



GCWA Newsletter

December 1998

TOYS for TOTS

President's Corner

Ho, Ho, Ho, and a Merry Christmas!

December is upon us! Old Saint Nick will be coming around the corner soon, over the trees and onto the roof tops, gifts for all the boys and girls. Yes, I am speaking of Toys for Tots. Every December a toy drive is put on by many charities all over the world for the children of families that are not so lucky as to have a Christmas. Gulf Coast Woodturners Association does the same here in the Houston area. We would like for you to join in on this wonderful toy drive for the kids. We would like for you to make or buy something for a boy or girl, and bring it to the meeting on Saturday, December 19. This will make a bunch of children very happy on a very special day. These toys will be taken to a charity center to be given to the less fortunate families.

Turning back to Texas Turn or Two, if you have any questions about Texas Turn or Two, there is a committee meeting on January 9th in Temple, Texas. If you would like to have your question considered, this would be a good time to put in your two cents worth. I will be going to Temple to deliver any and all information to the Texas Turn or Two Committee. Give all your thoughts to me at or e-mail me at wwbob@aol.com.

As the holidays draw near, more and more people will be on the road visiting family and friends, as I know a lot of you will be on the road. Please think safety always. So what if you are a little late? Better late than never. Happy holidays to all.

-- Bobby Bridges

December Program

Hands on Demonstration

The turning presentation for the December meeting will be a HANDS ON demonstration of the Lyle Jamieson Stabilizer Handle. This specialized handle,

with a boring bar and an auxiliary tool rest allow for a completely safe and stable system for hollowing large turnings. A large hollow turning will be set up on several of the lathes for you to give this system a hands on test. Other lathes with wood on them will be available. If you have a problem area, get a more experienced turner to share his techniques with you. Please remember we are guests of Deer Park High School and practice SAFETY and respect for the equipment provided.

Future Programs

I have received several good suggestions for topics for future programs. Keep them coming !!! The demos and programs are to benefit you as a member. Please tell me what you want to see. Call me at 281-479-8073, e-mail me at BBERRY2301@AOL.COM or talk to me at the meeting.

-- Bill Berry

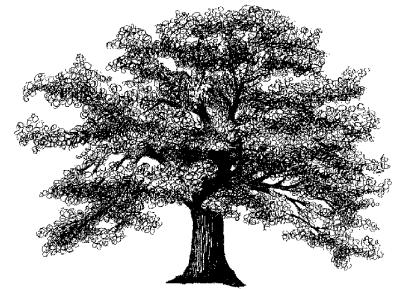
Finishing Techniques - One Way to Do It

The finishing of a project you've just completed actually begins with the final sanding and ends when you are satisfied that the end result meets your standards of quality. The method that I will describe is certainly only one of countless ways to accomplish a quality finish. This method will work especially well if you do not or because of constraints of the project size or shape, cannot do buffing. Production turners will certainly find ways to minimize the time required to complete their projects by utilizing other methods; however, if you want an absolute top quality finish, the time you invest in this one method will give you years and years of satisfaction and does not require any special tools or difficult methods.

Prior to application of the first coat of finish, I recommend a thorough sanding of your turning, down to at least 1000 grit

In this Issue

President's Corner	1
December Program	1
Finishing Techniques - One Way to Do It	1
Monte Laramore	3
Homemade Expansion Chucks	3
209 Finish	3
For Sale	3
Want to Purchase	3
Source: Closed Cell Foam	3
Lament of a Woodturner's Wife	4
Executive Committee	6
This Month	6



GCWA is affiliated with the American Association of Woodturners. GCWA meetings are usually held at 9:00 a.m. on the 3rd Saturday of each month. Check the last page for our Calendar of Events. Annual dues are \$18. Dues may be mailed to Helen Young, 2502 Esther Ave., Pasadena TX 77502-3239. Make your check payable to GCWA or Gulf Coast Woodturners Association.

wet/dry sandpaper. This may be obtained at the major automotive stores or others that specialize in automotive paint products. I normally sand with 220/400/600 and at least 1000 grit respectively before completing any project. This may be done on the lathe as much as is practical for your work. Normally the last three sandings are done utilizing water as a lubricant to raise the grain of the wood and to take away the sandpaper grit and wood as it is being worked. I am a firm believer that taking this material away from your turning rather than working it into the wood gives you a finer finish, especially since your final sanding is with an extremely fine grit of paper. In this regard, constantly use clean water to allow proper lubrication with minimal contaminants getting back into the project.

