

TURNING TALK

Newsletter of the South Auckland Woodturners Guild

Number 118 : November 2003

Programme for the Fourth Term 2003

We will continue to meet at Papatoetoe High School at 7:00 pm. For those who wish to make use of the machinery, do some shopping, or get a little extra advice, the doors open at 6:00.

This term sees the continuation of a Table Prize for each term – so keep your good work and lessons learned flowing to the show-and-tell table each meeting night.

5 November **Hands on** making a simple bowl. These will be on the show and tell table at the end of the term and become part of our Christmas gift package to sick children.

12 November **Bias Turning.** Mike Lewis shares some of his knowledge on the art of off-centre turning.

Photo night for entries to the Treeworkx competition in the March 2004 NZ Woodturner.

19 November **Segments.** Dave Harmes leads us through the intricacies of building a segmented vessel.

26 November **A Threading Jig.** Dick Veitch puts threads where the hand-chaser does not like to go.

3 December **Fill the Bowls.** This last night of term we fill the bowls and give them away.

This night is also the Show and Tell for a simple bowl and the awards night for the table prize.

And it will be the photo night for entries to get into the March 2004 NZ Woodturner.

6 December An **“Island Night”** at Terry Scott’s. The meat will be on the BBQ. Bring a salad or sweet.

Term one for 2004 starts 4 February.

Guild Correspondence to: 6 Taylor Road, Mangere Bridge, 1701. bnchartley@paradise.net.nz

President:	Terry Scott	297-7051
Vice President:	Dave Harmes	579-8722
Secretary:	Bill Hartley	622-1182
Editor:	Dick Veitch	298-5775
Treasurer:	Colin Mitchell	577-2259
Committee:	Len Bacon, Mac Duane, Terry Meekan, Brian Petterson, Les Sivewright.	

Newsletter contributions to: 48 Manse Rd., Papakura.
Or dveitch@kiwilink.co.nz or fax 298-5775

Coming Events

The Art of Turned Wood, Aotea Centre, 10 to 29 November 2003

West Franklin Woodturners Exhibition and Sale. Waiuku Civic Centre 17 to 28 November 2003

Derek Kerwood demonstrating for West Franklin. Saturday 29 November at Russell Snook’s shed. SAWG members welcome.

Papakura Christmas Sale, 8 to 24 December 2003

Whangamata Arts 2004, 9 to 11 January 2004

Waihi Summer Festival Woodcraft Competition, 9 to 15 January 2004

Teknatool Open Day, 21 February 2004

Thames Society of Arts Summer Exhibition, 26 February to 14 March 2004

Timber and Working with Wood Show, 11 to 13 March 2004

Turangi Jamboree, 19 to 21 March 2004

Royal Easter Show entries close 28 March 2004

Royal Easter Show, 7 to 12 April 2004

Harihari Learn to Turn Jamboree, 4 to 6 June 2004

Franklin Arts Festival, 13 to 20 June 2004

National Woodskills Festival 2004. Kawerau. 10 to 12 September 2004

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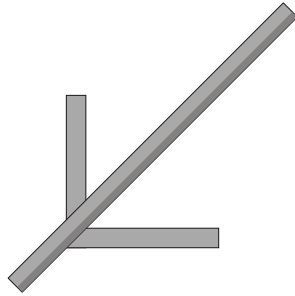
Email. iplfish@xtra.co.nz

Club Night 8 October 2003. A Simple Bowl

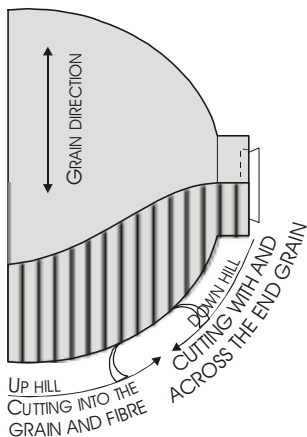
Even for a simple small bowl Terry Meekan advised starting the work by planning what you intend to do. Select, or cut, wood so that it is to one side of the central pith. Sharpen your chisels as there is always a need to cut against end grain.

There are many ways to mount wood on a lathe and Terry's choice was a fat washer screwed to the work and then gripped in a scroll chuck.

He showed us a useful home-made centre finder to locate the centre of the work regardless of whether it is round or square. You can make this to the size of your choice and right or left handed. The one shown here is for holding in the left hand with pencil in the right – ie the right-hand side of the centre shaft is aligned to the centre of the vee and is the face to be drawn against.

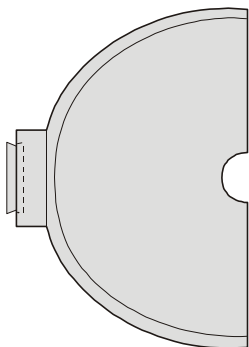


Terry's preferred shape for a small bowl is the arc of a circle.



