



Journal Of
The North Carolina Woodturners' Association

VOL.2 NO. 1

January, 1992

Editor: Ken Bachand, Rt. 1, Box 192-C, Brevard, NC 28712

ABOUT SHARING

We are never more generous than we are toward the end of the year. We exchange gifts and greetings, and most of us get much satisfaction from giving to those who cannot give back. We seem to recognize, at least at this time of the year, that it is indeed more blessed to give than to receive.

Those of us who are members of the Apple Country Woodcrafters recently saw ourselves on TV, making and packing wooden toys for the Salvation Army -more than one-hundred toys of all kinds that can be made from wood. Knowing that many children who would otherwise have nothing for Christmas would be made happy by our efforts gave us a great feeling of gratitude that we were able to share our skills and resources with others.

But there are some incidents that I could not help but recall that remind me of the fact that some people are missing out on the joy of sharing. Some years ago I was visiting a mall craft show and met a man who was selling clocks. I recognized some of these clocks from having seen them in a catalog -ready-made, just sand, varnish, and insert the movement. Some of them, however, looked as if he may have made them entirely from rough stock. He seemed very proud of his clocks. Pointing to the one I had seen in the catalog, I asked, "How did you make that clock?" Apparently thinking that I was thoroughly amazed by the mastery of his work, he answered, with a tone of sarcasm, "There are sixty-seven different ways of making that clock." He wasn't about to share his trade secrets with another woodworker!

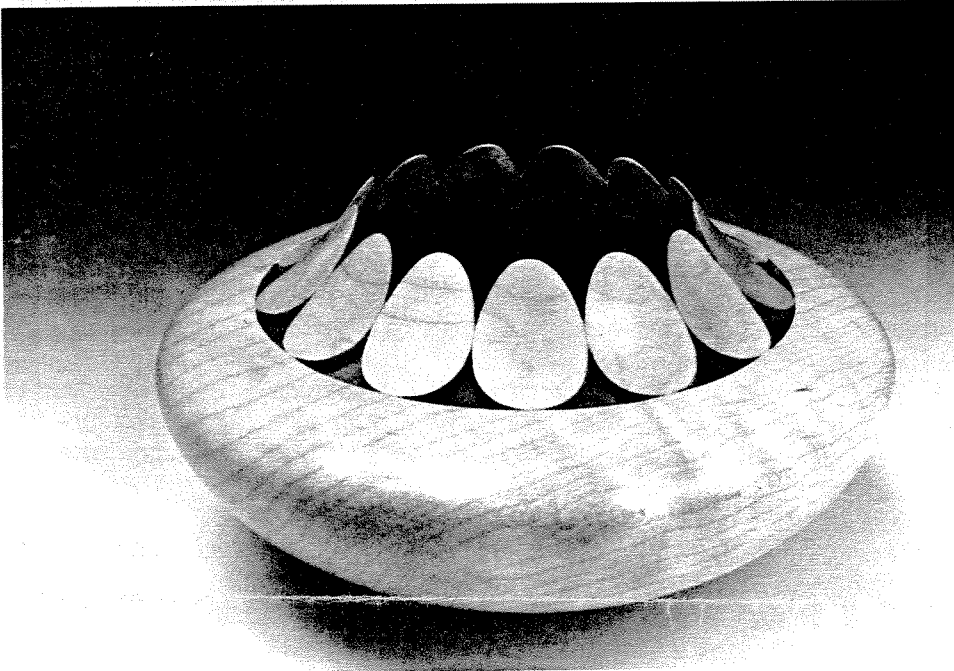
While still at the same mall show, I stopped to look at some lamps that were made entirely of popsicle sticks. I mentioned to the woman whose husband had made the lamps that I was a woodworker and complemented her husband for the cleverness and novelty of his work. But as I continued to look more closely at the lamps, the woman became irritated and finally asked me to leave, saying that I was only trying to figure out how they had made the lamps. She too was not about to share her (really not-too-mysterious) "trade secrets."

