



IWG News

The Newsletter of the Island Woodturners Guild

January 2011



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About the IWG:

The Island Woodturners Guild meets from 1:00 - 4:00 PM on the 4th Saturday of each month (except for July and August) at the Central Saanich Senior Citizens' Centre, [1229 Clarke Road](#), Brentwood Bay, BC. Visitors are welcome.

Newsletter Editor:

[Andre Robin](#)

Executive Committee

President:

[Graeme Evans](#)

Vice President:

[Mark Taylor](#)

Treasurer:

[Doug McBeath](#)

Secretary:

[Max Uhlemann](#)

Member at Large (and Membership Coordinator):

[Derek Wentworth](#)

Member at Large:

[Brian Hayes](#)

Past President:

[Donald Porter](#)

The IWG gratefully acknowledges the support of the following companies:

[Craft supplies USA](#)

[KMS Tools](#)

[Lee Valley](#)

[Skookum Tools](#)

The President's Turn: Your Executive

I thought I would start out the New Year by letting you know what your executive has been doing for you. This isn't a personal pat on the back; rather, it will hopefully inspire you to think about running for an executive position at our AGM in May.

Programme – Booking Guest demonstrators. Organizing demos for each meeting. The Guest demonstrators are a busy bunch so we have to look into the future to book them. For the present, we are booking two guest speakers per year unless a special opportunity arises. We have booked Johannes Michelsen for March, Bonnie Klein for October, Stephen Hatcher for April 2012, Graeme Priddle from New Zealand for June 2012 and Cindy Drozda for October 2012. Call up their names on the web to see what you can anticipate. For local Demonstrators, we continue to rely on you the members for both demonstrations and ideas on what you want to see.

Something different – organizing a “Shop Tour” on a non meeting Saturday this spring with thanks to Brian Kemper.

Equipment – We are continuously improving our video coverage with thanks to Tim Soutar. We will hopefully have a working audio system in place for the next meeting with thanks to Scott Reid and Andre Robin. We have purchased our own chuck for the lathe. We have purchased software needed for downloading video of our meetings to DVDs. We have purchased software which will allow us to convert our library videos from VCR format to DVDs. And of course, our lovely new Lathe with it's rolling base thanks to Mike Neal.

Information - Hew Lines has been working hard at building our website with input from the executive. He is looking for a deputy webmaster to cover the times when he is not available. Have a look at it at [islandwoodturners.ca](#). If you have any ideas on how to improve our website or anything else in the club, let us know.

Jeremy Brown and his team (Andre Robin and Tom Benham) have done a great job of creating our newsletter and getting it out each month. I for one think they are doing an excellent job. Obviously, the Executive contribute to the information flow but we would like to see more input from you the members.

President's Turn continued

Upgrading the library with thanks to Phil Cottell.

Miscellaneous

- Coordinating the guild turning challenges with thanks to Cheryl Samuel.
- Coordinating the use of the hall and the supply of refreshments with thanks to Andre Robin.
- Liaising with other Guilds.
- Coordinating the purchase of door prizes.
- Liaising with AAW.

Now I know there are a number of things I have not mentioned and probably some people I have not recognized, including those who help set up and reassemble the hall, but this gives you an indication of what we have done and where we are going. WE CANNOT GET THERE WITHOUT YOUR HELP AND INVOLVEMENT. We are still looking for a member to coordinate the effort required to meet our new mission statement – “Giving Back to the Community” which involves a commitment by the guild to work alone or with other like-minded groups to use our resources to benefit the community as a whole.

Graeme Evans

The Wool Spindle (Mediterranean style)

by Claudia Lorenz

Making thread or cordage by twisting together strands of vegetable fibre, tree bark, grasses and other found materials has been a universal human craft since we walked upright.

Archaeologists have found extensive evidence of rope-like cordage in many mid-Upper Paleolithic cultures (around 20,000BC). What started as the making of coarse rope and cordage by finger-twisting two or more strands together to make a stronger cord, slowly developed into finely spun yarns and threads of animal hair (and human hair, and very fine vegetable fibres such as wild cotton, flax and nettle). Rope was good for tying things together, but much finer versions of the constructed strand enabled weaving of textiles, which became a major occupation of formerly nomadic Neolithic populations that began settling, farming, and trading.

