

Shavings

DETROIT AREA
WOODTURNERS



April 2006

<http://www.DetroitAreaWoodturners.org>

Editor Ruby Cler

President's Message

Hi fellow turners. Don't forget that due to Easter on the 3rd Sunday, **our meeting will be the 4th Sunday, April 23.** It is nice that spring is finally arriving. For or me it heralds my physical recovery. My rehabilitation project of turning boxes was a good idea, as it started to help me get me back on my feet and into the swing of turning without making long term projects. I have been working on a big project with two artists one from Detroit and one from Germany. We are making 8 large vessels that are 18 inches long and about 14 inches in diameter. The wood was harvested last year, dried and laminated into big blocks. As a result, I am turning all this as dried lumber and the hollowing is end grain. Boy, is it tough. To compound my problems, the wood is still moving, so I am repairing it all with epoxy as I go. I,ll have pictures at the meeting. The good thing is that the box project was a good conditioning exercise.

We are trying to get a bus organized for transportation to the Symposium this year. If we can get at least 30 folks to commit by the April meeting, we will be able to do it. Look for a bus in the parking lot across the street from the nature center building. The bus company may bring one to help promote this joint trip.

Wood Carving and Enhancing on Turned Objects

At the March meeting, we were treated a demonstration of carving by Ray Frase. His preparation was very thorough. To do some pneumatic power carving, a compressor with a very long hose was brought in and placed in the storage closet, to reduce noise. He also brought in were many examples of his work, which he used to describe some of the ways to burn or carve on a turning. This took his turning to another level. To aid in carving one might use: Dremels, Foredoms, and a large variety of hand tools. (Just the amount of time that a presenter uses to get ready for such a demo and the amount of energy that it takes to box up and carry everything in, is obviously a big job. Many thanks to all the presenters at the club meetings who do this for us.)

One example was his 36 in. platter. Ray enjoys turning these large platters and has made many of them. He not only has to cut, square up, glue up dozens of pieces, he has to turn it into a large plate. This process takes many hours and only after he applies a finish can he start the carving process.

For this carving, Ray showed us a tool he uses. It is like a dentist drill and spins at 400,000 rpms. Ray uses a 400XS made by ****SCM High Speed Engraving****. For thismeeting Ray showed how to stencil a leaf outline or use a photocopy and tape it to your wood. The 400XS can go thru the paper and not tear it up. **Continued on page 5 ...**

Join the AAW!!



Next Meeting - April 23, 2006

Meeting Highlight will be on staves. The Detroit Area Woodturners meet at the Shelby River Bends Park, Shadbush Nature Centre, Shelby Township, MI, from 2:00 to 4:30 PM. The Park is located on Ryan Road between 21 and 22 Mile Roads opposite the Hamlin Road junction. All visitors are welcome.



Calendar of Events

The DAW meets the third Sunday monthly, unless adjusted for holidays, September through June. General Meetings are scheduled from 2:00 PM to 4:30 PM. Executive meetings are open to all club members:

- April 5th/06 - Executive meeting 7:00 p.m. at John Fitzpatrick's house.
- April 23 - General Meeting. Demonstration on Stave work by Frand Marabate
- May 10 - Executive meeting 7:00 p.m. at Ruby Cler's house.
- May 21 - General Meeting. Demonstration on making Goblets.
- May 31 - Executive Meeting.
- June 11 - General Meeting and Picnic. Bring your croquet balls and mallets.
- June 22-24 - AAW Symposium in Louisville KY



Left:
Vase made by Bob Daily

Below:
Candle holder made by Howard Kloc



DAW Officers - Here to Help!

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Wood of the Month: Yew: The Strong, Pliable Softwood

Yew is a wood which has a deep history and is associated with much folklore. Yew's evergreen leaves are said to be symbolic of everlasting life. The Greeks considered yew trees sacred and associated them with Hecate, Queen of the Underworld. Christians traditionally planted yew trees in country churchyards.

In her book, "Wood," Jane Struthers writes that opinion is divided on just why yews are associated with churchyards. "Some old authorities claim it is because the yew is said to ward off devils (which is why yew hedges were frequently planted near houses), while others believed it was due to yew's ability to absorb the noxious smells that floated up from the graves."

Bow Wood

Once upon a time, yew wood was the wood of choice for making longbows. These archery bows were a staple in the arsenal of medieval wars. The bows are often called English longbows, but historians say wood from Spanish yew trees was better suited to making the bows than English yew. The English variety grew curvy and gnarled, while the Spanish yew grew straighter. Donald Culross Peattie writes in, "A Natural History of Western Trees," that, before the invention of gunpowder, "a good supply of yew was as important as steel as a raw material of war-making."

Historical writings about famous battles attest to the importance of the longbow. In one account of a battle between the English and the French at Agincourt in the Hundred Years War, 4,000 English archers were able to defeat 65,000 French cavalry because the longbows could be shot continuously. Sir Walter Scott writes in a footnote of *Ivanhoe* that King Edward I "decreed that yew trees should be planted in all the English churchyards in order that there would be a plentiful supply of wood for longbows." However, the practice of planting yews started long before Edward I was king from 1272 to 1307.

Some of the Oldest Trees

Yew trees are some of the oldest trees in the world. European yews routinely live hundreds of years, with the oldest of the trees being 2,000 years old.

Yew's heartwood ranges in color from an orange brown to a golden orange often streaked with purple, mauve and brown.

Yew grows in many places around the world and is one of the few evergreens that is native to Great Britain. The tree grows in Europe, Asia, Persia, north Africa and parts of the Himalaya Mountains. Species of *Taxus* are also found in the United States.

