

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, April 12, 2026 at 2:00 PM

At the April meeting:
Weird, unusual and wonderful turning tools: demos **and** hands-on
(Bring your PPE so you can step up and try something new!)
Show and tell

The President's Report

It's amazing how fast the year is going. Last month's demo by Emma Cook, the Tiny Turner, was an interesting demonstration of how a little augmentation to a bowl can significantly change the look of a project. I was taken by the differing shades of light emanating from the chameleon flakes as the viewing angle changed. I was fascinated enough to try one myself.

With the end of year quickly approaching it means one thing: the annual turning competition is nearing, more details will be provided at the meeting.

Recently we were contacted by Clapman's Beeswax Products Ltd., a family run business from Salt Spring Island BC. They have offered us wholesale prices on their products. Several of their products are available at Lee Valley. In order to get wholesale pricing we would have to order 1 case of a product and then add any other products at the individual price. The list is available for viewing at <https://claphams.com/wholesale-order-form/>.

See you Sunday.

Bob Earle – President

Notes from the March Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President **Bob Earle** at 2:02 PM with 18 members present online. The first part of this meeting will be an Internet Remote Demo (IRD) and the meeting will be held entirely online.

Main Presentation:

This month's presentation was a remote demonstration with Emma Cook (a.k.a. The Tiny Turner), <https://www.thetinyturner.co.uk/> on "Turning an Iridescent Bowl".

Preparation:

- Emma starts with a blank of 4 to 6" in diameter and 3 to 4" thick. She was using a nice piece of Walnut for today's demonstration.
- Mount the blank between centres. With the blank mounted, run the lathe at the fastest speed possible that avoids vibrations.
- Emma uses bowl gouges with a traditional short grind (not a fingernail profile) when turning bowls. If turning platters, she will normally use a gouge with an asymmetrical grind with the left wing ground longer than the right which makes it easier to turn the broad flat areas of a platter.
- Turn the blank down until it is round and running smoothly.



Turning the Exterior:

- Using a parting tool, create a waste tenon at the tailstock end. This tenon will be held in the chuck rather than using a recess, as a recess with the chuck jaws in expansion mode may cause the blank to crack. The tenon is formed with the parting tool cutting uphill to get a good peeling cut, rather than a scraping cut with the tool held horizontal; make the tenon approximately 1/4" long.
- Don't make the dovetail sides of the tenon too steep (if you will be using dovetail profile jaws) as you need to ensure that you'll have a good grip on the tenon.
- Mount the blank in the chuck using the waste tenon, then smooth the other end. This will become the bottom of the bowl.
- Turn a tenon on the bottom of the bowl. You may choose to have this tenon become the foot of the bowl. If so, hollow the centre of the tenon and decorate as desired.
- Start to shape the curve of the bottom of the bowl using a small (i.e., 3/8") bowl gouge. Frequently adjust the position of the tool rest as the curve forms so that the gap between the tool rest and the wood stays less than 1". If the gap gets over 1", there is too much of the shank of the gouge extending beyond the tool rest which can cause the shank to flex, causing rough cuts due to tool vibration.
- When you have the rough shape for the bottom, move to the top of the bowl sides and turn down towards the rim. Then turn away the flat band that will be left at the widest part of the bowl ("waist"). Use smooth, light cuts to refine the shape and remove any tool marks on the surface.
- Sand the outside of the bowl to the desired finish. Emma uses a passive disk sander that is rotated by the wood moving past it. You can sand with the lathe running fast, but running too fast will overheat the disk and destroy the adhesive holding the abrasive onto the disk and damage the disk.

Also, sanding too fast can cause overheating and result in heat checks in the surface of the wood. Walnut is not too bad for this, but Maple is easily damaged.

