



TURNINGS

December 2001

WCWA, Pinelands Hobbies Club, Nursery Way, Pinelands
<http://www.angelfire.com/ct/wcwa/index.html>

NEXT MEETING

16th January 2002, Pinelands Hobbies Club, 19:00 sharp, as usual.

The topic for our first meeting for 2002 has been scheduled as “*Rescue 911*” *How to salvage a piece when things go wrong*. In keeping with this theme I found an article on the *NZ Woodturner* website, which I have reproduced to whet your appetite.

Please bring along any pieces which you have consigned to your pile of braai wood, that you feel might still have some scope for salvage. It might still remain firewood, but you never know what might be waiting to be discovered, if you are not prepared to experiment a little – remember, turning is meant to be fun – join in and let’s see how things develop on the 16th.



A cork oak bowl that got seriously out of shape, and is now living happily in a German home

EDITORIAL

Greetings and compliments of the Season to you and your loved ones. I hope everyone has had a peaceful and blessed rest at the end of an “interesting” year.

Our condolences and heartfelt sympathies are with the Thornton family during their time of loss.

It is hard to believe the year 2001 is now almost over. We had a very enjoyable Showcase and Year-end braai (without rain for a change) at the end of November. This is a final call for written proposals on how turnings might be judged, in order to allow the committee to workshop and finalise this matter.

My intention was to publish a Christmas issue of our newsletter during the second week of December, but as always, time and circumstances have had their way in delaying me in fulfilling my ambition. However, today is

Christmas Day, so in a way this is the Christmas Edition, with two articles courtesy of *NZ Woodturner*, which I hope will be of interest to readers.

Reading through the first issues of *Turnings*, I encountered an article by one of the founding members, Peter Southworth, about microwaving turnings, and finding another article on the New Zealand website, *NZ Woodturner* on the same subject, I felt it would be interesting to reprint the original article, as well as the article *A Test of Microwaving* by Dick Veitch. It would be fun if readers shared their experiences with microwaving turnings with us as well.

I can attest to the fact that if left in the microwave too long, or at too high a setting, interesting dark spots develop on turnings (which will ignite if not noticed in time), and we’ve had some interesting “designer firewood” processed through our microwave. Some very interesting shapes have also resulted from this technique.

With the growing number of novice turners in the club, the next issue of *Turnings* will cover safety in the workshop. If members have any input on the subject that you wish to share with us, please let me have this before 10 January 2002.

So long,

Gigi

FROM THE COMMITTEE

We wish all our members a peaceful and restful holiday.

FROM THE MEMBERS

AT LEAST I DRESSED THE PART

There is a lot more to woodturning than putting a chisel against a piece of wood on a lathe. What about the vast amounts of shavings and saw dust?

First I started with a dustcoat, but one could do better with Fred Goodmans’s turning jacket, which does not let shavings go down your neck. Of course you can go the whole hog like Dennis, and put on a white overall.

Next I found out I needed a glove for my left hand, that was getting burned by high speed shavings. Talking of left hands, don’t allow your sleeve to slide up the tool rest, it kind of limits the length of spindle turning you can do.

One thing I do not have yet, and I hope someone can make them, is *SPATS*. My shoes get full of shavings and this is most uncomfortable.

Most of us have glasses, if we do not have a big suction fan at the workstation. It is not long before they need

wiping, when using dry wood. Here I find the most important aid is a facemask. To start, Bert will sell you one for R11.00, but I have a rubber one with a filter. Somehow I still get dust up my nose. After every stint at woodturning, I sniff up salt water, which does a very good job. I hope to have less lung trouble than smokers.

I have not yet turned that showcase piece, but at least "I am dressed the part".

Ed Brymer

TAILPIECE

During the second week of November I was wheeling my granddaughter on Knysna Station, waiting for "the Chook Chook" to go. Who should I meet, but Tony van Niekerk. He had just brought seven ladies on a five-day trip around the Southern Cape. SEVEN! I thought of joining him, but when I saw the "Old Dears" sitting in the train, I said "over to you Tony and the best of luck!" They all looked seventy plus plus. But was Tony enthusiastic! I am sure he must be one of our best tour guides.

