



AWA Newsletter



A member of the American Association of Woodturners

Location: Homewood Senior Center at 816 Oak Grove Road, Homewood, AL 35209
 Web Site: www.alabamawoodturners.com

Coming Events

- Aug 8 – Jess Walls
- Sep 12 – Pat Matranga
- Oct 10 – Brian Simmons
- Nov 14 – Round Robin

The Aug pre-meeting demo will be on the use of parting tools by Moody Davis

President's Message

What an extraordinary meeting we had in July. Binh Pho, a world class wood turner was our demonstrator! I have been going to meetings for only three short years and for me this was the one of best presentations our club has put on. The demonstration was very informative with Binh sharing the stories behind his pieces and on the technical side we saw how to turn a thin wall vessel along with air brushing and piercing. He makes it look effortless. Please check out Binh's web site at www.wondersofwood.net/. The club bought a copy of his DVD's for our library. Please contact the librarian if you are interested in checking them out. Also, if you missed the meeting or want a copy of the meeting we have it on DVD and are selling it for \$10 a copy.



Kudos to Worth for bringing Binh to us, he has been working on getting this demonstrator for over 2 years.

I would like to give Will a special thank you for opening his home to Binh and having the workshops in his Studio.

Our Italian lunch was fantastic and coordinated very well, so thanks to the girls.

We had 85 people attend with several guests: Steve Welds, Greg Riley, B, Cottrell, Betsy Black, Garry Simmons, Jim Price, Todd Dees and Deborah Files Smith. Also, we had a few new members to join, George Strother of Homewood, Diana Hansen of Huntsville and Jim Priest. We always look forward to meeting new people interested in wood turning.

Bill West updated the club on the Christmas ornament project for Children's Hospital. Our goal remember, is about 350. We all know how important this is so please get to work and make some ornaments to support Children's Hospital. It's a very worthwhile cause. The last opportunity to turn in ornaments will be the October meeting.

We still have about 20 members who have outstanding dues for 2009. Please bring these payments up do date, or unfortunately, we will need to remove these individuals from the membership roster. This will need to be done by August 31st.

The August program will feature one of our club members, Jess Walls turns some really nice designs on the lathe and we are looking forward to his presentation.

I look forward to seeing you soon. - Kevin

Officers of AWA

- President** – Kevin Felderhoff
- Vice President** – Worth Barham
- Secretary** – Richard Serviss
- Treasurer** – Norris Jackman
- Directors:** Don Blankenship, Bill Hubbard, Dave Chanslor, Judy Osmundson, Donald Payne, Jess Walls, and Brian Simmons
- Web Master** – Robert Scheitlin
- Training** – Phil Fortmeyer
- Newsletter Editor** – Jerry Hanchey

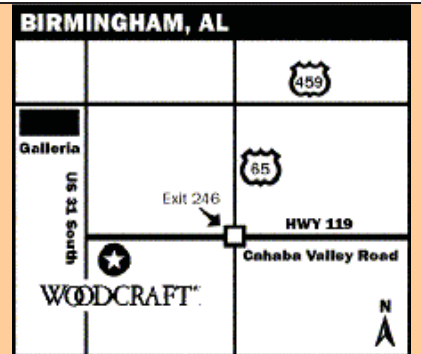
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 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 9 am – 7 pm
 Thursday: 9 am – 9 pm
 Saturday: 9 am – 6 pm
 Sunday: noon – 5 pm





BINH PHO WEEKEND...Yes it was a great weekend. Many of you only saw Binh at Saturday's demo, but some of us got to participate in a one day hands-on class held in Will Pate's shop (and a fine shop it is.)

A big **Thank You** goes out to all who helped make this event a success. First to the Pate's who hosted Binh in their home and provided space for the hands-on class. To Worth Barham for his efforts to work out the scheduling of Binh and coordinate many of the details of this event. Binh isn't easy to get. He has a very limited schedule and Worth started working this last year. To Bill Hubbard for his generous contribution of round-trip airline tickets on Southwest Airlines for Binh's travel. (There is a story about that, ask me). To the ladies who arranged for the food for lunch and got everything set-up so we could enjoy a nice meal during the noon break. (You need to remember that some of them aren't turners and they're volunteering to help just out of the goodness of their hearts.) And last, a big thanks to all the club members who pitched in to get the room cleaned up and ready for the next crowd which was waiting at the door to get in. It may not take a village to raise a child, but it sure takes more than one or two to pull off a weekend such as this one.

One of the great things about Binh is that he's willing to share his knowledge and techniques. Of course, it might take years to achieve the caliber of work Binh produces, but many of us can and will benefit greatly from applying some of what we've learned to our own work. As Binh told me, while we were driving back from dinner Friday night, it isn't so much about being artistic as it is about doing a lot of turning and experimenting with it. I've said it and heard other people say it too. "I'm pretty good at the mechanics of turning, but I don't have any creative talent." You know what I mean. You can imitate/copy something you see, but you have difficulty coming up with your own ideas/designs from scratch. Binh was saying if you turn enough and experiment a lot you will eventually start getting design ideas that are uniquely your own. Now if I can just get to the "a lot" part of the equation...

