Minnesota Woodturners News

Newsletter of the

MINNESOTA WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION
Local Chapter
American Association of Woodturners

Second Quarter 1991

Minnesota Woodturners Association Officers

President
William Allshouse
(612) 755-3373

Vice President
Don Wattenhofer
" 572-1045

Secretary
John Engstrom
" 475-0307

Treasurer
Hal Malmlov
" 789-9616

Newsletter Editor
Paul Kachelmyer
" 738-3940

Program Director
John Berglund
1-558-2338

Membership Application and Renewal
Minnesota Woodturners Association

Name (Please print) ____________________________ phone ____________________________

Address ____________________________________ Zip code __________

Dues are $15 yearly (starting in Jan.) but $10 for new members joining after July 1.
Please check: Amount Enclosed ________.
Renewing member ________ New member ________.

Mail to:
MN Woodturners Assoc c/o Hal Malmlov
3613 Belden Dr.
Mpls. Minn. 55418

MN Woodturners Association
64 108th Ave. N.W.
Coon Rapids, Minn. 55433
Address Change:

Please note that our mailing address has changed. It is now: Minnesota Woodturners Association, c/o William Allshouse, President, 64 108th Ave. N.W., Coon Rapids, Minn. 55433

However, dues and other financial matters should be sent to: Hal Malmlov, 3613 Belden Dr., Minneapolis, Minn. 55418.

Past meeting minutes:

January:

We met at the Shopsmith store and I gave a brief talk and demonstration on tool sharpening, and smooth cutting techniques. Many of those at the meeting, then sharpened their tools and a few tried some cutting.

Some of the sharpening points I consider important:

1. Most any grinding wheel can sharpen the tools. Big ones, small ones, fast ones, slow ones, will all work, (sanding belt machines also work). However, if you are going to buy one, some work better than others. I would prefer a 6 inch diameter, 60 grit, friable, J hardness, "white" wheel, with a speed of between 1000 and 2000 revolutions per minute.

2. Heat generated in the grinding process can build up and turn the edge of the tool blue. If that happens it is an indication that the steel at the edge has lost its hardness. Once an edge has lost its hardness it will dull very quickly. A hard edge can be achieved by regrinding the tool, and removing about 1/16 th of an inch of steel from the edge. The steel to remove is the part that turned blue.

3. Several things can be done to reduce the chances of generating excess heat when grinding tools, they are:
   A. Use a smaller diameter grinding wheel.
   B. Use a slower speed grinder.
   C. Use a very light touch in pressing the tool against the grinding wheel.
   D. Dip the tool edge in water frequently, to cool it, if you are grinding off a lot of steel.

4. A perfectly round grinding wheel is essential to get a sharp tool. Many devices are sold to round out grinding wheels. "Star" wheel tools are perhaps the most common, and are available cheaply from hardware stores. When Del Stubbs was here he said that he rounds out his grinding wheel after only 2 - 3 minutes of use. Doing this actually extends the life of the wheel, as out of round wheels wear away very quickly.
5. To sharpen a gouge, I first bring the "heel" of the bevel, of the cutting end lightly into contact with the wheel. Sparks will fly downward, and sometimes around the grinding wheel. I then slowly raise the tool handle, which brings the cutting edge down toward the wheel. When sparks start to fly over the top edge of the tool, and down its shaft, then the edge is being sharpened. At that point, I rotate the tool so its entire cutting edge is sharpened. The people at the meeting were able to achieve this very quickly. Like many other things, once the principles are known, some practice will refine the technique.

6. I don't further hone the edge, or do anything else, and seem to get a very good cut from the tool.

What tools to use:
I do about 80% of my work with a 1/2 inch bowl gouge, about 10% with a 3/8 inch spindle gouge, and the remainder with a few other tools. About 90% of my work is spindle work; as I make very few bowls. The tools that I use are strictly by personal preference, as I feel that many different tools can be used to achieve the same results. As far as buying a lot of tools is concerned, It doesn't seem to be necessary for the average turner. Four or five tools should be all that most people really need.

The meeting was geared toward helping some of our less experienced members to learn the basics of woodturning. Both Willie Allshouse, and I, offered that if anyone needs a little help sometime, that they could call us.

February:
We met at "The Woodworkers Store", and John Berglund led a discussion on the design of turned objects. John stressed that he tries to make his turnings, his artwork, "beautiful", and acknowledged that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder". John talked of the many sources for ideas for shapes of objects, some being: Shapes from nature, fruits, plants, etc. 
- Items in your kitchen, bowls, pots, vases, etc.
- Pottery shapes, glassware, and museum objects,
- Combinations of various shapes,
- and surprise, other peoples turnings!

