

Volume 29 Issue 9 May 2025

The Turning Point

In this issue:

President's Report 2 **April Meeting Notes** 3 DaveM's Fireside Chat 8 Turning A Glasses Case 13 Baseball Bat Challenge 14 Baseball Bat Challenge 2 15Cover Photo 16 Photo Credits 16 Guild Executive 17



The next meeting of the Nova Woodturners' Guild will be held at Lee Valley Tools, 150 Susie Lake Crescent, Halifax Sunday, May 4, 2025 at 2:00 PM

At the May meeting: Bob gets rough with some bowl blanks Don't forget to bring your baseball bat fun turn project Drop off competition entries

The President's Report

As our next meeting is fast approaching we start to realize that our year is getting close to ending, with only one other meeting left. We all know this means that the annual turning competition is in the near future. But let's not get ahead of ourselves: we have the baseball bat competition to get to first. (That's a not so subtle hint that this month's meeting is for showing your work.)

Turning competition entries can be dropped off at the May 4 meeting, or May 16th and 17th from 12:00–3:00 at Lee Valley (an NWG member will be there to receive your entry). The entries will be on display from May 20th to June 9th. Rules and regulation are available on the website.

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

Bob Earle – President

Notes from the April Meeting

As the April meeting featured an Interactive Remote Demo (IRD), the meeting was held online only.

Back to Basics:

The pre-meeting "mini-demo" was provided by Kai Muenzer, on Using Leather to Improve Box Lid Fit. Kai explained that a loose fitting lid on a turned box could be "corrected" using a thin strip of leather:

- A thin strip of leather is set into a groove in the lid joint acting as a "gasket" and making the fit snug.
- Use 1/8'' wide untanned leather lacing available at art supply stores (e.g., Michael's) or Amazon.
- Using a 1/8'' parting tool, cut a shallow groove around the tenon of the box lid joint roughly centred on the height of the tenon. This groove should only be about 1/16'' deep.
- Seal the groove with sanding sealer and glue the leather into the groove using PVA, CA or Shoo Goo[™] adhesive. The leather will be easier to handle and glue in place if it is stretched slightly before gluing into the groove.
- Trim the ends of the leather at 45° where they meet and stretch the leather as needed to ensue a smooth, tight seam at the joint.
- Once the glue is dry, test the fit of the lid. If it won't go on, you can turn down the leather taking light cuts with a skew chisel or spindle gouge until the desired fit is achieved.
- The leather can then be finished as desired an oil finish looks best!
- Another, but trickier, option is to place the groove for the leather inside the mortise of the lid, rather than on the tenon. For this you will need a narrow hooked scraper tool, such as the Lee Valley Pepper Mill Mechanism tool, to cut the groove in the face of the mortise. Kai fashioned his own tool for this by grinding down a large Allen key to form the bent scraper. Proceed to glue and finish the leather gasket as above.

President **Bob Earle** called the meeting to order at 2:06 PM with 13 members online.

Main Demonstration:

This month's main demonstration is an Internet Remote Demo (IRD) with Calgary, Alberta-based turner **Kai Muenzer** on *Turning a Multi-axis Eyeglasses Case*. Kai's demo was recorded and will be available to members through the DVD video library for borrowing.

Getting Started:

- Start by selecting a blank of the desired species. It should be a close grained hardwood with relatively straight grain and no major knots or inclusions. Kai used Cherry for this demo.
- Measure the folded eye glasses in both length and the maximum width needed (don;t forget about the space needed for the arms). The diameter needed may be $1^{1}/_{2}$, $1^{3}/_{4}$, or 2 inches depending on the glasses. Most glasses will fit in a space 6'' long.
- Decide on the number of sides or facets. The case can be turned round, but it will tend to roll off of surfaces potentially damaging the glasses on impact with the floor. Three or five facets work well, but four generally does not look good.

