

The Turning Point

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The next meeting of the Nova Woodturners' Guild
will be held at Lee Valley Tools, 150 Susie Lake Crescent, Halifax
Sunday, June 9, 2024 at 2:00 PM

At the June meeting:
Turning competition results
Annual General Meeting

The President's Report

Gary Landry

Once again we come to the end of a meeting season. Our meeting on June 9th will release our Turning Competition results and will constitute our Annual General Membership meeting.

Last month we had a demo by Steve Gutz of “Steve Makes Everything” on YouTube on the topic of “Using a Laser Engraver on Woodturnings”. Steve's demo was very well received and generated a lot of comments and questions. It sure proved to me that this is not a situation where you buy the equipment, plug it in and start engraving. There is a learning curve involved and, depending on how tech savvy you are, the lag between getting the equipment and successfully engraving an item can be lengthy. I want to thank Steve for taking the time to make and present this very informative demo for us. Please visit Steve's YouTube channel for more info on laser engraving and CNC techniques.

The members of the executive met on May 31st and logged in all the competition pieces received and set up the display cases in the LV showroom. Overall we received 29 entries consisting of 31 turned items (two entries were sets of two). There is some impressive work in these entries. But then again I say that every year . . . because it is always true! Judging will be conducted on Friday, June 7th and this year we have a slate of three judges. I am also informed that Bill Maes, our VP and Competition Chair, has obtained over \$2000 in prizes to be awarded to participants. If you have pieces in the competition please pick them up on June 9th as Lee Valley has no room to store them for us. If you cannot make it in person please arrange for someone who is attending to pick up your pieces for you.

We have openings for members to offer demonstrations in woodturning to the customers at Lee Valley. If you wish to sign up for a two or three hour shift please contact Calum Ewing, our Secretary. Times are available from June 2nd to June 8th. This is one of our best ways to recruit viewers to both woodturning and to membership in our Guild.

Our Annual General Membership meeting will be held immediately after the announcement of the Competition results and the awarding of prizes and trophies. As usual reports from members of the Executive and Committee Chairs will be given and elections held. Also, if you want to present a motion to be debated and voted on by the membership this is the time to do so. I would ask that you send your motion(s) to me and to Calum in advance so it/they can be put on the Agenda.

On a final note I wish to thank the membership and especially the members of the Executive Committee for all their ideas, help and support not only over the past year but over the past six years that I have been President. Any organization is only as good as the engagement of the members allows. As a striking example of this, our Guild could not have survived the tumult that ensued from the COVID-19 pandemic and lock-downs without all of us working together to keep things going in a meaningful manner. Thank goodness for Zoom and Jitsi! We not only met during lock-down but as a result of our efforts to engage members at home we have now expanded our in person meetings to include at-home members on a monthly basis in a virtual way.

It has been an honour and a privilege to have been your President these last years and I wish you and your new Executive nothing but the best in the future.

Notes from the April Meeting

Calum Ewing

Editor's note: as mentioned last month, scheduling issues prevented the April meeting notes from getting into the May newsletter. But, as promised, here they are now.

Meeting called to order by President **Gary Landry** at 2:00 PM with 16 members and 1 visitor present (in person) and 7 members connected on the Jitsi platform (online participation).

Announcements:

- Competition Chair, **Bill Maes**, gave an update on the planning for the Annual Turning Competition:
 - Entries can be dropped off in the seminar room at Lee Valley:
 - ★ May 5th at the regular Guild meeting
 - ★ Saturday May 25th — 10:00 AM–1:00 PM
 - ★ Sunday May 26th — noon–3:00 PM
 - ★ Friday May 31st — noon–3:00 PM (last day to drop off entries)
 - Working to recruit judges.
 - There will be turning demonstrations at Lee Valley during the competition display. Watch emails for a call for volunteers to demo turning and promote the Guild.
 - The **Warman Castle** Trophy (People's Choice Award) has not been awarded for the past few years due to pandemic restrictions. We still need to consider how voting can be done safely. We will need to have a decent number of entries to make the people's choice voting worthwhile.
- Thanks to **Bob Earle**, **David McLachlan** and **Calum Ewing** who demonstrated turning during the recent two-day Power Tool event at Lee Valley. As usual there was good interest from customers in the store who enjoyed seeing turning in action.
- Upcoming meeting topics:
 - May — **Steve Gutz** (of @SteveMakesEverything on YouTube fame) — Laser Engraving to Embellish Woodturnings.
 - June — AGM and Competition Awards presentations.

