

The Turning Point

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The next meeting of the Nova Woodturners' Guild
is at Lee Valley Tools, 150 Susie Lake Crescent, Halifax
Sunday, October 15, 2023. 1:00 p.m.

At the October meeting:
— find out what is new in pen turning
— bring in your recent work for Show and Tell

The President's Report

Gary Landry

Well this is going to be a short report!



Attendance at the September meeting was 13. Membership forms and dues were collected. Please remember to provide both if you have not done so already. The **membership form** is on our website under the **Documents** tab.

This month our demo will be provided by myself. The loose title is “What is New in Pen Turning”.

We are trying to continue to provide raffles at the meetings without having a dedicated Raffle Master. It seemed to work at our September meeting so we have hope.

The Executive are working on trying to get our live meetings out to members who cannot attend in person. We will soon be doing a test run of the system before our October meeting using our camera, a laptop and the WiFi at Lee Valley. If, and I mean if, everything works when you get the reminder to come in to the meeting this month it will include a Zoom or Jitsi link to watch the proceedings at your location. Keep your fingers crossed!

Bring in some pieces for Show and Tell and some loonies for the raffle.

Turn some wood, make some shavings and please stay healthy.

Notes from the September Meeting

Calum Ewing

The September meeting was postponed a week due to inclement weather with Hurricane Lee.

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 PM by President Gary Landry with 13 members present.

Announcements

- Membership dues are now due. The dues remain at \$40 and can be paid by cheque or cash at any meeting, or by e-transfer to treasurer@novawoodturnersguild.com. The Guild has purchased a Square™ Point of Sale system that will allow members to pay dues and other fees by credit or debit card at meetings.
- Two health-related items for those that do not already know:
 - Life Member Don Moore suffered a stroke in June and is recovering now. He continues with physiotherapy and other treatment to deal with the effects from the stroke. Feel free to email him at moorewood1@gmail.com or reach out on Facebook to express your best wishes.
 - Treasurer David McLachlan has been undergoing several rounds of chemotherapy and radiation treatment to treat cancer. Fortunately, it was detected early but treatment was slow to get. Dave also is available via email at treasurer@novawoodturnersguild.com if you would like to connect with him.
- Our meeting & demonstration schedule has been roughed out for the year and you can keep up to date by consulting the Guild website (www.novawoodturnersguild.com). We are planning on one IRD by a well known turner. The DRAFT schedule is as follows:
 - Sep 24 No demo planned; membership renewals; catch-up and social time
 - Oct 15 “What's New in Pen Turning”, with Gary Landry
 - Nov 19 “Techniques for Embellishing Turnings”, with Calum Ewing
 - Dec TBA Christmas Social meeting
 - Jan 21 Internet Remote Demo (topic TBD)
 - Feb 11 Discussion with Steve Zwerling, topic TBD
 - Mar 17 “Using a Segmented Turning Jig”, with Dave McLachlan
 - Apr 21 “Turning Fine Finials”, with Leo Westhaver
 - May 5 “Using a Laser Engraver”, with Steve Gutz
 - Jun 9 Annual General Meeting, Demo TBD

Note that this schedule is tentative and dates or topics may be changed to accommodate availability of presenters, etc.

- Scott Manor House in Bedford hosted the Guild for a week-long show and sale in August. In addition to the display of turnings for sale, turning demonstrations were presented each day. Although sales were not brisk (bad weather later in the week did not help bring people out) we did sell \$167 of turnings. After the host commission to Scott Manor House, the Guild netted \$150. However, outreach went well with several visitors expressing interest in turning and the Guild and we also had great coverage on CTV news during the event.

