

Minnesota Wood Turners Association

A LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

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AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF WOODTURNERS

**“Secret” Open Shop Experiment Held.
See page 34 for Details.**



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III. MWA EVENT CALENDAR

<p>January, 2015 6th Membership Mtg Sharpening Systems Nelson, Robinette, etc</p> <p>13th Board Meeting</p> <p>23, 24, 25, Craig Lossing, Pro</p>	<p>February, 2015 3rd Membership Mtg Gluing Segmented Work Bob Puetz</p> <p>10th Board Meeting</p>	<p>March, 2015 3rd Membership Mtg Fun with Spindles Steve McLoon</p> <p>10th Board Mtg</p> <p>13, 14, 15 Nick Cook, Pro</p>	<p>April, 2015 7th Membership Mtg Hollowing Mark Debe</p> <p>14th Board Mtg</p>
<p>May, 2015 5th Membership Mtg Making Platters Steve Mages</p> <p>12th Board Mtg</p>	<p>June, 2015 2nd Membership Mtg Skype with Joe Hermann</p> <p>9th Board Mtg</p> <p>25-28 AAW Mtg Pittsburg</p>	<p>July, 2015 7th Membership Mtg Finishes Mark Palma</p> <p>13th Board Mtg</p>	<p>August, 2015 4th Membership Mtg Home Made Lathe Tools Jeff Luedloff</p> <p>11th Board Meeting Chainsaw Safety Class Sat 22 Noon -4PM</p>
<p>September, 2015 1st Membership Mtg A Goblet W Captive Rings Gary Mrozek</p> <p>9th Board Mtg 19, 20, 21 Dixie Biggs Pro</p>	<p>October, 2015 6th Membership Mtg Pendants Robinette and Farber</p> <p>13th Board Mtg</p>	<p>November, 2015 3rd Membership Mtg Put a twist in your work Todd Williams</p> <p>10th Board Mtg (Al Stirt Pro demo?)</p>	<p>December, 2015</p> <p>No Membership Mtg</p> <p>No Board Mtg</p> <p>Christmas Party</p>

July/August Special Events at a Glance

July 23, Basic Bowl Turning, Bob Meyer, Rick Auge's Shop noon to 4:00 pm

August 6, lidded boxes Woodcraft 6:00 to 9:00 pm

August 13 Hamburger club, 50's Club Brooklyn Center, 11:30-1:30

Possible August 19 Sharpening Class, Neil Robbinette's shop 6:00-9:00

August 26 Plymouth Area Wood Turners, Steve Mages Shop 7:00-8:30 PM

Possible SE metro Meeting in member's shop. Details TBD



IV. President's Message



For what it's worth.

I was able to attend the AAW Symposium in Pittsburgh. I was reluctant. Well,,,,,, It was worth it.

As many of you know our club participated in the chapter collaborative challenge. Collaborative meaning 6 or more members are required to have worked on the project.

There were four awards given. Our chapter won the Fantasy award. Congratulations to ALL who worked on this project to make it happen.

Prior to this symposium it was thought that this would be the last year of the Collaborative due to poor response over the past 2 years. However it was stated at the time of the awards, "There were more entries this year than in the last two years

combined."

For our chapter, this year was a last minute rushed challenge. I am not sure what the theme is for 2016 in Atlanta. However if our chapter is going to participate, we should start thinking about it now rather than April 2016.

There is an overwhelming amount of inspiration that can be found at the AAW Symposium.

Vendors galore! You know, just in case you're not spending enough already on your turning endeavors.

There are 5 daily seminar/demos. Given by leading turners and artists throughout the world. Each seminar is 1.5 hours. I found each seminar I attended was full of worthwhile information, and how to's.

For example, there were the following interesting tips from the pro's demos:

David Ellsworth on Cyanoacrylate ie: superglue and Pith. This seminar Ellsworth turned a hollow form from a green log, with the pith running across the center of it.

Tip #1. align the pith horizontal with the top and bottom of the vessel. When you do this it will warp uniformly. If the pith is at an angle the form will sag to one side as it warps.



Tip #2. DO NOT use superglue on green wood to “fix” cracks. It makes things worse in the long run. In many cases after the wood dries warps and relaxes, the cracks reduce themselves. If there is superglue in that crack as it reduces, that glue works as a wedge causing other cracks.

(I wondered why galleries do not allow turnings with superglue.)

Kip Christenson: On Skew and Muscle memory and eggs.

Tip #1. Develop muscle memory and turning skill by repeating small motor movements. By repeating the same cut over and over. Don’t try to turn a bowl to improve your muscle memory. There are too many large and varied movements involved in a bowl.

Tip #2. Round out a 2” x 2” # 10” spindle, take a skew and make ½ of a bead on the tailstock end then keep repeating this cut one after another after another work on thin cuts to get more in. This way you are repeating that one small move time after time after time = Muscle memory. Work your way roughly to the center of the

rough out. Then go to the headstock end and start the left end ½ bead cut keep repeating. By the time you get to the center you should have 1 perfect bead in the center of the blank. Or maybe on the next blank!

Then do the reverse with a spindle gouge working from the center to the tailstock end with cove cuts. Etc.

Tip #3. If you get the concept of the skew, all other tools will be easy to use and you will never get a catch unless you’re doing a demo.

Almost forgot Eggs!

Tip #4. Make an egg! Any time you get a new variety of wood, cut off a piece and make an egg, this will let you know the working properties of that particular piece of wood. It also warms you up to what you will be doing.

Other topics covered

Cindy Drozda on how to cut and turn a cap burl, what to look for, how they grow & special tool grinds for making finials. How to make a delicate finial.

Mark St’Leger on boxes, lids, and finials.



V. Sample of Dixie Biggs AAW Display

Space does not allow presentation of all the work at the symposium. A representative sample of the work of Dixie Biggs is shown below. This is of particular interest to MWA since Dixie is coming to MWA to teach decorating your work in two hands on classes and one large class demonstration. As noted in the MWA event schedule on page 3, these events will be held September 19, 20, and 21. It should be a great learning opportunity. Plan to attend.



VI. Editorial (Pete Bryant)

In Rick Auge's President's message in the June newsletter, he urged members to start thinking ahead to November when board elections are held. Approximately half of the board is nominated and elected each year. He asked anyone who is interested in serving to consider being nominated or anyone who knows someone who desires to play a larger part in the direction to talk with that person. In the event either happens, please contact a board member for further information.

My first reaction was that this was premature. November is five months away and there is a lot of time left. However, as I reflected on my situation, I realized that it took this long for me to be convinced that I should be on the board.

At that time, I was coordinator of the Plymouth area turning group. I took that position because I appreciated the volunteer efforts of many in the MWA and felt that it was right to be a contributor as well as a taker. But to be on the board and have to go to meetings, plan events, talk with people, and write reports and newsletters was not at all appealing. I recently had retired from this and just wanted to work with my hands.

So, why did I become a board member?

