



IWG News

The Newsletter of the Island Woodturners Guild

September 2024



About the IWG:

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

Visitors are welcome.

Executive Committee

President:
Don Costello

Vice President:
Don Robinson

Treasurer:
Chris Leach

Secretary:
Michael McEwan

Members at Large:
Hovan Baghdassarian
John Kilcoyne
Virginia Lee

Past President:
Tim Karpiak

Newsletter Editor:
John Kilcoyne

The IWG gratefully acknowledges the support of the following companies:

[Artisan Wood to Works](#)
[Chipping Away](#)
[Industrial Plastics & Paints](#)
[Island Blue Print](#)
[KMS Tools](#)
[PJ White Hardwoods](#)
[Richelieu Hardware](#)
[William Wood-Write](#)

THE PRESIDENT'S TURN

Happy September, all! I hope you have all had a great summer and are ready to get back to the workshop and re-connect with Guild members. It has only been a couple of months since our last meeting, but it seems like much longer.

For me the summer is a time to visit with friends and family, clean-up the workshop and do a bit of vacation travel. In fact, I am writing this from the coast of Spain and the photo is of sunrise in the coastal town we are staying at.



I brought with me a few of my smaller turnings to give to folks that stood out to us; these little gifts have made several people very happy. A reminder of the joy I get not only from the practice and creativity of turning but also in sharing the finished product.

Whatever your reason for turning I encourage you to get out there and create something and then share it, bring your latest or your favourite piece to the show and tell and let us know how you were inspired to create it or the challenges the piece presented to you.

Don Costello.

Editor's Note: A recent photo of a Canadian tourist on a beach in Spain. He looks kind of familiar eh!



NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY SEPT 28

This meeting will feature an in-person presentation at our meeting hall by John Kilcoyne on Pyrography. He will provide an overview of the equipment required (burners, pens, cords, etc.) followed by a demonstration of various techniques and patterns.



SEPTEMBER CHALLENGE: FINIALS

A reminder that the challenge for this meeting is to turn one or more finials – ideally for a box or other form. You can find some suggestions and advice in the June Newsletter.



Results will be displayed during the “Show and Tell”.

MAKE A NOTE: OCTOBER MEETING

Our meeting on October 26th will feature an in-person demonstration by Keith Jesequel on Turning Hollow Forms. (No charge for members.)



A resident of Oregon and a demonstrator at the recent AAW Symposium in Portland, Kevin was selected as the 2024 co-recipient of the AAW's Professional Outreach Program (POP) which recognizes those with outstanding potential.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The deadline for membership renewal is September 30th. Please note that there are **two** steps to do so.



First, you must complete online the application form which can be found here: <https://www.islandwoodturners.ca/membership-application/>.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND ENSURE THAT YOU CLICK THE RELEASE OF LIABILITY BOX AT THE BOTTOM.

Secondly, annual dues of \$50 can be paid either by e-transfer (**preferred**) or cheque/cash. If you plan on paying your dues at the September meeting, cheques should be payable to "IWG" and if by cash, exact amount would be appreciated.

NOTE: If the membership application and dues have not been received by October 31, 2024, you will be removed from the Membership List and will no longer receive notice of meetings or the Newsletter and will no longer be eligible to attend meetings.

JUNE RECAP



Gord Kifiak provided a great demonstration on turning a multi-axis bud vase which included some excellent tips and advice. The following are the highlights.



1. LAYOUT

Gord began with a blank that was 8/4" thick which is readily available from local lumber stores. He noted that care is required in turning to maintain as much thickness as possible as this will affect the size and thus stability of the base.

PJ Hardwoods has a wide range of dimensioned hardwoods that are available to Guild members at reduced (wholesale) rates. (Membership card required.)



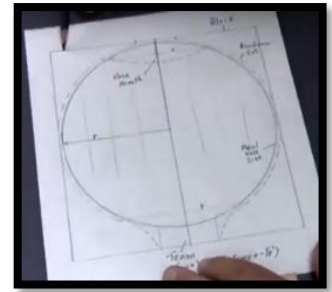
For plain wood, you should consider grain matching which means that, if possible, select a centre line location which will create a "book-matched" grain pattern (left).



A figured blank will require attention to centre line placement and grain orientation. A paper cutout of the border of the vase may help to identify the most attractive orientation.

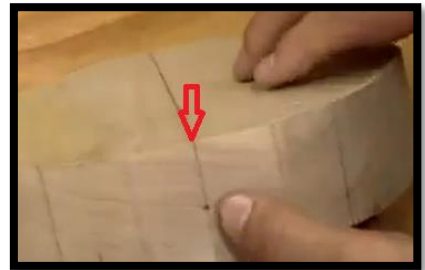


For the actual layout, Gord prepares a full-size drawing which shows the centre of the primary axis line, the radius and the tenon location at the base. As for the mouth and base, he generally opts for lengths which are approximately 2/3 of the radius. Having said that, for stability, you may want to make the base *slightly* longer.