Not too long ago, two of our members visited the shop of a certain woodturner whose name and works are often seen together with those of some of the real masters of our craft. They had recently paid him to do a demonstration for a woodworking group to which they belonged and were responding to an invitation to visit his shop. While there, they asked him about how he had made a certain piece and got a response that went something like this. "It cost me a lot of money to learn how to do that, and if you want to know how it's done, it will cost you too!"

I can understand why Coca Cola, Pepsi, and RC keep their formulas under absolute secrecy or why IBM, Xerox, or Panasonic might jealously guard

the process by which they made some revolutionary breakthrough in electronics; but I fail to see what some craftsman is trying to hide by refusing to share his techniques with others, especially when they clearly present no serious competitive threat. If a craftsman has the skill to do it and wants to do what you do, he will do it, whether you have shown him how to do it or not. If he cannot do it, then you've still lost nothing when you show how it's done.

To end this on a happy note, let me say that at our December meeting the show-and-tell segment of our program was especially good because so many of us got into it with comments and suggestions on how to do certain things -mounting a piece for reverse turning, for example. And I was especially happy to learn from Bill Heath how to prepare stock for turning square bowls, something that I have always wanted to do. I would have eventually figured out that it is best to glue waste pieces to the sides and then saw them off. He saved me some time and trouble by telling how to do it. And I must not close without pointing out that Dewey Garrett of Livermore, California, has very unselfishly shared with us his methods for making his lattice and flower vessels. It's all about sharing!



PETAL VESSEL

By Dewey Garrett
Livermore, California

This is the second in a series of three special techniques that Dewey Garrett is sharing with us. It presents the basic processes that are used for the more complicated Flower Vessel that we will feature in next month's Journal. It is featured in "A Focus on Hidden Talent" in the September 1991 issue of the American Woodturner.

The Petal Vessel designs make use of techniques I've developed that combine simple cylindrical forms. When turned on the lathe, surprising shapes that suggest the delicate petals of opening flowers are revealed. The petals are formed from plugs -cross-grain, wooden cylinders that are glued to the bowl blank.

Plugs can be prepared in a variety of ways as long as they are made with the wood grain direction perpendicular to the axis of the plug cylinder. For a small quantity of plugs, a turning blank of cross-grain sections can be glued up, mounted between centers, and turned to a constant diameter cylinder. Then a parting tool is used to mark (without parting) the individual plugs which are cut and separated after the cylinder is removed from the lathe.

When many plugs are required, a drill press mounted plug or tenon cutter works well. These cutters are available in numerous sizes up to one inch in diameter for plugs as long as two inches. The cutters typically have a cutting rim, 5 bottom cutters, and 5 side cutters. They will make many smooth, uniform plugs from hardwood if they are kept sharp by frequent honing.

Cutting plugs requires removal of large amounts of material. In order to avoid waste and reduce the cutting effort, the wood for the plugs is first cut into squares slightly larger than the finished plug diameter. These squares are then glued to a thin piece of scrap wood that can be clamped to the drill press table as each plug is cut. The scrap wood becomes a part of the plug but is wasted away in the final turning.

Once the plugs are prepared, the bowl blank is mounted, rough turned to a cylinder, and surfaced flat. For an outer rim of petals, a 1/8" deep recess which is slightly more than half the plug diameter in width is cut on the top, outer circumference of the bowl blank. The recess inner diameter is sized by trial and error so that the plugs will fit in the recess -each plug touching its neighboring plugs and the inner diameter of the recess. A precise, tight fit is required to give the rim strength. The plugs are glued in the recess initially by applying glue to the plug bottom surfaces and clamping them with a metal, worm-gear band clamp. The plugs are aligned so that the wood grain is parallel to the recess tangent at the point of contact. After the glue is set, the clamp is removed and a fillet of glue is applied to the line of contact between each pair of adjacent plugs.