- You can use a sanding sealer (cellulose-based) and polish the wood with an abrasive polish like Yorkshire Grit™ or Richard Ford's NovaSilk paste.
- Apply your desired finish to the bowl exterior. Emma prefers a penetrating oil finish to highlight the natural grain of the wood and then a coat of Conservators' Wax over that. A final finish of wax is ideal to avoid issues at the last decorating stage later.
- Final Step: Use the corner tip of a parting tool to cut 2 'V' grooves in the side of the bowl approximately 1/8" wide and deep. The corner of the square end of the parting tool will result in 'V' grooves that are as wide as they are deep with sides at approximately 45 degrees to the surface. The top groove should be cut a little below the rim of the bowl and the lower groove near the widest part of the bowl profile. Note: it is important that these grooves are cut after the finish is applied so that no finish gets in the bottom of the grooves, and before the bowl is hollowed so that the bowl does not change shape during hollowing making it impossible to get even, consistent grooves cut on the outside after hollowing.

Turning the Interior:

- Turn the bowl around and mount in the chuck gripping the second tenon / foot.
- Start to hollow out the bowl interior. Start cuts with the tool angled well over so that the bevel at the cutting edge is approaching the rim at a steep angle (the end of the tool handle should be well away from you over the lathe bed at the start of the cut). The bevel angle steers the cut, not the cutting edge. A steep bevel angle makes sure the bevel gets trapped against the edge it has just cut and can't skip out, ruining the rim of the bowl.
- Continue to hollow the interior ensuring that the interior shape follows the exterior for a consistent wall thickness.
- Take the rim and upper side to the desired thickness first, then work on the lower side and finally the bottom. The plug that forms in the centre can be cut down by cutting from the centre out, but finish cuts on the inside need to be made from the rim down to the centre for a smooth finish.
- When turning the "corner", or transitioning between the side and bottom of the bowl, drop the handle, raising the cutting edge up to around the 10 to 11 o'clock position in the bowl to keep the bevel engaged and supporting the cut as you round the corner.
- Don't turn the bottom too deep if you are planning to remove the tenon to make a small foot, so that you leave enough wood in the bottom.
- Emma switches to a larger (1/2") bowl gouge for finish cuts on the interior to remove any tool marks from the smaller gouge used for hollowing.
- The rim can be trimmed to have a slight inward slope on the top of the rim, enhancing the design.
- Sand and finish the interior of the bowl in the same manner used for the exterior.

Carving the Decoration:

- Emma was trained in traditional carving techniques, so used 2-handed carving chisels for most texture work. She prefers to have all turning completed before starting decoration to avoid spending a lot of time decorating and then damaging the piece with a subsequent turning incident like a catch.
- Use a gouge chisel with a shallow "sweep" for easier carving. For this bowl, Emma used a #3 fishtail 1/2" gouge. For harder woods, use a shallower (e.g., #2) sweep gouge.

- Start carving a little beyond the crown of the side grain to avoid chip outs from carving uphill in the grain. Lock the indexing head on the lathe to secure the bowl in a fixed position and raise the tool rest to help support your lower hand.
- Take shallow cuts to create “divots” in the wood surface that overlap to create a “hammered” appearance. As you cut, slide the gouge to the side to take an easier, slicing cut, which results in a smoother finish. Use the ‘V’ grooves cut earlier to frame and limit the texture band.
- As you move around the bowl, unlock the indexing head and reposition the bowl so that you are cutting in a comfortable area. Try to ensure the divots cut are fairly consistent in size and shape.
- When carving in end grain areas, swing the chisel around so that it is parallel to the lathe bed and cut towards the headstock. In this way, the gouge is cutting across the grain and will not chip out wood as you cut.

Colouring:

- Emma uses iridescent “Chameleon” pigments to colour the textured band. These are available through her website and at better artist supply stores.
- Decide on the colours you want to use. They should complement the colour of the wood used. For example, with Walnut, blues, greens and purples work well, but red, yellow and orange don’t look good.
- Paint the textured band with black gesso paint and allow it to dry fully. This black paint creates a suitable base for the next steps and the black highlights the iridescence in the pigments. If any gesso gets in the ‘V’ grooves, it is not a big issue. If any gets beyond the ‘V’ grooves onto the sides of the bowl, the wax finish will allow it to wipe off easily once dry.
- Once the gesso is fully dry, apply size over the gesso. Use metal leaf size and follow the manufacturer’s directions on how long to leave it to become tacky (usually 10 to 15 minutes).
- When the size is ready, use a soft brush, like a camel hair brush or makeup brush, to apply the pigment. Dip the brush in the dry pigment and dab it onto the size. Once covered, use the brush to smooth and even out the pigment. Allow to dry fully (at least 2 hours, or better yet overnight). It is best to leave the pigment band without finish for the best lustre and sheen. If needed, you can add a coat of clear gloss lacquer over the texture band.

