

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, November 17, 2024 at 2:00 PM

At the November meeting:
Lantern Christmas ornament demo
Show and tell
Outrageous stories and riotous laughter

The President's Report

Last month **Mark Hazen** did a very interesting presentation on turning a biscuit cutter. After viewing this I decided to turn one myself. What happened when I was almost finished and in the process of rechucking the piece I learned a life lesson. It started after I bought a dust collector for my shop. One of my projects required drilling a number of holes using a Forstner bit. The shavings that came off the bit were quite large and clogged up the grill covering the collector's intake. Thinking that removing the grill would allow for the chips to enter the collector unobstructed. . . It worked just as I thought and I figured it wasn't a safety problem since the intake was covered by the hose. Now getting back to the biscuit cutter, as I was rechucking the piece, I made the mistake of not turning off the collector and before you knew it the piece was sucked into the dust collector and made it into the fan blades. The result is self-evident in this picture.



Long story short I've ordered a new cover plate so as not to repeat this misadventure, proving that no misdeed goes unpunished.

Remember to bring in your ornaments for picture taking if you plan on entering the ornament challenge. Happy turning and see you at the November meeting.

Bob Earle — President

Notes from the October Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President **Bob Earle** at 2:00 PM with 12 members present and 4 members on-line.



Announcements:

- The annual dues are now due. If any of your personal information has changed, please complete a new membership form. A new feature this year is that dues (\$40.00) can be paid by e-transfer to treasurer@novawoodturnersguild.com. So, dues can now be paid by cash, cheque, credit and debit card or e-transfer.
- This meeting, like recent ones is being run in a “hybrid” format with both in-person participants and others joining online. As expected there were some early growing pains and issues with the meeting quality online. Most of these stem from the hardware setup being used.

In order to provide a better streaming service, we are going to need an ATEM video management device. This will allow for a better streaming experience and should alleviate our current problems. So, the following resolution was proposed:

Be it resolved that the membership supports the expenditure of sufficient funds to buy a video management device to allow for casting our meetings to members at their residences.

Moved by: **Bob Earle**; seconded: **Dave McLachlan**. Motion carried.

- A reminder about the Christmas Ornament Challenge that **Dave McLachlan** detailed in the current (*editor's note: October*) newsletter.
 - **Dave McLachlan** has volunteered to photograph any entries that need images on the Monday following the November meeting.
 - Each person needs to enter their own entries.
 - Entries are accepted online from Nov 1st to 29th.
 - Lee Valley has offered to display the entries in a case in the store.

Members Lost:

In recent weeks we have lost two long term members: **Dr. Andrew Watson** and **Zalman Amit**. A minute of silence was held to remember them.

Main Presentation:

The main presentation was a demonstration by member **Mark Hazen**, on turning wooden biscuit cutters. Mark has been using scraps, off-cuts and salvaged wood (e.g., from pallets) to make attractive and useful biscuit cutters which have been a very popular item at local markets.

Preparation:

- Start with a blank $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3" square and 4 to $4\frac{1}{2}$ " long
- Hollow the end of the blank with a Forstner bit to a depth of 1 to $1\frac{1}{8}$ ". This hollowing can be done on the lathe or on a drill press.
- Mount the blank between centres and turn to a true cylinder of the desired diameter. A 2" diameter is common, but $2\frac{3}{4}$ " is also popular with some bakers.
- Cut a tenon for the chuck jaws on the end that will become the top of the cutter.

The Process:

- Mount the blank in the chuck jaws using the tenon on the "top" end and true up the cylinder again using a skew chisel to make sure it is perfectly true in the new orientation. Mark uses a rounded skew for this as it is easy to turn and adjust.
- A speed of 800–900 RPM is ideal.
- Next, using a flat skew, true up the end where it is hollowed out.



Mark trues up the cylinder. Behind him, his clone, Mark Mk. 2, does the same.