As he worked he gave us many small tips on chisel angle and tool rest height. He rounded off the bowl with the tool cutting above centre and the cleaned off the bottom with the toolrest close to the work and cut downhill, with the grain, rather than uphill, against the grain.

He made a dovetail on the foot to fit 50mm jaws and then turned the work over. He always tries to cut the bowl wall to an even thickness. He used just two small bowl gouges to achieve this.



When the inside of the edge of the bowl starts to approach right angles to the original face there is a possibility that the chisel

will leap to the left and mark the face. So start the cut by making a small face with the corner of a skew chisel or parting tool.

After completing the inside he made a jam chuck to hold the bowl while he cleaned the bottom. He emphasised that this could also be done using hot melt glue, a vacuum chuck or Cole jaws.



Building Update

Council has agreed that the part of the building we are to shift into is to change from "Commercial" to "Community" zoning. This now has to be processed by Council staff and after that the rental rates, other fees, and shared costs can be considered.

The Police are still due to move out at the end of November.

The SAWG Committee looks forward to the time when they can consider and discuss the rental agreement. I look forward to the possibility of setting up the club rooms over the Christmas break.

The Art of Turned Wood

It will be there for you to see from 10 to 29 November. Many Guild members are on the roster to help and also to see what the rest of New Zealand has to offer the woodturning and art community. I hope more Guild members and their families can make time to visit this exciting exhibition billed as the best NZ woodturning show.

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Club Night 15 October 2003. Epoxy

Bill Blanken gave us a very able demonstration on setting things in epoxy resin in turned work. The writing below makes no attempt to include all the details he told, but may include other information as it was first written after I discussed this subject with Bill and others a year or two ago.

In woodturning we now see seashells, pebbles, badges, toys, and more, embedded in resin around the rim or in a hole in wood of the turned item. In simple terms this is done by filling a hole with epoxy resin. But there is a little more detail to it.

The resin we use is 421 Epoxy Resin made by Altex Coatings, 215 Oripi Road, P.O. Box 142, Tauranga, phone (07) 541 1221. In Auckland supplies are available from the Smart Marine Supermarket, 123 Beaumont Street, and Altex Coatings, 4 Te Apunga Place, Mt Wellington.

Other resins do not set to a clear colour. The hardener with 421 Epoxy Resin will also discolour over time and may need to be replaced. Keeping it in a dark pack in a refrigerator will slow the darkening.

The wood the resin is to be poured into needs to be dry and clean. The inside of the part that is to be filled should be finished to whatever standard the worker wants while ensuring that there is surplus wood, or a "fence" of card or masking tape, above the planned finish line so that the resin can overflow the hole and then be cut back when dry. Coating the inside of the hole with sanding sealer is recommended. If the inside of the hole needs to be coloured then water-based school poster paint works well providing it is allowed to dry thoroughly.

All sorts of little things can be embedded in the resin. Most can just be placed in the hole before the resin is poured. If it is necessary to glue the item in then use a permanent glue such as superglue or aliphatic resin. Use the glue sparingly as bits that extend beyond the item being glued will be very visible later. Do not use hot melt glue as this may release its hold when the resin warms up while setting.

Items which may hold air pockets need to either be glued in or introduced to the resin in a way that excludes the air. If there is a small air pocket the item may initially stay down in the resin but when the resin warms while setting the air will expand and the item may rise like a hot air balloon.

Mix the exact proportions of one part hardener poured into four parts resin. Make a stirrer from a smooth round piece of wood. Stir gently so as not to introduce air bubbles to the mix. Stir for at least three minutes and watch for the swirls in the mix to go away. Do not mix too large a quantity as larger quantities gain heat and begin their chemical reactions quicker than small quantities. The chemical reaction in the mix produces heat which may melt a plastic container and allow the mix to flow to unwanted places.

Once thoroughly stirred, pour the mix smoothly to fill the prepared space. Check after a few minutes and top-up as some mix may have flowed into hidden spaces. If there are air bubbles stopped part way up the mix then pass a hot gas torch quickly over the mix to slightly warm and raise the bubbles. Leave to set for at least 24 hours.

Cut back the surplus hard-set resin, and surrounding wood, with a chisel and sandpaper to the desired shape. Finish by going through the sandpaper grades to 2000 grit. Then rub the resin with Brasso. Then, if you have some, rub with the 3M product "Finesse-it II".



Photo: A Brian Petterson bowl. Sorry, Bill, could not find one of yours, but this is almost as good.

Club Night 29 October 2003. Colours

In this demonstration Dick Veitch showed some of the colouring technique he had seen at the Utah Symposium.

This is about adding colour over most, or all, of the surface of a turned item. The natural grains of wood are wonderful but some are very pale and the addition of colour will be a considerable enhancement.

There are two main types of colour: paint that can be added layer upon layer; and stains which will soak into the wood or an underlying stain to change the colour there. But, paint can be left just in the grain of the wood and stain can be part of the surface coating.