Western yew — *Taxus brevifolia* — is also called Pacific yew and mountain mahogany. These yews can grow as tall as 75 feet. The Pacific yews have gained notoriety because bark from the tree has proven to be a very potent cancer drug.

Scientists began testing plants some 30 years ago. Of the 35,000 plant species tested, yew proved the best at offering a safe, effective treatment for cancer tumors. Taxol, as the drug is called, has been used successfully to treat ovarian cancer, lung cancer and breast cancer. Initially it took the bark of six trees to equal two grams of taxol for one course of treatment against cancer tumors.

Pacific yews are the best source for taxol, although taxol is present in European yews and other yews around the world. An average 100-year-old Pacific yew tree yields approximately 3 kg of bark. Today, needles from the tree are used to supply taxol, taking the strain off the supply of trees and the need to strip the trees of bark.

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Library Notes from Glenn

The following material has been added to the library:

TURNING GREEN WOOD by Michael O'Donnell

BEYOND BASIC WOODTURNING by Jack Cox

TURNED BOXES 50 DESIGNS by Chris Stott

FABULOUS TURNED-WOOD PROJECTS by John Hiebert, Harm Hazeu, Tim Bergen & Henry Bergen

The video TURNING WOOD with Richard Raffan has been returned to the library for circulation.

Welcome to New Members

A special welcome goes out to the following people, who have recently joined our club:

Kelly Friend, Warren MI
Dennis Ruth, Shelby Twp.

Source for engraving tool used by Ray Frase in his demonstration:

**SCM High Speed Engraving
N64 W19760Mill Rd.

Menomonee Falls, WI 53051

(800) 755-0261

Don't forget to mention Ray Frase sent you.

Don't Forget the Meeting Door Prizes!!

Door prizes are an important part of each meeting. Members enjoy getting the prizes. The monies, from the raffle, pay for things like operating expenses. Please bring along any extra wood, tools or other items you feel you can afford to donate to our prize table.

From John Fitzpatrick - Here are some good sources of information for beginning turners from "Fine Woodworking" :

Skew Chisel Basics by Richard Raffin; December 2000; pp 84

Scrapers Refine Turned Surfaces by Richard Raffin; April 2001; pp 56

Basic Guide to Buying a Lathe; June 2001; pp66

Learn to Turn Spindles by Ernie Conover; May 2002; pp 68



3232 Essex
Troy, MI 48084

Stamp

Nothing happens unless it is first a dream.

Yew - continued from page 3 ...

Yew continues to have many uses today, although European yew and Pacific yew are in limited supply. European yew is used for reproduction furniture, interior and exterior joinery, outdoor furniture and fence posts. It remains a popular choice for Windsor chair parts.

Yew tree trunks grow in a twisted manner affecting the wood's use in applications. Yew's irregular growth also impacts the wood's grain. It can be "unpredictable and volatile to work," according to Luke Hughes in the book, "The Encyclopedia of Wood."

"This explains the desirability of yew for the creation of smaller objects such as snuff and pill boxes, plates and spoons, and even the working parts of woodmills," he wrote. Veneers cut from yew are sometimes used for furniture and high-end uses, especially for reproduction work. It is also used for carving.

FAMILY NAME

Taxus baccata of the Family Taxaceae

COMMON NAMES

Yew, common yew, European yew, yewtree

HEIGHT/WEIGHT

Average height is 40 to 50 feet tall with short twisted boles but can be as short as 20 feet or as tall as 60 feet. Average weight is 42 pounds per cubic foot with a specific gravity of 0.67.

PROPERTIES

Wood dries fairly rapidly and well, with little degrade although care is needed in drying or shakes may develop. Wood is hard and elastic. Medium bending and crushing strength. Low stiffness and resistance to shock loads.

Woodcarving Demonstration continued ...

Ray says he likes to use simple patterns and often gets images from kids coloring books. Once the leaf was outlined, Ray showed us how to add things like shading to add depth, or a feeling of three dimension to the picture. He changed bits a number of times to show the different cuts that could be made.

After seeing all the examples of Ray's work and the way he makes it look so easy, I know that I will be trying to see what ways I can embellish my work.

Ray Frase was born and raised in Waterford, Michigan. After High School, Ray, like many other young men at that time, went into the military. He became a Paratrooper with the 101st Airborne. Ray served his country well and went off to the war in Vietnam. Little did Ray know, that after sustaining injuries and returning home, he would spend the next 40 plus years, fighting the Veterans Administration for the benefits that he deserved. Ray not only was determined to get benefits for himself, but for hundreds of other vets that needed help. Ray would eventually become the Chairperson for Veterans Affairs with the UAW. He has also been the Service Officer for the VFW and Vietnam Veterans of America both chapters located in Waterford.

Ray started Woodworking and Woodturning only 5 years ago, after his retirement. It was then, that he went to a weeklong seminar with Alan Lacer. Ray was so new in turning, that he really didn't know what direction to go next. Alan suggested that when he returned home, he look up a local turning group and become a member. Ray took this advice and found the DAW and met Greg Smith. Since that time, Ray and Greg have become good friends and have worked together to help build our club. In the past 5 years Ray has offered numerous demos, served as vice-president. He has made his workshop (studio) available to the club for workshops, etc.

This short perspective into Ray's life is why we, as a turning club, are so fortunate to have him as a fellow member. Thanks Ray.

A special thanks goes out to Mike Foydel for this submission.

DAW Photo Gallery

Ray Frase's carving demonstration.



**Right:
Vince
Hellmen's
segmented
bowl.**



**Left: Cup made
by Betty Brandt**

**Below: Small boxes
by Greg Smith**



**Above: Heart shaped box
by Carl Pardy**

