



SLIGHTLY

SKEWED

Journal of the Glendale Woodturners Guild

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NEXT MEETING

February



Why it's
only three
days before
Valentine's
Day!

Sunday February 11th, 2000
2:00 p.m. Sharp
Crescenta Valley Regional Park
Recreation Center
(See Map on Page 3) □

PRESENTATION

Bill Noble and his daughter **Catherine** will do a presentation on microwaving and boiling wood. She will present on how trees grow. Don't miss this one. □

CHALLENGE

Turn a piece, copying a form made of glass or ceramics
Try your hand at this fun challenge. □

LAST MEETING

Bill Haskell conducted the meeting. He welcomed our three new visitors. He gave us the sad news about the loss of **Carl Stude's** wife, **Norma**. We sent a bouquet of flowers and our sincere sympathy and prayers.

We elected a new president, **Linda Emery** who will take over the reins in March.

Bill received a letter notifying us that our collaboration lathe is now on display at the **Smithsonian in the Renwick gallery** on the second floor.

Bill received a call from **Jim Meyer**. **Jim** wonders why we are spending money mailing the newsletter when we are sending him an on line version. If anyone is willing to be content getting the newsletter on-line to save us a needless expense, we urge you to please contact **Al Sobel** so he can take you off the mailing list. Almost half our membership has on-line service. The savings would be very significant.

We received our **AAW** insurance coverage of \$1 million. **AAW** now pays for that insurance, which is only a third party liability coverage, in that it only covers someone else if they are injured at a function of ours.

We are receiving the **Woodturning Center's "Turning Points"** magazine each month. It will go into the library. Anyone interested can find it in the library.

Jill Conner, the **Brand Library and Art Center Director** visited with us and told us about this unique display called "**The Birthday Party**" that will exhibit March 3 through May 24. **GWG** has been invited to display our work, and to have a woodturning demonstration. We will also help with the show setup carpentry.

Program Notes

The new year has us all thinking about what can be done for the **GWG** that will inspire us to go beyond the very successful 2000 year just passed. A matter before us is what can we do for our new membership that is beneficial to them for joining our organization.

A January 10th letter addressed to the club from member **Chris Valvo** states, "I joined the guild when I bought my lathe but I've not gotten anywhere. I really need to learn but need some direction somewhere. I know that you guys are all advanced turners but maybe I'm not the only one who needs help with the very basics."

Well said. No, he's not the only one who needs help. And, we are not all "advanced turners." I'm sure that those who are advanced turners, at times feel just like **Chris**. Our presentation for February 11 will address this issue. Following this will be a February 24 club demonstration, conducted by three members, each lasting one hour,

showing how each individual approaches the execution of turning a vessel. Depending on the member interest and number of subjects covered, we may do a March follow-up session. As you know, a successfully turned piece involves an awful lot of planning, in addition to the turning itself. There are many subjects that need to be covered.

The February meeting presentation will be given by our **Bill Noble** on microwaving and boiling wood and **Catherine Noble**, **Bill's** daughter, who has finished studying about plant growth and specifically about "how trees grow, and why" and will present on this subject. Sounds interesting, and I'm sure, informative. Filling out the balance of this period, I will go over the findings of the January Survey that 13 members gave me. Interesting, "turning characteristics of local woods" and "green wood turning" were tops for Presentations, "lidded containers" and "segmented pieces" were leading Challenges, and, "hollow vessels" and "hand carving surface decoration" for Demonstrations. Fortunately, our club expert on hollow vessels turning, **Bill Haskell**, volunteered to do this

Further, thanks to **Art Fitzpatrick**, **Guilio Marcolongo** of Australia will demonstrate for us on April 28, which I announced at the last meeting.

