



# Greater Vancouver Woodturners Guild

130<sup>th</sup> chapter of the  
American Association of Woodturners



Newsletter

Vol. 2 Issue 1

October 2000

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**President's Column**  
*Art Liestman*

Welcome back for our second year! We had a highly successful first year and as we gain a bit of experience we to improve. Remember that this is a volunteer organization. If you have any particular needs that aren't being addressed, or would like to see some changes, we can use your help!

**October 25, 2000 Meeting:**  
Focus on Fundamentals –  
Larry Stevenson – Motors  
(starts at 6:30 p.m.)  
Main Speaker – Ross Pilgrim  
– Turning a Watch  
**Meeting at Canadian Legion Hall  
1025 Ridgeway Ave., Coquitlam**

Our September meeting featured a presentation by Fred Holder who showed us how he makes Chinese balls. The rest of the meeting was action packed, with lots of activity signing up members for a new year, a large instant gallery and President's challenge, and the largest wood exchange so far.

A quick reminder – the President's challenge for October is to make something "Halloweenish".

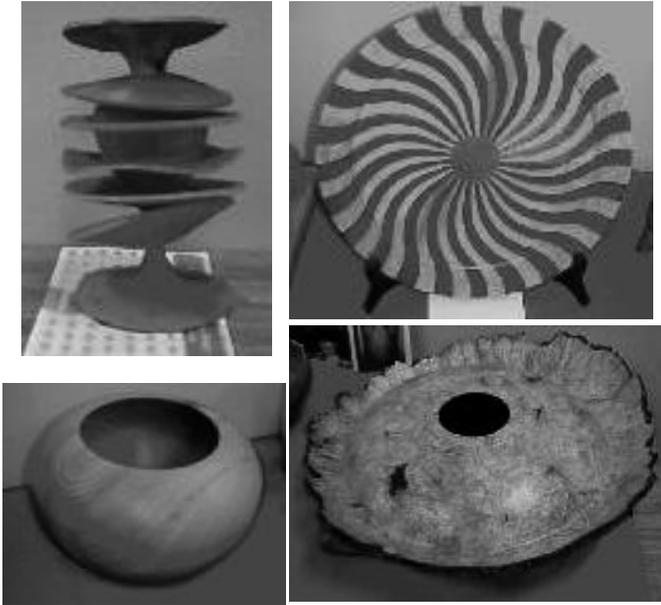
**Meeting Food Providers – Reminder**  
*We have gone to an alphabetical rotation!*  
We ask that the following members please provide some food for the October 25 meeting: **Ryan Austman, Marco Berera, Don Bishop, Loren Boyle, David Broomhead and Bruce Campbell.**

And, for the November 22 meeting: **Stan Clarke, Mike Dawson, Bob Dechaux, Colin Delory, Klaas Focker, and Lorna Gray.**

Your contributions are much appreciated.

## September's Instant Gallery

Art Liestman & John Flanagan (photos)



September's Instant Gallery featured lots of wonderful pieces. Marco did his usual splendid job of leading the discussion of the pieces. Unfortunately, the new labels, which worked well to identify the gallery pieces to Marco, disappeared at the end of the meeting. Since my memory is failing, I can only remember the maker of one of the pieces pictured here. My apologies! We'll do a better job of identifying them next month. I promise.

## Secretary's Report

*Dave Martin*

The executive of the Vancouver Woodturners Guild met on September 11, 2000 to review our first year of operation and to discuss plans for the coming year.

The guild will continue to hold regular meetings at the same location, and will investigate possible storage locations for equipment at the Legion.

To enable members to better see the two television monitors used during demonstrations at the meetings, Andrew Forrest volunteered to build two boxes that would serve not only as stands but also as storage units.

In the coming year, members will be asked to help with food for the coffee break in alphabetical order. Executive members provided goodies for the September meeting.

Much of the time at the executive meeting involved making plans for the Cloverdale Woodworkers Show on October 20, 21, and 23. Volunteers are needed to look after the Guild booth. If you can be of assistance and have not already signed up, please contact Ted Fromson at 876-0267.