Excavations from sites in what is now Turkey have yielded fragments of eight thousand year-old linen textile made from finely spun flax.

Woolen textiles were highly valued for their warmth and gathering wool from annually moulting wild goats and sheep was replaced by combing and later shearing domesticated herds that were also food animals. The earliest woolspinning tool (after fingers!) was a simple stick that was rotated in the hand to



Here are some of my favourite wool spindles, including two fabulous examples by IWG members Rob (right) and Don (Left).

The Wool Spindle continued

twist the wool fibres together, making a long and sturdy yarn that was either wrapped around the spinner's hand or around the stick itself. Later on (around 700 years ago), a weight or whorl was added to the stick that allowed the spinner to set the spindle spinning in mid-air, suspended on the newly twisted yarn, greatly speeding up the process. This is exactly the same system still used by spindle spinners today, in many cultures around the world.

Wool spindles, ancient and modern, come in a huge array of sizes, shapes, and materials, but the turned or carved wooden spindle is by far the most persistent version. There are only two essential components; the shaft and the whorl. Metal, bone or wooden hooks or notches are added at the top of the shaft to keep the suspending yarn from slipping off, and whorls provide surfaces for endless embellishment. The whorl may be at the upper, lower, or midpoint of the shaft, according to regional custom and the spinner's preference. Spindles may be very light with the entire arrangement weighing less than one ounce for very fine yarns from delicate fibres, or they may be more than five ounces for heavy, cord-like

yarns made from much coarser wool fibres (i.e., for weaving traditional saddle blankets). Most contemporary North American spinners like spindles between one and one-quarter and two ounces (or 35 to 50 grams), with a long, slender shaft that will hold plenty of finely spun yarn



made from the very soft wool of specially-bred animals like the Australian Merino sheep, Cashmere goats, llama and alpaca.

So why on earth, in an age of lightning-fast computerized spinning and textile-making machinery, are so many people still spinning yarns using this most ancient and laborious process? Don't we have better things to do with our time? The answer, obviously, is no. There are

few things that feel better, simpler and more authentic than practicing the profoundly ancient craft, for example making yarn: a product that we have used, valued and enjoyed in virtually unaltered form, knotted, knitted or woven, for 7000 years. By replicating the motions and gestures of countless generations of men and women before us, we are connected to our collective past much more deeply than through reading history texts... it feels good, and healthful, and satisfying to know that in some ways, we are still the same humans that made that history. And some of us, well, we just really like making stuff with our hands.

Editor's note: There's lots of information about drop spindles on the web, including instructions for making them with or without a wood lathe. For example, see www.davidreedsmith.com/Articles/MakingDropSpindle/MakingJudi.htm, or Google "drop spindle lathe."

What we have done for ourselves dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.

- Albert Pike

Buy and Sell

For Sale:

- Last chance to get a Rockwell Beaver lathe before it goes to the ironmonger. This is a good beginner's lathe that will turn up to 9" diameter that has its own base and motor and an insert to fit a Nova 2 chuck (not included). It's yours for just a \$50.00 donation to the IWG.
- A 14.5" (93.5: blade) Busy Bee band saw. Has new upper guide and new tension plate. Comes with 5 new Delta blades (3/16 - 3/4) and an assortment of older blades. Asking \$250.00

Barrie Baptie - 250-655-3273

Call for Volunteers

by Mark Taylor

I was asked to provide a short article on programs for the IWG and as I am supposed to organize them I figured I should ask for some input. You have already been asked to volunteer in some capacity or other in the guild and the guild is only as good as you make it, so please volunteer. There are many accomplished turners within the guild and really good discussions around the show and tell table but all too often we miss the explanations of how a piece was accomplished in the short time available.

Robert Dunlop has volunteered to demonstrate making threads and using threads for a screw top box for our January meeting. However, I am looking for people to demonstrate or discuss some aspect of turning in February, April, May and June so please let me know if you can do something. You can contact me by phone 658-9346 or by e-mail at markandingrid@telus.net

So all the best for 2011, keep on turning and make sure you do a good turn for the Guild by volunteering.