Finally, a review of past membership rosters found us getting 30 new members since April 2000. Outstanding. I've E-Mailed those with addresses to reply with their suggestions of topics they'd like covered, and to those without, I requested their input at the next meeting. So, see you all February 11

Cal Elshoff

Lidded Box Workshop

Demonstrator **Steve D'Arc**

by John Tarpley

In November we were fortunate to have a lidded box demo by someone we still consider a member of our Guild, **Steve D'Arc**. I've been interested in lidded bowls, also known as boxes since I started woodturning. I've taken box workshops with **Ray Key**, **Richard Raffin**, **Bonnie Kline**, and **Chris Stott**. None of those workshops were as good as the one **Steve** gave our Guild.

Steve began by discussing his design considerations that form the basis for his boxes. He feels you should limit the box to about 3 1/2 inches in diameter since this is the size that fits comfortably in a female hand. Since ladies buy many of his boxes he looks at cosmetic bottles and boxes to see what designs can be adapted to wood. He only uses wood that is stable, dry, and has an attractive figure. Burls are always good and he also uses English walnut, claro walnut, black walnut, maple, birch, myrtle, and many of the tropical woods. **Steve** also has three Fs for boxes, which are Form, Fit, and Finish.

The first area of Form is that boxes may be end grain or side grain. With end grain boxes the grain will match around the box and the box will be as tall or taller than it is wide. However, if the box is to be wider than it is tall, then it needs to be side grain to show the best grain. Many turners advocate that the box should be 1/3 lid and 2/3 bottom. **Steve** disagrees with this idea. Since boxes are intended, at least in theory, to store items he feels you need to leave

as much space as possible for that function. Therefore, he makes his lids thinner. While the thickness varies with the type of box, I think his general rule is about 1/5 lid and 4/5 bottom. Form must also be considered with function. As an example consider a jewelry box. This box needs ample storage space so a side grain box is more appropriate.

A jewelry box is also a good example of Fit. When this box is used you want the box to remain on the table when the lid is lifted so a tight, suction fit lid would not be appropriate. Instead the box should have a loose, but well fitted lid that allows it to be opened easily with one hand. There is a big difference between a loose lid and a sloppy fit lid.

The final F is Finish, which has a lot to do with how the box feels in the hand and how it looks. **Steve** prefers a finish that goes into the wood rather than builds up on the surface. This means a finish of oil, wax, or French Polish. While **Steve** has tried a variety of finishes he currently prefers one he makes himself. It consists of the cheapest baby oil available mixed 50:50 with odorless paint thinner. The finish is placed in a spray bottle and is applied to the turning while it is still on the lathe. It is applied in two coats and sanded in with 240 and 400 grit, wet/dry sandpaper. When dry this gives a nice matte finish. If a glossier finish is desired **Steve** allows the finish to dry for at least two days, lightly sands with 600 grit, and then applies a coat of wax. His favorite is TREWAX carnuba floor wax.

Steve then turned his attention to the tools he uses. He uses mainly scrapers for his boxes. He uses several scrapers that are 1/2 x 1/4 inches. They include a roundnosed scraper sharpened down the left side, a square scraper sharpened down the left side, and a square scraper sharpened at less than 90° with the corner eased. This tool allows him to work into the corner of the box without contacting both the sidewall and bottom of the box at the same time which is always trouble. He also has a few special purpose scrapers to do specific jobs. **Steve** prefers a good burr on his scrapers so he sharpens them upside down on a grinding wheel with a platform set at the sharpening angle. He reminded us that tool mass adds stability to our cuts. Since these tools are very light we must provide additional stability by solidly pinning them to the tool rest during use to prevent bouncing and vibration during cuts. Additionally he uses a depth gage while hollowing and sandpaper in grits of 120, 180, 240, and 400. As previously mentioned he uses wet/dry for the 240 and 400. For 120 and 180 he uses cloth backed shop rolls. They can easily be torn into strips to get into small details. With this very valuable introductory information **Steve** began the turning portion of the workshop by making an end grain black walnut box. Since **Steve** makes boxes for sale he makes them in small production runs. He turns a spindle long enough for several boxes and does the initial rough shaping for each box at this point. He cuts the tenons at each end to fit his chuck by using a go-no go gauge made for the chuck jaws he plans to use. Only a small tenon is required if it is cut accurately. He also marks the lid-body separation with a v-groove. He then parts off the pieces on his bandsaw using a large wooden woodworking clamp to hold them safely. He first hollows, sands, and finishes the box lid. The bottom is then mounted, shaped, and the lid fit. To achieve a good lid fit the mating parts must be either parallel or the bottom can have a slight radius. Wedged shaped parts will never fit properly. It also helps to slightly

