



Rocky Mountain Woodturners

November 1999 e-Newsletter

Vol. 5 - No. 11

A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners (AAW)

EVENTS CALENDAR !@!@!

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November 4. . .Monthly Meeting --Dan Templeton, Tabletop Photography

December 9. . .Monthly Meeting -- Christmas meeting? Challenge is - Battle of the Spinning Tops!

Christmas Party Pot Luck at Mountain Shadows Club House

Committee and Cleanup : Trent Bosch, David Gillespie, Kevin Dunn,  
Dale Kechter and Duane Fischer.

January 6 . . .Monthly Meeting -- To be announced

February 3. . .Monthly Meeting -- To be announced

Upcoming Woodturner Demonstrators...

Phil Irons from England and Guilo Marcolongo from Austrailia.

## OFFICERS-1999

## TELEPHONE #'s

## E-MAIL ADDRESSES

|                                    |              |                                 |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Lloyd Jenkins..... President       | 970-226-1166 | e-mail: lloydjenk@aol.com       |
| Ray Kowrach ..... Treasurer        | 307-634-9882 | e-mail: mesquite@cheyennweb.com |
| Kevin Dunn..... Sec/Newsletter     | 970-221-4894 | e-mail: woodhusker@aol.com      |
| Trent Bosch..... Program Directors | 970-493-6476 | e-mail: trentbosch@yahoo.com    |
| & Jonathan Fosse..                 | 970-493-1387 | e-mail: jfosse@verinet.com      |
| Jack Tefft..... Media Director     | 970-203-1870 | e-mail: slmichaels@aol.com      |

## OFFICERS for 2000 Nominated.

## OFFICERS ELECT FOR 2001

Johathan Fosse.....President  
 Jim Ferry .....Treasurer  
 Kevin Dunn .....Sec/Newsletter  
 Lee Carter .....Program Director  
 ???-??? .....Librarian

Dick Moody .....President  
 Mark Odell.....Treasurer  
 John Martin.....Sec/Newsletter  
 Trent Bosch .....Program Director  
 ??? ??? .....Librarian

*Dale Keeler*

## When and Where?

November Meeting:

We meet the 1st Thursday after the 1st Tuesday which is:

Thursday - November 4, 1999

7:00 PM at *Industrial Science Bldg*  
~~Guggenheim Building~~, Room 105

Industrial Sciences Building -

Colorado State University,

Fort Collins, Colorado.

SW of Laurel Street and the RR tracks on CSU campus.

## Agenda:

- \* Announcements - Year 2000 officers and officer elects for the year 2001
- \* RM Woodturning Symposium Update.  
Wrap Up and discussion.
- \* Show and Tell.....November will be Bird Houses
- \* Challenge is..... November will be Bird Houses
- \* Wood raffle.....\$1.00 per ticket - **PLEASE BRING WOOD!**
- \* Time to get your dues in for 2000. See application at the end of the newsletter.  
Last months was won by \*\*\*\*\*. \$15 gift certificate to Wood Emporium at Loveland, CO.
- \* **Main Demonstrator this month is Dan Templeton. (Thursday)**

## October Highlights:

Stewart Batty were both inspirational and hilarious. If you missed either turning meeting, you missed a lot. Both featured bird houses with Dale Nish demonstrating Christmas style bird house ornaments. He had a 5 page handout on the detailed descriptions of turning and finishing the bird houses from start to finish. You can't buy one from him for any price. But if you are family, grandchildren or close friends, you will receive

one for Christmas. He turns approximately 40 of these little jewels just before Christmas and some years, he just barely get them finished in time. Some of his quotes that night were,

"If you can't do it right, cheat a little." Dale Nish

"Life is too short to turn ugly wood." by Lane Phillips

## Fort Collins Woodturning Symposium Highlights:

There simply is too much to write about without devoting an entire newsletter to the Symposium events. Everyone really enjoyed this first annual event. It was first class, there were excellent woodturners, and the demonstrations were great. My biggest problem was trying to figure out which demonstrations to see. I tried to focus on turners that might not be around for a while so I finally settled on Max Krimmel's alabaster turning and spent the next two sessions with Martin Pidgen. Both were truly a delight. (by Kevin Dunn)

Did anyone get any pictures? Please let me know so I can scan them and put them on our future website!

We did well with our first symposium. Dick Moody thinks there were about 121 attending. I don't know what the firm actual count will be. Dick will let us know.

We took in total of \$6077.10 and still have \$200.00 coming from AAW to complete the grant we were awarded.

