrators of traditional crafts/trades for 10 days starting on August 27th. There is a \$125/day stipend.

Raffle:

Butternut from Randy
Cherry, honey mesquite, black mesquite, walnut & buck thorn from Brad
Mousepads
\$15 Woodturners certificate
Summer 2005 issue of Woodturning Design
Show & Tell:
Have: 16" cherry and spalted birch bowls.

Randy: Spalted maple hollow form.

The unknown Woodchuck (I didn't catch the name): Very

spalted maple soaked in cure-rot epoxy.

Ted: Osage orange bowl, "red blood cell" bowl in spalted beech, ambrosia.

Maple bowl, maple burl bowl with ebony lid.

Bob Martin: Cherry bowl.

Treasurer's Report

Chapter monies:

Balance forward	
\$2193.41	
Income	
Raffle 6/17/05	36
Expenses	<u>0</u>
Balance forward	\$2229.41
Pens Project	

Balance forward	\$104.62
Income	<u>210.00</u>
Balance forward	\$314.62

Bankbook balance 2544.03

Ted Fink

Random Shots

Woodchuck Chatter

Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont

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Woodchuck Chatter will be published monthly. Deadline for submissions is the 7th of the month. Please E-mail all submissions to the Editor in text or Word format. Visuals can be submitted as JPEG or TIFF.

I joined WoodNet last month after attending their Grand Opening. The advantages of joining are plain once you see the kind of work being displayed, and the demonstrations by craftsmen of different pursuits. The gallery is an excellent place to sell your work and to show samples.

I'm embarrassed to say that my work was rejected. I have not been able to get a critique yet, but I'm looking forward to finding what genuine wood craftsmen see as shortcomings in my work. As I state elsewhere, "kennel blindness" is a common problem in showing dogs and in viewing your own work.

On the subject of WoodNet, Judy Balch sent us some referrals for pieces which some Chucks might pursue.

I am writing to let you all know that I got a referral today at the Gallery. Lora Wilson came in and wants to find someone who can build her a cherry dining room table. She wants it to be 72" x 44" and to also have three 18"w leaves to put in to make it a total of 126" long. She wants it to possibly have tressel legs, but she wants them curved. What she is looking for is to not have the legs be in the way when people sit at the table. She would like anyone who

is interested in possibly building her a table to either call or email her. She lives in South Burlington.
work phone: 652-9803 ext. 2101
home phone: 660-8333 (evenings)
email: lorawilson@c21jack.com

Whoever ends up with the job, please remember that the Gallery gets only 12% on referrals with a cap of \$500. It's totally on the honor system, as we have no way of knowing if someone gets an order from a referral.

Thanks and Good Luck,
Judy Balch
Administrator, VT WoodNet
balch@kingcon.com
ph (802) 892-7786
cell (802) 274-8075

Well, the grand opening of the Gallery went very well. It was very nice to see those of you who could be there. For the rest of you, I hope that you get a chance to visit soon. I wanted to let those of you who have product in the Gallery know that currently, the items that seem to be selling are in the price range of \$10 - \$300. It's early, and as schools get out for the summer, we should see much more traffic. However, if any of you make anything or know of something that you would like to make that fits in that price range, I believe that

those items will be purchased year round. We still want and need the larger items, too.

I would also like to let you all know that I was contacted by a gentleman who has kiln-dried cherry for sale. It is not graded, has been milled at 1 1/8 inch, the boards vary from 4" - 8" in width, with lengths to 10 feet. He is asking \$3.50 per ft. If you are interested in seeing the lumber or would just like to talk with him, his name is Ron Burns and his phone number is 524-3851.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

Thanks,
Judy Balch
Administrator, VT WoodNet

Arny

Book Review

I picked up 2 more books recently. There is a new edition of "The Encyclopedia of Wood" edited by Aidan Walker; printed by Facts On File, ISBN 0-8160-6181-5; 192 pages, \$35.

This edition is far more useful for identification of species than the prior try. Each species has a page of its own, with a 1/3 page illustration in color clearly showing grain and figure. This edition retains two of the difficulties of the prior edition. The entries are alphabetized according to Latin name, and British names appear before American names in some instances.

"Wood", by John Sainsbury, printed by the Guild of Master Craftsmen Publications Ltd., ISBN 0-946819-05-x, 144 pages, \$12.99 at Borders.