Ed Brymer

MISSING BOWL GOUGE

David Nathan is still missing a 13mm Robert Sorby bowl gouge, which he believes he left at the club, by mistake, at the Wednesday informal meeting on the 6th June. David is hoping that someone at that meeting has taken it home for safekeeping. Its return will be appreciated.



MICROWAVE SEASONING

This is an article by Peter Southworth, originally printed in issue No. 3 of 1994, of *Turnings*.

1. Mount and turn the bowl as you normally would. Reduce to wall thickness of 15 to 20 mm.
2. Weigh the bowl and make a note of the weight.
3. Place the bowl in the microwave. This should have a turntable to make things easier. Microwave the bowl for 10 minutes at 80 °C or less. If your microwave does not show temperature, use the defrost setting.
4. Any distortion of the bowl can be corrected by pressing or clamping while the timber is still hot and in a semi-plastic condition. You can also try deliberately forming the edge of the bowl to your liking.

5. Remove the bowl and allow to cool for 10 minutes and then weigh again.
6. The above steps are repeated until the weight of the bowl has stabilized.
IMPORTANT: reduce the oven times as the timber dries otherwise burning may occur.
7. When the weight has stabilized, remount the bowl, turn to final thickness, sand and finish.

A thick walled bowl could take 2 hours to dry, but should you choose to make the initial bowl thinner – say 6 to 8 mm – drying time could be reduced to about 20 minutes.

FROM THE WEB

A TEST OF MICROWAVING

By Dick Veitch

Recently I took three small bowls along to our club meeting. I had microwave dried these from fresh-cut wood in the previous couple of weeks. Comments on microwave drying in this manner were readily forthcoming: "You will kill your microwave"; "You can't dry wood without a fire brick in the oven"; "I did a bit recently and it took far less time" and, from Faceplate of September 1994, "air dry to 22% moisture before microwaving". As I had done none of these things in the course of producing perfectly good bowls I decided a little research and experimentation was in order to gain a bit more definitive information on the subject.

As drying wood from fresh to dry can take from 40 to 90 'cooks' per bowl there could have been some truth in the "You will kill your microwave" comment. I therefore checked out the operation of microwave ovens with two electronics experts, one of whom has a doctorate in microwave technology. The answer: "Cooking wood like this is exactly what a microwave oven is designed to do." But if you turn your microwave on without using the timer and leave it for too long then the wood may catch fire and thus burn the microwave and possibly your house!

While talking to these experts I asked about the fire brick theory. A microwave works on meat, vegetables, cold coffee, wet wood, and all other things, by agitating the water molecules and this produces heat. If the brick in the oven contains no water molecules to agitate then it is just a 'nothing' as far as the microwave is concerned. So a dry fire brick will have no effect on the drying of wood but if the brick is wet then it will absorb some microwave energy and hence slow the drying of the wood.

With those two comments set aside I began my experiments. My microwave oven has a full power of 700 watts and a defrost power of 245 watts. My series of test bowls were 100 to 130mm diameter and all turned to about 15mm thick. I weighed each bowl to start with and then after each five 'cooks' and recorded the weight. When ten cooks passed with no weight change the bowl was declared dry. For greatest efficiency in weighing I suggest you use scales which will consistently detect a 1% change in the weight of the wood.

The first obvious difference was the number of cooks needed to dry and the rate of weight loss of different woods and different cuts from the same tree containing more or less heart (Figure 1).

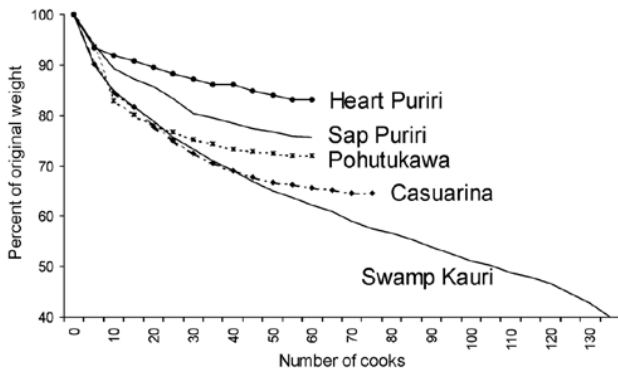


Figure 1: The percentage weight loss of a variety of woods when microwave dried.