- Clean up the inside of the hollow end taking the wall thickness down to between $1/8''$ and $1/16''$. Cut slowly taking light cuts to avoid overheating and cracking the wall. A parting tool, spindle gouge or other tool of choice can be used for this. The floor of the recess is also cleaned up at this stage to remove marks or cuts left by the Forstner bit. Mark uses a small “bull-nose” scraper to slightly hollow the floor of the recess. This creates a small space so that when the biscuit dough pushes up into the cutter there is space for the air above it to go.
- The interior of the recess is then sanded to 400 grit. Once sanded, apply a generous coats of wipe-on polyurethane and allow to dry overnight. This tends to plasticize the thin wood at the edge and help to prevent cracking or chips when the outside of the cutter is finish turned. Cutting will create heat; the heat causes the thin wood to expand and it can crack easily, ruining the project.
- The next step is defining the shoulder and knob or handle on the top. Mark starts the shoulder at $1\frac{1}{2}''$ from the end and leaves another $1\frac{1}{2}''$ for the knob. A 2" diameter knob is very comfortable in the hand when making a lot of biscuits. Mark out the shoulder and top of the knob with a parting tool then turn down the shaft between these reference cuts to just over 2".
- Next, using a skew chisel or spindle gouge, turn a smooth shoulder above the hollow and shape the knob into a comfortable, rounded shape. Don't forget to turn a smaller diameter shank above the shoulder to create a recess for the fingertips to rest in during use.
- Lines can be burned into the circumference of the knob to add a bit of simple decoration.



Mark reducing the wall thickness.



Mark marking some lines for decoration.

- Next drill two $\frac{1}{8}$ " diameter holes through the shoulder at an angle into the interior recess. This will allow air to enter the hollow so the dough will drop out easily.
- Apply wipe-on polyurethane as a sanding sealer on the exterior. Another coat can be applied to the interior at this stage if desired. Set aside for 24 hours to dry fully before completing.
- Once fully dry, turn down the inside of the opening to create a nice sharp cutting edge. This can be done with a skew chisel taking light cuts or a safer approach is to use sandpaper, starting with 80 grit then working through the grits to the desired finish. Proceed slowly to avoid overheating the thin edge and causing cracks. When sanded to a fine edge, it is ready for finishing.

Completing:

- Using a skew chisel, continue to turn the top of the handle until ready to part off. Make sure you have a good opening in the blank above the handle so that you can get your fingertips in to sand the top of the handle without danger of injury.
- Finally part off with the tip of a skew chisel or a fine saw if desired. Sand the top of the handle to remove any nub and apply finish.
- Finish with 3 coats of wipe-on polyurethane in the desired sheen.

Discussion:

- Kitchen implements such as this can be made very water resistant by heating mineral oil to 60°C and immersing the project in the hot oil for a few hours, then wiping off and letting dry before finishing.

Show & Tell:

Dave McLachlan showed off a “Tempest” pen by Beaufort in the UK, in stabilized figured Redwood that has a very nice chatoyance.

Adapters for holding square-shanked tools in collet-type handles. These are made from countersink depth stops sold by Lee Valley. He has used these to make small bedans and skew chisels for one-handed use when turning thin finials or spindles (leaving the other hand free to support the thin wood).



A small box with threaded lid in Yellow Birch. This was the type of box that he demonstrated at last month's meeting.



Del Desroches

presented a very large bowl in Maple. Often when turning large bowl very thin, the wood will start to move and the bowl will get out of round as you turn it. He stabilized a couple of cracks in the blank using wood “butterfly” inserts. He carves the foot into three separate feet to ensure the bowl will sit stable even if it distorts in shape.

A small lidded box in Rosewood. The lid has an insert of stabilized Buckeye burl.





The three feet of Del's bowl.
Note the butterflies!



Zoom in to get a better look at the box.

Ted Monk is offering a spindle steady to fit a 16" lathe to anyone that would like to make a donation to the Guild for it.

Raffle Results:

Brian Sharp took home a book and a Walnut blank.

Mark Hazen won a Butternut bowl blank and a Walnut blank.

Bob Earle added a Butternut blank and a Walnut blank to his stock.