Final Steps:

- Use 2mm leather lace to frame the texture band by setting it in the ‘V’ grooves cut earlier. Any colour of lace can be used but colours that complement the pigment colour work best.
- Cut the end of the lace at 45 degrees and apply a thin bead of clear textile glue into the groove. Start fitting the lace into the groove pressing the lace into the glue, rotating the bowl as you go. When you get to the starting point, trim the lace at a complementary 45 degree angle and join it to the starting end. The 45 degree angle avoids an abrupt cut line and makes the join in the lace much harder to notice.

Guild meeting:

Following Emma's very engaging demonstration, the Guild meeting continued on the Jitsi platform with 15 members present.

Announcements:

- Tool Auction: the auction items are all set up and things are just about ready to go. Watch for emails on when the auction will open and be available for bidding.
- Purchase of products from Emma Cook's website: to reduce shipping costs, we may want to do group purchases. Emma has offered a discount to Guild members following her demo and group purchasing could reduce shipping costs. Brokerage fees may be a deciding factor, though.
- "Members" email list: nearly all current members have opted in to the "members" email list, so any member can contact the membership with questions or offers, etc., by emailing to members@no-vawoodturnersguild.com
- There are videos of other demonstrations by Emma hosted on YouTube and available through her website (www.thetinyturner.co.uk).

Show & Tell:

Mark Hazen, following on his demonstration last month, showed off a tree ornament with the branch "layers" shaped and offset at 120 degrees from the adjacent layers for a more natural looking appearance.

Dave McLachlin presented a few turned fishing lures of different styles:
— one was jointed in the middle;
— a second was shaped in a "popper" style.

Dave uses stainless eyelets to attach hooks to the body and used 1/8" rivets with the centre pins removed to form ferrules for the drilled holes in the ends. The eyes at the front and back ends are formed in thin stainless wire that passes through a hole drilled through the body as eyelets in the ends would pull out of the end grain under strain. He will be coating the lure bodies with epoxy prior to painting.

The meeting wrapped up at 4:15 PM.

Calum Ewing — Secretary

DaveM's Fireside Chat

Spring is almost here, well as close as it can be in the Maritimes, with snow systems possible even in April. I want to take this opportunity to remind members that the Annual NWG Turning Competition is coming up quickly . . . now is the time for getting those competition pieces on the go. The competition pieces will need to be submitted the third week in May. Remember you can enter two pieces in each of three categories (spindle, faceplate and mandrel). As always it would be great if you could enter several pieces. And don't forget the prizes are awarded based on participation.

I wanted to discuss on the technical side today how I went about repairing a pepper mill damaged during its initial turning . . . What had happened was that some beads added to the body messed up and so they were taken out but then there was missing wood, which can be seen in Figure 1. The obvious way to repair this was to remove more wood and add a band of segmented wood. This was made more complicated as the grinding mechanism had already been inserted into the body and couldn't be easily removed.



Figure 1. Damaged pepper mill remounted on the lathe using friction fit drive centres which accommodated the protruding aluminum shaft of the pepper grinding mechanism.



Figure 2. The two friction drives showing the central bores to accommodate the protruding shaft at both ends. The smaller tailstock end friction drive centre had a single layer of masking tape added to ensure a tight fit into the pepper mill body. The opposite end of the small drive had a 60° countersink added to accommodate the live centre.

The damaged beads had been removed before I received the pepper mill, but the recess didn't have perfectly square edges and had to be cleaned up before I would be able to add a segmented ring to the body, seen in Figure 3. (Note the rounded edges of the recess). To clean up the recess the mill body would have to be remounted on the lathe so the cut away area could be extended slightly and the bottom perfectly flattened to accommodate the ring. This was accomplished using some custom inserts as seen in Figures 1 & 2.



Figure 3. The pepper mill body with the damage cut away, but there were not clean square edges that would accommodate the ring being inserted seamlessly.