The B/W illustrations are not very sharp, but the content is excellent. The techniques of mounting to the lathe are covered in detail. There is a section on making tools for turning miniatures, including the hardening/tempering process. Many materials suitable for miniatures are described, and many miniature projects are illustrated and explained. This is an excellent primer for the budding miniaturist.

The second book is "Turning Miniatures in

Arny

American Association of Woodturners
21st Symposium in Overland Park Kansas

Important Notice

DEMONSTRATOR ASSISTANTS NEEDED In KANSAS

Be a volunteer
Have the best seat in the house.
Get a FREE re-TURN to OZ T-shirt, and a chance to assist a demonstrator of your choosing (FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE, no guarantees).
Contact Jim Lambie 913- 681-1058

Duties involved are:
Help Demonstrator prepare and set up his tools if needed.
Does he/she need the light moved?
Does he/she need water?
Help clean up before and after demonstrations.

CAMERAS

This year Deryl Duer will have training sessions with our new Mini-Camera set up and the one

Video Camera.
As you arrive on Thursday and after you register, go through a training session to familiarize yourself with the set up.
Pick up your T-shirt and check to see where you are on the Demo-Assistants rotation board.
If you arrive on Friday or Saturday, training sessions will be at 7 am in the designated room.

Thanks
Linda VanGehuchten - AAW Board Member
vange@zoominternet.net

AAW Offers Demonstrator Checklist

As a service to both the AAW chapters and AAW POP demonstrators, we at the AAW are continuously trying to help figure out ways to extend the communication process between demonstrators and chapters once initial contact is made. We thought it might help if we provided you with a demonstrator check list and a questionnaire.

I have attached a file that may help your chapter plan for successful demonstrations in the future. It is a good basic checklist to go through with a prospective demonstrator so that you each know what the other needs and expects. It's pretty thorough, but please read through the topics carefully with the demonstrator so that everyone's needs are addressed.

In a second email to follow, I will attach another file that is an evaluation form similar to the one we use at the AAW Symposiums. The purpose is to help the demonstrator learn how they are coming across to your members and, thus, make adjustments or improvements in their presentations. You may download this form and have enough copies made for all members present. Simply have your members fill out their evaluation and return it so that you can see the feedback, then give all forms to the demonstrator.

And finally, we encourage all Chapters to use the demonstra-

tor list on the POP section of the AAW website. That's one of the best services of the POP. As well, if a demonstrator contacts you directly but you do not already know them personally, you can find out more information about them by simply asking them for referrals from the other Chapters where they have made presentations.

We know how much our members want and appreciate good demonstrations. I hope that these tools will help you deliver just what they want. Let us know if these are of help to you and if you have any suggestions that would further benefit the program.

John Hill - Chairman AAW Chapters and Membership
Johnrhill@charter.net
828-645-6633

News From Away

G'day Mate!

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is John Jewell and I reside at 51 Renton Ave Moorebank NSW Australia. I am a member of the Sydney Woodturners Guild.

I found your e-mail address on the web and thought that I would send a greeting and request a favour of you.

In order to promote Woodturning/Woodcraft and general woodwork I am making a collection of Woodturning/Woodcraft patches/badges and insignia from around the World.

I was wondering if any of your Members would be interested in swapping one of your patches/badges for a Sydney Woodturners patch.

Alternatively I could pay for one, but I would rather swap. If you or any of your Members are interested please contact me on the below details.

Yours in Chips and Dust.

John Jewell
Regional Representative
Macarthur Region (SWTG)
51 Renton ave
Moorebank,NSW
2170 Australia
johnjewell@bibpond.com

Texas Turners Symposium

I am writing to you as the President of your local woodturners chapter to ask for your assistance in getting the information in the attached flier to your membership. The annual SWAT Symposium (formerly known as Texas Turn or Two) is the second largest gathering of woodturners in the US and is being held this year in Wichita Falls, Texas, September 30 - October 2. Attendees will see a large number of excellent demonstrations at the bargain rate of \$75 for three days. For more information, check out the

SWAT website at www.swaturners.com.
Thanks for your help.
Charles Kay
SWAT Publicity Chairman

Ted's Turn

"The very intractability of a natural material imposes a discipline that forces the craftsman to produce something beautiful as well as useful. It is the grain of the wood with its liability to split along one plane but not in others, that forces the carpenter, that wheelwright, the cooper, the turner or the shipwright to fashion it in certain ways, to use the qualities of wood and overcome its disadvantages, that imposes a pattern of beauty on wooden objects. It also forces the craftsman in wood to learn the mystery of his craft and this elevates him high above the mere factory worker.

