The Journal of the Nova Woodturners' Guild

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February 2025

The Turning Point

In this issue:

The next meeting of the Nova Woodturners' Guild
will be held at Lee Valley Tools, 150 Susie Lake Crescent, Halifax
Sunday, February 9, 2025 at 2:00 PM

At the February meeting:
— Turning Wave Ornaments
— Show and Tell (don't forget the finial challenge!)
— **At 1:30(!) a "pre-meeting"** sharpening demo featuring the Sorby ProEdge sharpening system (aimed particularly at new turners, but all are welcome)

The President's Report

It's hard to believe that we half way though our year. Last month's feature presentation by Richard Ford was interesting in numerous ways. The idea of using bingo markers for dying the wooden dowel rods was something that I think we could use in a number of places. The use of the laser for cutting the detail in the flowers was remarkable and quite fast.

This month's feature presentation will be by Dave McLachlan on turning a wave ornament. If this is anything like his wave bowl it will be a show stopper.

This month we hope to start a new pre-meeting segment dealing with the basics of wood turning. These demos will take place immediately prior to the regular meeting at 1:30pm and will cover basic information to assist new turners develop their knowledge and skills (and remind the more "seasoned" turners in our midst). This month's topic will be sharpening your tools and will feature a demonstration of the Sorby ProEdge sharpening system. Sometimes it is just a good idea to get back to basics and refresh the way we do things. With this in mind it would be helpful to get some ideas of what future topics we should present, so please let anyone on the executive know what would be of interest.

That's all for now and I looking forward to see you on Sunday.

Bob Earle – President

Notes from the January Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President **Bob Earle** at 2:00 PM with 12 members present, 6 members online and 1 guest present (David Dansereau is a relatively new turner and is keen to learn what he can).

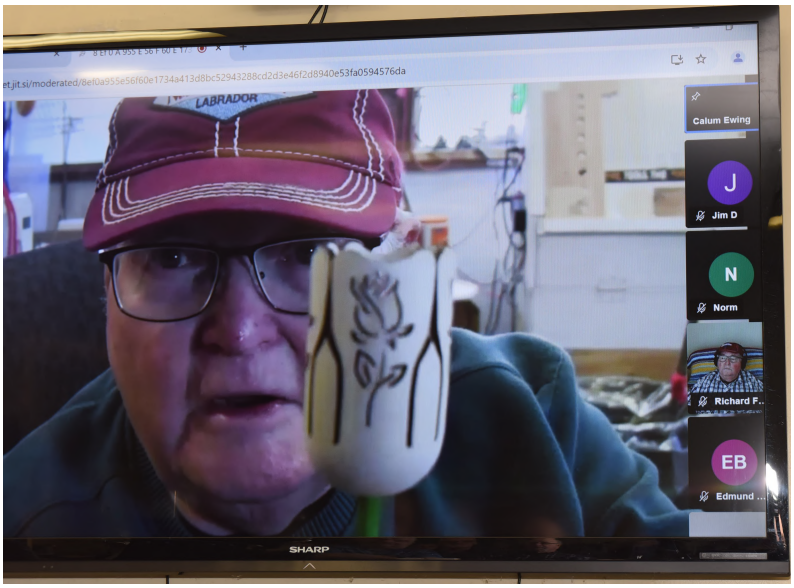
Announcements & Discussion:

- President **Bob Earle** pointed out that we still have a large number of turned items donated for sale at craft shows and similar events. Bob is looking for feedback from members on what we can do with this surplus to benefit the Guild. See the January newsletter for more details on this. Bob will look into using online sales sites (e.g., Etsy) to move some of these pieces to purchasers. Also **Brian Sharp** will check with Craft NS about the Guild participating in their annual Christmas show.
- Next month's meeting will be held February 9th and the main demo will be by **Dave McLachlan** on *Creating "Wave" Ornaments*.
- Following the introduction of a new visitor at this meeting, there was a discussion on how the Guild can help relatively new turners gain skills in the basics of wood turning. An idea for "mini-demo"s on specific topics was suggested. These will be short duration (max. 30 minutes) and will be held in the 30 minutes before the normal meeting start time. This will be piloted at the February meeting with Dave McLachlan demonstrating tool sharpening with the Sorby ProEdge™ system.
- A discussion ensued on desired topics for future meetings. The most popular suggestions were:
  - Back to Basics — the basics of turning wood
  - Sharpening Tools
  - Sourcing & preparing turning wood — cutting blanks from a log