- After this successful show and sale in August, Scott Manor House has invited the Guild to participate in their annual *Celebration of Lights* event in November (date to be confirmed). This 'market-style' event will feature various artisans that have demonstrated there over the summer and will be a good opportunity to sell turned goods. Experience has shown that the best selling items are usually in the \$20–40 range.
- In the next couple of weeks the Executive will be testing the capacity of the WiFi at Lee Valley to see if 'hybrid' meetings will be possible. These will be run both in person and online for those unable to attend in person.
- We will be attempting to hold meeting raffles without a formal “Raffle Master” as the Fundraising position on the executive is vacant. If anyone is willing to take on this role, please let Gary Landry know.

General Discussion

- Insurance: The Society of Canadian Woodworkers has been seeking coverage through another underwriter due to rapidly increasing costs. They have offered a revised package for \$800, but that does not include Directors and Officers liability coverage or instructor coverage. This is still very pricey and would consume 20 memberships of dues when we might typically have 30–35 members. A motion was made by Gary Landry, seconded by David Gillam that, given the current cost of insurance with SCW, the Guild will not purchase this insurance for this year. Motion approved.
- Challenges: The question was raised if members wished to participate in 'challenges' this year as we did during the COVID-related shut down with members being challenged to turn a specific item (e.g., mallet, rolling pin, etc.). The general consensus was 'yes' that they are fun and spur people to try turning items that they might not normally try. If anyone has suggestions for topics of challenges, please contact Vice President Bill Maes at vice-president@novawoodturnersguild.com.
- Turning 'Kits': William Wood-Write Ltd has started a kit subscription service where subscribers receive a mystery kit of assorted pen (and other mandrel) projects with hardware, bushings, and materials. David McLachlan had purchased a subscription and two of the recent kit boxes were on display for members to check out. If anyone wished to purchase materials from the kits, please contact Dave at treasurer@novawoodturnersguild.com.
- Buffing Systems: The question of cleaning the buffing wheels was raised and if this is necessary:
- cleaning is not usually necessary but you will need to replace buffs occasionally
 - buffing brass and possibly aluminum can leave traces of the metal on the wheel which will stain the next item buffed
 - buffing wheels can be cleaned by running them on the toothed edge of a hacksaw blade to clean and dress the surface of the wheel
 - cleaning is definitely necessary if you are changing polishing materials, thus it is good practice to have a separate wheel for each polish or buffing compound that you use.

Burning Wire: Yogi Gutz has several thicknesses of nickel-chromium (Ni-Chrome) wire that is great for burning decorative rings in turnings. See Yogi after the discussion if you would like some.

Selling Items: Members with tools, accessories or materials that they wish to sell are welcome to bring them to meetings and offer them for sale. You can also contact Calum Ewing at secretary@novawoodturnersguild.com to get a notice sent out to all members of items for sale.

Show & Tell

Mark Hazen showed off: a tree ornament made from several small sections of different wood 'offcuts' from other projects.

a small bowl / pencil holder. He is not sure of the type of wood and believes it may be locust or elm.

a small 'ring bowl' that he turned from the last piece of stock left in the chuck after turning a number of his wooden cookie cutters.



Raffle Results

Gary Landry took home a walnut board

Ted Monk won a maple bowl blank

Yogi Gutz added a maple blank to his collection

Bob Earle collected a maple bowl blank

Chris Palmer won a book for his personal library

Mark Hazen took away a turning book

Joe Crouse netted two cubical maple blanks.

The meeting wrapped up at 3:35 PM.