When you are satisfied with your sanding results, allow the turning to completely dry before attempting to apply any finish. My finish of choice is an old favorite of the club and, without it, countless projects would not be finished as nicely as they are today. Call it '209' or if this doesn't register with you, just go get some Minwax Natural #209 at your local building supply house. My experience has taught me that the more you open any can of finish, the harder it is to get the ultimate in final sheen, so I recommend that you buy what you will be using or if you wish to buy in bulk, transfer some to other cans and only work with what you will be currently using. Also, try to keep it away from extreme changes in temperature as much as is possible.

My normal finishing process is one that could be called time-consuming as seven to ten coats of finish are applied depending on the project and how the finish is accepted by the wood. Please don't let this discourage you. You have worked hard on your project and it is not finished until you are completely satisfied with the results. I begin by putting the first four coats on in as rapid a manner as drying time will allow. Most of my finishing is done off the lathe as I can do other projects while finishing is being completed on the current one. I usually find that I can get at least two coats on each day and possibly a third. I don't worry about any sanding between these coats; but I am careful to only apply as much as I can without obtaining any significant runs. After approximately four coats, the wood fibers normally will be sealed and sanding can be done before further finish coats are applied. At

this time, wet sanding with 1000 (or greater) grit is accomplished.

I find that for most project that I can run water in the sink and thus allow for maximum lubrication of the sandpaper and less distress to the fibers of the project. (This is best done when you-know-who is not home or when the meat is not defrosting in the sink - discretion is certainly the better part of valor in this instance.) After the project dries, you may continue to apply more coats of finish, one at a time allowing for complete drying between coats. This will usually be at one day intervals. At this point, anything that gets on your project that is not finish will ultimately have to be taken off by sanding so take care during this phase. When applying each coat, be sure that the rag you are using is as lint-free as possible and that you have a place for drying that will receive minimal air movement to lessen transmission of contaminants to your turning. I find that a separate room where the heating/air conditioning vents can be turned off works well. If you don't have this luxury, just find a place where there is minimal air movement for drying purposes. One would wonder how much finish should be applied at one time and the answer can only come from experience. What you will most probably find is that you can get the applicator rag fairly wet to coat the project, but before you finish you will want to wring it out to where it is almost dry and then take the majority of the finish back off to where it will not run before drying. This will save you further sanding efforts. Generally, after I place a coat of finish on a project, I observe the way it begins to dry. As it begins to dry, streaks from the rag begin to disappear within a minute or two; the finish will 'lay down' and the surface will appear smooth. If you see that the rag marks are still there then you probably have too thick a coat (or your finish is old and lost its consistency) and it will most probably dry with these same streaks. At this time, you have at least two choices. One - leave it alone and later sand these out after drying, or two - you still have time to apply more finish to get the desired finish. If you do apply more finish, do it right away. What you will find is that you will have to work the new finish through the poor coat and in essence you are then back to where you need to be. Don't be discouraged if you have to do this. It may be easier than sanding it later.

Now what? You have a number of coats of finish on your turning - but when are you finally going to get through? At a

point in time, you will see that your project has developed a certain sheen to it. At this time, the exterior is probably coated sufficiently to totally seal the wood. I recommend another wet sanding with 1000 (or greater) grit paper at this time. Instead of water alone, I will add a few drops of dishwashing liquid to the water I use and wet sand with this concoction? Why do this? The dishwashing liquid now enhances the lubrication qualities of the sandpaper and furthers a finer finish. Don't allow your project to stay wet, rinse it off thoroughly with fresh water (warm or cold, never hot) and dry it immediately.