Although I had an adjustable angle jig for cutting segments, I decided it would be a good idea to build a dedicated 12 segment ring jig with fixed guides 30° apart (each guide 15° perpendicular from the blade). I used a 3/8" plywood base with hardwood guides (Figure 4). In use the wood strip is alternated between the two guides to make the segments.



Figure 4. The business end of a jig meant for making segmented rings.

Figure 5 shows the resulting segment; when 12 of them are put together they form a perfect ring with no gaps between the segments. Walnut spacers were made to go between the segments for visual interest. The grain of the spacers was aligned with that of the walnut body.

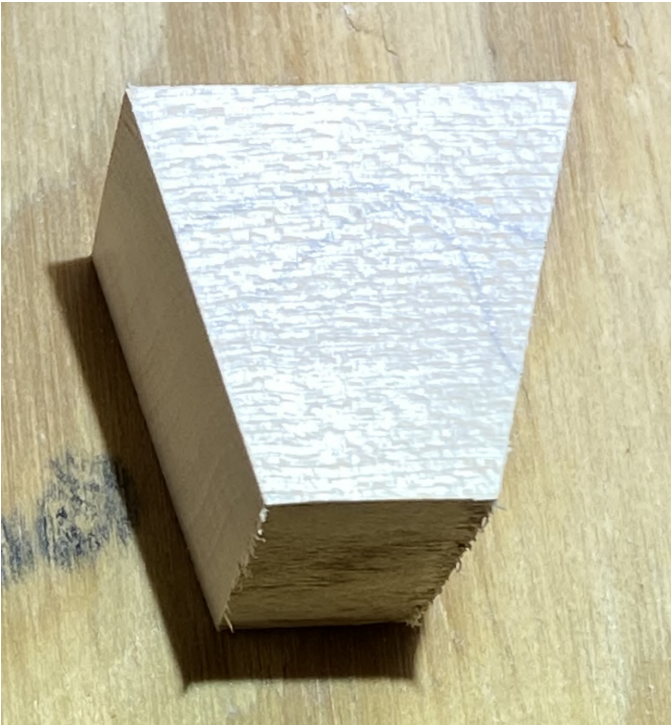


Figure 5. The resulting segment from the jig were exactly the right dimensions to make a perfect ring. . . Between each ring thin walnut spacers were added to match the wood of the mill body.

Figure 6 shows the glue up for the ring. The ring had two opposing sides fitted with a piece of cardstock to facilitate splitting the ring in two after turning down the ring to fit into the groove of the pepper mill body.

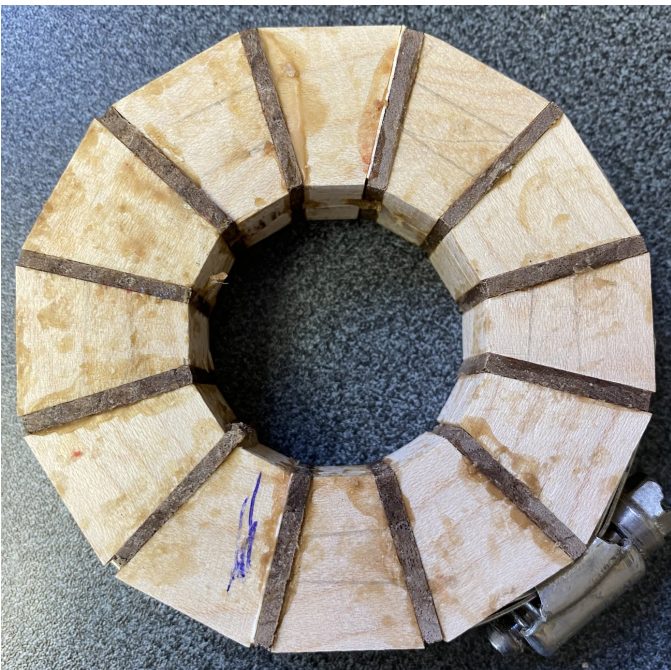


Figure 6. The glued up segmented ring with walnut spacer inserts.

The glued-up ring was then placed in a 100mm dovetailed jaw set, with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " backing plate to prevent the cutting tool from contacting the jaws when hollowing out the center of the ring (Figure 7). The upper and lower faces of the ring were cleaned up with a square carbide cutter. The ring was reversed in the jaws to clean up the opposing surface and to bring it to the correct thickness to fit in the grooves. The thickness was determined using a digital caliper.