The guild usually meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month. In December, that would mean a meeting on December 27. As many members are not available during the Christmas period, the executive recommended a field trip to be held early in December to replace the regular meeting.

The executive is presently investigating bringing in a number of special speakers in the

### Canadian Woodturning Competition

Friday, October 20 to Sunday, October 22

Cloverdale Rodeo & Exhibition Grounds  
176th Street & 64th Avenue, Surrey B.C.

Thanks to everyone for volunteering to staff the competition and the GVWG booth. Please note that if you are entering a piece, you should send Bruce Campbell or Andrew Forrest your entry form, even if you are going to hand-deliver your piece(s).

We have recently discovered a disastrous typo in the entry form, where both Andy's and Bruce's phone numbers are incorrect. Please assist anyone who is having trouble contacting us by providing our correct phone numbers. Bruce is at (604) 469-0221, and Andy is at (604) 990-9667.

spring of 2001. These people would probably be available for a Friday night large-group demonstration followed by small-group, “hands-on” sessions on Saturday and Sunday. Our plan is to team with AAW chapters in Seattle, Mount Vernon and Portland to help defray the costs involved.

Members are reminded that guild dues for the September 2000 - September 2001 year are now due. The annual fees are thirty dollars. Forty-four members renewed their memberships at our September meeting which delighted Don Hoskins, the guild treasurer. When you renew, be sure to pick up your wallet-sized membership card.

### **Focus on Fundamentals Report**

*Bruce Campbell, Coordinator*

There was no FOF at the September meeting so we could allow Fred Holder to begin his excellent presentation earlier in the evening. We will get back on track in October with a presentation on The Basics of Motors by Larry Stevenson. Larry is a journeyman electrician and worked for a number of years in that field. Today he is a technician in the medical industry and works with the “guts” of complex medical equipment. This, plus several years as an instructor in the field makes Larry very well qualified to lead us through the complexities of this subject. I, for one, am really looking forward to it.

And what is next? Well, you tell me. November may be filled by Larry doing “Part II” of motors or we could talk about the interesting subject of pricing our work when we sell it.

I am always looking for new topics and people to present them so please get in touch with me with your ideas. Remember that this is “fundamentals”. It should be a topic that can be covered in 45 minutes – including questions.

### **Main Presentation – Chinese Balls**

*Art Liestman*

Fred Holder gave us a splendid presentation on the making of Chinese balls. The process is very technical and I can’t begin to recount the details. If you are interested in knowing more about making these beautiful objects, you may wish to consult the classic book *Hand or Simple Turning – Principles and Practice* by John Jacob Holtzapffel or the more recent Woodturning *Wizardry* by David Springett. Fred Holder has written several articles on Chinese balls in his monthly publication *More Woodturning*.

The special tools for making these balls are made by Crown. Fred has modified his to work better. The pictures show the tools, the chuck to hold the ball, a cut-away ball showing the cuts



made by the tools, and a couple of finished balls. Very impressive work, Fred!

Fred teaches woodturning in his shop in Camano Island, Washington. If I wanted to learn to make Chinese balls, I'd contact Fred about taking a course. More information about Fred and his publication *More Woodturning* can be found at [www.fholder.com](http://www.fholder.com). Fred can be reached by phone at 360-387-0349.



## Melvin Firmager's Visit

*Art Liestman*

In August, Bob James arranged a visit by the noted British woodturner Melvin Firmager. During his stay, Melvin taught some hands-on classes for local woodturners including some GVVG members. On the weekend after the classes, Melvin gave two full-day

demonstrations at Bob's shop in North Vancouver. I attended Sunday's demo and found it very enlightening.

Melvin is known for his unusual grinds on bowl gouges as well as his unique "leading bevel" hollowing tools. It was interesting to see them in action for the first time. Melvin spent time explaining how the tools worked and why he shapes them like he does. He also showed us how to sharpen the tools and demonstrated their use on two hollow forms.

For those who weren't able to attend, the Guild purchased Melvin's two videotapes which are available from our library. For a unique approach to bowl gouges and hollowing tools, check out the tapes!