My starting thickness of 15mm was generous for some woods, notably puriri, but not so for others like pohutukawa and casuarina. The swamp kauri barely moved but note that it never levelled out in weight. Indeed, towards the end of the experiment its weight loss increased and I think it was beginning to break down (burn) internally.

The time that each piece of wood is cooked for is determined by the temperature of the wood at the end of each 'cook'. All previous reports recommended use of the defrost setting on the microwave, cooking the wood until it is 'comfortably warm' and then allowing it to cool completely. I saw no reason to change this and found that a good starting point is ½ a minute on defrost for each 100 grams of wood. As the bowl dries it may get hotter so keep checking. If the wood gets too hot it can crack but if it does not get hot enough it will not dry. To test this I reduced the 'cook' time for some bowls to half that of others. When taken from the oven the half-time bowls could be described as "comfortably warm" (this may be likened to the cat on your knee or the cup when the soup is nearly gone) and the full-time bowls as "toasty warm" (which really warms the hands but can continue to be held). When the half-time bowls were apparently dry (Figure 2) I began to cook them at the full-time (toasty warm) rate. They lost a further four to six percent in weight.

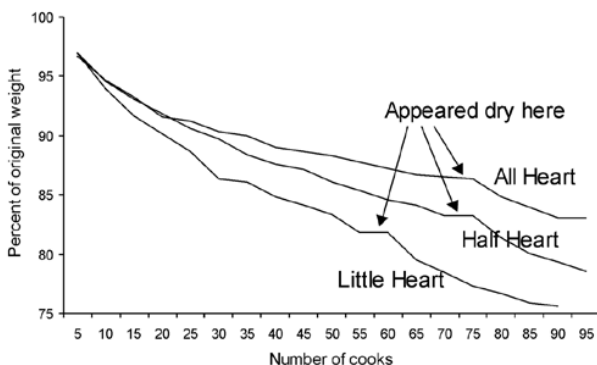


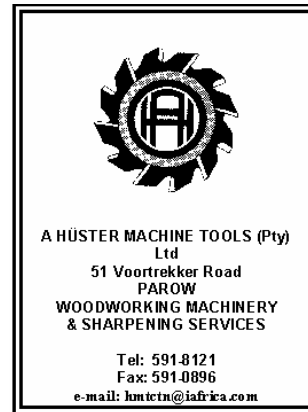
Figure 2: Three bits of puriri gently microwaved and then given some longer cooking.

I then returned to question the person who said "I did a bit recently and it took far less time" and the outcome was

that his one bowl may have started dryer and really taken a similar number of cooks. All the bowls I cooked were from fresh green wood and now look just as good as air-dried wood. Air drying to 22% (Faceplate September 1994) would reduce the microwaving time but I have seen nothing to suggest a better bowl would result. Some microwave ovens operate on the lower power settings by reducing the total power while others use pulses of the full power. These differences may cause differing times and results. Turning the bowl upside down for every second cook (which I did not do) is reported to reduce the number of cooks needed.

I rough turned my bowls to 15mm thick which, if the 25mm per year air drying time is true, would equate to seven months of air drying. In all my microwave oven did 845 'cooks' during this experiment and still mulls wine perfectly well. I did more than 56 hours of microwaving and mulled over the thought of doing more. Even my Great Aunt Liz can surely wait seven months for a bowl.

Article reproduced and gratefully acknowledged, from: <http://www.woodturning.co.nz/archives/microwaving.html>.



KORU BOWLS & OTHER "DISTASTERS"

By Rob Waanders

In the mid 1980's I obtained a 500 x 45 Rimu woodturning blank from Brian Massey's woodturning shop and rough turned it into a flat edge bowl and left it, unfinished in hot weather on my workbench for a few days. This of course, no matter how dry the wood is, resulted in a nasty open crack at the edge of the bowl and the piece ended up with all my other rejects somewhere in the pile of junk under my workbench. It taught me a lesson, always protect unfinished work even if it is only for the time when you have a cuppa! In 1993 I stumbled onto the piece again, yeah yeah I had a long overdue clean-up of my workshop and was just about to send the cracked bowl via the bandsaw to the firewood basket when I thought I would have a crack at cutting the crack out and design something around it. Well I put my thinking cap on made some pencil scribbles followed by a drastic bandsaw cut around the crack, something I would never have done with a good bit of wood, after all I am from Dutch origin.