Main Demonstration:

The main demonstration was a pre-recorded video demonstration by **Richard Ford** on "Turned and Engraved Wooden Flowers", with Richard participating online to answer questions. The full video of Richard's demo is available on the Guild's YouTube channel at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjdjyQR4ZIo



Richard's process is to:

1. turn the head of the flower;
2. engrave a desired pattern on the flower head using a laser engraver fitted with a chuck rotary device to rotate the flower head as it is engraved; and
3. dye the flower head and a dowel for the stem, then assemble.

Turning the Flower Head:

- Start with a blank of the desired width and about 4 inches long. Richard usually uses clear spruce, often from construction lumber, for his blanks.
- Mount the blank between centres and turn it to a cylinder using a spindle roughing gouge, then turn a tenon on one end that will fit in a collet chuck. To get an accurate tenon diameter, set a pair of calipers to the desired diameter and use a narrow parting tool to cut "depth" cuts, then remove the wood in between these cuts using a gouge or skew chisel to get a smooth tenon of the correct diameter.
- Reverse the blank in a collet chuck and true up the exterior again.
- Using a spindle gouge, shape the bottom end of the flower head to the desired round shape. Richard often uses a tulip-like shape for his flowers.
- Hollow out the interior with a Forstner bit to get a wall thickness about 1/8″, with the lathe running at about 800 rpm.
- As drilling may have shifted the blank slightly it is good to re-true the outside again.
- Drill a $^1/_4$″ hole through the centre axis of the blank to accept the dowel that will form the stem.

- Richard then uses a Oneway Termite™ tool (held in a round bar with a small handle) to clean up the inside and bring the walls down a little thinner if desired. He finds a "platform" type tool rest works well to keep the tool steady and horizontal *(as seen in the photo below).*

- Sand the flower head to remove any tool marks. The flower head is now ready for engraving.

Engraving the Flower Head:

- Richard uses a Creality Falcon II™ 23 watt laser engraver fitted with a chuck rotary device to rotate the work piece around the Y axis. He uses LightBurn™ software to control the laser.
- The desired pattern is a repeating pattern to create identical petals on the flower head. The length of the design (with all its repetitions) must be exactly the same as the circumference of the flower head. So the size of the pattern must be adjusted to this dimension in the software.
- The cutting / engraving pattern can be made of several layers and will be cut in order. The speed and power of the laser is set for each layer to get the desired cutting or engraving effect. The engraving work can be previewed in the software to check the order of cutting tasks.
- The flower head is then mounted in the chuck rotary unit held between the chuck and its live center.
- The laser head is aligned with the "zero" point over the blank and it is ready to go.
- Once the laser is set, the extraction fan is turned on — a good enclosure with effective smoke extraction is essential.

- **Note:** it is critical not to look at the laser while it is cutting as it can cause blindness instantly. It is also important to ensure that pets are not around so they are not impacted by the laser light.
- Once the engraving is complete, remove the flower head from the laser unit and remove any waste wood parts remaining.

Computer screen showing the software with a view of the laser engraving area.

Finishing the Flower:

- Remount the flower in the collet chuck on the lathe and lightly sand the flower exterior and interior to remove any scorch marks from the laser or pencil marks.
- Part off the flower head at its base using a narrow parting tool. Richard made a very narrow parting tool from an old reciprocating saw blade with the teeth ground off using a belt sander. Remember that there is a hole through the centre so it will part off as soon as you reach the hole.
- Use compressed air to remove any sanding dust from the engraved areas.
- Richard uses $^1/_4''$ craft dowels from The Dollar Store and these are coloured using a green bingo "dauber" or marker. An uneven coating is fine as real flower stems are not uniformly coloured. Once dried, glue the dowel into the flower head with a small amount of wood glue.
- Then use food colouring to dye the flower head. This creates a transparent dye allowing the wood grain to show through. A typical food colour kit will have instructions for mixing a wide range of

colours and the colour is mixed in rubbing alcohol. Brush on the dye mixture with a small craft brush being careful to get an even coating. Set aside to dry fully.

- If desired, you can apply a thin coat of satin spray laquer, but they don't need any finish unless desired.