- 1. I realized that there was a real need for effective leadership when meeting with some of the board members and that I had some skill sets that would help. So again, it was the right thing to do.**
- 2. Since I realized that MWA has an incredible smorgasboard of educational opportunities, I reasoned that being on the board would give me a good overview each of the educational programs and enable me to select those that are best for me.**
- 3. I wanted to better understand the relationship of the MWA organization with the AAW.**
- 4. I also realized that being on the board would expose me to some of the top turners in the club and permit me to easily ask them woodturning questions.**
- 5. Finally, I believe further that it is a good experience to work closely with new people and develop friendships.**

So how has this worked out after six months on the board?



1. I have come to see areas of the club as critical and satisfying to me. In particular, I have learned a lot from “hands on” training with professionals and from teaching beginners. I would not have had done so if not on the board.
2. I have come to understand how much the AAW provides to each chapter and how different chapters interact with each other. The AAW is an amazing organization, and it is centered right in our home town.
3. I have had my turning questions quickly answered in casual conversations and emergency phone calls with the people I have met while on the board. This has provided a strong growth in my turning skills.
4. I have developed satisfying relationships with new people who have the same interests as I do.

The bottom line is that there is a lot of hard work that goes into serving on the board and writing the newsletter, and there is some of the bureaucracy typical of corporate America, but the benefits far out weigh the negatives.

Take some time and think seriously about it. You may have a lot of good reasons to be on the board.

At the time of publication, I visited Woodcraft and learned that they give a 10% discount to MWA members but **a 20% discount to MWA Board Members!** Another great benefit to serving on the board.

Correction: In last month’s newsletter, those organizations listed giving discounts to MWA members did not include Woodcraft. This is in error. Woodcraft does provide these discounts.

VII. Monthly Meetings



A. July Membership Meeting
1. Pre-meeting Activities
a. Used Tool Sales



Bob Puetz sold tools for a friend who was getting too old and ill to use them anymore. One table consisted of a box of miscellaneous tools that was sold by silent auction (left hand picture). The proceeds went to the club. Jim Jacobs won the silent auction with a bid of \$40.

The items on the right were sold individually for generally \$20. For example, Pete Bryant bought the set of hole saws in the middle of the table for \$20. They work great. Proceeds went to the original owner.

VII. Monthly Meetings
A. July Membership Meeting
1. Pre-meeting Activities



b. Instant Gallery



The instant gallery is a monthly event. Turners bring recent work without regard to category that are particularly beautiful, clever, or unusual. The collection above is representative of the fine work regularly put on display.

VII. Monthly Meetings

A. July Membership Meeting

1. Pre-meeting Activities

c. AAW Entry





The above two pictures show the final version of the chapter collaborative project entry that won top award for fantasy. It was on display at the meeting. The football on the truck bed was filled with turned toys. The lower picture gives some idea of the huge size of the truck when compared to the people immediately behind it. See President Rick Auge's comments on a fine chapter effort on page 4.

VII. Monthly Meetings

A. July Membership Meeting

1. Pre-meeting Activities

d. Raffle Tables





There were some concerns that the wood raffle would not be as abundantly sourced at this meeting as in the past. However, more wood was donated than tickets were bought. As a result, a lot of wood was given away at the end.



Whenever wood turning tools are provided such as these, there is a lot of interest in the tool raffle!

V. Monthly Meetings

A. July Membership Meeting

2. Meeting

a. Combo Lathe Stand (Mark Debe)





Mark Debe is shown with a lathe stand that he conceived, designed, built, and financed himself. The concept was inspired by a presentation at the 2014 AAW Show in Phoenix and by the development of a wall mounted fixture by several MWA members to hold a lathe for use by a wheel chair bound member. Mark's stand takes previous work to a new level. It can be operated by one standing or sitting, it can be easily converted between positions, and it is readily portable. As such, it can be of benefit in teaching by making the lathe accessible to both those in wheel chairs and those that are able to stand. In addition, it can be used by those who are either too old or unable to stand for extended periods of time. This design clearly expands the field of those who can learn, develop, and enjoy woodturning skills.





This is a view of the front of the machine and stand as seen by an operator seated in either a regular chair or a wheel chair. The stand itself weighs 108 pounds and is designed to accommodate a delta lathe. The total weight with the lathe is about 200 pounds. The design is adjustable to two fixed heights, one for standing and one for sitting. Height adjustment is made using the scissor jack shown and a pistol drill with driver. A set of guides to support the lathe during height adjustment is provided. The lathe and stand is custom balanced so that it is easily shifted from one angular position to another. At each height, the lathe may be tilted 0 degrees, 22.5 degrees and 45 degrees. The stand is on castors and can be easily moved from one location to another. One person can change positions of the stand. Tom Kindom and Pete Bryant were able to change positions in about 10 minutes without reading the instructions provided (hanging outside lower left hand leg). Most of the ten minutes was spent finding the tools we needed in Rick Auge's shop.





At Rick Auge's invitation, Phil McDonald, President of AAW, attended to see the type of work that a chapter could do to expand learning opportunities for all. He was impressed!

Tom Kindom was asked to try the stand and delta lathe for the first time in front of the whole club and President McDonald. Tom liked the portable version better than his wall mounted model. He found it more rigid.

Next Steps:

- 1. Mark is donating use of his stand to the MWA in training classes for the wheel chair bound. If the club dissolves or if he gets to the point where he can only sit and turn, he would like it back.**
- 2. The stand has been successfully used in two training classes already.**
- 3. The AAW has awarded the MWA an Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) to provide a system for wheel chair use for all chapters. This money will be invested in preparing a set of drawings that will allow duplication of the stand by anyone. It will be posted on our website and all chapters of the AAW will be notified of its availability.**
- 4. Mark Debe plans to write a paper for AAW publication.**



V. Monthly Meetings

A. July Membership Meeting

2. Meeting

b. Bowl Carving Fixture (Acme Machine)



A representative from Acme Machine (a local family owned company) came and demonstrated an adjustable fixture that could hold a bowl (or other turned work piece) during decorating, carving, etc.. The device can rapidly and easily be adjusted and locked firmly to present convenient access to various sections of the work for secondary hand operations.

The following brochure excerpt shows some of the positions that the fixture can assume when carving a duck decoy. It also provides specifications, cost, and contact information for those interested.





The Hydra- Positioner can rotate 360 degrees, tilt from 0 to 90 degrees as well as swivel 360 degrees , locking in any position with just a simple rotation of the handle left or right. The Hydra- Positioner is composited of all precision machined steel parts, there is no castings. All the parts are plated, to prevent rust. It offers superior rigidity.



Hydraulic system is hand operated and self contained within the unit, and sealed with replaceable o-rings.



The Hydra-Positioner comes with two different mounting plates, a 1.5" wide by 3.5" rectangular plate and a flat 2.5" by 2.5" square plate. These size of plates cover a wide arrange of mounting configurations.

The Hydra-Positioner safely holds 25 Lbs. on a 12 inch lever arm.