After some cutting, shaping, carving, changing my mind as I went along and lots of hand sanding I decided that the bowl was allowed to stay out of the firewood basket, in fact I was quiet pleased with the end result so I decided to

exhibit the finished untitled carved edge bowl at my solo exhibition in March/April 1994 at Page 90 gallery, now "Pataka Porirua museum of Arts and Cultures". The official opening of Page 90 was by the then Governor General Dame Catherine Tizard who promptly bought the spiral carved edge bowl at the opening and when Dame Cath spoke to me she kept referring to "The Koru Bowl", so that is how the name koru bowl came about. I made some 150 of them over the years for 2 Governors General, Government Departments, City Councils, Corporate offices, Ambassadors, and private buyers.



So where did I get the design from? Well foremost I must say I certainly did not copy it from anybody. Regretfully there are those who copy designs without acknowledging the source. While the koru is widely recognised in New Zealand the spiral motif design does not belong to one particular culture. Many cultures worldwide have developed this centuries-old spiral motive to suit their particular cultures. The reality is that I have developed the spiral carved edge bowl design and other carved and sculptured designs through observing, experimenting, developing, researching and above all being patient. I had become frustrated by the restrictions of round things. When I was a member of a potters co-operative gallery I thought the potters are lucky because after they finish turning a pot on a vertical lathe they can shape it in any form they like including adding and taking bits off. No such luck for woodturners I thought. How wrong I was. I now often carve and or sculpture work which is purely based on my woodturning experience and use in addition to the woodlathe a chainsaw, arbortech and carving chisels. When you see something new, original and innovative you may think of why you did not think of that, as often the design is so simple. You must not forget that people come up with new things and ideas all the time. There is no reason that you can not come up with something new also. Look at shapes and forms in detail ranging from the coffee pot handle to dramatic cloud formations to interesting shapes formed by windblown sand to the minute detailed pattern on a dog's nose to hub caps of car wheels to fine detail of seed pods of plants and trees. Well I can go on and on and on.

Many years ago I used to work for Architect Jack Barnes, a keen water color artist who is now retired and is a

member of the Wellington Guild of Woodworkers. He asked me after I finished a perspective of a collage for him if I would like to have a go at coloring the perspective including surrounding trees. He set me going with a set of 68 different color pencils and I thought why so many different colors – green is green for colouring trees. Wrong! Jack took me to the window facing the bush clad hills of Tinakori hill in Wellington and asked me what colors I could see. My answer, green. Wrong. Look again he said and then it suddenly clicked, dozens and dozens of shades of green which I never noticed before. That is what I mean when I say "observe". When experimenting and developing it is okay to copy other work if necessary, but only in the confinement of your workshop with curtains closed and door locked! Change it drastically and make it unrecognizable before you open the curtains and unlock the door again. Better still, pick up that piece that was destined for the firewood bin or the piece you worked on many years ago and gave up on or that piece of wood which seems impossible to use for anything because of the defects, cracks, knots etc, then chop and change it. You have nothing to loose and the firewood bin will still be there.