## Our First Picnic

*Art Liestman*

On July 29<sup>th</sup>, our first picnic was held at the home of David MacDonald's father. There was a good turnout for the event. About 25 members attended with some spouses and families.

The afternoon began with games of bocce (using a brand new set of balls made by Phil Laliberte) and petanque (the French version of the game played with metal balls). These games drew to a close when the egg cup race began. A dozen (or so) participants produced eggcups which were judged to be acceptable. The winner of the race for fastest eggcup was host David MacDonald who had the home field advantage. Attendees then voted for the most pleasing eggcup. Colin Delory's cup easily won that award (probably due to the special type O negative stain that he added to it).

After the games, food was prepared on various grills and a large assortment of pre-made goodies appeared on the table for all to share. The feast was on!

After the meal, an auction was held. The bidding was fierce with attendees vying for bits of unusual wood, partially turned pieces, and some finished pieces. Thanks to the donors and the bidders, a whopping \$687 was raised for the Guild! This was a very timely influx of cash allowing us to stay in the black. Thanks again to everyone!

The picnic was a lot of fun and we hope to have an even larger turnout next year. The success of the event was due to hosts David MacDonald and his father Mac and to John Bese, Marco Berera, and Bruce Campbell for organizational skills. Thanks guys!

### **Shop Crawls**

*Art Liestman*

This summer organized a series of open shops to fill the empty space between the July and September meetings. Seven members opened their shops on a weekend afternoon for members to visit. Some of the openings featured hands-on experience for the attendees while others focused on a demo. I was only able to attend four of the events and regret that I didn't manage to get to the others.

As host of one of the events, I had great fun showing off my Stubby lathe and the rest of my shop. With the help of the attendees, we roughed out some large bowls after coring out the centers with the McNaughton tool. The roughed out bowls (and some others that I had done the previous day) were then boiled and are nearly ready to finish turning now. It was a treat to be able to share the afternoon with all of the members who dropped by.

As a visitor to other people's shops, I enjoyed the demos and picked up some very useful ideas – some of them just from snooping around the shops. At Marco's, I got to try my hand turning a spindle on a pole lathe. At Steve's, we got a detailed look at his homemade bowl lathe and a peak at his huge wood supply. At John's, the

mighty Oneway easily turned huge blanks while John removed cores with the Woodcut Bowlsaver tool.

We will do more shop crawls in the future. Please consider adding your shop to the list. We all have tools, techniques, and shop ideas that we can share with others.

### **My Trip to Maine**

*Art Liestman*

I was fortunate to be awarded an AAW Educational Opportunities Grant in the last competition. The grant was for \$800 US towards a two-day one-on-one class with Jacques Vesery, an exceptional young woodturning artist, at his shop in Damariscotta, Maine. I arranged to do the course on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and was able to afford it by piggybacking the course on to a work trip to Boston.

Jacques' recent work focuses on small hollow forms. His forms feature detailed carving or texturing on the outer surface and are usually painted except for a delicate neck which is added. His work sells in the most prestigious galleries and is highly sought after by collectors. Having seen many of his pieces and held a few, it is easy to understand their appeal. They are wonderful objects!

I arrived at Jacques' meticulously clean shop for my first day. After a brief look around, we immediately began to "play". Over the course of the two days, Jacques devoted his attention to showing me every step of the processes that he uses. We covered everything including deciding where to cut the blank from the log, turning the outside shape and hollowing using a specially ground bowl gouge and a cranked scraper. We followed that with carving with reciprocating carvers while the wood was still wet. After microwave-assisted drying, we explored carving with rotary tools and woodburning tools. Finally, we considered

coloring with acrylic paints and inks, and adding final details such as necks and handles. Along the way, we went off on tangents such as which brand of toilet paper to use for applying finishes and discussions on how to display work for sale. Jacques even made me lunch on both days!

A one-on-one course is very intense. It will take me some time to reflect on my time in Maine and to explore these methods in more detail I plan to share some of the details with the guild, but right now, my brain is very full.

Any AAW member is eligible to apply for an Educational Opportunities Grant. More information on applying can be found in *American Woodturner*, the AAW's quarterly magazine or at their website at [www.woodturner.org](http://www.woodturner.org). Applications for the next competition must be postmarked by January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Good luck!