Editor's Note: it isn't obvious to many of us, but the executive members donate an enormous amount of their time and resources to make the guild as successful as it is. Please consider your relationship with the guild to be a matter of giving as well as receiving. Some ways you can contribute are:

- Come early to a meeting and help set up
- Stay late and help with the tear-down and cleanup (especially after demos)
- Offer to share your knowledge and expertise by doing a demonstration. What did you learn from the last project you completed? How do you prepare your blanks for the lathe? What jigs and tools can't you live without?
- Draft an article for the newsletter (we can use product reviews, tips and hints, trip reports, and even notes about a project that you have completed)
- Donate a draw prize
- Let the guild know when you hear of wood becoming available (email anyone in the executive, or the [newsletter](#) staff with the information)

Forthcoming Meetings

by Mark Taylor

- Robert Dunlop has volunteered to demonstrate making threads and using threads for a screw top box for our January 22nd meeting. These threaded boxes make excellent gifts so come prepared to learn on how to do them right. At the January meeting Cheryl Samuel will introduce the concept for our Challenge #2 which will be due for the February meeting.
- The February meeting will focus on embellishments to wood turnings and Mark Taylor and Tim Soutar will give a presentation on the many aspects of carving and burning to enhance your pieces.
- In March Johannes Michelsen "The Hatman" is scheduled for March 19th. The original concept came to Johannes in early 1980, and it took 10 years of mulling it over before he made the first hat. Hat #1 was made for the occasion of Albert and Tina Lecoffs wedding in 1990 and was so well received they were a powerful force that took over his artistic output. Over the years he has developed many devices and techniques to ever improve the art form all of which I share freely and fully at my demonstrations and workshops. You can check out his website at: <http://www.woodhat.com/>
Johannes is going to run some hands on workshops so make sure you sign up early at the January meeting as space will be limited.
- In April Donald Porter and Derek Wentworth will talk about building vacuum pump systems so if you missed out on purchasing one at our November meeting now is the time to learn how to build your own. At this meeting Cheryl Samuel will introduce Challenge #3 so make sure you attend and get ready to be inspired and produce something for the May meeting, which is also the AGM. At this meeting we will be electing some new officers so please be prepared to volunteer and become an active participant in your Guild. For further information about programs please contact our web site: <http://www.islandwoodturners.ca>
- I am still looking for people to demonstrate or discuss some aspect of turning in June and in the fall so please let me know if you can do something. You can contact me by phone 658-9346 or by e-mail at markandingrid@telus.net
- We have recently had an invitation from the Greater Vancouver Woodturners Guild of an Associate membership which would cost our guild members \$12 a year. Associate members will receive notification about visiting demonstrators and other events organized by the GVWG.

IWG Website

by Jeremy Brown

If you haven't yet seen the [IWG website](#), this would be a great time to give it a glance. In addition to the newsletter backissues and photo galleries from previous meetings, the new site features links to other guilds and turning-related websites, as well as magazines, suppliers, and the websites of notable woodturners. You'll also find detailed information about the guild, including meeting times and location, executive members, and information about the guild's groups. Other sections are still under construction, including information about the guild library. Your suggestions are welcome - contact [Hew Lines](#).

10,000 Words

photos by Peter Robin



AAW Local Chapter Challenge

by Graeme Evans

The American Association of Woodturners will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2011 and have challenged all Chapters to submit one lathe turned item which best exemplifies and represents that chapter.

Each entry must comply with the following:

- The object must fit in an 8"cube
- Weight is limited to 3 lbs(1.36kg)
- Sales will be shared 70% with the chapter or artist and 30% with the AAW

All pieces must remain with the exhibit and travel to various venues after the symposium. Unsold work will be returned to the chapter or individual.

Guild members are invited to submit one turned item each for consideration at our January meeting where members will vote on Guild submission. Items may be submitted by individuals or they may be submitted as a collaborative turning from two or more members.

The AAW's goal is to have every chapter represented. Let's ensure we are there.

Parting Off

As usual, we owe our thanks to **Peter Robin** for providing photographs for this month's issue. Claudia Lorenz also provided photos to accompany her article.

We are always looking for suggestions for our in house demonstrations and for volunteers to demonstrate. Contact Graeme Evans at 250-361-2646 or email gnbevans@shaw.ca

Thanks also to **Hew Lines** for the improvements to our [website!](#)

All the best,

Andre, Tom, and Jeremy