



# 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](http://www.alabamawoodturners.com)

### Coming Events

Mar 14 –

Pre-meeting demo is on use of scrapers led by Ronnie Perkins

Meeting Demo – Bill Hubbard on “natural edge bowls” or something like that.

### President’s Message

The Great Escape! With all the crazy things going on in the world today, it sure is a great escape to be able to go into our shops and turn some wood. This is such a wonderful hobby (actually addiction for me) and I am thankful that I was introduced to wood turning.

The pieces that were presented for February were phenomenal. It is obvious from the quality of the pieces, that everyone is spending more time in their wood shop. You can easily see the progression of some club members and the quality of the craftsmanship. I was talking to one of our members and he was saying back in the very beginning, everybody got excited when someone brought in a piece with a smooth finish. Boy, have we come a long way with our craft. Please remember to bring one of your pieces to share at the March meeting.



The featured presenter for February was Don Russell of Georgia. He put on a fine demonstration on segmented Christmas ornaments; kudos to Don for sharing his craft with us.

Wow, we had a great February meeting with a total of 82 attending. We welcomed five new members: Frank Moody of Grady, Jeffrey Hicks of Huntsville, Jim Ogle, Marvin Little and Ryan Morris all of Pell City. We also recognized seven guests and hope that they will come again to our meetings: Buddy Eiland, Ray Morgan, Janet Prickett, Keith Prickett, Sherri Simpson, Ken Ray and Brian Johnson.



We are trying very hard to ensure that everyone has and wears a name tag. Members should have a printed name tag. If you do not have one or have misplaced yours, please see Richard Serviss and he will get you fixed up. We will have guests wear colored name tags so we can easily recognize them and make them feel at home. Remember when you first came to a meeting? Bet you can remember who made you feel welcomed, so we are asking our members to please reach out to the visitors and get to know them so they will feel comfortable about returning to our meetings.

Continued on page 2

### Inside this issue:

- Article by John Lucas Pg 2
- Announcements etc. Pg 3
- Club Competition results Pg 4



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 Thursday: 9 am – 9 pm  
 Saturday: 9 am – 6 pm  
 Sunday: noon – 5 pm



The wild woman working the registration table and chasing everyone down to make sure we have your picture for the website is my wife, Linda. She definitely took me seriously about wrangling up everyone to ensure we had their picture. Don't worry about how you look, Linda will straighten you out and Robert will take your picture. It really is painless and one more thing you can check off your to do list. They were able to get about 20+ pictures of members for the directory. We will continue with the push for website pictures at the March meeting. You can see the added photos in the member directory on our AWA Web Site.

Having a hard time remembering the name of the person you met at the last meeting? Perhaps you're like me and talk to people at the meeting, but just can't remember their name when you get home. An easy way to solve that problem is just to go to our website and look at the member list and match the face with the name.

If you would like to get involved in activities in the club, please see me. There is plenty to do before and after the meeting. It is rewarding and you will make a lot of new friends. Thanks to the members who stepped up and joined the video team.

It's time to order Anchorseal Wax sealer again. We will have a 55 gallon drum in time for the April meeting so save up some one gallon jugs. We will have the cost at the March meeting. We will need someone to organizing the distribution for us. I will receive the shipment at where I work which is in Pelham. Please bring containers that are even gallons, to the meeting because we have no way to measure except by your own container.

The March program will be Bill Hubbard on natural edge vessels. It should be a great demonstration. Bill is one of those guys who I have been watching their work for the past two years and pieces that he is turning out are quite remarkable.

One of our original club members, Bill Cleage, has turned over 452 canes! If you were lucky enough to be an early member, you received one of these canes from Bill. They are absolutely beautiful. After much thought, Bill has decided to sell his shop. We know this was a tough decision, but realize he will still be busy with his other hobby, flight simulation. Bill has generously donated the proceeds of this sale to the Alabama Woodturners Association. We will be using this significant donation to continue our guest speaker education program and scholarships. We wish to thank Bill for this donation.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the March meeting.