DaveM's Fireside Chat

Dave McLachlan

As promised I thought I would describe how I got into woodturning... You have to understand first of all I came from a very small southwestern Ontario town called Harrow, which had a population of 1800 and serviced a rural farming community. There wasn't much to do in the town for young people; there were a couple of baseball fields, a public tennis court, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and the United Church had a small outreach woodworking shop for teaching rudimentary woodworking (back then) for boys 11 to 14. Well I was all into woodworking from an early age; my Grandfather, who was a farmer, had all sorts of woodworking hand tools and was very handy. He was my role model growing up. Anyway, I spent many evenings taking classes in the Church workshop for years, building all sorts of projects. They had a Beaver Rockwell lathe there that no one used but I always had a yearning to give it a try. Finally in 1966 when I was 14 one of the shop leaders agreed to let me give it a try, even though he wasn't a woodturner himself. For my first project I thought I would make a rustic desk lamp for my bedroom desk. I found a piece of white birch firewood about 14" x 2½" with the bark still intact and a piece of 2x10x10" pine to use for a base. It was pretty rudimentary! I turned a 1½" tenon on the end of the birch and used a turner's shell auger to drill a 3/8" bore through the birch log on the lathe. I turned the base very roughly with an accompanying 1½" socket. Put it all together, wired it up and found an appropriate lampshade. This got me a wood working badge in Boy Scouts and the lamp was proudly on my desk all throughout high school.

The next fall I was working on a fruit orchard and had gotten to know the family quite well; the mother offered me an old well-used maple rolling pin and suggested I try to make another desk lamp for her. Well I was all over that and wanted to make something very special for them with some really nice wood. But when you live in a small town there aren't any options to get a piece of hardwood. Someone suggested to me that there was a retired contractor, John Munger, who had a warehouse on the outskirts of town who might have some hardwood. I was a small 15 year old barely 4'2" tall, and rode my bike out to this large metal-sided warehouse (100' x 24') that didn't appear to have any windows facing the street and only one door. I went up to the door and banged on it for a while and finally a 70 year old gruff man came to the door and asked who I was and what was I doing there. I knew just telling him my name was not going to get me anywhere, so I told him I was Earl Wright's grandson (my grandfather was also around 70 so I figured he might know him). Well that opened the door so to speak; he did know my grandfather and apparently thought highly of him. I asked if he might have some hardwood of some sort to make a base for a lamp I wanted to make. He invited me into the warehouse and I couldn't believe my eyes, there were hundreds and hundreds of all sorts of planks of every kind of hardwood you could imagine. He had been collecting local logs for years and had it all milled into lumber when he was a contractor. There was maple, birch, hickory, walnut, butternut, cherry, apple, oak, elm, horse chestnut, American chestnut and many more species. We finally settled on a 9x9x2" piece of cherry which he cut from a 16' plank. When I asked how much I owed him he said, "Just bring the finished piece around to show me and I will tell you how much." So off I went with my piece of cherry and thinking what luck I had had that day.

The next week I finished the desk lamp back at the Church workshop and headed back to the warehouse after school one day. I banged on the door again and out came Mr. Munger, he was maybe

a bit surprised to see me again, but looked over my project and had some kind words about the quality of the workmanship. I asked how much he wanted for the cherry wood. He said, "Come in I would like to show you something." With a little bit of trepidation, I followed him in, there was a walled off area once inside, and he took me through the door to another 15' x 20' workshop where he was set up to make apple crates, a pastime for him in his retirement which helped to use up some of the wood he had accumulated for years. But in that workshop was the most beautiful lathe I had ever seen or imagined. It was a Union Graduate lathe made in the UK. He said to me, "*How would you like to use this lathe?*" My jaw must have hit the floor. "*I got this for my grandkids to use but they have no interest.*"



Union Graduate lathe,
circa 1965.

I assured him I would certainly love to use the lathe, and so my patronage began. I could come after school whenever I wanted and turn until he headed home at the end of the day. He would supply all of the wood, and I could turn whatever I wanted for myself, but for every item I made for myself I would make something for him of his choosing. I spent many a day after school there in that shop making countless items on the lathe. John, was not a turner himself but he had a lot of woodworking experience and always had suggestions how to fix blemishes, mount work on the lathe, sharpen tools. Back in those days there wasn't much written about woodturning (at least not that I could find as a young boy) so there was a lot of trial and error. I went off to university in northern Ontario, but whenever I went home I would always drop into John Munger's shop and he would let me turn whatever I wanted, until he died in 1976.