I have paid out a total of \$2803.81. According to Lloyd we still owe John about \$800.00 that he spent including the lunches. I owe anyone else, please let me know as soon as possible. Use email or leave a message at 307-634-9882.

Considering what we owe John, we spent \$3603.81 leaving us with a positive balance of \$2673.29.

The club will end the year with about \$800.00 in the checking account not counting Y2K dues collected or the symposium profits. That will give us a total of \$3473.29 that we have to use for the club's benefit.

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS TO ALL OF YOU FOR A JOB WELL DONE.

by Ray Kowrach

Ed. There were 2 new memberships and 2 renewed during the show. They are Marc Clarke, Chuck Everitt, Stan Howard and Kevin Schneider. Their addresses are at the bottom of the newsletter.

## Classifieds: (let me know when your items sell)

TO PURCHASE: I'm looking to purchase a pin chuck for a Shopsmith lathe. Call Dale Kechter @ 970-667-2842.

FOR TRADE: Will trade a 300 amp Miller AC/DC arc welder. TIG unit attached. Wired for MIG. Need lathe of equal value. Contact Dale Kechter @ 970-667-2842.

FOR SALE: Collection of wood & magazine library. Contact Mrs. Failing @ 719-570-9932

FOR SALE: Several of the members have been looking for a power visor to purchase. For those of you who have seen mine, this is the same unit that Klingspor used to sell, but have discontinued. I have located a source who will sell them to the club members at a discounted price of \$139.00. The current retail price is \$159.00.

chapter information, demonstrator connector and other lists are now database applications so editing will be done through the web. Please be patient while we get all of it entered.

Thanks, Roger Austin, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina  
AAW Home Page <http://www.RTPnet.org/~aaw/> (651)484-9094

## More News From the AAW:

The AAW home office has moved into bigger digs. The telephone, fax, and email are all the same. This new facility is much bigger than the old office. It will allow us to do a lot of things that we couldn't in the 500 ft that the staff had before. The additional room will allow us to bring together our inventory and processes. Thanks to those members of the Minnesota Woodturners chapter who are volunteering their labor for the move.

Please note down the new address in your orange AAW Resource Directory. I've updated the web site with as many of the addresses as I could find. Please email the URL to [aaw@rtpnet.org](mailto:aaw@rtpnet.org) if you find the old address while surfing through the AAW site.

The new address is:  
American Association of Woodturners  
3499 Lexington Ave. N., Suite 103  
Shoreview, MN 55186

## Great Turning 'Net' Links:

If you know of another member or great turning web pages, please forward them to me at [woodhusker@aol.com](mailto:woodhusker@aol.com)

<http://www.woodworking.com/lumber.html>  
<http://www.azwoodturners.org/>  
<http://www.kiva.net/~rjbrown/w5/turning.html>  
<http://RTPnet.org/~aaw/locals/>

Members Pages:  
[http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/High\\_Peak\\_Creations](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/High_Peak_Creations)

**New webpages!**  
<http://users.mwci.net/~rspragg/>  
<http://www.pathways98.org/>  
Trent Bosch's is [www.pathways98.org/images/jpg hires/img0051.jpg](http://www.pathways98.org/images/jpg hires/img0051.jpg)

Pathways is an international juried exhibition of woodturning, featuring the works of over 40 artists from 20 states and 6 countries. The selected pieces were originally displayed at the Cleveland State University Art Gallery (Ohio, USA) from June 11th-30th, 1998. PS.  
There are over 100 pictures on this gallery!  
Thanks to Bruno for these links!

## Final Shavings:

Here is a hilarious description of the history of the skew.  
I found it at the following site: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~pwguild>

The site has a lot of useful information. For example if you click the "Articles" button then follow the "Gadgets" link one of the paragraph explains how to draw an egg using a compass.

bruno.

A SKEW WHIFF TALE.

Is this how the Skew started?

To arrive at the sequence of events that led to the development and use of the skew chisel, one must go back in time to the days when men were first learning primitive woodcraft skills, mainly by trial and error methods. Having learned these, they soon found that a round pillar was far better to bump into than a rough hewn square one, so they applied their minds to this problem. The obvious solution was to use much smaller younger round trees but the conservationists quickly put a stop to that, so back to the drawing board.

The more skilled artisans began to experiment with short sections of timber and found that by shaping a square, then cutting the corners off, then cutting the corners off the corners, etc., etc., they could arrive at a point where they had created a fairly well rounded short pillar. A spinoff from this of course was the invention of the wheel and, because the processes involved in making wheels and pillars were at best labor intensive, minds were applied to the problem and mouths to bottles. The end result of course was a crop of first class headaches and, as you have probably guessed, the lathe was born.

