



South Central PA WoodTurners

April 2013 Newsletter

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Club Web Site

www.PAwoodturners.com

Dates to Note

Club Meeting

Tuesday May 7

Social 6 - 6:30 PM

Meeting 6:30 PM

**Green wood gathering,
drying and turning**

by Tom Deneen

June 4

**Turning a Salt Box
by Bob Robinson**

July 9 Take Notice!

It is the second Tuesday,
the first.

**Summer potluck at the
Stewarts!**

Cabin Fever Update!

If you have never gone to a Cabin Fever show you are missing an entertaining day seeing some very interesting working models of everything from trains, cars, carousels to battle ships. If you think woodturning can be challenging, take on a project that can take years to complete. (Not for me, folks!) The show has expanded and had more exhibitors than ever before. Our club members did demonstrations of turning and sold many of their own turnings to an eager public.

Salvation Army Donation: John Stewart sent out a letter to the members stating that the club raised \$778.85 at Cabin Fever from the sale of tops, bowls and other items that were sold for the benefit of The Salvation Army. A check was sent to them for that amount.



Minutes April 2, 2013

Submitted by Carl Woodbury

Two guests introduced themselves: Don Garrett and Al Cross.

Raffle:

A mulberry ikebana flower container by Dave Neuberger was won in the raffle by Bryan Sword.

Finances:

Six pieces of box elder brought by Martin Stolpe were auctioned off at \$5 each to benefit the club.

Bill Fordney has audited the books and they look correct. The Treasury presently holds \$2,126.09.

Announcements:

Bill Fordney reported that the ladies from House of Hope were appreciative that we allowed their sale of Easter candy and would like to do it again in 2014.

Baltimore Woodturners

Charlie Stuhre notified us that the Baltimore Woodturners have a new home at the Boumi Temple.

Club Insurance:

The insurance has been purchased. It is the policy suggested by AAW at \$90/yr. Don Wilson reported that he has checked and gotten permission to demonstrate and be covered by this insurance. There are issues regarding professional people demonstrating and the AAW coverage.

Show & Tell:



Dave Neuberger
Ikebana
flower holder
walnut



Tom Deneen
Cherry scoops
(The under \$10 items!)



2 maple
bowls



Sycamore bowl



Al Herner
Walnut chess pieces



Barb Palastak
Chess set and board
walnut and poplar



John Stewart
Yo Yo
spalted maple
Made for Cumberland
Valley Club challenge



Bill Gilbert
Winged bowl
sassafras



Bill Fordney
Osage orange
bowl



More Show & Tell:



Mark Daugherty
Maple & walnut
box



Leo Deller
3 bowl set as
anniversary gift
walnut



Jon Amos
Kiln dried cherry
platter and bowl



Don Barrett
2 pens
maple burl
and
green tru stone



Phil Reed
Japanese maple vase
(burned decoration
by Carol Hunter)



Pair of boxes
butternut



Smaller box
maple burl



Cocobolo box



Felix Sylvius aka Martin Stolpe



The evening's program was an illustrative talk given by our very own Martin Stolpe, Forester. Having been fascinated with wood since he borrowed his very first book out of the library, he is a font of knowledge and obviously enjoys sharing it with others.

In an informal chat with questions and answers, Martin discussed various trees and their characteristics. Of course, for this group, that included their suitability for turning and suggestions on how best to utilize their strong points.

A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America

America by Donald Culross Peattie was highly recommended by Martin as a source book.

Maples: Box elder and other maples (box, red, white, sugar, Norway in order of softest to hardest) are good to turn. They all contain sugar which is brought out as sap by the sun; that sap will make rum. Box elder was used by the hillbillies of WV (ed. note: to make a therapeutic brew?). It is best dried by putting it into a brown bag and letting it dry slowly.

Walnut: Walnut trees were an import to America. They are in danger from an insect invasion from Japan 3 years ago, just like the chestnuts and elms. Older walnut trees have darker wood; younger ones are lighter. Walnut takes most finishes well.

OAK: White oak from Pennsylvania and New Jersey was used for Old Ironsides. British cannon balls just bounced off of it. It's builders were English who were accustomed to building with English oak. On the other hand, English ships were of Latvia pine, a very heavy wood which made them top-heavy and they tended to fall over in the water. In the old days, Americans also used pine for ship building, but lighter American pine.

Pine: White pine has beautiful whirls where branches grow from the trunk. Although it's hard to turn, the finished product is lovely. Martin suggests removing pine sap in a 200-300 degree oven with tin foil under to catch the sap. Heat crystallizes pitch and it becomes harder and easier to deal with.

Q and A:

What is hardest wood? Lignum vitae from the Caribbean. Next is honey locust, then sugar maple, lilac and dogwood. Honey locust turns easily, is strong, has golden color and doesn't split. Martin likes this for turning.

Large dogwoods for turning may be found in cemeteries if you keep watch for when they fall.

What is softest wood? Obviously soft woods are easy to turn. The University of Wisconsin has a US forestry lab and tests woods. You can go online for a listing of softest to hardest woods. Sassafras is soft with a grain that looks a bit like white ash. Toy sailboats are made from it because it is great in contact with water and takes spar varnish well. White ash is perfect for bending but splits easily, so not as good for turning. It is a member of the olive family.

What wood do you like to turn? Honey locust, osage orange with triple-locking grains, black gum with same interlocking but lighter and workable either with- or cross-grain. (Circus tent mauls are made of wood with triple locking grains so that they can be pounded into the earth without splitting)

Is hickory good to turn? Hickory becomes lighter when exposed to light. As with many woods sunlight deteriorates it and the water in any wood, as it deteriorates, allows fungi to grow. You end up with spalting if you catch the wood at the right moment in that process. Otherwise it can become punky and can't be turned.

What are some particular uses of woods?

White cedar is used for siding. Arbor Vitae from Michigan is used in log houses. Hackberry, split longwise, creates a flat interior wall and makes a home smell wonderful, but housewives used to use hydrochloric acid to clean it! Basswood is a favorite of carvers for its white color and hardness. Linden rots quickly but accepts any color, but don't even try to turn it.



What about Sycamore? You can cut sycamore very thin because of its interlocking grains. It is used for kaleidoscopes, stereographs and kitchen ware. This tree's oddity is that it will continue to grow on the outside while rotting out on the inside. In Colonial times, it became large enough for people to camp inside.

What else is good for kitchen ware? Tulip poplar is great as it takes moisture well, and also sugar maple.

Are any trees poisonous? Poison ivy dry has a nice grain when turned, but beware – wetness can rejuvenate the sap. Silky oak from the West Coast makes dust that causes heart attacks. Black walnut allergy causes hives. Any tree that has significant sap, you don't want to eat from. After time anyone will develop allergies to them. AAW has a list available of poisonous woods.

What woods have unusual appearance? Beech is lacy. Sycamore closer to the tree's center is lacy most of the time. The medullary ray that takes moisture from the inside to the outside of the tree is what creates the birds eye or burl effect. Martin is always fun to listen to and full of great knowledge.

Thank you, Martin!

(Ed. Note: This was a great summary by our dedicated secretary **Carol Woodbury**.)

Tips and Tricks:

Charlie Stuhre suggested getting a precision mandrel if you're doing pens.

Tom Deneen created a PVC jig for holding scoop blanks in chuck. Scoop blanks were first turned on lathe, then cut in half on bandsaw. He constructed 2" circles of PVC to hold the blank firmly in the chuck so it could be hollowed out. (See jig picture in show & tell.)