John Seymour (The Forgotten Arts and Crafts)

The Finish Line

Every once in awhile something you have been doing gets validated. For the past three years my favorite finish has been Minwax Wipe-

on Poly which I use to finish pieces right on the lathe.

In the most recent issue (no.178, August 05) of Fine Woodworking, Chris A. Minick does a fairly exhaustive study comparing 17 wipe-on finishes. He tested them for ease of use, clarity, penetration, water resistance, sheen, drying time, viscosity, beauty and cost. In FWW comparison testing they give two awards, one for **best value** and one for being **best overall**. Both of these awards were won by Minwax Wipe-on Poly. It was determined that it was not only the best of the lot but also the cheapest. Minick advises the readers to not apply the old adage. "You get what you pay for" does not apply to Wipe-on finishes.

Ted

In House Demos:

July 21: Peter Smith: Finishing Your Work

August 20: Picnic at Herb's—Al Stirt on creative process: also, Turning Stock On The Stump with Ralph

September: TBA

October: Annual meeting & elections

Woodchuck Sightings

Just a reminder that the Shelburne Craft School will be offering turning workshops by Ralph Tursini (soon-see below) and Al Stirt (fall). We also have a few other woodworking workshops this summer and fall that you might be interested in. Instructor bios and more class info. can be found on our website www.shelburnecraftschool.org or by calling 802-985-3648.

Thanks,

Doug Jones
Shelburne Craft School
Wood Resident

Turning a Wooden Bowl: Exploring Connections between Forest Ecology, Wood, and Bowl Design.

Instructor: Ralph Tursini F,S, & Sun July 22, 23, 24 8:00-4:00

[As both the shop and forest will be the classrooms, pack some bug spray and boots.]

Member Tuition:\$255 nonmembers:\$285 Materials:\$30
Max 4

Creating Curved Surfaces: Cold Bending with Laminations July 29-31
F,S, & Sun 9-4pm with Doug Jones

Member Tuition:\$255 nonmembers: \$285 Materials:\$15

Max 8

Exquisite Surfaces and Details August 22-26 9-4pm M-F with Garrett Hack

Member Tuition: \$385 Non-Member: \$425 Materials \$25
Max 10

Shaping Wood Sept 10-11 9-4 pm Sat&Sun with Doug Jones

Member Tuition: \$170 Non-Member:\$190 Materials: \$10
max 8

Open Bowls & Platters: Turning, Carving & Texturing Oct 1-2 9-4pm Sat & Sun with Al Stirt

Member Tuition:\$200 Non-Member:\$225 Materials: \$30
max 8

Drawers --The Basics and Beyond Oct. 15-16 9-4pm Sat&Sun with Garrett Hack

Fellow Chucks,

I have a lot of thoughts about burls (my wife says I have way too many!), and thought I'd jot a few down to get the neurons a-firing, and a discussion going ...

I have cut up a number of burls, and have also learned a few things from Dustin Coates, who is far more expert than I. To boil it all down, no two burls are alike, and bigger isn't always better. We might want to go up to look with some basic rule of thumb about a value based on size and quality -- as best we can see it "on the hoof". There is also a danger of escalating prices until only well to do can purchase burls, and I, for one, would like to avoid that.

Some commercial vendors and e-Bay sellers offer up burls by the pound. This only works if the burl is consistent throughout, usually applies to real big burls that have been sawn up into usable-sized chunks (so you can see the quality on the cut faces) and is often done because burls can have odd shapes or natural edges, and a board-foot price would be just too hard to figure. It also requires a good deal of trust that the seller is making a fair representation of the goods.

Green burls are heavy. If you are used to working with store-bought, kiln dried wood, an 18" diameter Cherry burl will seem impossibly heavy. With 10-12" of stump on either side (very desirable for more than one reason), this can easily top 250 - 300 pounds. A fresh burl is like a big bag of water -- heavy. I'm suggesting that buying fresh burls by the pound is not the way to go.

Burls can be pretty mysterious. The more we work with them, the more predictable they become, but within definite limits. Basically, you never really know what you are going to find in there until you cut into it. Some burls have a lot of oddball inclusions and pockets of bark; others are beautiful on the outside, but a mushy mess in the core, or full of ants (common) or wasps (thankfully, not so common). Others may have been lying on the ground for a few years, or on a standing dead tree, and

look a real mess on the outside (the sapwood is often rotted and eaten by beetles), but have very nice wood below the surface.