Main Presentation:

The main presentation was a presentation on Turning Elaborate Finials by **Leo Westhaver**. Leo demonstrated how he makes open, twisted spiral finials.

Selecting a Blank

- Start with an appropriate sized blank — for example, 2 x 2 x 6 inches.
- Wood needs to be fine grained with straight even grain.
- Avoid wood with knots, checks or other imperfections for these finials.

Rough Shaping

- With the blank mounted between centres, turn it down to a cylinder.
- Form a tenon on one end so it can be secured in the chuck.

- Remove the tailstock and mount the blank in the chuck.
- Using a skew chisel or spindle gouge, turn the tip of the finial — once the spiraling is started, the end of the finial will be too weak to allow further turning out at the tip, so the tip must be turned to final shape before proceeding further (Figure 1).
- Next use a pencil to mark the lower point of the 'body' of the finial (the open spiral portion).
- Turn the body of the finial to get a pleasing shape — full, rounded bodies often result in more pleasing shapes for the spiral than thinner, narrow bodies.
- Sand the tip and body.



Figure 1

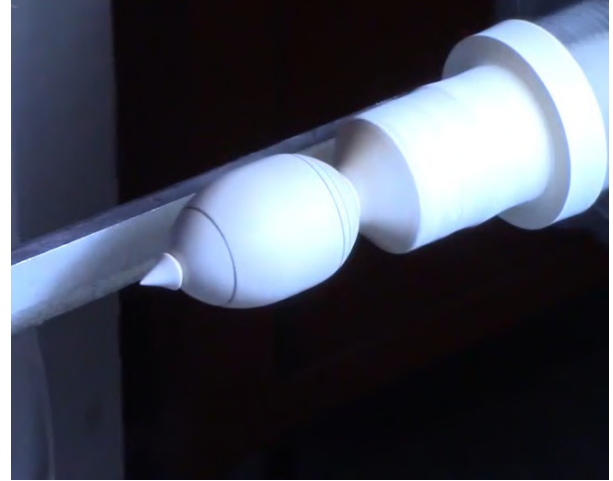


Figure 2

Laying Out the Spiral

- Decide
 - a) how many parts the spiral will have (four, or perhaps three are typical); and
 - b) how far around the body each part will twist — that is, how much twist there is to the spiral ($\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ turn are typical).
- Using a pencil mark the top and bottom positions of the spiral portion on the body (Figure 2).
- Next mark positions on the body dividing the body (between the top and bottom marks) into equal portions. The more divisions, the more twist the spiral will have.
- Next mark longitudinal lines along the body — one line for each 'arm' of the spiral (e.g., for a four part spiral, draw four lines). An indexing head is very helpful here to make sure the guide lines are equally spaced. For example, if your indexing head has 24 stops, and you want four 'arms', mark a line every 6 stops (number of index stops \div number of spiral arms) (Figure 3).
- Now mark a dot at the centre point of each 'square' marked out.
- Next lay out the path of the first spiral 'arm' by drawing a smooth curve from one corner of a bottom square diagonally through the centre mark, through the corner of the adjacent square, through its center point and finishing at the opposite corner of the upper square. Make the ends of the line at the upper and lower corners curve smoothly into the top and bottom marks — a smooth 'S' shape to the line (Figure 4).



Figure 3



Figure 4

- Draw lines for the other arm positions (Figure 5).
- Set a pair of dividers to a little wider than the desired thickness of each arm (you will sand down to desired thickness later) and use the dividers to mark points on either side of each line along the length of the lines, then connect all these 'dots' to mark out the width of each arm (Figure 6).