Kevin

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Many of you remember John Lucas as our January demonstrator. One of our members (my apologies since I've forgotten who gave this to me) forwarded this article to me and for those of you who haven't spent time with Will Pate making tools, I think it has some excellent info on making your own.

## **Making Your Own Tools.**

**By John Lucas**

The easy way to make your own tools is to start with good steel. Used planer and jointer blades that are High Speed steel don't need any heat- treating to make them useable for wood lathe tools. They are hard to cut and shape however. I use an angle grinder with a metal cutting blade to cut the steel and the same tool with an abrasive wheel to shape the tool. You can use a regular grinder to shape the steel but it will be slower.

You can't drill High Speed Steel with a normal drill bit. If you want to make small cutters for your hollowing tools simply cut a notch in the side instead of trying to drill a hole. You can use the metal cutting wheel in the angle grinder for this.

To make tools out of high carbon steel you will have to learn some heat- treating. It's fairly simple. Heat the steel until it is red hot and non magnetic. Simply touch it with a magnet every now and then as it gets red hot. When it is not attracted to the magnet it is ready. Now let it cool slowly. This softens the metal so that it can be drilled and shaped. To bend it you will have to heat it red hot again. It will bend where it is hottest so move the torch to heat the area that needs to bend. I use a MAPP gas torch instead of propane. It is hotter. Propane works for smaller tools it just takes longer to heat.

After shaping the metal you need to make it hard enough to hold an edge. Heat the area where the cutting edge will be to a dull red. Check it with the magnet again. When it won't attract the magnet it's ready. Immerse the metal in water or oil to "quench it". If you don't know what kind of steel you are heating, use oil. Peanut oil or mineral oil works well. It has a higher flash point. Completely immerse the red hot area in the oil to keep from starting a fire. Do this outside just in case. The metal should be very hard now. It is too hard to hold an edge without chipping. You will need to anneal or soften the metal.

To anneal the metal sand the area lightly so the steel is shiny. Now heat it slowly. I pass it in and out of the flame observing the color of the metal. When it first changes to a straw color quench it again. Now it should be soft enough to sharpen. If you heat it to purple or blue you'll have to start all over. Fortunately it's easy to do this do this. Only the tip really needs to be the straw color. If you accidentally blue the area behind the cutting edge don't worry. The tool will still work it will just not hold an edge very well once you've

ground the tool far enough back to hit the blued area. Just go through the heat and quench cycle again. If you want to try to harden the metal to a specific hardness then use drill rod and order the hardening instructions. It will tell you what medium to quench the metal and what temperature you need to achieve to anneal it and get the desired hardness.

I often heat the steel to 450 degrees in the oven. This tempers the entire piece. I set it on a brick to even out the heat and then heat it for 30 minutes per ¼” of thickness. When it’s done simply turn the oven off and let it cool.

It’s easy to make a tool from good metal such as old screwdrivers, allen wrenches, or drill rod. Drill bits don’t make good tools and files are dangerous unless you heat treat them properly. Instead of files buy good steel from MSC, Travers, Enco or other machine tool companies.



Jerry Osmundson handles pre-meeting demonstration

### Pre Meeting Demos – Will Pate

Last club meeting, I took four of my unfinished pieces to ask Maurice Clabaugh to suggest possible shape & proportion refinements. As we looked and talked about this, several club members stopped by and had questions and suggestions of their own.

Our informal, spontaneous session became a great opportunity to add new dimension to our club purpose to provide training in the art of wood turning to our fellow club members.

Maurice Clabaugh suggested that maybe a new idea was being born in the form of the “Let’s Talk About It Table”. All projects would be welcomed.