Don't forget power carving, woodburning, and taxidermy tool!

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Minneapolis, MN 55408

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Cash, Credit Card (either Visa or MasterCard)-
state taxes were applicable.

+ shipping

Place a order by phone or send us a email.

acmemachine@hickorytech.net

The price is \$242.50 with tax.

VII. Monthly Meetings

A. July Membership Meeting

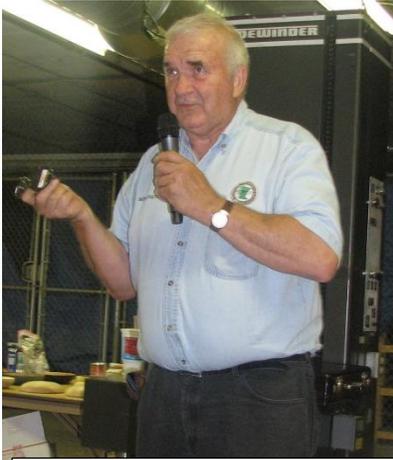


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2. Meeting

a. Elios (Bob Puetz)



Bob Puetz presented a faceplate system that he has found extremely useful. The components can be used either as a traditional faceplate with screws or as a drive system having a set of three pointed tips forming a drive system that is well suited to weird contours such as the initially curved surface of a log to be made into a natural edge bowl. The contact information, details, costs, and a description of the drive system as provided by the company is provided below. Product picture follows.

Available from Langer Craftwork, Edmonton Alberta Canada They describe their product as follows: This wonderful little tool is one of the safest, handiest, and most versatile tools to hit the shelves in quite some time. All three sizes have a #2MT and have three adjustable pins along with three countersunk holes so this drive can be used as a drive or faceplate, and just pops into your lathe. The three adjustable pins account for its versatility and make it ideal for most between-center work such as spindles, large logs, natural edge and regular bowls. For small work that requires attaching a faceplate exactly at the center, just leave the middle pin protruding a small amount to locate the center and then use three #10 or #12 screws to fasten onto your work piece. Now available in three sizes that are black zinc-plated, and can be purchased individually or as a handy set of three. The 2" drive is great for small pieces and ideal for spindle work, the 2.5" is a good all-purpose size, and the 3.5" is a must for larger size logs and natural edge or regular edge bowls. A 'must have' item in any turner's toolkit. Be sure to use a 1/2" knock out bar to remove the drive from your headstock :).

Price: \$125.00 for set of 3





VII. Monthly Meetings



A. July Membership Meeting

2.Meeting

d.Main Presentation: “Finishing for Mortals” (Mark Palma)



Mark Palma delivered an excellent presentation on finishing. Recognizing that much of a finishing presentation lacks the excitement of watching chips fly, Mark maintained audience attention by inserting Sven and Ole jokes at various points. This kept us learning and laughing most of the night.

A lot of positive feedback was received on this presentation and forwarded to Mark. Here are some from Rick Auge and Neil Robinette.

Rick: “Its rare that I get positive comments on Demos. You broke the mold. Tuesday night I started getting comments about how good you and your presentation was. Yesterday I had three more calls that were on the order of: ‘a good presentation’ & ‘He really knew his stuff.’ Again I was asked if you were a Pro.”

Neil: “Where did this guy come from? he was great! Why didn't we know about him before?”



Mark later noted that he had just had a paper published on finishing in the AAW FUNdamentals magazine and would like to have the written article published to MWA. Accordingly, that article, “Finishing Options for Woodturners”, is attached at the end of this newsletter for all to review.

What is said in the article and what was presented in the meeting have some overlap. Therefore, this newsletter will provide a combined outline of what was said in both. It is hoped that this outline might serve as a quick reference, and the article might provide some further detail in the areas it addresses.

Mark had a table full of sample finishing work. Three pictures of that work have been printed below. They clearly establish him as an excellent finisher.





Combined outline of Mark Palmas AAW FUNDamentals article and MWA presentation:

Overview

- **Mark started out by saying that he is sharing the way of finishing that works for him.**
- **Maintain a clean, organized finishing area.**
- **Think of finishing as part of the total process of making the piece.**
- **There a a limited number of finishes that can be applied on the lathe. Many finishes can be applied off the lathe-perhaps too many.**
- **Think about finishes and finishing before you start.**
- **Make a sample of the wood and finish before you start.**
- **A good finish requires patience.**
- **Finish is applied for two reasons: To protect the wood or to enhance it. (not to hide bad design or tear out!)**
- **When sanding, start with fresh abrasive each time.**
- **When sanding watch the dust flowing into the dust collector. When the flow slows down, replace the sandpaper.**
- **Put small details (e.g. grooves) into piece after sanding the rest of the piece. Resand details lightly after addition. This makes for a sharper defined detail.**
- **Between sanding and finishing, clean well and burnish using a kitchen type nonwoven, non abrasive scrubbing pad.**
- **Dust is a big problem. Before finishing, clean your entire shop from top to bottom and change into clean clothes. The below picture Mark demonstrates his finishing only smock.**



- **These comments do not address finishing plastic.**



Safety

- Always de-energize lathe when not turning
- Always wear a face shield when turning
- Yank on the tool rest before starting to turn
- Wear safety glasses when in the shop
- Only use lacquer when it can be sprayed outside
- Be sure you have adequate ventilation
- Be careful with used rags.
- Always properly dispose of applicators and solvents
- Wear a set of clothes for turning and another clean set for finishing
- Remember that a dust mask does not protect against finishing vapors
- Buy finishing materials in small quantities thereby reducing storage of explosive materials
- Drying time, humidity, and temperature are very important. Don't cut corners.
- Never apply friction polish with a rag. It could catch your fingers. Use a paper towel.

The Three Main Finishes

- Polyurethane: Meets every need except often perceived as a plastic without the feel of wood. You can make it feel like wood by covering the polyurethane with wax.
- Oils: Mark generally uses Watco oils
- Wax only

General Tips

- Clean off the lid and can top with a rag when opened and closed.
- Mark can of finish with the date purchased.
- Stir finishes with coffee stirring rods found for free in coffee shops
- Dye is composed of small pieces that sink into the wood. Stain is composed of large particles that stay on the outer surface of the wood.
- Repeatability with dyes is very difficult.
- If wipe-on polyurethane finish does not apply well, it can be improved by blending with pure polyurethane finish.
- Krylon clear acrylic finish is very good in place of varnish for top coats.
- You cannot increase the gloss of semi-gloss or flat finishes as they contain dulling additives.
- If a modern finish is applied to wood and allowed to fully cure, it should be food safe. When in doubt, allow to dry an extra long time before use with food.