Figure 7. The glued up segmented ring held in 100mm dovetailed jaws with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " backer disk inserted first to protect the gouge and the jaws from damage.

Once the ring was fully dimensioned to fit in the groove it was time to split the ring into two pieces (Figure 8). This was accomplished by placing a box cutter blade on the cardstock seam and applying a small amount of pressure. The ring split apart amazingly easily. A few swipes of the ring on a piece of 120 grit sandpaper sheet on a flat surface cleaned away the residual cardstock and glue.



Figure 8. The segment has been split in two using a box cutter blade at the cardstock inserts.

Figure 9 shows dry-fitting the ring into the groove to make sure it fits perfectly. After checking the fit the ring was removed and a generous amount of clear 15-minute epoxy (C-poxy 15) was applied to the ring and the groove and clamped up with a hose clamp. Small cardstock shims were placed at the two ring junctions so that any ejected epoxy wouldn't bond the hose clamp to ring (Figure 10).



Figure 9. Fitting the split rings into the groove. Note that there is almost a perfect fit height wise into the groove.



Figure 10. The ring is glued in place with clear epoxy with compression accomplished with a hose clamp. Note there is a small piece of cardstock placed under the hose clamp at the joint of the two ring segments to prevent the hose clamp getting glued to the ring.

Once the epoxy had set the ring was turned down to the pepper mill body using the same setup as seen in Figure 1. The tool of choice for me to do this was a $1\frac{1}{4}$ " skew. Figure 11 shows the result of the finished skew cut. There had been some small jaw marks left on the mill body from the initial bead repair done before I received this for repair, so I took a small skim cut the full length of the mill body to ensure these marks were removed and a continuous contour with the new ring insert and mill body.



Figure 11. The resulting pepper mill once the ring is turned down to the pepper mill body. A thin layer of the mill body was removed to get a perfect continuity of the body and the ring.

The completed repair is seen in Figure 12, next to another view of the turning before the repair for comparison. The walnut spacers ended up being almost the same final colour as the body and it gives the appearance of maple segments inserted into isolated recesses in the body.



Figure 12. Before and after: the pepper mill before the repair on the left, the completed repair on the right.

A snow-covered tree, Take 3

As you may recall, a couple of months ago Guild brother Mark gave a demo on turning Christmas tree ornaments, and there was some discussion about having the lower edges of the “snow layers” covering the tree sloped, rather than straight across. Mark went away, gave it some thought, and showed a new piece off at the February meeting. Unfortunately, it didn’t get photographed, so I asked Mark for a photo for this month’s newsletter.



Pens from the crib

As I previously mentioned either at a monthly meeting or in this Newsletter, I was asked to produce three pens for three brothers (one is my brother-in-law) as a memento of their childhood home. I was given a piece of wood, a leg of the crib they all slept in as infants, to use to make the pen bodies. Long story short, the pens were well received.

As a result I was asked to make six more pens for the adult children (all female) and wives of the brothers. In the photo below you can see the finished pens. They are all "Fancy Slimline" pens, in gunmetal, chrome and gold finishes. In order to differentiate each from the others I made them all in different profiles and/or with burn-in lines. They have not been delivered so I do not have any feedback yet on the reception they received.



Gary Landry

Video of the Month

Guild brother Dave sent in this link to a short video of someone making a cell phone “amplifier”. You will recall that Guild brother Bob recently did a demo where he made such a thing, so the video is topical.