A few years ago my dad passed away and I went home to clear out his apartment. I found he still had an end table lamp I had made them for Xmas in 1971. It was made of walnut and cherry and was of a mid-century Danish design. I was quite impressed with the quality of the work; even though the finish had faded, given it was almost 47 years old. I took it apart and brought the pieces home with me and I hope to one day return it to its original look.

So that is how I got my start in woodturning. I had the great opportunity to learn turning through self-learning and helpful suggestions from someone who had a lifetime of experience with wood, who allowed me to experiment on the lathe and provided all of the materials I could ever want. It was truly like a patronage from an era long gone by, and I am forever grateful. It is one of the reasons I am so passionate about belonging to our Woodturning Guild to pay back the kindness offered to a 15-year-old boy in small town Ontario.

This month's topic of interest is turning a Morse taper adapter for your lathe. This was actually a topic brought up by Richard Ford several years ago, but is worthwhile to be revisited. Having wooden #2

Morse Taper adapters for your lathe can be very useful and serve many functions. They can be used as custom drive centers, blind friction drives, centering devices for cutting tubing, and a pair of them in the head and tailstock can function as a great pen press. It is very easy to turn them and a great way to practice using a skew.

To make them I mark the center on each end of my spindle blank and then make a 60° recess with a center drill to mount the blank between the live and drive centers. (See Figure 1a.) I used a MT2 collet (Figure 1b) to take measurements to transfer these to the blank.

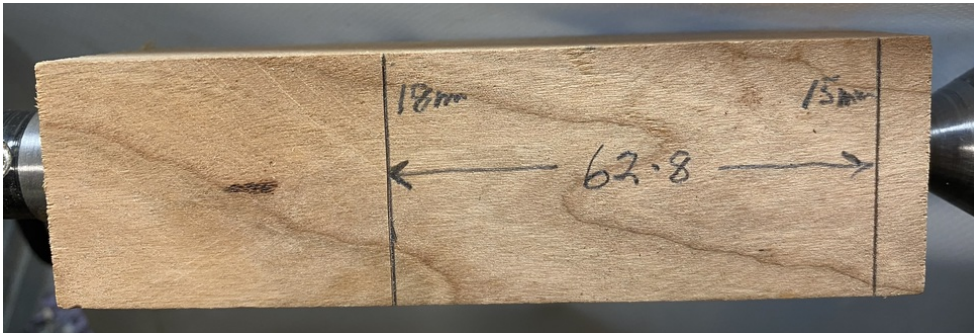


Figure 1a. Mount the blank between centers and mark the length for the Morse taper.

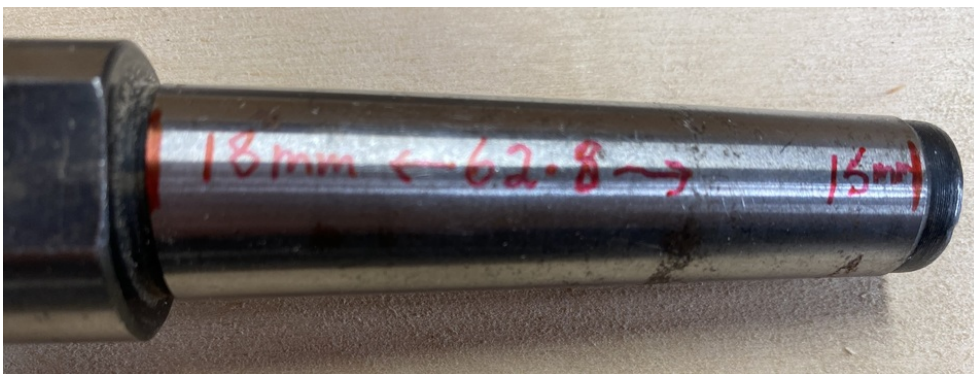


Figure 1b. MT2 collet used as a MT2 taper reference.