Chris Palmer took away a Walnut bowl blank.

Charles Neiforth collected 2 platter blanks in Cherry.

The meeting wrapped up at 3:45 PM.

Calum Ewing — Secretary

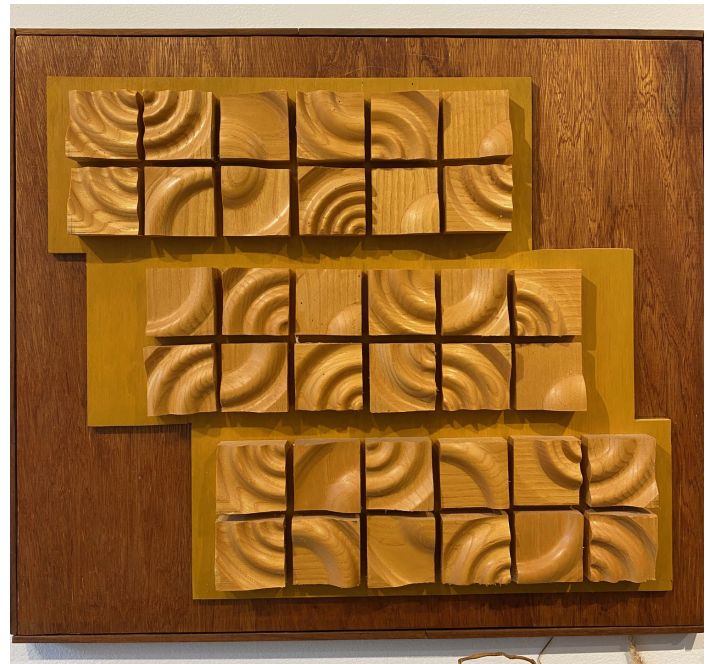
DaveM's Fireside Chat

I recently attended the Celebration of Life event held for family and friends of **Zalman Amit** on November 9, 2024 at the Pier Gallery in Lunenburg. The event was a retrospective of Zalman's life from his early days in Israel (1934 to 1961), life on a kibbutz, service in the Israeli army and work at middle east archaeology sites and his life in Canada do date.

He moved with his wife & family to Canada in 1961. Zalman had hoped to attend university in Canada but couldn't get into Canadian universities without high school certification, so he moved to Wales for an undergraduate degree and returned to Canada to obtain a PhD in Psychology at McGill specializing in neurochemical and behavioral mechanisms of drug use. He would go on to teach at Concordia University and also engaged in a clinical Psychology practice with his late wife Ann Sutherland.

Several former colleges from his academic and clinical practice spoke about Zalman at his Celebration of Life expounding upon his significant contributions to the field and his love of life and interest in art, in particular folk art. He was also very interested in political activism, photography and scuba diving. He made many trips back to Israel over the years and there were many photos depicting life there and the struggles of the Palestinian people.

Once he and Ann retired they moved to Kingsburg, Nova Scotia and he took up wood turning eventually becoming a founding member of the Pier Gallery in Lunenburg. On display at the Pier Gallery was a large collection of his wood turning art which goes well beyond classical wood turning; it is well worth the trip to Lunenburg to witness his work, as well as some of his photos from Israel. Here are just a few of his pieces on display there.





Zalman was a long time member of the Nova Woodturners' Guild and contributed much to the Guild over the years sharing his love of woodturning and art . . . we all will miss him dearly.

Moving on to more technical issues, I thought I would bring up a couple of issues with making Christmas ornaments. I had an idea that I would like to make a hollowed-out elongated ornament based upon a multi-species glued up piece that had been hanging around my shop for a number of years. The glue-up was of maple with walnut scales glued to the 4 sides (Figure 1). The first order of business was to round it up between centers so it would fit into my Nova Duck Call Jaws to be bored out (Figure 2). I planned to mount this piece on a $\frac{5}{8}$ " diameter pin mandrel (which I use for duck calls) so I could shape it and hollow it out. In order to do this I mounted the cylinder into the Duck Call Jaws and drilled it out with a $\frac{5}{8}$ " MT2-shafted drill (seen here in Figure 3), and the drilling operation in Figure 4.