Specific Finishes

- Shellac is a wonderful finish. It sticks to almost anything and almost anything adheres to it. It can be used as an intermediate layer between two incompatible finishes.
- Mark applies lacquer with a spray can. He sprays beyond the piece with a constant speed. Lacquer layers are cut back by wet sanding. He uses lacquer when he wants to make something really beautiful.
- Mark often uses oils for grain enhancement. If the oil is completely dry he can then add a lacquer top coat. Alternatively, shellac can be used as an intermediate layer.
- General Finishes has recently put out a clear, water based Woodturners Finish that has worked well for Mark.
- When friction finishing, start with a cellulose base sanding sealer. Mark uses Mylans. Apply the friction finish with a paper towel until considerable heat is generated.
- Milk paint is a fascinating finish. You mix only what you need and it is extremely durable when dry. Try it!
- Mark blends his own wiping varnish. See article for formulations.

Trouble Shooting

- Old finish-check purchase date
- Contaminants in the can-do not dip brush or applicator into can. Pour finish into a clean, throw away container.
- Environmental issues e.g. Temperature and humidity-check specifications
- Insufficient drying time-check specifications. Note there is a difference in time to add a second coat and dry time.
- Environmental contaminants-check for dust, bugs, and chemicals in the area. Round circles (fish eyes) are normally caused by silicone contamination.
- Incompatible finishes: Read about finishes you have used and find out why the problem occurred.
- Bad technique-i.e. you. Too much finish in one coat, too much oil in one coat, using dirty applicators, using the wrong finish for the situation, not maintaining a “wet edge”, not reading the proper instructions, improper mixing, or application, etc.

Finally, he demonstrated his excellent “finishing technique” by closing with this joke:
Ole came home from elementary school one day and told his Dad that he had the biggest feet in the third grade. He asked his father if this was because he was Norwegian.

His father said, “No, its because you are 19 years old.”



V. Monthly Meetings
A. July Membership Meeting
2.Meeting
e.Beads of Courage



The beads of courage bowls that were sent by MWA to the AAW symposium are shown above. Note that our bowls were surrounded by Beads of Courage bowls from other chapters. The bowls to the left have been submitted by The Tennessee chapter. The bowls to the right by the chapter known as Turners Anonymous.

To give you an overview of the AAW presentation, refer to the photo below, our bowls are in the upper corner. Every card on the table represents a participating chapter.





At the June MWA meeting, a number of bowls were submitted by Dick Radke. Each bowl body was made of segmented maple and walnut and had a poplar cover. He finished the with a single coat of 50% tung oil and 50% mineral spirits. They looked great, but unfortunately, there are no pictures available due to camera (or operator) failure.

Dick did share a special story, however. He was telling of the Beads of Courage effort to a friend. That friend commented that he had a young family member who was undergoing cancer therapy and that the family member did not have a bowl. Dick promptly gave one of his bowls to that friend. This made participation in the program even more meaningful to Dick.

V. Monthly Meetings



A. July Membership Meeting

2.Meeting

f.President's Challenge

The Presidents's Challenge for July was a multi axis turning.



First Place: Wayne Johnson:

Maple cube with holes on three axes. Ebonized, partially sanded, and dyed followed by texturing tool.



Second Place: Mark Debe:

Mark spent a lot of the month finishing up his lathe stand and still had time for this fine piece.





Third Place: Ken Gustafson

A baseball bat wrapped around a baseball. The bat is two axis and the ball is made separately.

Honorable Mention



Ron Solfeist



Dan Larson



Ken Hallberg



Richard Messer



V. Monthly Meetings

B. Lunch Gatherings

1. Hamburger Club

The Hamburger Club met at the 50's Club, Brooklyn Center in July as scheduled. There was no report, but it is believed that attendees had a splendid time as usual.

The next Hamburger Club Meeting will be Wednesday August 12 at the 50's, Club, Brooklyn Center 11:30 to 1:30. Mike Hunter advises that in the summer the group will convene on the Wednesday of the week after the MWA membership meeting. In the fall, the schedule will revert back to the normal Thursday of the week after the MWA membership meeting. The meeting place is most convenient for those on the north side of town. But all are invited.

V. Monthly Meetings

C. Area/Regional Turning Meetings

1. SE Metro Turning Meeting

Jim Jacobs reports

“Jim Jacobs hosted the SE metro small group at his shop in Hastings. 7 club members had a busy day from 10-3. Since this was an "open agenda" we tried to cover whatever members wanted to work on. We showed how to turn the foot off the bottom of a bowl..sharpened several tools on a CBN wheel..we discussed burrs on scrapers and the shape of the grind on gouges..A home made hollowing bar was also set up to look at. At noon we "circled up" in the shop and did some fine dining with Jimmy Johns. We all agreed we like these shop meetings better than a restaurant.

Another member may host a "tentative" shop mtg in mid August.. details will follow. We were so busy, we never got any pics!

(Jim is glad he hosted this because his shop is now much cleaner than normal.)”