Making the Template:

- Using a piece of heavy card stock or thin plastic, mark a centre point and lay out lines at 120° for a three facet box. For a 5 facet box, the lines would be at 72°.
- Next mark an offset point 3/8'' from the centre point along each line (more than 3/8'' makes the box too eccentric and less makes it too round.
- Place a compass at an offset mark and draw an arc of $1^{15}/_{16}''$ radius connecting the opposite two lines. Repeat for each of the offset marks.
- Cut out the template and it is ready to use.

Preparing the Blank:

- Start with a square blank about 8" long and 3/4" wider than the diameter needed for your glasses. So, for glasses that are 6" long and need 11/2" space, the blank should be 81/8" long and 21/4" wide.
- Mark the centre point of the blank ends and place the template centered on the end of the blank, with one of the points of the template aligned with a corner of the blank.
- Trace outside edges of template on the end of the blank with a fine but dark marker (e.g., a SharpieTM).
- Repeat the process on the other end of the blank.
- Mount the blank between centres and turn tenons on both ends. Important: do not round the blank and ensure that the turned tenons stay outside the markings on the ends so that the markings are not lost.
- Cut the blank in half at the mid point on the bandsaw or with a hand saw.

Shaping the Box:

- Mount one half of the box in the chuck and mark the centre point on the end.
- Mount a $1^{1/2''}$ Forstner bit in a Jacobs chuck in the tailstock.
- Mark a point on the drill shaft 3'' from the tip of the bit.
- Drill out the centre of the blank at 400 rpm. Drill slowly in small increments clearing chips out.
- Note: you will get much cleaner sides to the drilled hole if the hole is drilled in multiple size increments. For example, to get a good 15/8'' hole, drill first with a 11/2'' bit at 400 rpm, then drill in one smooth pass with a 15/8'' bit at 1000 rpm. Make sure the bits are sharp. You can sharpen them with a 600 grit flat diamond hone held flat on the beveled cutters. Don't forget to hone the tips of the cutting faces on the teeth on the edge if your bits have those teeth.
- Safety Tip: drilling is dusty!

- Mount the second half of the blank and drill a 15/8'' glue hole in the centre of the end, 3/4'' deep at 400 rpm.
- Next, drill a 3" deep hole with a 13/8" bit at 400 rpm, then do the final drilling with a 11/2" bit at 1000 rpm.

Making the Insert:

- Select a blank of hard maple with fine grain $1^{3}/4''$ wide and $5^{1}/4''$ long.
- Mount the square blank in the chuck with a thin "back up" plate of wood between the blank and chuck so that the drill tip does not contact the chuck.
- Drill a hole half way through the blank with a $1^3/8''$ bit at 400 rpm.
- Reverse the blank and complete the through hole from the other end. If the two drilled holes do not meet in the centre at exactly the same point, it does not matter as it will be re-drilled in the next step.
- Drill through the blank with a $1^{1/2''}$ bit at 1000 rpm in one smooth pass until the bit cutters contact your "backing plate".
- If the inside of the blank needs sanding, remove the blank from the lathe and sand with a large dowel wrapped with sandpaper, sanding along the grain.
- Make a stepped jam chuck that will mount in your chuck and the other end will fit snugly inside your liner blank. Bring up the tail stock with a large cone centre to secure the other end.
- Rough turn the outside of the liner using peeling cuts with a sharp skew chisel or with a roughing gouge.
- Use planing cuts with a sharp skew chisel to do the finish cuts on the outside to create a smooth cylinder of the correct diameter.
- *Tip:* if you use a "ring gauge" you can check the size of the liner without removing it from the lathe. A "ring gauge" is a ring of wood or acrylic with an inside hole exactly the diameter needed (1⁵/8″in this example). If it is mounted on the jam chuck before the blank is mounted, it and can be slid along liner to check when the diameter is correct. Do not turn the liner too small, so sneak up on the desired size slowly.
- Finally glue the liner into the second half of the box with PVA glue.