A large burl is a lot of work to handle, and we sometimes hold off on cutting into it for fear of ruining that potential 18" super premium bowl, or wait until we have a giant lathe that can handle large work, and we allow the thing to crack and go to waste before having to settle for little bits of good wood between the cracks and the rot. Better to carefully cut it up for use now, with available equipment, and get a higher overall yield. This might also necessitate a second summer picnic over at Dicks, to turn and/or core a few larger chunks... then go swimming at the State Park nearby...

Often, a well-formed and symmetrical burl that's a solid ball 12" in diameter will produce better quality (higher value) turnings than a 30" beachball-sized thing with all sorts of infoldings, bark inclusions, and multiple lobes.

We should keep in mind that many of us have been able to find suitable burl material for free -- or for a small fee to pay someone for their time & effort in cutting, transporting, or even just saving the burls we seek. Loggers and foresters are learning that these odd lumps are of some value, but only we end consumers can keep the costs down to a fair and reasonable price for a raw material. Just because you can make a \$400.00 turning from a burl doesn't mean you should pay anything near that, or even a significant fraction of that for the raw material; the real value is in your skills and what you do to create the finished piece.

One problem is that there are some who can (and some who occasionally *will*) pay ridiculous prices for a nice burl. If someone is used to buying all their turning stock, they might think nothing of paying \$ 4.00/pound for fine Cherry burl, when even half that would be far more than fair to the seller (and quite possibly excessive, at that!) These people might be amazed at how much excellent wood, including burls, can be had by getting to know trees and those who work with them. It is a common story that someone starting out in turning can't

find enough wood, while veterans can't ever find the time to turn it all, and some can't give it away fast enough!

We want to give the logger or forester a fair price that doesn't leave burl turning the exclusive province of the well-off. We also want to reward these people for even recognizing our interest in burls, and or even thinking of us in the first place, and not busting them up for firewood. Professional loggers going after saw logs or veneer logs used to commonly trim burls off as blemishes that would affect the value of the log. Root burls (growing among the roots, and often extending well below ground) are still usually left to rot. If someone is willing to pluck these from the ground, and truck them out of the woods, they should be rewarded so they will get into the habit of doing it again!

While I have gotten most of my wood and burls for free, here is a rough rule-of-thumb guideline I use when I DO buy Cherry burls, assuming they look solid, somewhat spherical, and well formed burls (and reduced accordingly, if not):

When small batches of high-quality burls are bought in small lots:

- ~ 6" - 8" burls \$ 3.00 - \$5.00 each
- ~ 10" - 12" burls \$ 5.00 - 10.00 "
- ~ 14" - 16" burls \$ 15 - 20 (as much as \$25.00 for a real nice round one)
- ~ 18" - 20" \$ 25.00 - \$ 50.00 (possible more if in very good condition)

~ BIG burls depends on how much work the seller did to bring the burl to me, as well as the condition of the burl; these often have to be delivered, or need substantial work before they can be handled -- "per pound" they would be worth a lot less than a real nice, 12" burl that can ride in the trunk. Only a few turners can make truly huge turnings, so the value has to be based on how many high-quality smaller pieces can be made from it. We need to remember that making 24 lidded boxes, or a dozen bowls requires a lot of work at our end, including saw time, coring, etc... and that

(Continued on page 6)

<http://www.woodturningcenter.org/links.html> <http://www.woodturnerscatalog.com/>
<http://www.woodcentral.com/> <http://www.packardwoodworks.com/>
<http://www.woodturningonline.com/> <http://www.tools-for-woodworking.com/>
<http://www.cnew.org/> (Central New England (Highland Hardware)
<http://www.pennstateindustries.com/>

Brad on Burls Continued

(Continued from page 5)

the value has to reflect how many hours of work we need to invest.

For larger lots (say a pickup truck load or two), I suggest we consider a bid on the lot, and negotiate with the seller. Good turning wood in log form can often be

had for 1 - 2 times the price of green firewood (hey-- they didn't have to cut, split, stack, dry, load, and deliver it -- we do almost all the work). Burls ought to be no more than 2 - 3 times as much, unless exceptional or rare.

OK, *WAY* more than 2 cents worth -- anyone have other or

similar thoughts ?