Figure 5



Figure 6

Cutting the Spiral

- Use a drill, Dremel™ tool or power carving tool with a small drill bit to drill holes between the lines along each line.
- Drill approximately to the centre of the body or just a little further. The aim here is to remove the bulk of the wood between the spiral arms (Figure 7).
- Switch to a small rasp type carving burr and begin to join the drilled holed together, connecting and enlarging the holes to remove the wood between the arms (Figure 8).
- Once each arm is rough shaped, use a smoother carving bit to smooth the edges of each arm and further refine the shape making sure the arms flow in smooth curves.



Figure 7



Figure 8

- Then remove the sharp 'corners' along each arm and begin to refine the round shape of each arm — on both the inside and outside of each arm.
- You can also use fine hand rasps or diamond needle files to refine the shape of each arm, removing any sharp edges of the arms will reduce the chances of breakage once sanding starts — the arms are very fragile at this stage.
- Use sandpaper cut into narrow (e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$ inch) strips to sand the arms smooth, working through the grits to the desired finish. Wrap the strip around the arm and use a push/pull, sawing motion to sand around the full circumference of the arm (Figure 9).
- Use sandpaper glued to popsicle sticks to do any fine tuning of shape or finish.
- Repeat for each arm.

Finishing

- Stain or dye the finial with the desired colour dye (e.g., leather or fabric dye) and allow to dry fully (Figure 10).
- Once fully dry, turn the lathe on slow speed and apply 3 or 4 light coats of spray lacquer.
- Use a parting tool to cut a tenon at the base of the finial and part off.



Figure 9



Figure 10

Editor's note: here are some photos taken during Leo's presentation in April.



Some finials on display



Presumably
an example of
what NOT to do



Leo formulating four or five flawless finial facts

Show & Tell

Leo Westhaver presented an interesting 'umbrella' ornament in live edge Birch. The ornament had finials dyed black with fabric dye.

Andrew Watson presented an impressive bowl in Cherry burl. The blank had some large bark inclusion in the base that required gluing on sacrificial blocks so that it could be held with the chuck. These blocks were later turned away, once the bowl was nearly completed.

Dave McLachlan showed off a fine 'wave' bowl in maple with a dyed red protruding with the jig that Dave built and presented at the March meeting.



Andrew's cherry burl bowl



Dave's wave bowl



A close-up of Dave's wave bowl

Prize Auction

An impromptu auction was held for a couple of prizes donated to the Guild by some of our competition sponsors:

- Gift Certificate from R&D Bandsaws, valued at \$25 — won by **Zalman Amit** with a winning bid of \$15.00.
- Gift Certificate from East Coast Specialty Hardwoods, valued at \$25 — won by **Yogi Gutz** with a winning bid of \$10.00.
- Gift Certificate from Halifax Specialty Hardwoods, valued at \$50 — won by **Bob Earle** with a winning bid of \$30.00

Raffle Results

The monthly raffle was held for a range of prizes:

Chris Palmer	added a Maple bowl blank to his stock
Charles Neiforth	collected a rough turned bowl blank in Maple
Bill Maes	picked up a platter blank in Birch
Yogi Gutz	won a rough turned vase blank in Butternut
Martin Lachance	added a tubing cutter to his tool collection
Gary Landry	collected an ‘Algonquin’ pen kit
Bob Earle	won a pill holder kit and blank

The meeting wrapped up at 3:50 PM.

Notes from the May Meeting

Calum Ewing

Meeting called to order by President **Gary Landry** at 2:00 PM with 10 members present.