Turning the Outside:

- Assemble the full box. Add a single layer of masking tape to the outside of the liner near the centre of the box. This will prevent the two halves from slipping and rotating.
- Mount between centres using the first offset points. Use the Sharpie marks on the end with the lathe turning at high speed to assess where the limits of the marks are.
- Turn the first face down slowly using a roughing gouge, only to the **outside** of the outer Sharpie marks.
- Remount between centres at the second offset point and turn the second face.
- Repeat for the third face using the third offset point.
- Remount between centres using the centre point. Then using the tip of a skew chisel, cut a small "Vee" groove at the joint. Do not cut too deep as you have only 1/8'' of material at the centre of the turned faces.
- Remount at offset 1 and do finish cuts on the first face, then repeat for faces 2 and 3 using the second and third offsets. Turn these finish cuts in several steps: 1, 2, 3, then re-cut 1, 2, 3, etc. to sneak up

on the final shape (to the **inside** of the Sharpie marks) with nice crisp edges where the faces meet. Check progress frequently with the Sharpie marks on the ends.

- *Tip:* Flipping the blank end-for-end between each face cut will help to keep the grip of your drive centre good (this prevents one end of the blank from getting severely chewed up by multiple mountings on the drive centre.
- Refine your "Vee" cut at the joint slowly until you have a groove all the way around the box. Do this refining in several small cuts, checking progress frequently.

Sanding:

- Sand the exterior through the grits by hand to your desired finish with the lathe off.
- You can sand with a 2" power sander, but you must pay careful attention to the direction of the sander rotation and where you are applying pressure so that the sander does not run over the edge, rounding over your crisp edges.

Final Shaping:

- Use a parting tool to turn down the ends of the box at the desired length. Note: be aware of the depth of the interior ends of the box.
- Using a spindle gouge, turn a bead shape on the ends creating a "pommel" on the ends.
- Note that because of the eccentric shape, the gouge will be contacting only the tips of the eccentric edges as you are starting these cuts.
- Turn the pommel slowly taking light cuts until you have the desired shape.
- Remove the box from the lathe and cut the end "nubs" off with a sharp hand saw.
- Alternately, if you have an appropriate jam chuck $(1^{1/2''} \text{ and } 1^{5/8''})$ for each half of the box, you can mount each half on its jam chuck and turn off the nub with a small spindle gouge.
- Sand the ends of the box.

Finishing:

- If the suction fit is too tight, you can cut a "breathing" hole in the liner with a Dremel $^{\rm TM}$ sanding drum.
- If the fit is too loose, you an use flocking to line the "lid" half of the joint and create a snugger fit.
- Apply your desired finish to the box exterior and ends. You do not add finish to the liner insert.

A "Twist" on the Shape:

If desired, you can create a twisted box. To do this:

- The blank is mounted between centres with the headstock end in offset '1' and the tailstock end in offset '2', then the first face is turned.
- Remount between offsets 2 and 3, to cut the second face.
- Remount between offsets 3 and 1 for cutting the third face.
- Maintain this mounting sequence 1–2, 2–3, 3–1 for shaping and the finish cutting on each face.
- For a spiral in the other direction, use the sequence 1–3, 2–1, 3–2

Announcements:

President **Bob Earle** reported on the recent Artisans Weekend at Lee Valley. "Quite a few people were drawn to our table and several were interested in our Guild. I was there both days and Gary Landry was able to help out on Saturday. We were able to sell \$45 worth of our turnings from the items donated by Guild members."

A reminder that the Fun Turn "competition" will be revealed at next month's meeting, so bring your work along to show it off.

The end of the year is fast approaching and this means our Annual Turning Competition is about to happen. Drop off will be at the May 4th meeting, or May 16th and 17th 12:00–3:00 at Lee Valley. The entries will be on display from May 20th to June 9th.

The next meeting will be on May 4th, 2025, due to conflicts with Mothers Day and the Victoria Day weekend.

Show & Tell:

Nothing presented by those present.

The meeting wrapped up at 3:55 PM.

<complex-block>

Image: CP

Calum Ewing — Secretary

Some of the attendees, including demonstrator Kai (leftmost in middle row).