Well, now, your project no longer has the luster that it did before this step, but you haven't taken a step backward and are almost finished. Two or three more coats will be necessary to achieve a fine luster that will last and last. For these final coats, I recommend that your '209' is fresh and that you use very thin coats allowing each to dry thoroughly between coats using the above methods of application. A sheen will begin to develop with the first coat and continued coats should be applied until you are satisfied with the results. If you do not get runs and each coat is of appropriate thickness, no further sanding should be required. (If further sanding is required never use less than 1000 grit paper and always wet sand with cold or warm water utilizing the soap as lubricant.) You will find that you can stop at any coat when you achieve what you desire in your particular object. If you apply three or more coats at this time, you will have an exceptional shine. One tip that I try to follow is that I apply the final few coats when the humidity is as low as practical. At this time of year we have many of these opportunities as dry fronts move through. There is a difference in a coat of finish one day and the coat of finish another day of lower humidity so pick your time to do these final coats -- the results will show and your turning will receive the care it properly deserves. Please note that although you don't notice it, you have built up quite a surface of finish on your turning. This is what gives it the sheen and transparency that maximizes the warmth of the wood below but it can also hold one danger if you decide to later machine buff the project. My advice is don't. What you may do is wear through the first few top coats of finish and the surface will look like a poor attempt to carve canals into your turning.

A final coat of carnuba or equivalent hand-rubbed wax will protect your project and minimize contaminants from handling. You will find that the results from your work will be well worth the effort you have expended.

-- Chuck Garrett

Monte Laramore

November 29, 1958 to November 20, 1998.

I would like to tell all the members about a man that gave me something to think about. This man was 90% blinded from diabetes. He called me to teach him how to turn wood. Hmm, I thought, how in the world would I do this? I went out in my shop with a pair of safety glasses and some clear tape, and I distorted my own vision. I did go and teach this man and had a good time doing so. He became a very good woodturner. The past couple of years, through surgery, he regained a lot of his vision and was in the shop working with his tools again. Monte passed away on November 20th after going to the hospital. Bonnie, our thoughts are with you and your family. Monte, you will be missed.

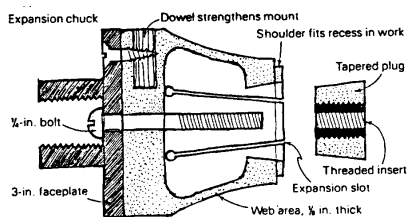
-- Bobby Bridges

Homemade Expansion Chucks

Once a turner masters simple spindle turning, a chuck almost becomes a necessity to expand your capabilities. Some of the more popular commercially available chucks include the Nova, One-Way and Stronghold. A good chuck will be able to both expand and contract to hold your turning. However, these chucks can cost up to several hundred dollars. Here are two expansion chucks you can make for little or no cost.

Expansion Chuck No. 1

Make the chuck from a piece of dense hardwood. Because your face plate screws will be going into end-grain, you should insert short dowel pieces for the screws to grab. (See diagram.)



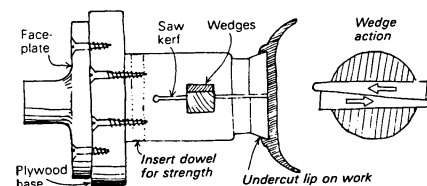
The chuck works by tightening the bolt which draws a tapered plug into the

chuck, expanding the outside shoulder. Turn the chuck to roughly the same shape as the diagram. The walls should be approximately 1/8" thick around the web area.

The shoulder should have about a 7 degree taper as seen in the diagram. Turn the plug to fit into the chuck opening. You can either use a threaded insert for the plug or you can use a metal tap to cut threads directly into the wood. After the chuck is completely turned, drill stop-holes and cut about eight expansion slots into the body. You will turn a dovetail recess into the base of your work piece to receive the tapered shoulder of the expansion chuck. Once your work piece is properly and snugly mounted to the chuck, you can finish the piece.