chamfer the leading edges of both parts. There are several methods to achieve an accurate fit of the lid. **Steve's** method is to accurately size the lid first, making sure the mating area is perfectly straight, and then to cut a taper on the box bottom. While the bottom is spinning in the lathe the lid can be offered up to the bottom creating a burnish mark on the taper where the two will ultimately fit. **Steve** then uses his skew on its side like a scraper to first cut into the shoulder and then by rotating the skew he can take light cuts of the mating surface until the burnish just disappears. This should insure a snug fit.

When designing beads or other decorations for your box, **Steve** advises to decide on the size you want and then reduce it by half. He feels they will always look better when smaller and more delicate. He aims for a final wall thickness of about 3/16 of an inch. To reverse chuck and turn off the bottom of the box he makes use of the chuck jaws in expansion mode. This eliminates the need to make a jam chuck.

Steve also made a side grain box with a wooden disk inlay. **Steve** already had this myrtle box partially prepared and mounted on a chuck ready to fit the inlay and hollow. The form he used was a modified ogee curve giving a graceful form requiring undercutting using some of the techniques of producing a hollow form. **Steve** prepares his inlays from small pieces of wood left from other projects. He mounts the pieces on a waste block with double stick tape and shapes them into disks with slightly tapering slides and slightly dished bottoms. After measuring the diameter of the inlay he marked the dimension on the top of the lid and proceeded to cut a recess that would just accept the inlay. He took care to make sure the bottom of the recess was flat. **Steve** believes that the joint between the insert and the lid should be celebrated in some way. This can be in the form of a decorative bead or by using a colored glue joint as he illustrated. After making sure the inlay bottomed into the recess he made witness marks on both pieces. He then cut a narrow groove or step around the inlay recess about 2/3 of the depth of the recess that will be filled with colored glue. He uses 5-minute epoxy tinted with powdered artist pigments. He advises that to produce vibrant colors first mix in a little white before adding the color of choice. Since he wanted to produce a dark brown he did not add any white. Mix the color into the resin portion of the epoxy until the desired color is achieved and then add the hardener. Glue is then applied to the bottom center of the inlay which is aligned with the witness marks and seated into place. Epoxy can now be placed in the groove previously cut around the joint. Neatness does not count at this stage since the excess will be turned away when final shaping of the lid is done after the glue has hardened.

Next he demonstrated the hollowing process beginning with using a central drill hole to determine the depth of hollowing. To keep from possibly damaging the edge during the hollowing process he cuts a v-groove at the desired wall thickness as a stop cut. The bulk of the material can now be removed using a small bowl gauge. To reach the material in the bend of the ogee underlying the rim he employed the **D'Arc/Devoe Rotary Excavator tool**, which is available for purchase from **Bob Devoe**. This tool, designed specifically for this purpose, is a small scraper using a tool steel bit with a movable metal block on the shaft to absorb the rotational torque and allow you to comfortably

handle the tool. **Steve** emphasizes that you work carefully and smoothly from the top to the bottom removing material and blending cuts as you work. When the inside is hollowed the box can be reverse chucked as described for the end grained box and finished.

Steve also had his photo album catalogs and several of his boxes on display including his newest design, the fly reel box. He estimates he has sold approximately one thousand boxes so his lessons certainly come from a wealth of experience. I'm sure all of us who attended left the workshop knowing much more about box turning than when we arrived.

Our thanks to **John Tarpley** for a great article.

2000 GWG CALENDAR

SUNDAY MEETINGS

Meetings usually consist of announcements, a feature presentation, Challenge, Show & Tell, and wood raffle.