When multiple concentric rings of plugs are used in the design, each ring is completed and the glue is allowed to set before building up the next layer.

For a design that uses an inner ring of petals, the construction methods are similar except that there are few good ways to apply clamping pressure that forces the plugs into the outside diameter of the required recess. However, when a tight fit is attained, vertical clamping pressure is usually sufficient for the first gluing step.

After adding the ring (or rings) of petals, turning the bowl proceeds with conventional tools and methods. Cutting the plug material to reveal the petals is simplified since the orientation of the wood makes the cuts follow the grain in a slicing motion. Nonetheless, great care must be used while cutting since mishaps are likely to ruin the work. Sanding can be done while the work is spinning, but caution is required since the edges of the petals can cause injury and are themselves easily damaged.

AN INVITATION

We have a special invitation from the Triangle Area Woodworkers Club to join them when they visit the new Woodworkers' Supply facility at Graham, NC. The meeting will be from 7:00 p. m. to about 9:30 p. m. on Tuesday Evening January 21st. Woodworkers' Supply will give a tour of their facility, demonstrations, and refreshments. For directions and specific information contact Ed Walker, Executive Director of the Triangle Area Woodworkers Club (919) 362-4617. This is a fine opportunity to meet some other woodworkers from our state and see first hand what Woodworkers' Supply has to offer. We hope some of you will attend, especially you downeasters!

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

HAPPY NEW YEAR, WOODTURNERS! We are looking forward to an exciting year of individual and club progress. As this is the time of year to establish goals and make plans to carry them out, we all should be thinking of what we want to achieve and how to do it.

One important point for us to consider is that the combined energy of a group usually exceeds that of the sum total of the individuals. This is a good place to thank Eric Hughes for "getting the ball rolling" about 18 months ago. Eric's idea of a woodturning group created for mutual benefit was not too unusual, but he did something about it. Through a lot of telephone calls and preliminary meetings, Eric created an interest and proved that it would be possible to unite a band of folks with a common personal interest. Thank you, Eric, for your effort and foresight.

Regarding membership, thirty-five (35) members have paid 1992 dues so far. Please bring or mail your \$20 check if you have not yet paid.

Our program at the January meeting will feature Rodger Jacobs and Herb Quarles. Herb will demonstrate turning miniatures on the new Carbatec Mini Lathe. Rodger will demonstrate candlestick turning on the Delta lathe. -Tony

ADVANCE NOTICE!!

We are planning to have the well-known British woodturner Ray Key for an all-day demonstration at our March meeting. We will have a catered meal served on location by Bennet's Barbecue. If you were here for our all-day meeting last January with Rude Osolnik, you'll remember how excellent was the food as well as the show. The cost for this meeting will be \$15 for members and \$25 for nonmembers plus the meal. We will have more specific information in the February journal. We hope this early announcement will encourage some of you who are on the fence to renew your membership and take advantage of the bargain price at this meeting.

IN THE LIMELIGHT!

Did you see the picture of us in the December issue of the American Woodturner? This is one of the pictures made at our meeting at Rodger's studio back in September.

Gratitude!

A very special thanks is due to all who have made life easier for us during 1991, those who have shared their talents by demonstrating and those who have helped to make it all go more smoothly. Thanks to Rhodes Batson for the fine graphics work on the Journal and stationery, to Walt Hoyles for his videocasts of the demonstrations, to Bill Johnston for preparing mailing labels for the Journal and keeping our membership list on computer, for those who brought turnings to show-and-tell, to those who have donated items to our library, to those who stay around and help clean up after meetings, to all who put their two-cent's worth into our discussions, to James Knipe for a large mirror that Tony promises will someday get set up, to Mary for all the fat and calories, and to all those whose contributions I in my old age cannot remember! -K. B.

MEETINGS ARE ALWAYS ON THE SECOND SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED IN THE JOURNAL - at 1 p.m.