Mark out the length for the Morse taper, and then using a caliper and a parting tool cut down to the approximate diameters (Figure 2) for the taper.

Use a roughing gouge to get close to the groove bottoms and finish up with the skew. Finally use a hard wooden sanding block to take out any tool marks and ensure a really straight taper. Insert the taper into your headstock and twist it around to see if there are any high spots that need further sanding. The adapter should fit snugly in the headstock Morse taper with no side-to-side play (Figure 3).

I keep a collection of these adapters for various functions on the lathe with different head diameters for friction fitting various project parts for turning and to act as pen press heads (Figure 4). Note the right-hand adapter was turned down to act as a friction drive for truing up the cuts on carbon fiber tubing and the left-hand adapter was sized to friction fit salt & pepper shakers so that the bottoms could be finished.

That is all for this month, if you have an early learning experience please feel free to send it in for inclusion in a future Fireside Chat column.

Best wishes to you all, and keep making shavings.

DaveM



Figure 2. Measuring the taper diameters using a small caliper (18mm and 15mm).



Figure 3. Checking the Morse taper for a good fit in the headstock. (18mm and 15mm).

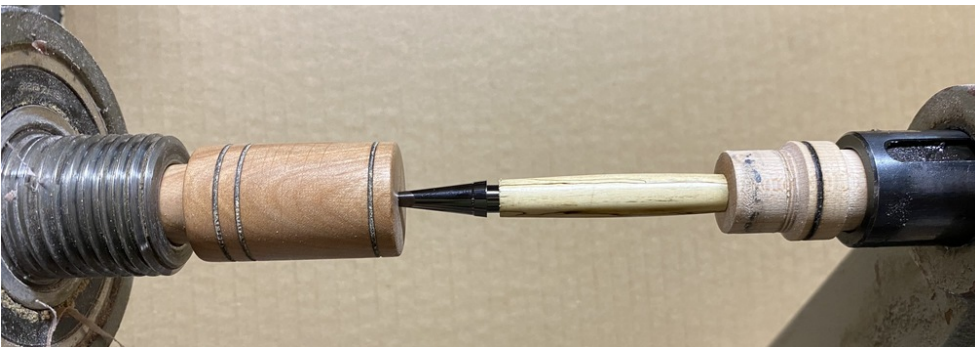


Figure 4. Two Morse taper adapters used as a pen press. With this method you are guaranteed straight alignments and no racking of the press heads when under pressure.

The Electrical Corner

Jim Diamond

The purpose of this (hopefully semi-regular) column is to share information about electrical and electronic things of interest to woodturners. Contributions and suggestions from members are not only welcome, but actively encouraged.

A number of companies sell various types of remote-control gadgets so that you can turn on your dust collector (for example) from the other side of your shop. While these are handy, from my knowledge of electronics I know how inexpensive the internal parts are compared to the healthy prices some manufacturers charge, and I've been loathe to pay the going rate.

One of the important features of a remote-control power outlet for a woodworking shop is the amount of power that can be switched: inside most (all?) such devices is a relay (that is, an electrically-operated switch). While turning on a LED table lamp requires a relay capable of only a modest amount of power, turning on a device with a large motor requires a relay capable of handling considerably more power. I suspect the manufacturers of remote-control switches designed for woodworking shops use heavy-duty relays, although I haven't dissected such a switch to confirm this.

A while back I purchased a four-channel remote-control device from China for a few (three?) dollars. The four relays in this device, which can be operated independently of each other using the supplied remote control, could (probably!) safely switch a small shop vacuum on and off, but not something requiring 15 amps. So for a few more dollars I bought a heavy-duty relay (rated for 25 amps, if I recall correctly) and wired it up so one low-power relay activates the high-power relay, and the high-power relay activates the attached electrical outlet. At one time I was going to write an article about this for the newsletter. However... putting this all together inside a nice box, getting a couple other miscellaneous electronic components, and so on, increased the effort to a level where I suspect only people who really enjoy playing around with electronics would be interested.