Show & Tell:

Norm Jolivet presented a hollow ornament in an unknown wood, created without using the "inside-out" method.

David McLachlan showed off a nice "Celtic knot" ornament in maple with red-dyed veneer to make the Celtic knot. The finials were also turned from a lamination of Holly, Maple and dyed Sapele veneer.

He then showed off some quite small gouges he had made for pen and finial work using some high speed steel (HSS) tool stock he picked up on Amazon.

Next he demonstrated how he makes "Shepherd's Hook" style hooks for his ornaments. He uses 16ga aluminum wire (copper coloured) and twists the wire to the desired hook shape using fine nosed, smooth-jawed pliers (Jewelers' pliers) available from Michaels.

He also suggested a Show & Tell challenge for the February meeting: that members bring in finials they have made as the demo will be on ornaments.

Jim Diamond presented a tool handle he made using an unknown wood to house a small collet holder.

Richard Ford showed off the results of a collaboration between himself and **Edmund Benoit**. Edmund had turned a number of lantern ornaments following **Bob Earle**'s demo in December. These were then engraved by Richard using the techniques demonstrated at this meeting. In terms of "depth" of the engraving, the surface of the lanterns being engraved was approximately $1/4''$ below the outer diameter (roof edge) of the ornament and still had clear definition.

Raffle Results:

Yogi Gutz	took home a selection of Cherry slabs (3).
Gary Landry	collected a nice slab of Cherry.
Calum Ewing	added some *Woodturning* magazines (6) to his library.
Martin Lachance	dded a Mike Darlow book to his library.
Bob Earle	collected a Richard Raffan book for his reading time.
Chris Palmer	took home a set of *Woodturning* magazines (6).

The meeting wrapped up at 3:55 PM.

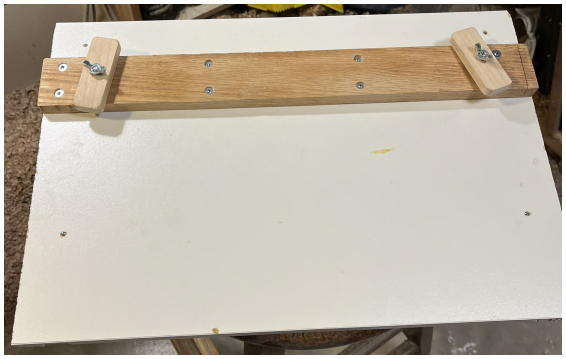
Calum Ewing — Secretary

Router Lathe Table

A couple of years ago Richard Ford had a video where (as an aside) he demonstrated a lathe table he used when buffing small items to rest/stabilize his arms. I have always thought that would be a good thing to have. Then, in December I was thinking about how to put flutes on bowls and kitchen utensils so I started watching YouTube videos about how to use your router to do that. Lo and behold, many of them used a lathe table. "Right", said I, it is time for a Christmas Holiday project.

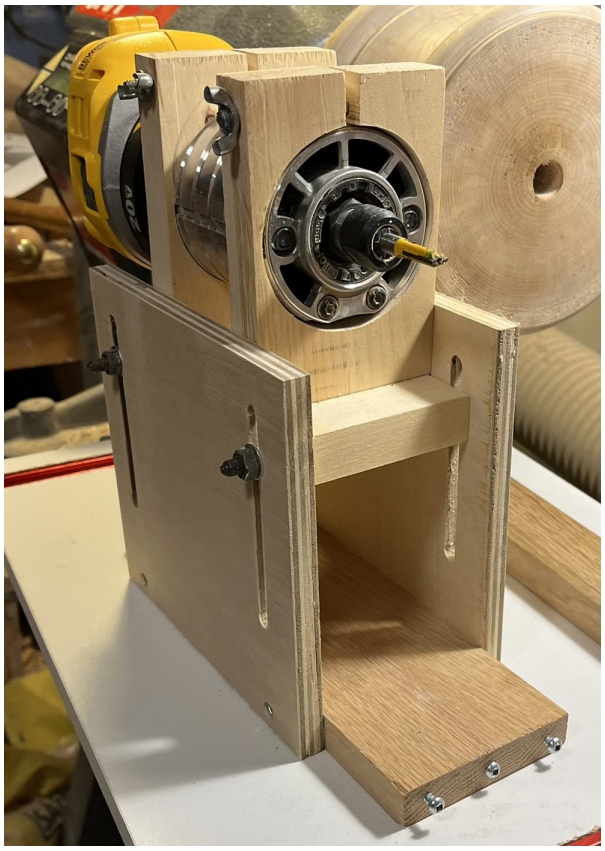
Building a jig for using a hand-held router with a lathe.