The woodturners very quickly realized that they were on to a good thing, so, closing their ranks, they formed a Guild and for many years they prospered sharing their skills only with other members. Secrets, even the best kept ones, will out and, as a result of industrial espionage or just plain snooping, trade secrets were laid bare to all comers. Amateur turners grew in numbers and developed skills in the craft that were equal to if not exceeding those of the professionals. This was bad enough, but imagine the impact on the industry when amateur turners began to give away work instead of selling it.

The Guild members got together to discuss ways and means of overcoming the problems being caused by the amateur, and after much discussion it was decided that the best way to combat the threat to their livelihood was to invent a new tool which would be so hard to use that the amateurs would become discouraged and things would return to normal in the trade. After much consideration they took a flat bar of steel, fashioned a tang on one end and then, because it was too long, cut a few inches off the other end. Owing to the fact that they were not very proficient in working steel the end they cut off was far from square, but they ground a cutting edge on it anyway and fitted a long handle.

The next problem was a name. One said it was a chisel, but another objected on the grounds that the cutting edge was not square and, furthermore it was positively askew, which everyone knew was also askance, awry, aslant and definitely oblique. Much argument ensued and things became rather heated until the President remarked that, even if it was askew, it was still a chisel and maybe they could call it just that. This suggestion became a motion, was put to the vote and passed. So it was that the tool became known as a skew chisel.

Volunteers were called for to test the new tool and two doughty members stepped forward. In very short order one slashed his wrists and the other disemboweled himself, dying for the cause a few minutes later. The tool was, it seemed, a far greater success than had been hoped for. A delegation took the prototype, wiped the blade clean, and carried it off to the toolmakers. They requested that several thousand copies be made and released world wide after suitable media coverage had whetted the appetites of all the

amateurs.

The toolmakers accepted the order with grateful smiles, and emptying out their scrap barrels, went to work producing large numbers of the new tool from all the offcuts they had been hoarding for years. This set a precedent which is still followed today. It is a well established practice in the trade to use up any large stock of otherwise useless offcuts simply by putting a cutting edge on one end and a handle on the other. The resulting object is then promoted as the latest wonder tool and sold to unwary wood turners world wide.

The dreaded skew was duly released onto the market. The amateurs snapped them up, and shortly thereafter throughout the length and breadth of all the lands of the earth a large number of freshly turned graves began to appear. In a world subject to wars, plagues and pestilence, this in itself was no great cause for comment. There was however cause for speculation as it became apparent that a large proportion of headstones were designed in an unusual manner. Instead of the popular Norman or Gothic arch atop the stone, or fluted column dripping vines and angels, these headstones were almost austere in their simplicity. They were some three or four feet in height on one side and the top sloped down eight or ten inches to the other. This gave them the appearance of a parallelogram with one end buried in the ground. The only inscription upon the face was the dear departed's name and age at the time of death.

There was one minor difference to be seen, some sloped to the left and some to the right. At first this was thought to have political significance and, in some cases, widows and children were subjected to the usual discrimination from an ignorant minority. Nothing was further from the truth as the variation only indicated the direction that the skew was being traversed along the tool rest at the time of death.

The guild members agreed that the results of their plan exceeded all their wildest expectations. They closed their ranks and went about their business certain in their own minds that a return to the prosperous days of old was just around the corner. The one thing that they had not allowed for was human nature.

History has shown us that the human race, when faced with great adversity rises to ever greater heights and the amateurs responded to the occasion. They took up the challenge of the dreaded skew, and slowly learning from the mistakes of others finally mastered the skills required to survive.

Whilst doing this they discovered that the skew really was a wonder tool. It produced a finish far superior to that achieved by any other tool and it soon became apparent that any turner who could not master the art was at a great disadvantage when it came to reducing costs.

The Guild members suddenly found that they were trapped in a snare of their own making. This trap was twofold, as, whilst the amateurs were mastering the skew, the professionals had discovered another interesting fact about woodturning. Put simply it was that far more money could be made from teaching others the art and craft than by continued hard work in the trade.

In a manual craft or skill one needs to be able to demonstrate the use of all tools pertaining to the said craft. This meant that the Guild members now had to master the art of using the very weapon with which they had tried to

decimate the ranks of the amateurs.

During the period that it took for the Guild members to master this dread tool their numbers fell at an alarming rate. To avoid the very real possibility of the Guild being wiped from the face of the earth the members opened their doors to all comers.

So it was that the situation where both amateur and professional can share in an ancient craft first began. And as we all know, still exists to the present day. This happy state of affairs was brought about by the introduction into the craft of the not so humble skew chisel.

Murray White