To maximize thickness, he blunts the end of the compass point before drawing the circle. The slight imprint also serves as a depth gauge which allows him monitor how much wood he has taken off each side.

He then cuts out the blank on the bandsaw being careful to leave a flat portion at the top (right) which will enable him to turn the tenon on the bottom.



TURNING: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

While the following considerations are important in all turning, they are particularly important for this project which involves turning a great deal of "air".

- a. Sharpen tools **frequently**. When cutting end grain, he will often re-sharpen after 3 or 4 cuts and will use a freshly sharpened gouge for the final cut.
- b. Take light cuts. Aggressive cuts can lead to either a catch or significant pull-out on end grain.
- c. As a modified ABC approach, Gord suggests the following procedure: anchor the tool on the rest, lightly engage the side of the heel, gently rotate the tool until it begins to cut, engage the bevel and begin the cut.
- d. As a general rule, when turning a great deal of air, a higher speed will produce a cleaner cut. Having said that, never turn beyond your comfort level.

e. Frequently check your results which includes not only the surface of the turning but examination of the shavings (“tea leaves”). Long, curly fibers are a good sign of effective cutting.



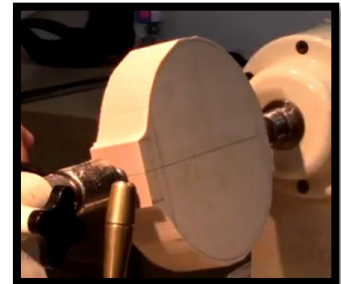
f. Consider using a smaller tool. For example, rather than a 3/4” or 5/8” gouge, he will typically use a 1/2” bowl gouge.

g. Before turning, take a moment to simulate your stance to ensure a smooth movement of weight between your front and back feet.

h. Always engage the tailstock for as long as possible.

FIRST MOUNTING

The first step is to turn a tenon on the “base” of the blank. Accordingly, the blank is secured between centres with a spur drive in the headstock and a live centre in the tailstock.



This configuration requires you to take care to protect your hands. Gord positions his tool rest such that he knows he must keep his hands on the outside.

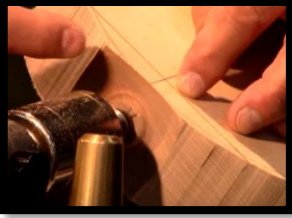
He uses a push cut to create the tenon – first coming in from the side and then cleaning it up by entering from the end.



SECOND MOUNTING

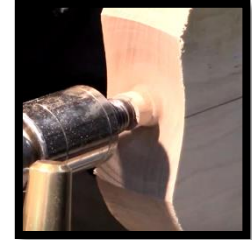
With the blank secured in a chuck and the tailstock engaged, he now turns the mouth of the vase. As this involves end grain, it is particularly important to use a sharp tool and to take light cuts.





He draws lines on the face and each side showing the desired depth of cut.

He takes light cuts and avoids forcing the “push” as this will simply increase the “bouncing”. To reduce vibration, he also reduces the amount of projection of the tool from the handle.



He cuts off the nubbin with a fine-tooth flex saw and then drills a hole for the flowers. If you plan on inserting a tube to hold water for real flowers, he suggests that the hole diameter should not exceed 7/8”.

The next step is to finish the base. He uses the bandsaw to cut near the line and then a disk sander to finish it off. After doing so, he uses a square on the centre line to ensure that it remains perpendicular.



THIRD MOUNTING

The next step is to prepare a glue block with a tenon for mounting on the turning. While the face edge of the block is flat, he turns a slight concave face on the inside which will act as a reservoir for any excess glue. To assist in positioning on the blank, he uses a skew to turn a centre mark.



To centre the glue block on the turning, he sets a compass approximately 1/16” greater than the diameter of the block and transfers this dimension to the turning. As a transparent adhesive is necessary to see the pencil line, Gord uses thick CA glue which also provides a bit more working time.

He adds a bead of glue around the edge of the block for greater security and once the glue has set, mounts the blank in a chuck.





He engages the tailstock but rather than using the live centre point, he uses a small "button" with foam on the face.



He first turns the circumference of the form. As there is considerable air, he increases the speed to approximately 1600 rpm. To start this cut, the handle is relatively flat, and the flute is almost closed. (pointing to 9 o'clock). He slowly brings the tool up until it makes contact and then makes the cut.



From experience he wants the sides to narrow to approximately 1/4". Accordingly, after marking the centre line, he adds two lines on either side that are 1/8" from the centre.