Figure 1. Blank between centers ready to turn.



Figure 2. Blank roughed out to a cylinder.



Figure 3. Inserting $\frac{5}{8}$ " – MT2-shank drill in tailstock.



Figure 4. Drilling operation using Nova Duck Call Jaws.

Once bored out completely, it was ready to be mounted on the pin chuck seen here in Figure 5, which shows the $\frac{1}{2}$ " MT2 collet chuck and the pin chuck shaft. Figure 6 shows the mounting of the blank onto the shaft with the alignment of the pin, with Figure 7 showing the blank in place and the tail stock brought up to support the end of the pin mandrel.



Figure 5. MT2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " collet with $\frac{5}{8}$ " pin mandrel.



Figure 6. Mounting the bored blank on the pin mandrel, with the pin in the central position (unlocked).



Figure 7. Blank mounted on mandrel and rotated away from turner to lock it onto the mandrel.

Next the blank is backed off the pin by rotating the blank forward until it is unlocked from the shaft, and is then slid outwards over the shaft to access the interior of the blank for hollowing, finally rotating it backwards to lock the pin to the blank (seen in Figure 8). The hollowing is done with a small carbide insert on a swan necked shaft.



Figure 8. Shows the blank slid forward on the mandrel to allow internal hollowing.

Once hollowed, two ends are made to accommodate 7mm brass sleeves and a $\frac{5}{8}$ " tenon on one end. These are lined up as shown in Figure 9 and glued up onto a full length 7mm brass sleeve. The glued up blank and ends are then mounted on the lathe using 60° center bushings between centers, Figure 10.



Figure 9. The three blanks prepared for gluing together on a 7" x 7mm brass pen tube.



Figure 10. The glued up ornament blank with 60° centered pen mounting bushings mounted on lathe centers.

The ends are turned down in Figure 11 and then some aluminum ornament ends were pressed into ends to finish the ornament, Figure 12.



Figure 11. Turned down ornament.



Figure 12. Final ornament with 7mm ornament fittings pressed in place.

In the end this was an experiment using up some materials already on hand and in retrospect I would have used a shorter glued up center, hollowed with a $\frac{1}{2}$ " drill, and made the ornament much shorter. It was a good practice for different holding options on the lathe from pin mandrels to between 60° pen centers (from William Wood-Write).

Dave McLachlan

Leftovers put to use

I decided to make some icicles for the Christmas Ornament Challenge and the Wreath Draw for the Christmas Social. To make more than just plain wood ornaments I decided to try and incorporate vinyl acetate cutoffs from some of the pens I have made over time.

I cut the vinyl to an appropriate length and marked the centre of each cutoff. I then drilled $\frac{1}{4}$ " mortises in the vinyl to receive similarly-sized tenons turned on the ends of the boxwood bodies. Fifteen minute epoxy was added to the mortises, the boxwood piece(s) were clamped into the vinyl cutoff, and the assemblies were left to cure overnight.

Each assembly was mounted on the lathe and turned to the shapes shown in the photos. Sanding was completed, taking the wood to 600 grit and the vinyl pieces to 12,000 grit. After parting off, final sanding was done and a hole drilled into the top. A brass eyelet was screwed into the hole.

Finishing was completed with the Beall Buffing System using the tripoli, white diamond, and carnauba wax sticks. The lengths of the finished icicles ranged from 4 to 6" (approximately).



Gary Landry

Cover Photo



Guild brother **Mark Hazen** reports: “The Dartmouth Handcrafters Show had a contest around a Christmas Tree theme, so I thought of upscaling my tree ornaments to something a bit larger. At the same time a friend has been working on needle felted animals for a mobile. So here is a picture of a Canadian winter.”

Photo Credits

Thanks to **Chris Palmer** for photos from last month's meeting. 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 — 2024/25 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	Bob Earle	
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	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.