My designs are developed from some of the following observations: Architectural study in the Netherlands with building history as one of my favorite subjects; Observing my brother restoring and preserving intricate historic ceilings in palaces, parliament and other very old historic buildings in The Netherlands often showing distinctive spiral based design motifs; Spiral motif based paintings and woodcarvings dating back to 1847, 1781, 1654, and older on Dutch windmills; Spiral motif based designs in stone, wrought Iron and Cast Iron dating back to 1522 and older on historic buildings in The Netherlands and Europe; Seeing traditional Maori woodcarver Paki Harrison carving a Meeting house and taking time out to explain the cultural background in every fine detail he was carving; Seeing experienced multi media contemporary Maori art designers at work, using the spiral, "NZ Koru", a typical design motif used for centuries all over the world by many cultures to suit their particular cultures; Observations I made from my son's Celtic Art exhibition catalogue of wood, bronze, gold, stone artifacts dating back as far as 1st c BC. He worked for several years as a conservator technician at the National Scottish museum and was part of a team conserving valuable and very old Celtic artifacts and set up a 235-piece exhibition in Tokyo in 1998. In this catalogue I noticed 45 very old artifacts with very distinct spiral motif based designs included on glass gaming counters dating back to 1st c BC. The exhibition logo for the catalogue called, "Treasures of Celtic Art, A European Heritage", is based on the traditional Celtic spiral motif design and looks very similar to the NZ Koru. I have also drawn design inspiration from the influence of ex woodturner Paul Mason who is, and has always been, my major influence and who always challenged me to be innovative and meticulous. Paul Mason I suggest was NZ's most influential woodturning artist. He laid the foundations in NZ when it came to modern artistic woodturning design. It is sad that a lot of woodturners in my opinion do not recognise or acknowledge that or do not even know who he is. He is well known for his inlaid

work using a variety of materials besides contrasting woods including silver and broken chicken egg shell! When I was invited in the early 1980's to the opening of his solo exhibition in the Dowse Art Gallery I was blown away, pieces he showed then would even today win major prizes here and overseas. Some years after his exhibition he established himself as a very successful artist using other media. American Al Stirt's attitude of combining woodturning and carving appeals very much to me so does Del Stubbs' fun loving and easy going and perhaps hippie-like attitude towards artistic woodturning.



These observations and experiences, including a life long interest in ornithology, seashells, photography and tramping I find very useful in developing my designs. I suggest that it is perhaps not a good idea to copy traditional art from cultures other than your own but I can not see a problem with being influenced by any culture and developing your own contemporary designs.

Article reproduced and gratefully acknowledged, from: <http://www.woodturning.co.nz/archives/korubowls.html>.

REMINDERS

The committee members for 2001 / 2002 are:

Eric Thornton	Chairman	531 1559(h)
Graeme Hill	Secretary	794 1639(h)
Bert Parker	Treasurer	914 0927 (h)
Alan Jackson	Library	558 1296(h)
Gert Ferreira		559 1409(h)
Gigi Laidler	Newsletter	797 7755(h)

Email contacts for committee members are:

Eric Thornton	notnorth@mweb.co.za
Graeme Hill mailto:	mwgahrhb@mweb.co.za
Bert Parker	nimbus@yebo.co.za
Gert Ferreira	gskc@mweb.co.za
Alan Jackson	alanj@global.co.za
Gigi Laidler mailto:	laidler@nbict.nbi.ac.za

Please could all members who have access to email (and MS Office) let us know, in order for us to send you the electronic version of the newsletter, which allows you to see it and print it out (if you have a colour printer) in glorious Technicolor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many thanks to all members who have renewed their membership, welcome to all our new members.

Members who have failed to pay their fees for the new financial year are now considered as resigned members

and will no longer enjoy the benefits of membership and will be charged R10 per meeting.

Part of the membership fee will be dedicated towards active promotion of the WCWA and stimulating public awareness of the art of woodturning, by means of making photographic displays of members' work to be used at demonstrations, etc.

Annual Subs are as follows:

Ordinary member:

WCWA	R80.00
Hobbies Club	40.00
Total	R120.00

Family member:

(Same surname – living under same roof)

WCWA	R45.00
Hobbies Club	R30.00
Total	R75.00

Country member:

(No Hobbies Club fee)

WCWA	R80.00
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Note: AWSA membership (R35) should be paid together with WCWA subs. The National Body prefers to have clubs pay for their members as a group payment, rather than individuals paying directly to the AWSA. Bert Parker will remit all AWSA memberships to the National Body.

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NAME TAGS

Bert Parker has printed the new name badges for the current year. Members are encouraged to wear their name tags when attending meetings, as this helps new members, and old, get to know each other by name. Committee members can be identified by the printing on their name badges being red rather than black.

If members lose their nametags, a new one will be issued at a cost of R5 towards the card-holder.