Step 1: Lathe table to provide a stable platform for mounting the router in some sort of jig.



I used a piece of particle board shelving, cut a piece of oak that fit snugly in the groove of the lathe bed and then attached two bolts with butterfly nuts and wooden plates to fit underneath the bed. See Picture 1 at the right.

Step 2: Sled for router.

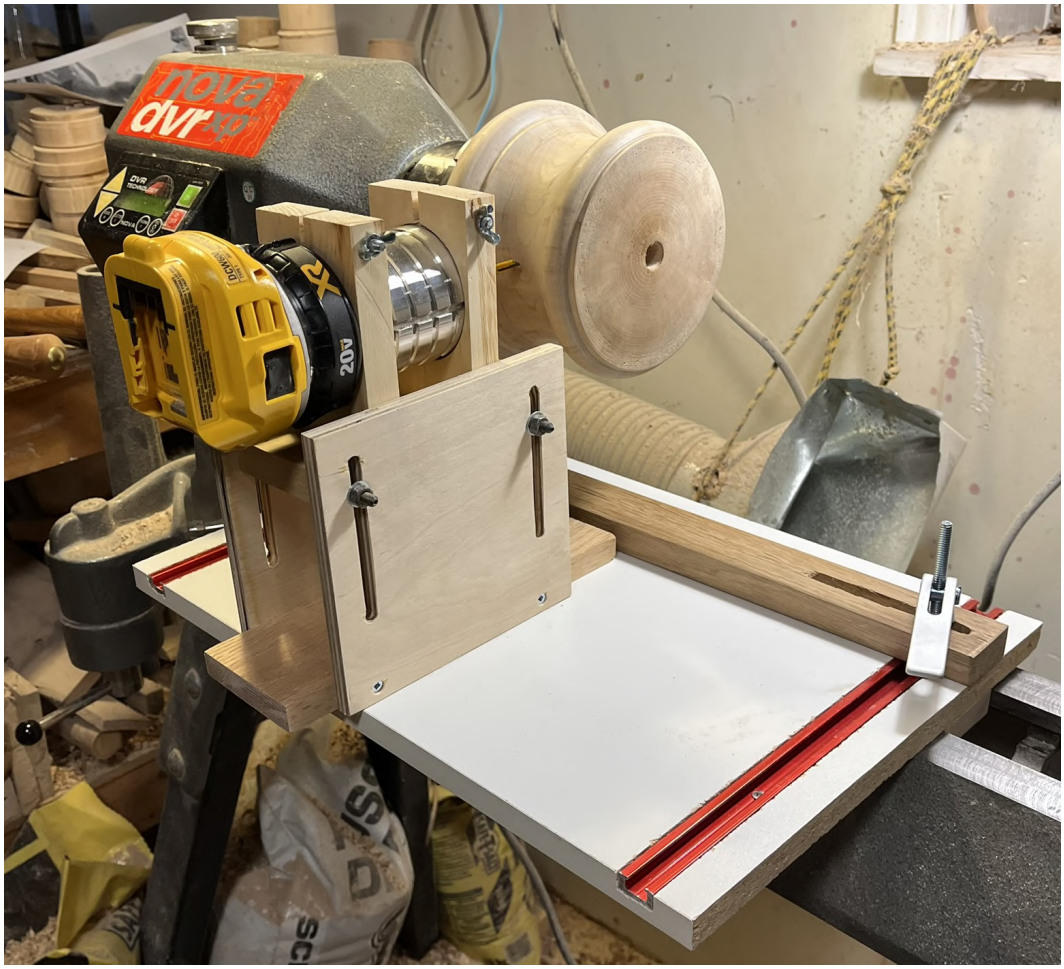


First I made a small sled with two uprights that would clamp around the barrel of my DeWalt cordless router. Uprights were cut so that grain is running vertically, with a $\frac{1}{8}$–$\frac{1}{4}$″ space at the top, and a bolt with butterfly nut to allow it to be tightened around the router barrel. Then a second sled with vertical slots so the first sled can be adjusted in height (and slightly in angle). I made a mistake here in that my second sled is not quite wide enough for the control section of the router, which limits the height adjustment. Fixing that will be the Mk II version. The bottom sled also has three screws in the front face. The two on widely spaced ones are for following a straight or concave curve, the centre one is for following a convex curve. See Picture 2.