Announcements:

- Competition Chair, **Bill Maes**, gave an update on the planning for the Annual Turning Competition:
 - Entries can be dropped off in the seminar Room at Lee Valley:
 - ★ Today at this meeting;
 - ★ Saturday May 25th — 10:00 AM–1:00 PM;
 - ★ Sunday May 26th — noon–3:00 PM; and
 - ★ Friday May 31st — noon–3:00 PM (last day to drop off entries).
 - The judges (3) are all lined up and judging will take place on June 7.
 - There will be turning demonstrations at Lee Valley during the competition display. Watch emails for a call for volunteers to demo turning and promote the Guild.
- Upcoming meeting topic:
 - June – AGM and Competition Awards presentations

Main Presentation:

The main presentation was *Using Lasers in Woodturning* by **Steve Gutz**. Steve (the younger brother of long time Guild member **Yogi Gutz**, has a popular DIY channel on YouTube: [@SteveMakesEverything](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSteveMakesEverything) in addition to his website at <https://slicedpi.design>. Steve talked to us today about using lasers to engrave and embellish wood turnings and other projects.

Safety

- Lasers of any type are dangerous! As a safety precaution, Steve recommends only getting a laser that is completely enclosed.
- Burns to the hands or arms are easy to get and eye injuries can be severe.
- Always wear appropriate protective equipment and be aware of the laser when it is operating.
- Enclosed lasers are much safer in use as open frame lasers produce a lot of dangerous light that is not contained.
- Fire is also a significant risk and better laser units will have fire detectors that will automatically shut off the laser if a fire is starting.
- Large quantities of smoke can be generated so some method of venting the smoke outside or processing through a fume extractor is needed when in use.



0.001 second of laser exposure!

Types of Lasers

- There are three main types of lasers available:
 - CO2 — good for wide variety of uses, especially on acrylic, but not great for engraving;
 - Diode — great for all types of wood cutting and engraving; have a very long focus range; and
 - Fibre — only for engraving, but works best on metals.
- Many models can use rotary attachments so that you can engrave around a round object. Rotary tools come in two types:
 - a) “chuck”, where work piece is mounted in a chuck; and
 - b) “rollers” where the workpiece sits on rollers that move the workpiece.
- For higher resolution work, lower power lasers are better as the width of the laser beam increases with increasing power of the unit.