Many people brought their turnings, to discuss how they designed them. There was a lot of discussion on the design, turning, and finishing of the turnings. I am sure that everyone attending was able to learn from this, and that we were all thankful to everyone who showed their work.

Several turnings I found especially interesting were:
A complete, functional, spinning wheel, made by Les Eckhart from Cherry wood he cut off his land. A lot of time went into it.
A large bowl made by Craig Lossing on his new Denver Ulery lathe. It was about 2 1/2 feet in diameter and a foot deep. He turned it green and left it about two inches thick, to dry. He hopes that the warpage will not be to bad, and that once dry, he will turn it to about 1/2 inch thick. He said that it had taken him about one hour of chain sawing, and about 8 hours of turning to get it to the point it was at.

A beautiful bowl made from a boxelder burl and finished with "Rockler" salad bowl finish. The finish did not seem to darken the color of the wood the way some finishes do. Sorry, but I can't remember who made it.

March:

Rick Stoffels gave a very informative demonstration on turning a goblet. Some of the steps and points were:

- Turn the goblet with the grain of the wood parallel to the bed of the lathe.

- Work on the "bowl" of the goblet first. For pleasing proportion, make the height of the bowl approximately 1/3 the height of the whole goblet.

- To start the inside of the bowl use a drill bit to drill the desired depth of the bowl in its center. Rick said that he prefers to use a long 1/4 inch drill bit, rather than larger ones, because they have more give, and feel safer.

- Rick first used a 1/2 inch spindle gouge to cut out the bowl, and then a rounded scraper to refine the shape and inner surface. With the scraper he cut from the inside of the bowl to the outside rim.

- There was considerable discussion on how tools, or hands, can be grabbed and forced around if they come into contact with the lower right portion of the inside of a bowl. William Allshouse described how he broke a finger when this happened. I have seen a couple of books on turning that also warn of this danger.

- Rick has dipped the handles of his tools in plastic dip, for a better grip, and shock absorption. Since it comes in a variety of colors, he advised using different colors for quicker identification of the tools.
- Dick Ensted said that he has read, that in medieval times, wooden goblets were commonly used, that they were sealed on the inside with beeswax, and that many would be used, and ruined, at big parties.

A discussion on band saws also took place at the meeting. Some of the comments were:

- The attachment that allows Delta band saws to be extended to cut wood approximately 18 inches thick, costs just over $100.00, and is well worth it. Most band saws are not adjustable, and can usually only cut wood 6 or 7 inches thick.

- William Allshouse touches a sharpening stone to the back edges of his band saw blades to slightly round them. This allows the blade to be backed out of cuts much easier, particularly with plywood.

- Hook tooth blades, with only a few teeth per inch cut faster in thick woods than standard blades.

- Releasing the tension on the blade in between uses can reduce problems with blades breaking, and flat spots and ridges being created in the rubber wheels, particularly with small blades.

- A band saw properly "tuned" can cut much better than one out of tune.

- There is a book written by Mark Ningowski on tuning a band saw that was highly recommended by a number of people.

- Band saws can be very dangerous. After the meeting a number of us compared band saw wounds. Anyone using a band saw should learn as much as possible about potential hazards.

- Dull band saw blades can be very dangerous, because wood must be pushed harder into them to cut it. My band saw wound occurred, in part, because of a dull blade, and my pushing hard. You can resharpen blades by touching the tip of each tooth to a grinding wheel. It only takes about a tenth of a second of grinding to get a sharp tooth. It takes me about 10 minutes to sharpen my 80 inch long, 4 teeth per inch, band saw blades.

Upcoming Meetings:

April 17: Wednesday, 7:00 - 10:00 p.m.

NOTE: Date has been changed from Tuesday to WEDNESDAY!

This meeting will be a professional demonstration by Bonnie Klein.
Bonnie is well known for her miniature turnings, and for her development and marketing of a small, desktop lathe. Bonnie will be covering a number of techniques and items. Among other things, she does chatterwork, boxes, thimbles, marbles, beads, pens, and tops.

This meeting will be held at "Woodcraft Supply" (884-3634) 9741 Lyndale Avenue South, Bloomington Minn. This is approximately two miles south of I-494 and 1/4 mile east of I-35W. The store hours for that day will be 9:00 - 6:00. They will be closed from 6:00 - 7:00, and will open at 7:00 for us.

This meeting will be open only to paid up members of the "Minnesota Woodturners Association" and will cost $10.00, payable at the door. Please bring a check (no cash please) made out to the "Minnesota Woodturners Association".

May 4: Saturday, 1:00 - ?

This meeting will be a picnic with spouses and families invited. It will be at John Engstrom's house at 1322 County road 24, Long Lake Minn. 475-0307. John's house is located approximately 14 miles west, and 2 miles north, of downtown Minneapolis. A map to his place is enclosed with this newsletter. John notes that the house numbers on County road 24, change in the vicinity of Holy Name Lake, so don't be confused by them (they go up to 5 digits, then start over).