Feeling pretty smug I put it all together and tried it out on a small utensil. It worked ok. But clamping a guide was problematic on my lathe. So . . .

Step 3: Adjustable guide for router jig.

Busy Bee had a sale on T-Strips and T-Clamps, so on Boxing day I visited them and picked up a section of T-Strip and two T-Clamps. Spent the next day installing the two T-Strips and an oak guide. For fluting a bowl I will make a different curved guide.



I am fairly happy overall with the result. The lathe table is pretty quick to mount and dismount and I am looking forward to seeing what I can do with fluting projects. Wondering if the jig might be modified a bit to help with making yarn bowls.

Mark Hazen

DaveM's Fireside Chat

Welcome back to my fireside chat, and the upcoming Happy Valentine's Day. This month I will be presenting a new jig for making Christmas wave ornaments at the meeting. This presents definite challenges for the turner, but besides the jig, a whole system is developed to produce wave ornaments which I will not go into here but will save it for the actual meeting.

At our last meeting I put out a finial challenge, and hopefully members will remember to bring in examples of finials you have made. Even if you don't have any actual physical examples, you could always bring in some photographs of finials you have produced over the years. I would suggest you send in JPEG files ahead of the meeting to secretary@novawoodturnersguild.com so Calum can present them on the big screen. Here are just a few examples of finials I have produced over the years.

So please bring in some of your own finials to Show & Tell.

One last reminder for the upcoming meeting, we are planning to have a demonstration of the Sorby ProEdge Sharpening system a half hour before the beginning of the meeting (at 1:30)... If you are a new turner or have a particular gouge or skew you would like sharpened please bring it in and we will see what we can do.

. . . . . .

On the technical side this month I thought I would share a laminated finial. Unfortunately I didn't take a lot of photographs of it as it was being made as I was in time crunch to get it done (and not even a photo of the finished ornament!).

It occurred to me that it might be nice to have a colourful finial to go with the Celtic Knot bodies I produced this season as Christmas gifts. I started out with a piece of holly and took a couple of narrow slabs from it so that I had a core piece $7/8'' \times 3/8''$ and laid up two layers of red dyed veneer with the slabs forming spacers as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Gluing up the holly/veneer blank using 15 minute epoxy.

Once the blank was ready, I cleaned it up with a swan necked chisel to bring it close to square on the edges and mounted the blank in pen jaws on the lathe. The first order of business was to center drill the tenon end and tap it for M4 screw threads (Figure 2). Then I created a 5/8″ tenon on the end of the blank and brought the initial shoulder to the diameter I needed to fit in the ornament body as once it was in the collet chuck it wouldn't be possible to get in close enough to make these cuts without possibly hitting the collet nut with the gouge.

Figure 2. Tapping the end of the blank for a connecting M4 shaft between the top finial and bottom finial.

The blank was then mounted in an ER25 holder on the lathe and turned down using mostly the 6mm round skew. The initial rounding of the blank was done with roughing gouge with the blank supported by the tailstock live center. The finial was turned down to size with finger support.

The last photo (Figure 3) shows the nearly completed finial before sanding and finishing. The last profiles at the collet end still needed to be completed but I couldn't get at it with the skew, so I had to switch to a small custom made 6mm detail gouge to get the profile I wanted . . . and unfortunately, I never went back to photograph the completed profile.

Figure 3. Nearly completed finial showing the results of the laminations.

I hope you enjoyed this different take on making a finial.

Dave McLachlan

Moore† Tools For Sale

Continuing from the article in the December newsletter, Guild brother Don has a few more († see what I did there?) things for sale. (Zoom in your PDF viewer to get a closer look at any of these.)

Delta floor Drill Press $300.00

Laguna Bandsaw 16 HD (Made in Italy, not Taiwan) $3000.00

Craftex Shop Dust
Filtering Unit $200.00

Rigid Shop Air Filtration $70.00

Rockwell / Beaver 4″ Jointer
$150.00

Craftex Belt Sander $200.00

Please contact Don directly if you are interested in any of these tools.