So, if you apply a dark coat of paint over a lighter one and then sand the dark layer a little, the lighter shade will show through. But, if you put a dark stain over a light stain, the result will be a mix of the two colours. This may then be sanded to reveal the harder wood below which the stain has not soaked into.

Generally, then, it is best to apply paints with light colours first and stains with dark colours first.

Stains come in various forms – water based, solvent based, spirit based, and possibly others. They may arrive as a powder, concentrated liquid, or ready-to-use. Each type has its good and not-so-good values. All can produce wonderful results when applied by a person with the right technical and artistic skills.



The wood the stain is applied to will play a significant role in the end result. A pale wood with good figuring and a strong difference in the hardness of the wood between growth rings is probably best as stain will soak more into the softer parts of the wood.

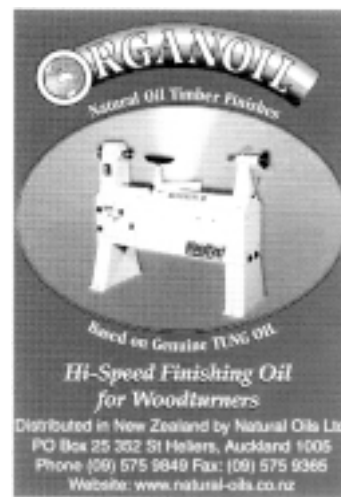
Some experts recommend sanding to 300 or 400 grit before applying stain, others take the work to a scraped finish.

Plan the work – just what colours will be used and in what strength and order. These choices can only be made after experimenting with the wood being used as the wood will change the stain colour. If you don't have an inherent or learned knowledge of colour, get a colour wheel to help your planning.

Apply the first stain, dry it off and then sand it back until it looks right. You may stop with one colour or add more, drying and sanding between applications to get the right effect.

Stain is usually a quite thin liquid so will flow to all sorts of unwanted places. If there are areas of the work which you do not want to stain then cuts and beads may separate them. The stain may also flow right through to the other side of the wood or part way down an edge. Paint or texturing over these areas will cover the problem.

Once the desired effect has been achieved the stain may be covered with sanding sealer and then wax, or just a spray-on clear lacquer.



With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.

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Of Judges and Being Judged

At every woodturning competition there is someone who grumbles “the judges got it wrong” and I have happily passed that off as just a normal part of the competition scene. But now I have a letter before me which asks “Just what rules and instructions do you give the judge?”. So let me try to answer that, bearing in mind that the judges decision is always right and is unquestionable.

The simplest answer is that the rules for the judge are same as the rules for the judged. This is just like real life and also, just like real life, the judge and the judged may interpret the rules differently. Also with woodturning, as with all other artforms, there are many unwritten rules.

For every competition there will be a number of clearly written rules like: it shall be made of wood; all your own work; turned on a lathe; etc. We expect both the judge and the judged to remember these with equal clarity.

Next there are some unwritten rules: no sanding marks; clean the bottom; smooth curves; and the like. Depending on the quality of their eyesight and fingertips both the judge and the judged should give these equal treatment too.

After that opinions begin to diverge about shape, form, colour, embellishments, and other “artistic” values. Many words have been written about this and in the end the rules are in the mind of the beholder. If you want your work to have a chance of winning the “artistic” stakes then you must understand, and play to, the likes and dislikes of the judge you are putting your work before.

For some competitions the organisers provide a score sheet which allows the judges to mark the entries for factors

like: first impressions – visual impact; innovation, ingenuity, originality; design, proportion, balance and use of material; turning techniques and skill level; suitability and quality of finish. This marking usually endeavours to place equal weight on the various marked aspects and thus gain a balance between technical and artistic values.

I have seen these forms diligently used by judges to good effect within classes of a competition. But when it came to putting the highest marked item up as Best of Show they found it was not the one they liked best so they went back and adjusted the marks until the piece of their choice came out on top. Then nobody looked at the score sheets and nobody quizzed the judges about their success or failure.

The next year’s judges politely declined to use the form, as is their right unless the organisers pay them heaps and write a job description. After that show a number of competitors discussed their work with the judges and asked to see their marks.

Judges are human, as are those being judged. As a competitor you have three choices: put up your best work, enjoy seeing it there and discuss it with the judge; or research the likes and dislikes of the judge, try to modify your style and discuss it with the judge; or wait until there is a competition with a judge whose preference is work like yours, enter your work and discuss it with the judge.

For me, competition is about enjoying the creation; enjoying the participation and enjoying the learning. We would all benefit from more of it, done in the spirit of enjoyment.



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Eggzactly Right


The relationship between the diameter and length of chicken eggs varies quite a lot but the diameter is often 75% to 80% of the length. One way to achieve a convincing shape is to make the diameter 75% of the length and to position the point of largest diameter about 42% from one end (Source: Sydney Woodturners Guild). If that fails, you can use an ornithological term such as pyriform, elliptical-ovate, or oblong-oval to describe your egg as belonging to a bird you are sure the person has never seen.

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