### **Drying by Boiling – An update**

*Art Liestman*

In the May 2000 newsletter, we reprinted an intriguing article by Steven D. Russell on drying wood by boiling. This summer, I shortened a 45-gallon barrel to 30 gallons, added a propane burner, and joined the boiling brigade. In June, I boiled 37 roughed out bowls of maple and cherry. I did several more in August and Bruce and Neno added some pieces to the pot.

The reasons for boiling are to reduce warping and cracking and to speed the drying process. At this point, it looks like a huge success. Some 10" blanks that were rough turned to about 1" thickness were dry enough to finish by 2 months after the boiling. Thicker bowls take longer, but again the process is sped up. The distortion, which is particularly a problem with cherry, is much less in the boiled bowls. I have had a few cracks in the first batch that I did, but I believe that this may be attributed to not boiling them long enough. I have subsequently increased the boiling time for thicker bowls (using 1 hour per

inch of thickness as a rule of thumb) and have had no cracking in the newer bowls.

The most interesting effect so far involved two of Neno's pieces. Among the pieces he contributed to the pot were two London plane bowls that had been roughed out 4 months earlier. They had distorted so badly that they could not be finished. We dropped them in the pot and were very excited when they emerged perfectly round!

If you are interested in trying this, dig out the March newsletter. It works!

### **Upcoming Events**

*Fred Baldwin – Educational Coordinator*

Guest presenters for upcoming meetings are as follows:

November 22 - Four members will present their ideas on Turing Xmas Gifts. (If you have any projects you would like to see, please call me.)

December – We are arranging a field trip for December 9<sup>th</sup>. Members are invited to a wood turning demonstration by Vernon Leibrant at his shop in Everson Washington. Vernon has given many demonstrations on his large bowl turning - nothing less than 16" in diameter - and averages around 24" per bowl. He has made his own lathe, tools etc and they work - really work. Every one can learn something from Vernon from turning, drying woods, finishing and marketing. More info to follow at our October and November meetings. Any questions please call Fred at 224-5780.

January 24 - Have trouble with finishing your turnings? Cornelius Regehr will discuss and give advice on the techniques he uses to get that great finish.

February 28 - Ever turned a bowl with a scraper? Scott Belway of the Fraser Valley Woodturners will demonstrate his techniques on how he uses only a scraper to do it.

March 28 – a special guest to be announced.

April 25 - Bark edged bowls. Neno Catania will show us the tools and techniques he uses to do either natural or burl bark edged bowls.

That's all so far. For future meetings if you have any suggestions please give me a call 224-5780 or email me at fbaldwin@direct.ca.

### **Art's Alive in Washington**

On November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, the lovely town of LaConner Washington will be abuzz with woodworking and other good stuff as it celebrates *Art's Alive*, a 2 day celebration of the arts. *The Northwest Washington Woodturners* (our sister AAW chapter from whence came our recent speakers Fred Holder and Bill Smith) will be there displaying, selling, and demonstrating. *The Northwest Corner Woodworkers* and *Woodworkers Northwest* will also be there. The festival's hours are 11am to 5pm on both days. Go!

### **GVWG T-SHIRTS FOR SALE!!!**

We now have club T Shirts. Forest green with our logo on the front and a motto 'let the chips fly ' on the back. For this run we only had L and XL sizes made. Cost is \$18.00. I'll be at the Cloverdale show on Friday, October 20, so if any members who is hosting our booth or the competition display wants a T-Shirt call Fred Baldwin at 224-5780 and we'll see if we can arrange to get you one. If not they will be available for sale at our next meeting.

## **CLASSIFIEDS**

For Sale - An assortment of used blast gates, elbows, and "T's" for a four inch dust collection system. Price three dollars each. If interested, please contact Dave Martin at 521-8327 or martin\_dave@telus.net.

### **THANKS!**

Special thanks to the following for donations, expertise and help:

KMS Tools (Coquitlam) 522-5599

Mount Cheam Woodworking  
(Chilliwack) 795-9297

Neufeld Brothers Hardwoods  
(Chilliwack) 795-7886