Letters to the Editor

In a startling (shocking?) change, this month there is something that qualifies as a letter to the editor. (I won't say how long ago it was originally e-mailed. The wheels of journalism can turn slowly.)

. . . . . .

Hi <redacted>, I just received this article from Carter & Son Tools and thought I would pass it on to the membership. It is another alternative to cutting threads on the lathe. I think it gives a good description of how to go about it.

https://carterandsontoolworks.com/pages/threadchasingbasics

DaveM

. . . . . .

(This isn't exactly a letter to the editor, but I decided to put it here anyway. The joy of being the newsletter editor is that I get to make arbitrary decisions with (more or less) complete impunity.)

Stephen Zwerling tells me that he is planning on selling his woodturning tools and machinery. And his house, for that matter. If you are interested in any (or all) of these things, please contact Stephen directly at 902.497.0656 or **zwerling@mac.com**.

Cover Photo

Leo Westhaver sent in front and back pictures of a project he has been working on recently, and I liked them enough to make one of them this month's cover photo. He reports “It started out to be a maple plate. When I reversed it to work on the foot I decided to remove the foot and then carve it. Here is the result. It still needs some touch up sanding before finishing. I'm hoping the pyrography on the trees (I hope they look like trees!!) enhances the piece. Also the top inside edge of the rim where the branches meet is also textured using pyrography. It is $9\frac{3}{4}''$ D$\times 1\frac{1}{4}''$ H$\times \frac{1}{4}''$ thick.”

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.

In Memoriam

A long time ago there used to be an annual "wood" show in Nova Scotia, where companies and individuals involved in woodworking would put on a show in the Halifax area for a few days. In the early days of the NWG, we were always invited to have a booth in the "clubs" section, where we displayed turnings, met with people coming through the show, and put on woodturning demonstrations.

The NWG got its start because, one year at the show, a professional wood turner from New Brunswick put a sign-up sheet at his booth, inviting anyone interested in a woodturning club to add their name and phone number to the list. At the end of the show he passed the sign-up sheet to Steve Zwerling, who then led the charge to get the NWG up and running. We in the NWG owe our thanks to this New Brunswick wood turner, because without his benevolent efforts it is unclear as to when (if ever!) we might have eventually formed our Guild.

This New Brunswick turner was none other than Maurice Gamblin, who, I regret to report, passed away on January 16th this year.

The Guild had Maurice come and do a demonstration In October 2001; the topic was "how to get a gallery-quality finish on a bowl". He demonstrated the use of 2″ velcro-backed sanding disks held on a foam pad, where the pad's supporting block was chucked in a drill; I had not seen these sanding disks demonstrated up until that point. I was instantly converted to that method of sanding bowls, and I have used the technique he presented ever since.

Maurice was a very friendly person, and was keen to have people visit his shop. One time when my wife and I were driving through New Brunswick (his shop and gallery were just off the Trans-Canada near Perth-Andover, before New Brunswick built their new Trans-Canada highway) we stopped in to see him, but he wasn't around. I leaned on the glass door of his gallery to shield my eyes from the reflections in the glass, and, to my surprise, the door popped open; I closed it quickly in case someone came along and got suspicious! We didn't see him that day, but when we were returning to NS we stopped by again, and this time he was in. He was happy to show us his shop and what he was working on at the moment . . . which happened to be a 5 or 6' (yes, 6 foot, not 6 inches) bowl. His lathe was elegantly simple: a concrete post embedded in the concrete shop floor held a pillow block, and the shaft of the pillow block had a pulley on one end and an attachment point for the turnings on the other end.

He invited us to wander through his gallery. I admitted to him that I had accidentally popped the door open when we stopped by the first time, suggesting that maybe it had not been locked properly. He told me that the gallery door was usually unlocked(!). Apparently, to their credit, the good people of the Perth-Andover area are **not** a collection of woodturning thieves.

I will never forget that visit, both because of the unusual turning he did, as well as how friendly and welcoming he was. Maurice was not just a friendly woodturner, he was also a friend to woodturning.

His obituary can be found at **https://www.brunswickfuneralhome.ca/obituaries/182713**.

Jim Diamond

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.