He is then ready to turn the face. Normally the best cut on side grain is a push cut which in this case would mean a cut from the centre to the edge (right). However, that would mean that the tool has no body support which means it is harder to control the depth of cut and is prone to producing significant tool marks on the turning. Accordingly, he recommends that you use a pull-cut.



If you are turning green wood, a pull-cut with the tool roughly level can be used for fast and effective removal of wood. However, on dry wood, this position will run across the end grain on the blank producing a rough cut with chopped strands and considerable tear out.

Accordingly, in these cases, Gord recommends that you drop the tool handle significantly which will produce a high sheer angle cut. This will significantly reduce tear out on the end grain portions.



He starts on the outside edge of the face where he will need to remove a considerable amount of wood. While he initially takes a relatively robust cut – which produces a considerable amount of tear out – as he gets closer to the final mark, he adopts a lighter cut for a smoother finish.



He removes the tailstock to complete turning the face. He begins in the centre to remove the compass point before faring this area into the balance of the face. Once again, he sharpens the tool before making the final cuts.

He power-sands the face starting at 120 grit and then then hand sands the piece with the grain. He then removes any grit/dust with a brush and then with a shop towel. He continues these steps through to 400 grit.

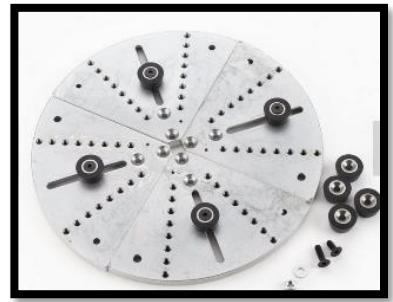
Note: As a final step, he uses a profile gauge to record the curvature on this face so that he can replicate it on the other once it is remounted.

FOURTH MOUNTING

For the final mounting, he uses a vacuum chuck. With the turning still in the 4-jaw chuck, he mounts it on his tailstock which enables him to centre it on the vacuum chuck. He noted that you frequently need to make a slight adjustment to ensure that the blank is properly centered.

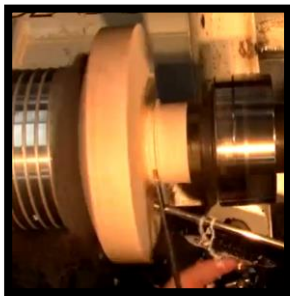


If you do not have a vacuum system, you could use Jumbo or Cole Jaws.



CAUTION

Please be aware these Jaws are designed for light turning and cannot be used at a high speed. Oneway states a MAXIMUM speed of 1250 rpm for small turnings, 900 rpm for large turnings, and slower for those over 12" while Cole Jaws are only suitable for a MAXIMUM speed of 600 rpm.



Gord first removes the glue block using a parting tool and a fine-tooth saw. He removes the remainder of the glue block using a gentle push cut with the tailstock engaged as long as possible.



Once completed he re-engages the tailstock using the "button" to protect the face of the turning. As he did with the first side, he completes this face using a high-shear pull cut. However, he finds that at the outer edges this produces a considerable amount of tear out. Accordingly, he sands each side by hand to bring it to the desired mark.

He then removes the piece from the lathe for the final sanding and finish application.

THE MAGIC OF WOOD!

John Gayfer recently turned these four beautiful bowls from a single piece of big-leaf maple.

While they are all stunning, what is particularly remarkable is that all 4 came from a log that was less than 30" long! The variation in grain and colour in such close proximity is simply amazing.



EPOXY ACCENT: HARVEY PFLUGER

Harvey has emerged as our resident expert in epoxy work and has created a number of outstanding pieces. The following is a brief outline of how he created the piece at right with a coloured epoxy band.

(The photo, taken by a pathetic photographer who shall remain nameless, fails to capture the full beauty of this piece!)



1. Materials

a. Epoxy

Harvey uses epoxy from *Designer Epoxy* which is a Montreal firm specializing in crystal clear epoxy for artists. <https://www.designerepoxy.ca/epoxy-resin-canada-3/>

Depending upon the nature of the turning and the area to be filled, he will use either:

a. *ArtCast* (.5 gal: \$80/2.0 gal: \$160) (Full cure time: 24 hours), or

b. *Deep Casting* (1.5 gal: \$150) (Full cure time: 72 hours)

Note: The long cure times allow more time for the inevitable gas bubbles to dissipate.

b. Colourants



Harvey uses a variety of colourants including *Designer Epoxy Pigment Powder* (3 oz: \$9), *Jacquard Procion MX Powder Dye* (\$8: Opus Art), *Mixol Concentrate* (\$11: Industrial Plastics) and *Chestnut Spirit Stains* (\$15: Woodchuckers).