Uses

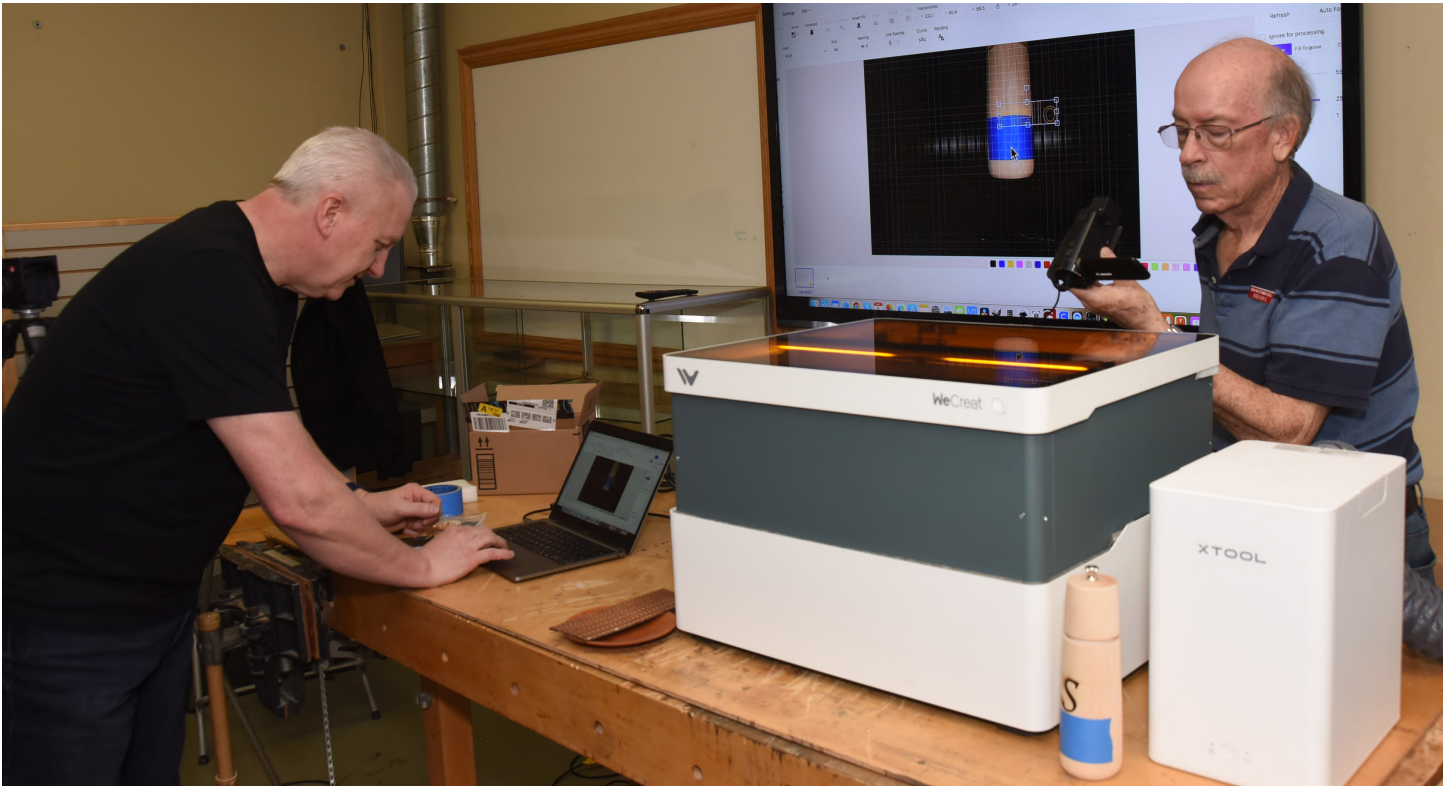
- Lasers can be used for engraving, including accurately reproducing photographs, as well as for cutting — including cutting for inlays with veneer.
- A common and popular use is making custom engraved 'medallions' to fit into a recess in turned work as a distinct maker's mark.

Costs

- Costs increase with the type and power of the laser.
- Diode lasers are a good cheap way to get started.
- Generally, dimensions of units are accurate, but power is often reported in different ways so research is needed to make sure you know what you are getting.
- More complex units with many features and capabilities can have steep learning curves to get effective output.

Using Lasers

- The object to be engraved is placed in the laser unit on the 'stage'.
- The laser unit is driven by custom software that converts images into instructions to the laser unit.
- Images (textures, photographs, letters or other shapes) are loaded into the software.
- Then various settings for the laser (depth, wood type, focus and power) are set.
- Next the engraving action is started.
- The software will let you know when the task is completed.



Setting up the burning area; Steve is positioning the area to be burned via the software on his laptop. The blue tape is to help position the letters at the same height on both shakers.



Steve showing the results of laser engraving the pepper shaker.



The shakers after burning letters in 1/8" deep.



The shakers after cleaning up the charring residue.

The meeting wrapped at 3:45 PM.

DaveM's Fireside Chat

David McLachlan

Hi everyone, well we are just about to have our last meeting of this fiscal year, and then a two month hiatus before the fall session. . . For me this is always a bit of a sad time as I look forward to sharing thoughts on turning at our regular meetings which end up being suspended for our two summer months. So I would like to propose that I am available for coffee chats with anyone who wants to contact me and we can set up a time to meet up and talk shop, you can reach me at visions4U.hfx@gmail.com. I will be passing through various parts of the province periodically through the summer so let me know if you want to meet up somewhere for a chat, it can be a café, your shop, or a stroll through a park. I hope to be able to hold a hands-on workshop on producing wave bowls this summer and I will let everyone know when and where once I have it firmed up. I would also encourage others to join in on making themselves available for impromptu get-togethers with other turners in your areas. In the early times of the Guild I believe this was a more regular occurrence, especially for turners outside of the HRM, (I am thinking South Shore, the Valley and New Glasgow, where I think that this still does occur upon occasion).