Binh showed us three different techniques in his demo. First was how he turns thin-walled vessels, down to 1/16 in. Second was how he does airbrushing and third was his technique for piercing designs in those thin-walled vessels. The key to turning thin-walled vessels is to work the inside in stages. He only removes about one inch of wood at a time taking it all the way across to the wall and only leaving the desired thickness before moving on to remove another inch. He cuts, scrapes and sands each increment of the wall until it's what he wants and then moves on. That part of the wall is done and you can't go back to "do a little touch-up work" on it once you've moved deeper into the vessel. If you do, you'll find that the wood has already "moved" a little or a lot and if you try to cut or scrape it some more you won't be able to remove a uniform amount around the inside surface. This results in an uneven wall thickness or in the worse case a wall failure. Having said this, I'm here to tell you it's **HARD** not to go back!



Of course the thin-walled turning is quite admirable with respect to turning technique, but the real beauty in Binh's work comes from the surface enhancements in the form of airbrushing, piercing, dying, gilding, texturing, etc. In the piece shown on the left he has used several of those methods to create the result we see. And we got to see much of his work during the slide show he presented at lunch. Because of time constraints, Binh was only able to share a portion of what

he uses to complete his pieces. The next thing was the airbrushing. One of the great things about his technique is you don't have to be an artist or even be able to draw well. The combination of stencils and masking that he showed us enable almost anyone with a decent airbrush to do some of the stuff he does. His use of a flat piece of 1/16 inch plywood on which to practice all these techniques means you can do this part even before you get the thin-wall technique down pat. He uses low tack masking tape, friskett, and a design transfer process that allows us to use drawings, or designs from a number of sources, on our own work. Once the coloring has been completed with the airbrush or dyes, Binh uses a high speed piercing tool to create the "lattice like" cut outs which form designs that compliment the color patterns and other design elements.

Although, this type of thing is way too "artsy and fartsy" for some turners, there were clearly a number of our club members who have been intrigued by these techniques and are going to give it a try. Having seen Binh a few times before, I've got info on much of his equipment, supplies, where to get things and what he uses. I'm happy to share with anyone who asks. —EDITOR—



A WHAT? – A TRAVOIS!

By Maurice Clabaugh



A modern day Travois



Picture 2

Since my turning involves recycling of wood that has been cut by others, I often find wood in the oddest places and at the oddest times. Sometimes it's a call from someone who has cut a tree, knows of a tree that is being cut or I find it by the side of the road. When opportunity "knocks" like this, I'm pressed to answer in a very timely manner.

Recently a neighbor cut a 16" diameter sweet gum tree and put it at the side of the road. Finder's keepers! But since it was at the entry to my subdivision, and the city trash pick-up was in two days, time was critical. After perusing the situation, I found a treasure trove of good, very wet (over 60 percent moisture) logs. They were 16" in diameter and 28" long. This wood find was much too heavy to load by myself and no time to call in favors for help. Ingenuity to the rescue.

I hurried home and developed a "Travois". Built from my knowledge of Native American folklore. A "Travois" (pictured on the left) is a device made by Native American women to facilitate moving their belongings. Having no wagons, they devised a way to move their belongings by horse. Tying their log poles on either side of the horse and creating a webbing of rawhide, they could move their things and ride the horse at the same time, without straining the horse. It was a sled-like device.

I developed an adaptation of it. Two 30" pine 2x4s with 18" cross pieces and two 45-degree wedge steps between the top and bottom, became my Travois. The reason for the wedge steps was to hold the log while I lifted on the bottom handles. See picture of "travois" on the back of my van ready for logs.

My reasoning was if I could "roll" the logs to the back of the van and up to the first step, I could lift the log to just above horizontal and it would roll into the back of the van. Once in the back of the van, I could stand it upright and proceed to load another log. See picture 2 with log ready to be lifted and loaded.



Maurice's Travois

Come and See Us!

For those interested in joining our club, it is a great way to share and learn woodturning techniques. With over a hundred members, the experience of our members ranges from novice to professional turner. Some have big fancy lathes and some have none. Everyone who is the least bit interested in knowing more about this addictive hobby, contact Richard Serviss at (205) 853-2136, Norris Jackman at (205) 678-9348 or Kevin Felderhoff at (205) 823-2011 and they'll happily answer your questions and get you signed up. OR...come visit us at our next meeting. We meet the second Saturday of each month. Meeting starts at 9:00 am, but people start showing up before 8:00 am. Questions are welcome and answers are plentiful.

Meeting Location

From I-65 N, exit 256B (From I-65 S, exit 256A). Turn West on Oxmoor Rd. go about .5 mi – halfway there take the left fork at the traffic light (means you'll go straight ahead) – Turn left onto Oak Grove Road and go about .2 mi. Homewood Senior Center is on the right. Check out our Web Site at www.alabamawoodturners.com for much more about our club.