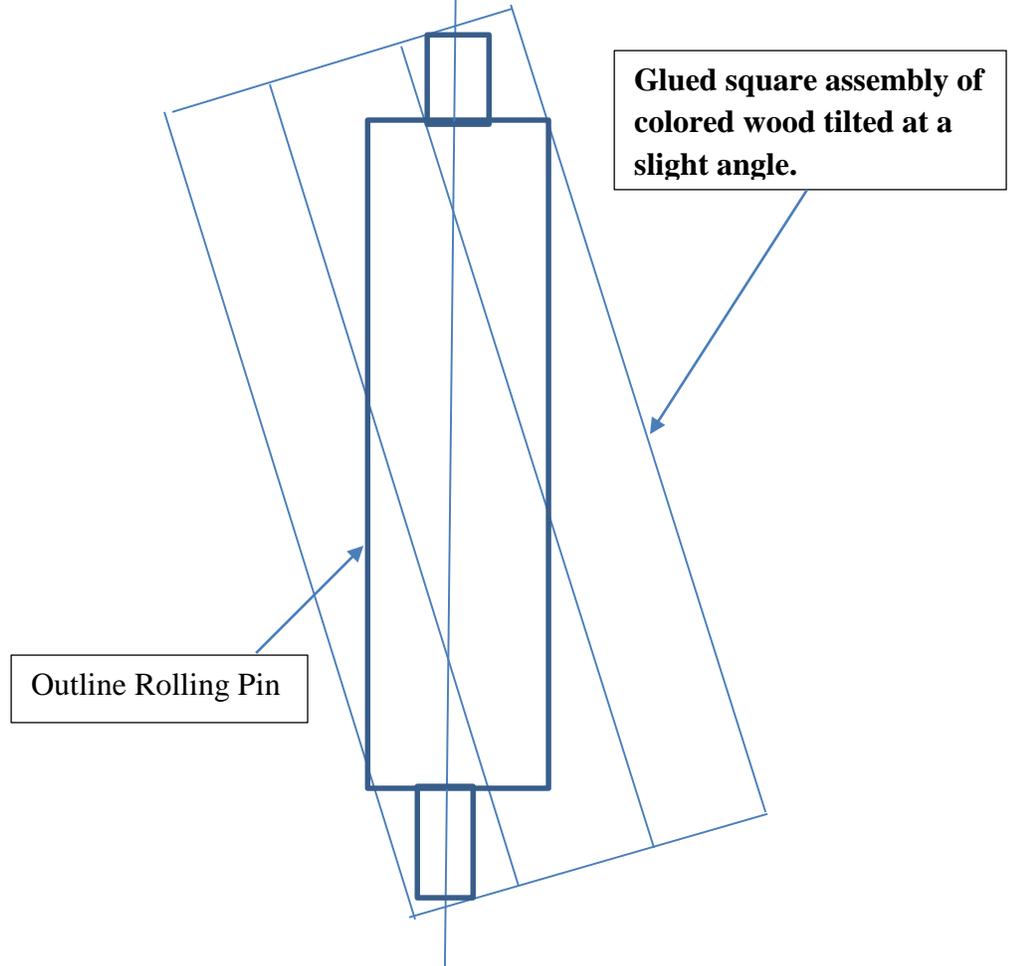


V. Monthly Meetings

C. Area/Regional Turning Meetings

2. Plymouth Area/Regional Turning Meeting

The Plymouth Group met Wednesday June 24 at Steve Mages shop. The highlight of the meeting was the spiral barber pole rolling pin designed and built by Al Heist (on the left). The method of construction as described by Steve Mages is detailed to the right.



Al entered his rolling pin in a local county fair. Ask him if he won a ribbon.

V. Monthly Meetings



C. Area/Regional Turning Meetings

3. Northwest Turning Meeting

This group is just starting up. A general meeting to determine interest was held at a local restaurant. At least seventeen people are interested in attending. The first actual turning meeting was held on Saturday, June 27 from 2:00 to 6:00 pm at Neil Robinette's shop.

Neil reports,

“We had our get together on Sat. the 27th in great weather.

Those attending were: Gar and his son Todd Brown, Jane Hillery, Dennis Dalhberg, Gordon and Mark Fay, Dan Larson, Greg Just, Neil and Ginger Robinette (chief griller and food dispenser).

Jane turned a small bowl with a deep rim. Gordon turned a small ash bowl, while Mark worked on his tool control. Dan had fun with a piece of Osage Orange.

The menu was hot dogs and brats with Snicker salad, (almost a dessert), oriental salad, a nice bottle of wine from Jane, and blond bars from Greg's wife (definitely dessert!) We'll do this again and do more turning! Thank you to the cooks!”



Gordan Fay shows the small ash bowl he is turning. To the rear, his son, Mark, learns some tricks from his dad.



An action shot of the group in Neil's shop.



Jane Hillary and Dan Larson take a break from their turning projects.



Denny Dalbert and Greg Just enjoy looking through a wood turning magazine





The Robinetts have a wonderful back porch for a summer picnic. The group takes time out to eat and develop relationships.

VI. Monthly Classes

A. Regular Classes

A basic bowl turning class and a tool sharpening class were held as expected. As usual, attendees were quite satisfied with what they learned. Two wheel chair turners were at the basic bowl turning class.

The class schedule was lighter than usual because of the AAW symposium and a lot of people were out of town for the Fourth of July.

B. “Secret” Open Shop Experiment

In recent months, over 40 new people have joined the MWA. Many of these turners are beginners who need help getting started. Rick Auge tried an experiment and invited some of these rookies to an open shop at his home where the lathes are located. He also asked what they were interested in learning how to turn. His intent was to determine if this would help get basic shop training to these new turners.



He invited Laura King, Mary Allen, and Tom Kindom. Mary and Tom were interested in making pens and Laura wanted to make bowls. Rick invited Ed Mielech to help him briefly on the instruction side because of Ed's experience with pens. The group is shown below:



From left to right, Rick, Mary, Ed standing, Tom seated and Laura. Mary Allen noted that this was one of the few MWA meetings she has been at where the number of women were close to the number of men.

There were a lot of simple questions that most turners could answer e.g. how do I find the center? How do I change speeds? What speed should I run at? What tool should I use?



Ed shared his pen making experience. He brought a pen drilling fixture and a pen assembly fixture for use by the class. They are pretty slick and shown at the left.



Tom Kindom and Pete Bryant figured out how to change speeds on the handicapped lathe stand.

It was a lot of fun.



The cover picture (page 1) shows Rick Auge working on a bowl with Laura King.





Mary Allen learns how Rick Auge sharpens tools



Generally, the students worked independently and without help. They also conferred with each other on turning issues.



Tom and Mary display their completed pens.



Laura plans to return and finish her more complicated bowl.

The results of the experiment are being evaluated. Every one thoroughly enjoyed the event. The experience appears to have helped the students get over any reluctance to start turning as well as giving them the satisfaction of completing a product. It was particularly good to see each student working with other students. They often answered each others questions. More difficult questions could generally be answered by a low intermediate turner.

There were times, however, when all the students had different questions at the same time. This was rough on the instructor. Starting with a bowl is difficult. Maybe simple projects are better. How to best handle this situation is being considered. Stay tuned.



VIII. AAW And Regional Announcements

- A. Corridor Woodturners presents John Jordan for a two day demonstration October 3 and 4 in Cedar Rapids Iowa. The two days will be devoted to **Bowl Turning and Turned and Carved Hollow Vessels**. For details see www.corridorturners.org.
- B. **A Fresh Cut Green Woodturning Symposium** will be held October 30 to November 1, 2015. It will be held in Grand Marais, Minnesota. The symposium includes multi-day coursework, demonstrations, speakers, mini-courses and community gatherings, all designed to encourage wide-ranging discussion of the craft of woodturning and to celebrate and relish the intimate connection to the material green wood turning fosters. Featured will be Robin Wood, Michael Hosaluk, and Michael Cullen. The symposium is jointly sponsored by the AAW and the North House Folk School. Contact www.northhouse.org or www.aaw.org for details.
- C. The Wisconsin Chapter will not be having an expo this year. In its place, they will have an all day demonstration by one of their best turners, professional Barry Grill. The event will be held in Eau Claire on October 24, 2015. See www.cvwg.org for details.
- D. **American Wood Turner** for August is now available on line.

IX. AAW Programs

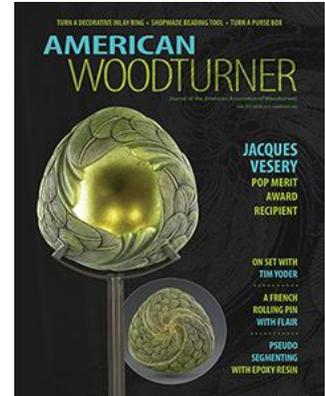
A. Index June American Woodturner Magazine

This index below has been included to show non AAW members one of the many benefits of AAW membership and to remind AAW members to check out articles of interest on line. Note the article on French rolling pins by MWA member Tim Heil.