We have just put all of the competition pieces on display in the Lee Valley show room, and I encourage members to drop by to see the pieces if you are in the area. This Sunday's meeting will be dedicated to the presentation of awards to the competition members and we will be holding the Guild AGM afterwards. This will also be a hybrid meeting that you can join online. As incentive to attend, I am offering up one of my carbon fiber handles as a door prize draw open to all members attending the meeting either online or in person.

In this month's newsletter there is a listing of all of the sponsors for the competition. I encourage everyone to take a moment and have a look at their websites and familiarize yourself with what products they have; you never know, but there might just be something there that you would love to have.

Lastly, although the Annual NWG BBQ has not been finalized for this year, I would encourage members to attend if at all possible; this event is also open to our significant others as well. It is a great time to catch up with other Guild members this summer.

Thanks for listening to me this year in the Fireside Chat column.

Thanks to our Sponsors

We would sincerely like to thank our 2024 NWG Turning Competition sponsors, most of whom have been the Guild's loyal supporters for many years. Thank you!

Craft Supplies USA
1287 E. 1120 S
Provo, UT 84606 U.S.A.
clubs@woodturnerscatalog.com

East Coast Specialty Hardwoods Ltd.
53 Wright Ave.
Dartmouth, NS B3B 1G9
inquiries@ecsh.ca

Halifax Specialty Hardwoods
112 Bluewater Rd., Atlantic Acres Industrial Park
Bedford, NS B4B 1G7
info@halifaxspecialtyhardwoods.com

Lee Valley Tools Ltd.
100 Susie Lake Cres.
Halifax, NS B3S 1C7
tbruno@leevalley.com

R&D Bandsaws Ltd.
42 Regan Rd.
Brampton, ON L7A 1B4
info@tufftooth.com

SIA Abrasifs Inc.
900 Chemin Olivier
Levis, QC G7A 2N1
simonpatry@siajjs.com

WoodChuckers
50 Venture Drive, Units 4 & 5
Scarborough, ON M1B 3L6
marc@woodchuckers.com

Woodturningz
15248 Stony Creek Way
Noblesville, IN 46060 U.S.A.
sales@woodturningz.com

William Wood-Write Ltd.
50 Golds Ct., Unit 109
Guelph, ON N1C 0A1
williamwoodwrite@penblanks.ca

Branches to Bowls Ltd.
45 Sunburst Cres. SE
Calgary, AB T2X 1W5
ken@branchestobowls.com

Carter & Son Toolworks Inc.
2042 South 24th Place
Seattle, Washington 98198 U.S.A.
contact@carterandsonstoolworks.com

Woodmaster Tools Ltd.
1176 Black Rock Rd.
Clifton, NS B6L 1C1
sales@moldingknives.com

Federated Tool Supply Co. Ltd.
1581 Oxford Street E.
London, ON N5V 2Z4
info@federatedtool.com

Mill Supply Ltd.
32 Troop Ave., Suite 20
Dartmouth, NS B3B 1Z1
paul@millsupply.ca

Woodworker Specialties
853 Seaborne Ave.
Port Coquitlam, BC V3B 0N9
csr@woodworkerspecialties.biz

Cover Photo



Thanks to Dave McLachlan for this photo of one of the competition entries. To find out about this turning, as well as many more from this year's competition, come (or at least tune into) the next meeting.

A Guild Brother Book Signing!

A few months ago (September, for the curious among you) this very publication reported that Don Moore has published a book *Memories of "A Kid from the Heights"*. If you didn't get your copy yet (or even if you did!) Don will have a book signing event at the Chapters store in Bayers Lake on June 15th from 2:00 to 3:00.

Photo Credits

Thanks to Chris Palmer for photos from the last two month's meetings, and to Bill Maes for the "after cleanup" photo of the salt and pepper shakers. Unless otherwise mentioned, the other photos were (as far as the editor knows!) all taken by the person who made the item in question and/or the person who wrote the article.

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 whomever 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 that 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.