Expansion Chuck No. 2

To make this chuck, mount a solid hardwood block to a face plate as shown.



Use short dowels in the base of the block to give the screws more holding power. Turn the block into a cylinder, and create a shoulder like on the chuck shown above. For flexibility, drill a stop hole and then cut a saw kerf through the center of the cylinder. Cut a square mortise through the saw kerf to receive the two wedges. Make the wedges out of a solid piece of hardwood that is about 1/8" thicker than the mortised opening. This is so that when you cut the piece of wood diagonally, it will fit nicely into the mortise. Turn your work piece with a dovetail recess to match the shoulder of your chuck, slip the chuck onto the base, and then drive the wedges together to expand the chuck.

Please note that these chucks will primarily work for medium to small size turnings. The ability of chucks to expand is not as great as a metal chuck, and over-expanding can and will cause the chuck to break. Also, if you try to turn something too large and heavy, it can fly off the lathe while you are turning.

-- Scott Luhnau

209 Finish

Power sand with 240 & 320 grit Mirca Gold on a foam disk. Make sure all the tool marks & bruised spots are removed. Coat liberally with Minwax wood finish #209 (Natural). Any other light oil finish

may be used. After a few minutes, wipe off the excess.

Using 400 grit wet or dry sandpaper and a small amount of thinner, wet sand by hand with the lathe turning slow until the surface of the wood is filled. Follow with 600 grit in the same manner.

Stop the lathe and wipe on another generous coat of Minwax 209. Watco oil or thinned polyurethane may be used at this time. Allow a few minutes, then turn on the lathe and buff dry with a soft cotton rag (old T-shirt) or paper towels. Higher speeds may be required to generate enough heat to evaporate the solvents in the oils and varnish. Continue adding finish and buffing dry until you are satisfied with the finish. Buff with Tripoli or white rouge and cotton buffer. Waxes may be added after sufficient drying time. It may take weeks for oil finishes to cure even though it is dry to the touch.

-- Luna Ford

For Sale

6-1/2 x 21 lathe. Includes shop-built stand, 4-speed pulley, and motor, \$65. Located in Southwest Houston. Jacob Schulzinger, 713.776.9063.

Jerry Murrey has power tools for sale. Call 281.286.7727.

Want to Purchase

16" x 54" inside with 24" outside Delta (DL40) Lathe, model no. 46401 built in 1987 with digital R.P.M. control, 110 volts AC. MUST be in "REASONABLE GOOD CONDITION". Will talk money after I see the lathe. Call Howard D. Moore @ 409-756-1783.

Source: Closed Cell Foam

During the October meeting Luna demonstrated how to build your own power sanding wheel. There was one item for which no one knew of a source. I think I've found one. The write up specifies 1 inch thick medium density closed cell foam. I bought a 3/4 inch sheet of Armaflex closed cell foam from Specialty Products & Insulation Company, 6550 Long Point, Suite C, 77055 - 713 957-2730 for \$17 (size 3 x 4 feet). The stuff Luna used was white and this is black but I don't see any other difference. I made a six inch diameter wheel and it seems to work fine. Other members may want to check out this source. Also, SPI offers a variety of different thicknesses. I got 3/4 inch because I forgot that Luna used 1 inch. I also bought a 1/4" sheet for another project - \$8.00.

-- Jack Hanley

Lament of a Woodturner's Wife

The lawn needs mowing, need help if you would
Later dear, I just love the smell of this wood.

Could you help with the groceries? It's a pretty big load.
No time now, I just saw a tree on the side of the road!

My car won't start, it must be broke.
Sure dear, there's nothing like turning a good piece of oak.

The kids are all fighting, at times its a pain.
I know what you mean, the wood WILL NOT take a stain.

The bird must be sick, he fell off his perch.
The guys just called they've located a birch.

Could you help with the homework? There's so much to learn.
Come out here son, I'll teach you to turn!

The house was robbed, oh, what grief.
They left the lathe, oh, what a relief!