MAR. 11 GWG Meeting – Surface decorating – coloring Ed Hotchkin and Square edged bowl Challenge

April 8 GWG Meeting – to be announced

May 6 GWG Meeting – to be announced

June. 3 GWG Meeting – to be announced

July 8 GWG Meeting – to be announced

Aug. 12 GWG Meeting – to be announced

Sept. 9 GWG Meeting – to be announced

Oct. 14 GWG Meeting – to be announced

Nov. 11 GWG Meeting – to be announced

Dec. 9 GWG Holiday Affair and Auction

SATURDAY WORKSHOPS (start at 9AM)

Feb 24 Special Beginning turners session

April 28 Guilio Marcolongo from Australia

SHOW AND TELL

Ed Hotchkin showed an enormous and beautiful 20" carob bowl and 10" red fumed hollow form with burned holes in side.

Dere Bushey brought a nice buckeye burl hollow form and a maple hollow form. Nice work

Carrie Cairres had 2 letter opens, one out of tobuti and one out of kingwood. She also showed her purchased alligator and bear letter openers.

Steve Dunn had a great curly maple large hat and 3 mini hats of madrone burl and 3 micro mini hats of madrone burl. Plus a hollow form and lidded box out of buckeye burl

Yo Takimoto showed his 5 carved letter openers and 2 carved spoons of black walnut. Incredible.

Amos Thompson had a beautiful 11" birdseye maple platter, finished with deft lacquer and a hat stand with 3 hats. One 11" x 6" standard, one 1" x 3" mini and one 1" x 1" micro all of big leaf maple finished with deft and buffed. Wonderful work.

Cal Elshoff had an offset turned 10" walnut vase and a 9" maple burl vase. Very nice.

Bill Noble had a lemon root decanter and a lemon root bottle. Good work.

Carl Stude showed 3 nice small walnut bowls.

Don Comer had a stupendously nice segmented walnut decanter.

Bill Haskell brought wonderful stuff. His silver maple tipped plate with pierced design and a buckeye burl hollow form with ebony rim—ca and lacquer finished.

Bill Kelly brought a great rum decanter of laminated white oak and fumed purpleheart plus some twisted stem goblets that are work in progress.

Ralph Otte showed a nice purpleheart bowl and some toothpick holders out of tatabu.

Mark Fitzsimmons bought some extraordinary stuff. Four Olive brandy snifters, a walnut bowl, a longworth chuck, a steadyrest and 4 hook tools.

Dave Holzberger had a winged eucalyptus bowl 18' x 8", a buckeye vessel 7" x 7" base mounted and a maple burl vessel 18:x 8" base mounted.

Very nice work.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Justin Vasquez and Barry Posner

Welcome Aboard! □

HOW TO FIND US

HOW TO FIND US ON THE INTERNET

At our Web page

<http://www.woodturners.org>,

President's Column

At our January meeting, we found and selected a new president for 2001, **Linda Emery**. I'm sure our membership appreciates **Linda** taking on this job as much as I do. Thanks **Linda**!

I have no doubt she will continue to keep this organization running with fine leadership and enthusiastic energy. **Steve Jacobs** offered to come back as the Secretary, so we now have a full slate of officers for the new year.

Cal Elshoff, our Vice President, is busy trying to put together a program for the new year. That responsibility is a difficult task, especially when someone is doing it for the first time. **Cal** needs a lot of help with both ideas and people willing to give presentations on turning subjects plus demonstrations on Saturdays during the year. Give this some thought and if you have something specific you're able to contribute, get in touch with **Cal**.

"The Birthday Party, An Installation," at the Brand Library and Art Gallery from March 3 through May 24 will be an exciting project this new year. Being a part of it with five of our members contributing work to the three month exhibit, plus having our own **GWG** display and demonstration May 12, is really exciting. I hope you will get a chance to visit the Brand Library and Art Gallery to see this unusual and fantastic array of turned work from top American turners and woodworkers.

Bill Haskell

How's this for a closer?

Depend on the rabbit's foot if you will, but remember it didn't work for the rabbit.

See you next meeting
Al Sobel, editor