2. Preparation

After turning the form, he turned a small recess (2 mm deep) for the epoxy “band” and applied a barrier coat of shellac.



He then ran beads of hot melt glue outside of each side of the recess and in which he embedded clear plastic shelf liner (Dollarama). He uses clear glue sticks – NOT yellow – as they are much easier to remove using alcohol.

To facilitate the epoxy pour, he then created a funnel using a small plastic mixing cup (100/\$8.50: LV) with a hole in the bottom. A corresponding hole is made in the shelf liner and the cup is secured to the liner with hot melt glue.



3. Mixing

a. Epoxy

He used the 24-hour *Art Cast* epoxy for this project. Before mixing, the required amount of resin and hardener were put in separate containers and placed in hot water for 15 minutes or so. This served to lower their viscosity which improves flow and facilitates the release of air bubbles.



He then mixed the components and let them sit for 15 minutes or so. He then divides the epoxy evenly into separate containers for each colourant – in this case 3.

b. Colourants

For this turning, he used turquoise and blue dyes as well as a very small amount of white. He then added each one to a separate container of epoxy. He does this as he prefers to have each retain its individual colour in the final appearance.

4. Application

He positioned the turning on its side with the “funnel” on the top and poured each container of dyed epoxy into the measuring cup. The greater surface area inside the cup means increased pressure that “forces” the epoxy around the circumference of the band.

5. Once Cured

Like most turners, Harvey uses carbide tools to rough turn the epoxy. However, for finish turning, he finds that he gets a much cleaner surface using HSS gouges in a shear-scraping mode followed by a negative rake scraper. Needless to say, HSS tools will require frequent sharpening.

He then sands the epoxy to 800 grit.

6. Beads

As for the beads on either side of the epoxy band, he uses a small spindle gouge. While he formerly used beading tools, he found it difficult to get a clean cut regardless of the lathe speed. After sanding, the beads are then coloured using India ink.

7. Balance of Turning

To colour the wood portion of the turning, he applied a coat of India Ink most of which he then sanded off. He then applied a coat of *Chestnut Spirit Stain*.




8. Top Coat

Multiple coats of lacquer were then applied to complete the turning.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TIM SOUTAR


The *Member's Gallery* segment of the most recent *American Woodturner* features a representative sample of Tim's turnings. Inclusion is by invitation only which not only illustrates his growing international reputation, but also means that he can now raise the prices on his turnings!

PS. In his brief note, Tim indicates that joining the IWG has played a critical role in his development. I for one am more than prepared to accept praise for his development and I would encourage all members to do the same!




Tim Soutar, British Columbia, Canada
My engagement with woodworking began as a child when my parents caught me trying to chop down a "tree," which happened to be a post holding up the house. This lesson proved quite valuable when I later built my own house and workshop. A few years before retiring from a career in oceanography, I discovered woodturning. Joining the AAW and the Island Woodturners Guild (Brentwood Bay, BC, Canada) and attending innumerable symposia, demonstrations, and classes have all played a critical role in my development, for which I am very grateful.
My woodturning projects tend to be equally divided between functional items (notably bowls) and artistic or decorative pieces. For the latter, much of my inspiration comes from the geometric and symmetrical patterns found in marine life and on seashores. For embellishing, I enjoy using a variety of techniques (pyrography, rotary- and hand-carving, burning, butterflies, and biscuits) as well as a variety of colorants such as inks, dyes, and paints. While I enjoy working with maple, arbutus, and fruit woods, my favorite woods by far are burls and those with extravagant grain patterns. >


Untitled Vessel, 2021, Pear, carving, acrylic paint, branding, dye, 11" x 5" (28cm x 13cm)




Untitled Bowl, 2023, Arbutus, branding, acrylic paint, india ink, dye, 4" x 13" (10cm x 33cm)



Untitled Sphere, 2012, Cherry, pyrography, rotary-carving, dye, paint, Arbutus branch, Sphere 7" (18cm) diameter



Nested Bowls, 2023, Arbutus root burl, tung oil, 12", 9 1/2", and 7" (30cm, 24cm, and 18cm) diameters



Untitled bowl, 2016, Arbutus, acrylic paint, carving, 5" x 15" (13cm x 38cm)

IN MEMORIAM: HEW LINES

Long time member Hew Lines has passed away. He was an active member of the Guild serving on the Executive, acting as our first Webmaster and making jigs as well as the *HUSmartburner* for members. Our condolences to Sandi, his family and friends.



PARTING OFF

Thanks to Harvey Pfluger and John Gayfer for their help with this edition and a special thanks to Gord Kifiak for a great demonstration. And ongoing gratitude to the members of the Executive without whose work we would have nothing to do on the 4th Saturday of each month!

CONCLUDING THOT