The May/June issue offers a number of practical and inspirational articles expected to appeal to all woodturners, as follows:

- **Turn a Decorative Inlay Ring.** Cut the perfect circle for an inlay, by Bill Wells.
- **Turn a Purse Box.** From simple to elaborate, here's a turned-box project with a lot of creative latitude, by Walt Wager.
- **Shopmade Beading Tool.** Introduce simple decorative elements to your spindles and bowls while giving new life to an old tool, by Bob Patros.
- **Pseudo Segmenting with Epoxy Resin.** Open up creative possibilities with Jim Rinde as he demonstrates a new approach to achieving the look of a segmented turning.
- **A French Rolling Pin with Flair.** Tim Heil introduces us to a simple kitchen utensil, updated with distinctive Euro style.
- **On Set with Tim Yoder.** It's not easy to turn wood and talk at the same time, but Tim Yoder has the knack, by David Heim.
- **Tangible Mirages: The Authentic Illusions of Jacques Vesery,** AAW Professional Outreach Program's 2015 Merit Award Recipient. Captivating the viewer through a mesmerizing fusion of the realistic and the imaginative, by Michael C. McMillan.



IX. AAW Programs:

Article From May 2015 Woodturning FUNdamentals

B. “Finishing Options For Woodturners”

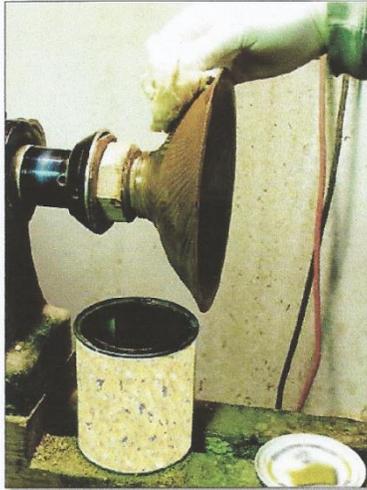
by Mark Palma

The following article appeared in the May 2015 Woodturning FUNdamentals issue. It is copied without change. See pages 21 and 22 for more explanation.



FINISHING

Finishing Options for Woodturners



Finish brings an element of visual interest and protection to your woodturning. Many times wood-turners fall into one of two categories when it comes to finishing: (i) "McFinish Users,"¹ and "Miracle Finishers." McFinish Users put the same finish on everything, no matter the type of wood, the purpose of the piece, or any other variable. They have one finish which they have found to work, and they stick to it no matter the circumstance. Miracle Finishers think that some company makes something that they can apply to any piece of wood, no matter how poorly sanded, and it will miraculously look perfect.

¹ I mean no disrespect to McDonald's Corporation, and instead I pay them a compliment on product consistency.

Choosing a proper finish is no accident, but with a little thought you can achieve a finish that works. So let's look at some factors to achieving a good finish on some woodturned items.

IMPACT OF WOOD SPECIES, DESIGN, AND USE

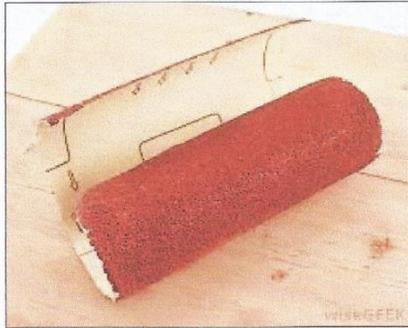
The type of wood² you choose for your turning project will open and close doors to finishing options. Open-grain woods (oak and ash) respond differently than closed-grain woods (cherry and maple). Highly figured wood and burls will absorb and react to finish differently within the same blank. Some oily woods (rosewood and lignum) may need no finish at all due to the natural oils they contain. If you are using a wood species new to you, take a scrap and try a finish on it before you turn it, so you can take what you learn from the test and apply it to your work.

Design also impacts finish choices. Some designs that require multiple chucking may limit or prevent you from using certain finish options. For example, if you are finishing the inside of a lid, your ability to reverse chuck it to turn the outside without damaging the finish may be a problem with some types of finishes. So think through finishing early on in the design of the piece. Also think about whether or not the finish "matches" the design. An organic shape may not look right in glossy polyurethane varnish. Use is often overlooked in the consideration of finish choices by some woodturners. If something is going to sit on a shelf, the world is your oyster and

² I am not addressing non-wood materials such as acrylics in this article.



you can choose any finish (or no finish at all).³ If I am making a utilitarian piece that will be knocked around the kitchen, a simple, repairable, utilitarian finish is my first choice, and I will pick a “forgiving” wood to make the piece from so that the finish and the wood help me get years of service. For example, the zebrawood peppermill that we use in our kitchen looks as good today as when it came into the house from the shop 3 years ago. It has a very simple design with no sharp ridges (to collect dirt or body oils). It was sanded to an 800 grit and given a simple oil and wax finish.



THE NAUGHTY WORD - “SANDING” AND ITS ROLE

I must stand up for sanding. I do not know why it gets such a bad rap in the woodworking world! Why is sanding “bad” and hogging out a rough-turned bowl “good”? From roughing through finishing you are involved in a process. Sanding makes or breaks the end result and should be part of the process. Sanding cannot cover up poor design or execution,

³ Although you may want to consider dusting and UV protection qualities.

but it can take a good piece and make it better, if done correctly.

Think about details before you sand. I often leave out small grooves and areas until the overall sanding is done. Then I add the small details (wire-burned grooves, for example) and then go back and blend in that area with the highest grit I left off with before I proceed to the next step. There is no rule that you cannot return to some detail turning after you have sanded. Go back and forth as the piece needs.

Turn down your lathe speed while you sand. If your paper is getting hot, it is either old or you are sanding too fast. Use dust-extraction equipment and wear a high-quality dust mask⁴ at all times while sanding. Watch the dust flowing off the piece into the dust collector. When the dust slows down, the paper is no longer cutting efficiently.

On the topic of sandpaper, it is cheap⁵ and it gets dull, so change out the paper more frequently. Rarely do you throw away “good” paper; usually you burnish the wood with dull paper and only generate heat and problems. If you have good tool control and if the wood is being

⁴ Cheap dust masks usually have one strap, where better ones have two straps. It isn’t a universal truism, but it will point you in a better direction. This is not a place to save money. Store dust masks in a plastic bag when they are ++++++ not being used and throw them away when they look dirty. Learn about dust and protecting your health.

⁵ I am not suggesting that all sandpaper is cheap, just in the grander scheme of what you pay during a year in wood working; sandpaper is not the biggest expense item. I am a proponent of purchasing “expensive” brand name paper (for example, ever hear of a little local company called 3m?) and have never been let down by high quality product.



understanding and forgiving, you may avoid the lower-grit papers. Start where you need to, depending on the situation. If you start with 120, then progress without skipping a grit until you reach your final sanding grit (120, 150, 180, 220, 320, 400...). Depending on use and finish, you may stop at 320, or I may go to 800⁶. Daily use knock-around pieces rarely benefit after 220 (other than using 320 and then a non-abrasive pad as a burnisher). A show piece may require a minimum of 800 grit, or even more!