We ask that everyone attending bring a salad or dessert to share, and their own beverage. John will provide hot dogs, beans, and coffee. We will be asking those attending, to pitch in $2.00 per adult, and $1.00 per child, to help offset the costs.

Bring your own chair, and yard games, if you wish. John asks that you let him know beforehand if you (and family) will be coming, so he can plan accordingly.

We would like to have a "show and tell" at this meeting. It would be a good chance for our families to see what other turners create.

A number of our members volunteered their homes for the picnic. We thank everyone who offered. It is nice to have so many giving people in our club.

June, July, August: There will not be any meetings during the summer; past experience has found that we just don't get many people attending summer meetings.
Symposium Registration raffle:

As had been announced in the last newsletter, our club has won one paid registration to the American Association of Woodturner's 1991 yearly symposium. The symposium is scheduled for June 14, 15, 16, 1991, and will be held in Denton Texas. Denton is about 20 miles north of the Dallas - Fort Worth airport. A copy of the informational brochure from the AAW on the symposium is included with this newsletter. The symposium costs $190.00 before May 1, and $210.00 after.

As had also been announced, we will be auctioning the paid registration, to our club members, with the proceeds to be used to fund a future professional demonstration. This silent auction will take place at our April 17 meeting. The silent auction will be simply a matter of whoever wants to bid, writing their name and bid amount on a piece of paper and tossing it in a bowl. The bids will be opened, and the highest bidder will get the registration. If anyone wishes to bid, but will not be at the meeting, they may mail a bid beforehand to Hal Malmlov, and he will open it at the meeting. Please mark the envelope "bid enclosed" so Hal will know not to open it until the meeting.

Book and Video Library:

John Engstrom announced that we now have four videotapes in our library that are available for use by our members. People may check them out for one month, or until the next meeting. Several people have videotaped some of our demonstrations in the past. We would appreciate it if those people would be willing to let us copy their tape for our library. Please contact John (475-0307) on this.

Creating a tape for the club: John Engstrom has volunteered to videotape individual members doing a demonstration in their own home workshops. This sounds like a wonderful idea, especially for people who don't want to demonstrate in front of a crowd. It would also allow the opportunity to get the best camera angles, and to reshoot things, if the demonstrator wants to do something over. I know that a lot of you have something unique to offer here, please call John if you are willing to do this.

Tool library:

In the last newsletter we mentioned that we were proposing to start a "tool library" for the club. Since that time, the subject of potential legal liabilities was raised, leading to a discussion at the last couple of meetings as to if we should have such a library. It was decided at the March meeting that the subject should be further discussed, and decided by the members, at the April Meeting.
Weighted tool handles:

I recently read (I can't remember where) of a woodturner who was having serious muscle problems in his arm. As a result of the problems, to reduce the vibrations and shock from his turning, he drilled out the handles of his tools and filled them with lead shot. After he did this, his muscle problems went away.

After reading this, I thought "better safe than sorry" so I drilled out the ends of my more frequently used tools and added some steel shot that I had. I have noticed that the tools are able to absorb vibrations a little better. Some people in the club have mentioned that they use pipes for tool handles, and fill them with shot. I have found that Menards carries various diameter pipes, 18 and 24 inches long, with threaded ends, and threaded end caps. I would imagine that many hardware, and building supply stores also carry such pipe.

Chatter tool:

William Allshouse has found that small pieces of banding steel strap work well as chatter tools. This is the type of strapping steel frequently used to hold together bundles of lumber, or to strap things to pallets.

Local Art shows:

Some members of our group will be showing at the following upcoming art shows:

- American Craft Expo - Minneapolis Convention Center, Second weekend in May. Admission fee charged.
- Edina Art Fair - First weekend in June.
- Annual art show at the College of Saint Catherine - June ?, Admission fee charged.

Information from others:

An article from the "Nutmeg Woodturners League" described a unique way of mounting a bowl blank: Purchase a length of one inch diameter dowel, drill a one inch diameter hole in what will be the top of the bowl, glue the dowel in the hole leaving a two to three inch stub sticking out of the blank. Then stick the dowel into your three or four jaw chuck, or spigot chuck, and start turning. When you reverse the bowl later, you can turn off the stub, or undercut it. It seems to me like this would work well for natural edge bowls, and for doing the outside, and bottom of a bowl in one step.

The April 1991 issue of the magazine "The Home Handyman" contains an 8 page article on bowl turning featuring Craig Hessing's bowls and methods.
Lake Independence

John Engstrom
1322 County Hwy 24
475-0307

John and Marcella Engstrom
1322 — Co. Highway 24
Long Lake
Minnesota 55356
475-0307