Thanks, honey, you picked our tree for the holiday season.
Anytime, but turning the trunk was my main reason!

I'm going home to mother, and taking the kids.
Wait honey, look, I just turned my first lid!

I feel dizzy, the room is a swirl.
Look dear, have you ever seen such a burl!

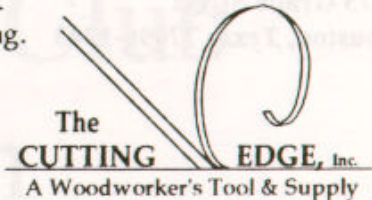
I'm really mad, I'm starting to burn.
Did your know there's a song called *TURN, TURN, TURN!*

It goes on, this song and dance.
But as long as there's trees, I haven't a chance.

-- Connie Bridges

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Calendar of Events

January 4, 1999 ~ 7:00 PM. First Monday @ The Cutting Edge, 7123 Southwest Fwy, 713.981.9228.

January 12, 1999 ~ 7:30 PM ~ Executive Committee meeting @ The Cutting Edge.

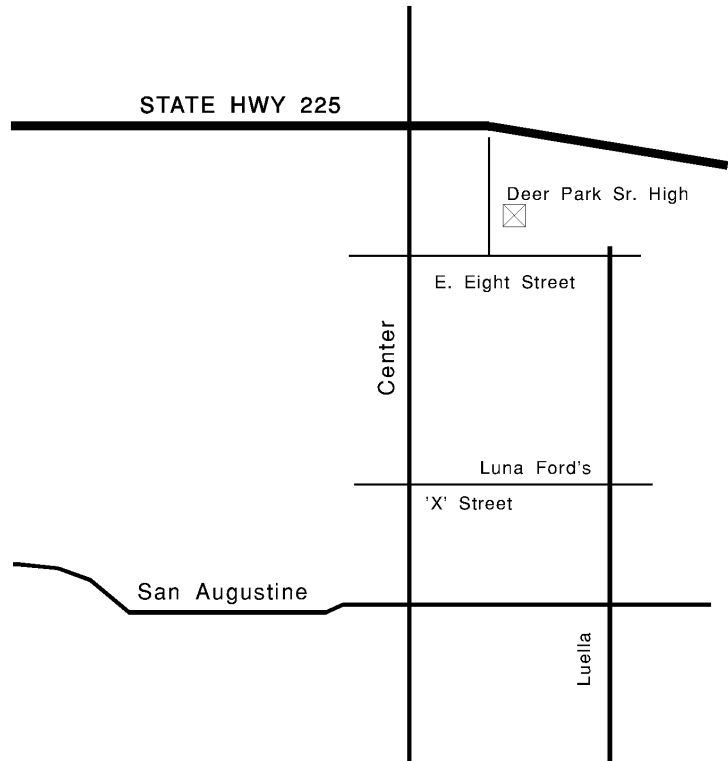
January 16, 1999 ~ 9:00 AM ~ GCWA meeting @ Wood Wright Woodworking

February 20, 1999 ~ 9:00 AM ~ GCWA meeting @ Pearland High School (Gary Rodgers)

March 20, 1999 ~ 9:00 AM ~ meeting open

April 17, 1999 ~ 9:00 AM ~ GCWA meeting @ The Cutting Edge

May 15-16, 1999 ~ GCWA 3rd annual Turning Retreat.



This Month

December 19, 1998 ~ 9:00 AM ~ **Deer Park High School, North Campus** (David Berry). The turning presentation for the December meeting will be a HANDS ON demonstration of the Lyle Jamieson Stabilizer Handle. Other lathes with wood on them will be available. If you have a problem area, get a more experienced turner to share his techniques with you.

Please remember we are guests of Deer Park High School and practice SAFETY and respect for the equipment provided.

This is our 9th annual Toys for Tots meeting. Don't forget to make or bring a commercial toy for a girl or boy to this meeting. These toys will be go to Toys for Tots to be distributed to less fortunate families. Let's make this the biggest toy donation ever.

Executive Committee

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