On the topic of sanding disks, they get dull fast. Depending on the type of wood and composition of the disk, they may have a life measured in seconds! If you think I am kidding, hold a piece of 220-grit paper up to cocobolo! If the disk is building up with dust and debris, either clean it or change it out, but do not bear down on the paper with your drill on high speed and think you are doing something positive.⁷

I always burnish with a non-woven, non-abrasive pad (kitchen scrubbers from the dollar store work as well as the expensive commercial ones I used to buy). I find they smooth out any last "fuzz" in the piece and give a uniform surface for finish.

Now I must mention another ugly fact – not all sanding can be done on wood spinning on a lathe! Sometimes you must take it off the chuck and hand-sand it to get it right. Put on some good music, relax, and do it when you feel like putting the time into the work. I have a demo piece by a nationally renowned turner that I received unfinished. It took 10 hours of hand-sanding to get the piece ready for

⁶ Well, I have gone to 12,000, but let's not talk about my obsessive behavior!

⁷ As I boy scout I was taught to start a fire by rubbing two sticks together over some kindling. See any similarities?

finishing. So buck up, and know that sometimes you just need to put in the work.

A CLEAN SHOP MAKES A BETTER FINISH

I recognize that there is a certain sense by some woodworkers and woodturners that a messy shop is a rite of passage in the craft. Setting that aside, take a lesson from professional cabinet shops and have a clean finishing area. If dust is hanging from lights and other surfaces, it will contaminate some types of finish and give you a poorer result. So if you want a messy shop, pick finishes that do not require longer drying times or do not collect dust as they dry.

Setting tidiness aside, having a finishing area in your shop is a good thing. Store finishes in a safe location to prevent fires. Keep your supplies in an organized area so that you can find them when needed. A side benefit of organization is that you will buy less as items will not get lost in the general abyss of the shop! Watch the life of products and properly dispose of old finishes. Yes, a big can is cheaper per ounce; however, will you use it during its shelf life? Avoid the temptation to use an old finish on something that you have crafted. More than once I have had to sand it all off and start over.



FINISHES ON THE LATHE

The lathe is a very versatile tool and lends itself to a broad spectrum of on-the-lathe finishing techniques. As most on-the-lathe techniques are designed to be fast drying, the size of the piece that can be finished on a lathe is generally limited to smaller items (pens, bottle stoppers, very small bowls, and other items generally less than 3 inches in diameter and modest in length.⁸)



Finishes used on the lathe seem to fall into the following categories:

- Highly sanded and buffed pieces with no finish at all.⁹
- A dedicated "woodturners finish."¹⁰
- Oil.
- Oil and wax.
- Wax on bare wood.

⁸ I am sure someone has done a 12" CA-finished bowl and can prove me wrong; however, as a general rule you can only get the finish on so fast with these techniques before the CA starts drying and impacting finish performance.

⁹ Some woods have a high natural resin content that allows them to be sanded to a high gloss and buffed out to great results. Some man-made products such as Dymondwood® also achieve the same result.

¹⁰ For example, General Finishes makes a water-based woodturners finish that dries fairly quickly (30 minutes per coat) and has no odors. It takes a little longer than lacquer- or shellac-based finishes but if you want a low odor and durable finish, it seems very hard after application.

- Wax and abrasives in a mixture.
- Shellac-based finishes.
- Lacquer-based finishes.
- Paint pens.¹¹
- CA-glue finishes.¹²
- Some combination of the above.

On-the-lathe finishes are fast, provide great results, can result in a phenomenal shine, and provide instant gratification to the turner, so what is not to like! I find some woods respond well to them as do certain types of work (there is no better way to finish a pen or a bottle stopper). However, they have their limits.

Here are some tips:

- Use only paper towels to apply on-the-lathe finishes. Cloth fibers can wrap around a spinning lathe, creating a dangerous situation.
- Cover your lathe bed, ways, and anything else you care about, as spinning wood can throw the finish all over the shop.
- Use slow speeds for application and speed up the lathe for buffing and polishing.
- Use sanding sealer (either water, lacquer, or shellac base) before you apply finish.
- Work from one end of the piece to the other and push or flow the finish across the piece. That way you get a

¹¹ These work for embellishments or small objects, but are not really a viable finish for large areas. Some people use ink markers, but again they are of limited use other than enhancing chatter work or a simple groove.

¹² "CA" is the abbreviation for "cyanoacrylate" or the active ingredient in Super Glue, a registered trademark of the Super Glue Corporation, who holds various trademarks on its products.



more even finish and give your finish a path to avoid build-up in the middle.¹³

- Stop the lathe and check your progress. Fix problems as they are spotted (even if it means going back to re-turning an area or, heaven forbid, sanding!
- Finish the ends after you part it off and do any manual touch-up.
- Wear proper personal protective equipment and understand that a dust mask is not safe for protecting you from finish vapors.
- Be careful if you spray finishes on the lathe, as they “gum up the works.”¹⁴

FINISHES OFF THE LATHE

The world is your oyster¹⁵ when you finish off of the lathe! You can use any type of finish (other than a CA or “friction” finish designed to be applied on the lathe) on your work. If there is a problem with off-the-lathe finishes, it is that the options are so numerous and staggering that one can become confused and therefore just grab a finish and hope, rather than plan, for success.

I break down finishes into categories, but there are many approaches. If you like a finish category, refine your thinking within the category. If you have had trouble, try a different category and maybe your result will get better. Beauty is in the

eye of the beholder.¹⁶ Some people like to feel wood in their hands, and want the tactile warmth of the wood. Others like the shine of a car hood and want maximum gloss. Some want reparability. Others seek environmental friendly or “green” alternatives. All are fine. Figure out where you want to go and then move in that direction. Some options include:

- Nothing--sanded, bare wood is nice to hold.
- Wax (or colored wax) on bare wood.
- Oil family of finishes (tung, danish oil, walnut, mineral, linseed, Tru Oil (gun finish), other oil blends).
- Water-based finishes for wood turners.
- Polyurethanes (vary in types, sheens, thicknesses, and drying times).
- Lacquers (either clear [various sheens] or colored)
- Shellac (premixed, flake, and various levels of color from clear to amber).
- Milk paint¹⁷.
- The home brews (ink, vinegar and steel wool, and a whole host of blends of various finishes).

¹³ I find this technique particularly effective with Hut wax sticks and you can actually watch the wax flow across the piece.

¹⁴ This phrase’s origin is a reference to the sweet gum tree (or red gum tree) located in the eastern United States. Apparently children and early American settlers chewed the sap as we do sticks of gum. However, it was supposedly impossible to harvest the gum without creating a very sticky mess. Hence the phrase we now enjoy today.

¹⁵ Thank you to Shakespeare for bringing this phrase to our lives.

¹⁶ Or the judge or the person parting with their cash to buy what you are selling.

¹⁷ Milk paint is a fascinating finish and I suggest you try it. It comes as a dry powder so it has an indefinite shelf life. You mix only what you need and it is extremely durable when dry. It has no odor and it comes in a wide array of colors.