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME

Please note: As this is the holiday season, there will be **NO** regular Wednesday **meetings** till **9** January 2001.

16th January 2002

"Rescue 911" How to salvage a piece when things go wrong. "Rescue" techniques and novel ideas will be demonstrated. The committee would also like to hear

from members about ideas for remedying a lathe or wood "disaster", turning an otherwise unusable piece into an acceptable artwork.

Monthly programme for meetings:

1st Wednesday is an informal affair where members are welcome to use the Association's equipment, receive guidance from experienced members and generally discuss matters turning. (Also the committee meeting)

2nd Wednesday is specifically targeted at assisting beginners.

3rd Wednesday is the regular formal meeting, comprising discussion of Association matters, as well as demonstrations, videos and in June and November, the biannual showcases.

4th / 5th Wednesday same as 1st Wednesday.

The dates for the rest of the year are: 28th November, 5th December, 12th December, 9th January.

NB Remember to bring your own chisels and other accessories for the "working" Wednesdays.

THE MARKET PLACE

We have been running a couple of commercial adverts in our newsletter. If you wish to advertise, or know of a company or person who wishes to advertise, please contact Bert Parker. Rates for an advert placed in the newsletter monthly, are R350 per annum.

Items for "the Market Place" are a free service.

AWSA CAPS

I have been asked by a couple of members whether any of the cream-coloured AWSA caps, that we brought back from the Seminar in East London, are still available. The answer is no, but we can order new stock, so if you are interested in purchasing one of the caps, please contact me as soon as possible. Exact cost is to be confirmed, but will be in the region of R35.

Contact Gigi Laidler, (021) 797 7755 after hours.

PHIL IRONS BOOK

There are still a couple of copies of Phil Irons' book, *Woodturning. Two Books in One* available at a special WCWA club price of R180 for WCWA members. Please contact Eric if you would like a copy of this most useful addition to your personal library.

16mm RECORD BOWL GOUGE

Virtually new, with Ellsworth grind. R450.

Contact Dennis Laidler, (021) 797 7755 after hours.

THE SA WOODWORKER

A special price of R128 for a one-year subscription to SA Woodworker has been negotiated for club members. Copies of the magazine purchased at this concession price can **only be collected** at the club, and will **not be posted**. Please contact Eric for your subscription form and for further details. From December this year, the subscription rate will be calculated for the annual rate from January to

December, and adjusted *pro rata* if paid for any other period.

SECOND-HAND TABLE

Please remember to bring along old tools to the "formal" meeting". This offers the newer members an opportunity of acquiring affordable tools, while you have some extra cash for that next bowl gouge you are hankering after, that Father Christmas forgot this year.

WCWA CLUB T-SHIRTS

We are happy to announce that new T-shirts are available – smart royal blue golf shirts, bearing the club name.

R45 for sizes small to large, and R50 for XXL.

Contact Graeme Hill

SUPERGLUE

Glue @ R18.00 available from Bert Parker.

MASKS

The committee has a supply of masks @ R11.00 each, available from Bert Parker.

HYDROWAX

We regret that as the cost of a drum of hydrowax has increased it is no longer feasible for the club to buy in bulk and dispense for members. Unfortunately there is no stock of hydrowax left. An alternative is to use diluted Alcolin.

TURNING JACKETS

Fred Goodman has a contact who will make your turning jacket for you if you supply 2m of the material of your choice, at a cost of R40. Please contact Fred for further details at: (021) 708 3371

WOODEN TEAPOT CHALLENGE

At our last Craft Market I was approached about an interesting challenge.

Someone who is a collector of teapots, would very much like a wooden teapot. Are any of our members up to that challenge? Please contact the editor for further details.

Please let the Editor know if you have anything for sale or to swap, and also how long you wish this to be placed in the newsletter, as a free service to members.

TAILPIECE

It surely must be the best way to spend your leisure time, when the lathe is humming gently, and piles of soft curly shavings mount up, while a crude chunk of wild olive transforms into a stunning bowl, revealing convoluted whorls of chocolate mixed with cream figuring.

My thanks to Ed for his contribution. Please remember, that the newsletter "lives" through members' input.

Cheers, and happy turnings till we meet again,

Gigi