Safe Spinning,

Brad Vietje

Thetford, VT

Future Woodchuck Sightings

Burlington Farmer's Market -

College St. - Saturdays 8-2:30 throughout the Summer until October - *I'll be selling my latest work*

Stowe Farmer's Market -

Mtn. Road, Stowe - Sunday 10:30-3:00 Throughout the summer until September *Selling wares from the*

lathe

Frog Hollow - Church St. Burlington - *Featured Artist for July*

Shelburne Craft School - Shelburne, VT - July 22, 23, 24 - *Teaching the Turning Workshop: Turning a Wooden Bowl: Exploring Connections Between Forest Ecology, Wood, and Bowl Design*

Morristown Craft Market -

Morristown, NJ October 21,22,23 - *Juried Craft Show selling my work.*

All submitted by Ralph Tursini. Any other news items gladly accepted.

" Thanks again for all the hard work. We are on the home stretch now! Let's wrap it up!!!!!"

Bob

The Pen Project

We didn't make the 600 by July 4th--but we are very close. I received some from Murray, Randy, Herb, John T, Bill Drucker and Arny.

Murray still has a few and Dick M will be mailing his to me, and Brad still has a few. Scott has had 9 in his showroom for sale to benefit the project-hopefully they still

exist and can be added to the mix.

John B. gave me the pen parts needed to make sure we had complete kits to be able to make the 600.

Hopefully by this time next week, all will be in my possession (I presently have 512) and the last delivery of 600 can be made to

Camp Johnson.

This will make a total of 1440 delivered! Enough for all guard members deployed as of 7/1/05. **OUTSTANDING JOB!!!!**

Not that it really matters, but the street value of these pens is \$30,000 + !!!!!!

Thanks, Bob.....

This Space Could Be Yours!!

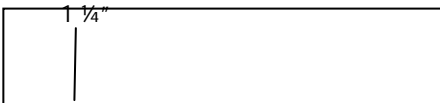
At their last meeting, the Board established a Corporate Membership. For \$50 a year, a supplier can have full membership in WTNV PLUS an ad space like this each issue. All we need is a logo, and some items of interest. You may send "Chatter" new items each month. Current readership is 40+, all interested in working wood. "Chatter" is flexible in page count and nothing gets crowded out. Contact Ted Fink for further info.

Michael Mode Stacks a Bowl

Micheal Modes's Stacked Lamination Techniques

Michael is using Excel Express glue that is dispensed from a caulking gun. It foams rapidly and sets up fast. To prepare his board he runs it through a Performax sander turning it a couple of times to feed it at a different angle for the final pass. He shoots for a consistent thickness all around with a 0.005 inch tolerance.

To plan the bowl he draws it full size on graph paper. The foot size should be about 2/10 of the overall width of the plank. On the graph paper make a line at 1 1/4 inches from the end for a 2 1/2" foot.



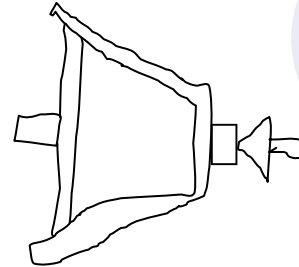
The first cut determines the shape of the bowl. A steep initial cut of around 60 degrees gives a vase shaped bowl. With a thicker plank you can have a steeper starting angle. If you start steep and decrease the angle you get a more rounded bowl.

On the graph paper draw each subsequent ring full size and increase the angle with each ring to flare the bowl. The more rings you make, the thinner the bowl.



Transfer to the board with a compass. You should have something that looks like a bullseye on the top of the board when done.

Note that Michael does this turning on his patternmaker's lathe at about 75 RPM. He reports that he is working a gadget to do it for you tool junkies out there (you know who you are!)



Mount on the lathe using a plywood faceplate turned to fit inside the bowl. Turn the edge to match the slope of the bowl. Clean up the glue squeeze out inside the bowl that will interfere with the fit. When you get it running true you can remove the wooden block on the tailstock and advance the tailstock into the bottom making a small dimple.

From here on was last years demo. Good luck!

Cut on the outside of the line with the band-saw. Make the cut coming in with the grain-it will close up easier and less visibly. On the last line, on the extreme right in the drawing above, don't cut. It will be shaped on the lathe.



Text thanks to Joe Barry. All photos this issue by Randy Ramsden.

**Woodchuck Turners of
Northern Vermont
An associated chapter
of
American Association of
Woodturners**

Publisher:
Arny Spahn
1620 Hebard Hill Rd.
Randolph, VT

" Thanks again for all the hard
work. We are on the home
stretch now! Let's wrap it
up!!!!!"
Bob



This Space For Mailing Label