I blend my own wiping varnish using a fairly typical blend that has many variants and names. It goes as follows:

First Coat :

- 1/3 Fast Dry Polyurethane (Gloss)¹⁸
- 1/3 Boiled Linseed Oil
- 1/3 Mineral Spirits

(Please note I mix only what I will use for that first coat so the quantities are small.)

Middle Coat(s)

- 2/3 Fast Dry Polyurethane
- 1/3 Mineral Spirits

Final Coat¹⁹

- 1/2 Fast Dry Polyurethane
- 1/2 Mineral Spirits

¹⁸ You cannot increase the gloss of semi-gloss or flat finishes as they contain dulling additives. You can decrease the sheen of gloss at the end so I always use only gloss finishes.

¹⁹ Prior to my last coat I sand with 400 or 600 grit serrate paper and wipe the whole piece down carefully, avoiding skin oils and other contaminates. The last coat is thinned to just fill in those final sanding scratches. It also dries faster due to the higher vehicle content so I get less surface dust attraction. This coat is usually put on late at night or early in the morning when the shop is still and I am not stirring up dust in the air.

FOOD SAFE?

I am now embarking on one of the most controversial areas of finishing. So let's start at the end of the analysis--common sense should prevail. People are not dropping dead in mass from finish on dinnerware. The Centers for Disease Control has no outstanding dinnerware alerts due to the malevolent action of woodturners. In fact, dinnerware on a global level is often not washed, or if washed, not in potable water. Those people seem to live. So, if we apply common sense, if a modern finish is applied to wood and allowed to fully cure you will be fine.²⁰

Most of the dialog seems to focus on cure time. I have read two ideas that seem to make sense to me. When in doubt, wait a month after finishing a piece before you put food in it. Any modern finish that is fresh, properly applied according to directions, and has not failed in some way will be cured in 30 days. The second test is the smell test. When you smell the piece, if you smell finish you are really smelling the vehicle evaporating from the finish. So if it smells, it hasn't fully cured. That is what curing is, getting the vehicle out.

²⁰ I am not advocating putting helpings of polyurethane in your coffee, or shellac in your tea. The quantities of vehicle that could be left after 30 days in a cereal-bowl-size piece are so small that it will not be harmful to a full-grown adult. Sure be safe with toddlers and kids, I wouldn't let them chew on a bowl, but need I write this comment down, or have we lost the common sense rule?



Some finishes seem to be more frequently mentioned as food safe and they include:

- Leaving the wood bare.
- “Salad Bowl” finishes (which seem to be polyurethane-based if my nose is working right).²¹
- Walnut oil, mineral oil,²² butcher block oil, and some of the other “food safe” oils. Avoid salad oil, olive oil, or cooking oils, as the general consensus seems to be they can go rancid in wood.
- Fully cured polyurethane, shellac, Danish oil, and lacquer.²³

COLOR AND BEYOND

I must profess that I am new to coloring wood and some would say it goes against my grain.²⁴ Normally I look for wood with great grain and leave well enough alone. Lately I have been experimenting with color and find it has its place in my turning toolbox. Color comes in many forms from paint, milk paint, dye, stain, charring, bleach,²⁵ and lacquer. Play around and see if it works for you. Remember to wear personal protection equipment (eyes, gloves, and an apron). Otherwise you will look like a Smirf.

²¹ For example, General Finishes “Salad Bowl Finish” states to wait at least 72 hours after the last coat before use. I have used this finish on several occasions with good luck, and find that it does create a pleasing finish.

²² Why did my great grandmother make me swallow a tablespoon of this when my stomach was upset?

²³ I wouldn’t eat out of something covered in latex paint, but that is just me.

²⁴ Sheldon is my humor coach, ah ah!

²⁵ Wood-bleaching products remove color but I lump them in here.

WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG²⁶

Yes, things go wrong, and with finishing woodturnings, it will happen. You are between finishing problems, not through with them. Hopefully they happen less frequently and the reparability of the problem is more easily accomplished if you sort through this approach to problem solving.

Here are areas to use in diagnosing what went wrong with your finish:

- **Old finish.** If there is a first place to look, it is cruddy, crusty, out-of-date finish. Here is a tip-- buy smaller cans and use it up. I believe there is false economy in purchasing vats of finish and having it sit around for years.²⁷ I buy the smallest size that meets my needs for the next 30-60 days. That may mean I buy a pint or quart of something four times a year. So stop, buy a latte, purchase new finish, and be happy. Finish has a shelf life that starts ticking at the time of manufacture, not when you buy it. If the can is dusty, do not buy the can. I cannot read date codes on finish, so I buy from sources that turn the product frequently and I do not stock up on finish, even if it is on sale. In magic marker mark the date on the can when you brought it home and use it up (you can always finish your jigs if you are getting near the bottom of the can).²⁸

²⁶ I am a husband, father of two children, and a guy; yes, I admit things do go wrong.

²⁷ Tip: the same holds true for glue, but alas, I am getting off topic, a frequent problem.

²⁸ Always properly dispose of old finish. Don’t get lazy, do it for your children and grandchildren.



- **Bad technique.** I know, I know, your technique is perfect, but hear me out. If your finish fails and you have eliminated all of the above, maybe, just maybe, you have to look in the mirror. Seriously, too much finish in one coat (trying to do one heavy coat in place of several proper coats), too much oil in one coat,³² using dirty applicators (lint³³, dust, and dirt transfer), using the wrong finish for the situation, using the wrong applicator, not maintaining a “wet” edge, not reading the product instructions, improper mixing or application, all can result in failure.

Whenever you have a finish failure, walk away for a minute, say those few choice words,³⁴ then diagnose the problem, get to the bottom of it, and find a solution so that it isn't a recurring event.

~ Mark Palma
Cameron, WI

Mark Palma is a tax lawyer by day and a woodworker whenever he finds that “spare” time that isn't spoken for. He thanks his family for allowing him to have a shop, a tool allowance, wood stash, and the time to pursue his addictive hobby.

³² Often called “bleeding” results in finish coming to the surface in open grain woods for days or weeks.

³³ Of course, if you are using a cloth instead of paper towels, you are finishing off the lathe and never on the lathe. Safety Reminder #1 --never use a cloth on a spinning lathe. Safety Reminder #2 -- always properly dispose of applicators and solvents. Charring wood should be intentional, not part of a conflagration that consumes your shop.

³⁴ I grew up in a strict Catholic family so that resulted in a trip to the confessional for some Our Father's and Hail Mary's, but use your own tension-release mechanism of choice. The point is to get past being mad and start to diagnose the problem.

WHERE TO TURN FOR WOODTURNING

Selected readings from *American Woodturner*, journal of the American Association of Woodturners

Getting Started in Woodturning



1. Safety for Woodturners
2. Lathes and Turning Tools
3. Learning at the Lathe
4. Practical Woodturning Projects

Elements of Woodturning

1. Turning Holiday Ornaments
2. Making and Using Turning Tools
3. Turning Bowls



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