One day I came across a very reasonably-priced remote-control outlet at everyone's favourite Swedish store (you know, the one where all the products have funny names). Specifically, they sell something called the TRÅDFRI "control outlet kit" which consists of a remote control and a remotely-controlled outlet which plugs into a regular power outlet; all this for the modest sum of \$19.99 (at time of writing, anyway).

The remote control, shown at the right, has a reasonably powerful magnet on the back. I have found this magnet keeps the remote control firmly attached to the front rail on my table saw as well as the casting of my lathe. (The magnet is inside the plastic case, so you won't see it when looking at the back.) Further, I can operate the relay while it is stuck to the machine, which makes its use very convenient. The remote is about 2"×2".



The remote-controlled outlet (seen at right) is a bit bulky, but is not so big that you can't plug something else into the same duplex outlet. The power-handling ability is a bit hard for me to track down. My outlet says "1800 watts" on the back. However, the description on the product's web page currently says "Max. output power: 3840W", which seems like a typo to me, since you can only get 1800W from a 15 amp 120 volt outlet.



An interesting feature of this system is that you can run multiple outlets from the same remote control. Additional remote-controlled outlets are available for \$14.99, so if you want, you could turn on many different things around your shop with just one remote. The web page for the outlet (without the remote control) claims the outlet has a maximum output power of 2300W, which seems more likely than 3840W. In any case, it is possible they have upgraded the outlet since I bought mine.

Motors provide a different type of load to switches than, for example, incandescent lights. I bought this device recognizing that I might eventually burn out the relay by putting too high a motor load on it. But, having said that, I have had mine for something like a year, and so far it has performed flawlessly switching on a shop vacuum. I can't yet comment on whether it would handle a 15 amp load on a day-to-day basis.

In summary, if you are looking for an inexpensive remote-control outlet, and you don't need to control a motor that takes 15 amps, I recommend that you give this one a look.

If you have discovered any useful electrical or electronic gizmos that you think other Guild members would be interested in, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Cover Photo



Guild member Bill Maes sent in the photo on the front page, for which a suitable title might be *Possibilities*. He muses: “When mounting a piece of wood, every turner is challenged by the potential and the possibilities every piece of wood holds. Will I cut deep or shallow? What kind of base? How can I bring out the character of the wood? What kind of decorative cuts can I make, should I make? Perhaps I really should turn something else.

Turning is about becoming. What will your next piece of wood become? Will you also be changed because of it?”

Nova Woodturners' Guild — 2023/24 Executive

All members of the executive, as well as committee chairs, can be reached by using the email address associated with that position. That is, a note sent to (for example) the president will go to who ever is president at that time. The following <address>es should be followed by @novawoodturnersguild.com to send mail to the person holding that position.

A 'C' after a committee member's name indicates they are chair of the committee.

Position	<address>	Incumbent(s)
Executive	executive (sends the message to all executive positions on the list)	
President	president (or) pres	Gary Landry
Vice President	vice-president (or) vp	Bill Maes
Secretary	secretary	Calum Ewing
Treasurer	treasurer	Dave McLachlan
Director at Large	director-at-large	vacant

Committees

Library	library	Jim Diamond Richard Ford	C
Web Site	webmaster	Richard Ford	C
Membership & Promotion	membership	vacant	
Newsletter	newsletter (or) news	Jim Diamond	C
Competition	competition	vacant	
Guild Photographer	photographer (or) photos	Chris Palmer	C
Fund Raising	raffles	vacant	C
Members Group	members	members	

The [members](#) address forwards the email to all members who have signed up to be on the members list. To add or remove yourself from the [members](#) list, email webmaster@novawoodturnersguild.com.

If you wish to send an email to **all** current members of the NWG, send your message to secretary@novawoodturnersguild.com with a request to forward your email to all members.