Maurice offered to serve as moderator for this table. All questions would be open in the spirit of learning and sharing. So – if you’re looking for new inspiration or maybe just a suggestion of what might be made from a piece of your wood, bring them to the new official “Let’s Talk About It Table” at the next meeting. This new “Let’s Talk About It Table” would give us another forum of learning. So bring something to discuss...piece of wood, partial turning or a completed piece that you want feedback on.

Our on -going “Pre Meeting Demos have inspired both members & guest alike. Our schedule is set for March-November (see the February Newsletter for complete list) but we still want your help recommending tools, and/or process demonstrations for later sessions.

For Questions or suggestions please call - Will Pate 205-907-0638 or see him at the meetings. Check the Coming Events section on page 1 for the next Pre-Meeting topic.

► FOR SALE: Delta Unisaw – 3HP Single Phase motor, 52” side table, T square fence. \$1200.00, contact Bill West at (205) 871-9326 or 531-8023 ◀

**REMINDER!** IF YOU HAVEN’T HAD YOUR PICTURE TAKEN FOR THE OUR WEB SITE, SEE ROBERT SCHEITLIN TO GET ONE TAKEN. We are fortunate in bringing several new members on board and the photos on the member’s list helps to place the faces with the names of everyone. If anyone doesn’t know how to access that list see me (Jerry Hanchey) or any one of the officers for a quick “how to.”

## *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](http://www.alabamawoodturners.com) for much more about our club.

# Club Competition

February was another good month for entries in our judging. I'm often surprised at the results of the judging, but at the same time I think more about the different elements which different judges use in ranking the entries. That is not intended to be critical, rather to suggest that those of us who don't have a piece in the judging can still learn something about how our fellow turners evaluate the quality of a piece.

I can think of three primary elements to judge (I'm sure there are others.) One of them is the design. *Is the piece appealing?* There simple designs and complex designs. There are delicate pieces and more massive pieces. There are pieces that have smooth flowing lines and those with gnarly, convoluted shapes. But regardless of the kind of design, the finished work must look like it was well done...therefore appealing.

A second factor related to the first is the evidence of skill with the tools. Are the surfaces smooth and do the lines flow continuously as you would expect in a properly turned bowl. Or does the piece exhibit breaks in the curve where an obvious transition occurred between the sides and bottom of a bowl. Is the detail work, on a finial for example, done so that the edges are crisp as reflected in good tool work rather than too much sanding. For open vessel and bowl shapes is the wall thickness uniform or does it get unnecessarily thick towards the bottom. Do the proportions look right as in "did the turner remove wood IAW the initial design/idea or does the piece look like too many design opportunities popped up and they determined the final shape. And finally, the finish!

Many turners do a good job up to the finish and then let up some. It doesn't matter what kind of finish is used, rather how well was it applied. It is pretty easy to tell when a finish has been applied over a poorly sanded/turned surface. Some finishes do not require a lot of time to apply, such as a buffed piece without any oil or lacquer applied before buffing. On the other hand some applications require a significant amount of time to allow proper drying between coats or before buffing. And always finish the entire piece. NEVER leave the bottom of a piece unfinished (assuming it has a bottom.) And if it is a closed vessel, the inside must at least be sanded as well as the outside to the depth that a long finger can reach. (That can be a challenge sometimes.) Finishing also applies to "enhanced" pieces. Whether it's texturing, coloring, carving, burning, piercing or whatever, it should add to the appeal not detract. - EDITOR



Beginner: 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>



Beginner: 3<sup>rd</sup>

BEGINNER: Troy Stroud 1<sup>st</sup>; Roger Walters 2<sup>nd</sup>; Marty Cogen 3<sup>rd</sup>.

INTERMEDIATE: Mel Brown 1<sup>st</sup>.

ADVANCED: Mark Couto 1<sup>st</sup>; Bill Hubbard 2<sup>nd</sup>; Mark Couto 3<sup>rd</sup>.

ENHANCED: Phil Duffy 1<sup>st</sup>; Mel Brown 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>.