DaveM's Fireside Chat

I think we can finally say spring is here as some leaf buds are breaking (at least around my place and the forsythia are in bloom. This is a fast turnaround from the April meeting as the May meeting is especially early. I want to remind everyone that there is still time to get that project finished for the NWG Annual Turning Competition. With a reduced membership this year it is even more important that everyone tries to get at least one piece into the competition. Remember there are three categories — Spindle, Faceplate and Mandrel — and that you can enter up to two items in each category. For full details and rules for the competition please see our website under Documents the guidelines and rules as well as the two entry forms (these are clickable links):

Competition Guidelines Rules & Regulations Entry Form 1 (3 copies per entry) Entry Form 2 (1 copy per entry)

Good luck with your project(s) for the competition.

So, on the technical side I thought I might talk about two aspects of the same subject: mandrels. So, every once and a while there is a project that just calls out for a mandrel support system in order to turn something... The case in point is making this finial for a pendant lamp (Figure 1).



Figure 1. A ceramic/cherry wood pendant lamp that Laura and I collaborated on.

As you may or may not know, my wife Laura is a turner of sorts as a potter. We often try to combine our forces in making a multi-media project that is just a bit different, like these lamps. Since the wooden finial also has to hide the lamp socket and connector to hold the shade to the finial it requires that the blank be initially held in a standard chuck in order to drill out the socket pocket and the through hole for the cord (Figures 2 & 3).

The Turning Point



Figure 2. Using a ring faceplate to hold a cherry blank on the lathe (partially roughed out).



Figure 3. The lamp socket pocket roughed out, bored through 10mm, and a locating recess put in the finial to align with a shoulder on the shade.

One can immediately see the problem though: you need a means of holding the finial on the lathe in order to turn the top down to a small diameter where it was once held using a ring face plate. The screws prevent one from turning this down to the narrow end it needs, hence one should go to a mandrel and a guide holder in the lamp socket pocket. The obvious solution is to create a 10mm mandrel. The easiest way is to start out with an appropriate length of 10mm threaded rod and a means of holding it on the lathe. The easiest way to mount it, of course, would be between a 60° drive center and live center, but first we need to have 60° pockets for the centers to engage with. Figure 4 shows the components we will need to make this happen on the lathe. We need a dovetail cut into a short blank and a piece of 10mm threaded rod and nuts.



Figure 4. A hardwood blank with a 50mm diameter dovetail and the section of 10mm threaded rod.

The blank is mounted in the chuck and drilled out on the lathe to ensure the bore is perfectly centered (Figure 5).



Figure 5. With the blank mounted on the lathe and a 10mm drill, bore out the blank.

Once the blank is drilled, the shaft is mounted in the blank, then mounted in the chuck with the excess rod going into the bore of the headstock; mini-lathes may not have a big enough bore to accommodate the shaft (Figure 6). Once mounted on the lathe the face of the threaded rod is flattened using a mill file with the lathe running slowly (400 rpm).



Figure 6. Once bored out, mount the 10mm shaft into the blank and mount into standard 50mm jaws.

The Turning Point

Then mark the center with a fine marker with the lathe running and bring up the 60° center drill ensuring it is perfectly centered with the mark you just made (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Once the face of the shaft is faced using a mill file, mark the center of the shaft with a fine marker and line up the center drill, (mounted in the tail stock), with the exact center of the shaft.

Figure 8 shows the completed 60° center on the shaft.



Figure 8. The completed 60° center in the end of the shaft. Reverse the shaft in the block and repeat the process for the other end.

So now we have a proper mandrel shaft with centers ready to hold our roughed out finial, as shown in Figure 9. The lamp socket hole has had a snug fitting wooden bushing inserted in place and the shaft fitted with aluminum bushings at the narrow finial end, ready for final shaping of the finial.