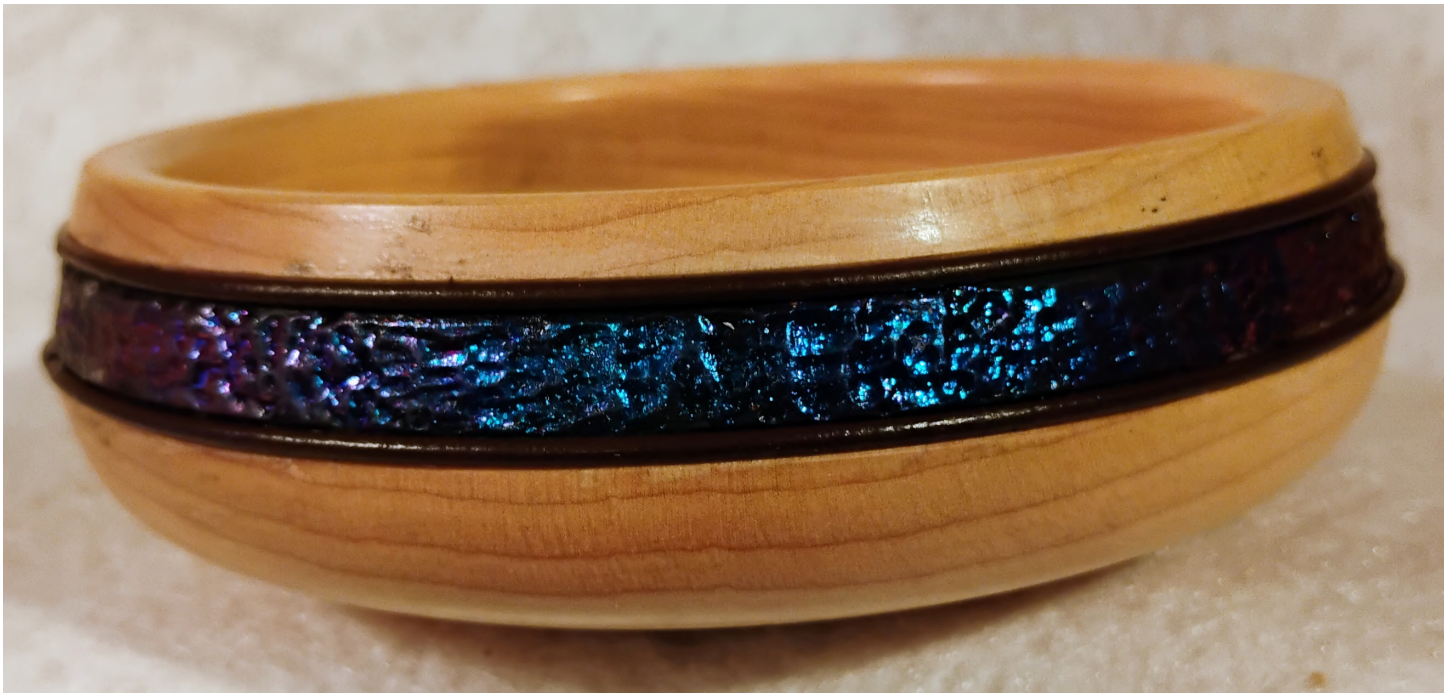
It is only three minutes long, so you don’t even need to move to your comfy chair to watch it. The video skips over various interesting details, but maybe the missing bits will provide some topics for conversation.

There is no doubt the finish he ends up with is gorgeous. Definitely worth 180 seconds of your life, in my opinion:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/jJY4z8KCz4Y?si=D7hsjOYTfb6HJVvX>

Decorated Bowl by Regular-Sized Turner

El Presidenté sent in a picture and these words: “Attached is a photo of my Emma Cooke inspired chameleon flake bowl. It was turned from a piece of maple I got in a recent meeting raffle. It was finished using a sanding sealer then abrasive wax followed by a layer of bees wax.” Kudos to Bob for trying out some new techniques right away!



Cover Photo

Did you make any fishing lures to bring to this meeting? If not, you should have at least a few hours after you get this newsletter to try to turn one out. Here are some that Dave has provided for inspiration.



Photo Credits

Rather than sending Chris Palmer to England to photograph the Tiny Turner for our March meeting, we gave him last month off. The photos in this month's issue were (as far as the editor knows!) all taken by the person who made the item in question, repaired the item in question, and/or the person who wrote the article.

Nova Woodturners' Guild 2025/26 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	director1	Mark Hazen	
 Committees			
Library	library	Jim Diamond Brian Sharp	C
Web Site	webmaster	Richard Ford	C
Membership & Promotion	membership	vacant	
Newsletter	newsletter (or) news	Jim Diamond	C
Competition	competition	Bill Maes	C
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.