Figure 9. The semi-roughed out blank mounted on the mandrel between centers on the lathe. Note there are aluminum spacers on the narrow end to facilitate getting to a narrow shoulder and not destroying your gouge edge on the steel nuts. (Note the double nuts locked at the drive end. This prevents the finial from undoing itself on the mandrel.)

The use of the mandrel shaft ensures a perfectly centered bore for the lamp finial and reduces any vibration that might have been introduced by holding the lamp socket end in a chuck. The added benefit is that this is a friction drive on the mandrel ends so if there is a catch the finial will sustain less damage than if it was held in a chuck. The fully roughed out finial is shown in Figure 10, ready for sanding and finish.



Figure 10. The fully shaped finial ready for final sanding and finishing.

To complete the lamp a hollow 1/8'' threaded pipe holds the lamp socket in the finial with a brass knurled nut on the finial end. The lamp socket has a threaded section that enters a hole in the ceramic shade and the shade is held to the finial with a Bakelite threaded ring.

I hope this was helpful in understanding how a mandrel might help you out with a particular problem, and how to make a simple mandrel supported between centers on the lathe.

Dave McLachlan

Turning A Glasses Case

So did anyone else try the eyeglass case demonstrated at the last guild meeting? I was intrigued by both the off centred turning and the turning of a cylinder 1/16'' thick. Well, I went for it this past week.

I used some mahogany I was gifted last month and birch for the insert cylinder. The off centre turning worked ok, although my cardboard jig was not as accurate as it should have been. What really worked well was the cylinder turning method. I used Kai's measurements $(1^{3}/8'' \text{ inside})$ and it was easy to get the 1/16'' wall thickness. I would say however that the $1^{3}/8''$ was not large enough for my ordinary glasses let alone my shop glasses. So I made a second set of jigs for $1^{5}/8'' (1^{3}/4'')$ cylinders. Hope other people have had fun with trying out the demo. And sorry I will not make the May 4 meeting, prior commitment.



Mark Hazen

Baseball Bat Challenge

Hello, this is Martin, and this is my baseball bat challenge: I made a slide whistle. Turning went pretty well but drilling in a long straight channel was a challenge. Could not get the hole to be in the center all the way. It worked out anyway since the two parts were from same turned and parted. In all I am happy with it.



Martin Lachance

Baseball Bat Challenge 2

When I was trying to decide what to turn with the baseball bat, it occurred to me that a baseball bat's destiny is to hit things, so why should I keep that piece of maple from fulfilling its purpose? Given the length of blank, a mallet seemed like the thing to turn. Those of you who read the April newsletter know that Bill M beat me to it, but I decided to carry on with my plan regardless. (Also, I regret to admit I didn't turn a mallet for the fun turn a couple of years ago, so this could be my very late entry.)

My mallet is nowhere near as elaborate as Bill's, but here it is anyway. It is $10.5'' \log_{100} 2^{3/8''}$ in diameter, and weighs in at 259g (9.15 oz, for you Imperialists).



A long, long time ago I bought some hop hornbeam at an AWA meeting, with the intention of making a mallet. Many years later (i.e., April 28, 2025), I decided that the mallet above needed a friend, and turned a bit of the hop hornbeam. The wood was a section of a small diameter trunk containing the pith, but after all these years there were only a few small splits near the very edge. The wood turned quite easily, and nearer the center the wood has quite a nice appearance.

This one is $12'' \log_{10} 3^{3}/8''$ in diameter, and weighs in at a hefty 626g (22.1 oz). I was given the opinion that this one is not well-proportioned, but sometimes you just need a bigger hammer (or mallet). I believe that when this one is used to hit something, that something will know it got hit.



Jim Diamond

Cover Photo



Guild brother Bill M selflessly saved all of you from seeing yet another burl picture on the front page of the newsletter. His modest comment was just "Left over olive wood and walnut." One might wonder what happened to the non-left over olive wood, but so far Bill is keeping that information to himself.

Photo Credits

The 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.

Position	<address></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

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

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@no-vawoodturnersguild.com** with a request to forward your email to all members.