



WOODTURNERS OF ST. LOUIS

A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

January 2009

Nick Cook Workshops Coming in March



Mark your calendar now for the last weekend of March. Our club has invited Nick Cook to come to St. Louis and he has accepted. He is a nationally known woodturner and a founding member of the American Association of Woodturners. He has served six years on the board of directors with the AAW, including one year as vice president. Nick lives in Marietta, GA where he owns and operates a woodturning studio. He frequently demonstrates and lectures at universities, craft schools and woodworking shows throughout the US, Australia and New Zealand. His work can be found in gift shops and galleries from coast to coast.

To see his work, you can go to nickcookwoodturner.com or look for his videos in the club library.

Next Meeting

Surface Treatment

By Matt Keim

January 25, 2009

1pm

Need help turning?

Bring questions, problems

To the Pre-meeting

11am

at

Woodcraft

2077 Congressional Dr.

St. Louis, MO 63146

Nick Cook Events

The Cook Weekend will be kicked-off with a day-long series of demonstrations on topics from use of basic tools, making simple projects and chucking (including collet chucking) to natural edged bowls and burned or textured rims on plates and platters.

Day One will be at Kirkwood High School's McCallie Hall A. The high school is located at 801 W. Essex, that is, west of Geyer Rd. between Dougherty Ferry and W. Adams Rd. The day will begin at 9am and end at 4pm with a 45-minute lunch break. You can bring your lunch or buy one that will be brought in for \$10. There is plenty of seating in this hall and there will be good overhead video and audio. Everyone is welcome. Advance purchase to Day One will be \$15 for members, \$30 for nonmembers. Admission will be free for students accompanied by a paid member. The day-of-the-event admission will be \$20 for members and \$35 for non-members.

Saturday evening we will *Meet and Greet Nick* for dinner at a location that is yet to be determined, depending partly upon the response to this first announcement. Your board wants to keep the price of the dinner below \$30 for advance reservations. If you have recommendations on the location, notify one of the board members.

Hands-on workshops on Sunday and Monday will be treated as separate events, each costing \$75 with club members getting priority. Projects will be appropriate for beginning skill levels up to advanced. Simple spindle turning, boxes, goblets, plates, bowls and Christmas orna-

(Continued on page 2. See **Nick Cook**)

Upcoming Meetings

February 22

Bowls

March 29

No Regular Meeting

Nick Cook Weekend

April 26

Candlesticks

May 17

Build a Tool

(Continued from page 1. **Nick Cook**)

ments are among the options for the workshops. Wood will be provided by the club. However, tools are the participants responsibility. Only 8 spaces will be available each day and lunch will be on your own.

Make your reservation NOW. Call Dave Endres at 314-568-1244 or Gary Hinegardner at 573-216-3572. Or email Dave at endrestoh@att.net or Walt Ahlgrim at stlwoodturner@sbcglobal.net

Reminders

* To pay your dues you may mail a check to Walt Ahlgrim (address on the back of this newsletter) or bring a check to the next meeting. *Don't forget to return library items. * If you wore your name tag home...Wear it back!

Woodturners of St Louis

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To volunteer call an officer.

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Robert Sorby Turning Demonstration

On Tuesday, February 24th, 2009, at Rockler Woodworking and Hardware, a Robert Sorby employee, from England, will be informally demonstrating how to maximize the use of Robert Sorby specialist tools. These may include the spiraling system (330H), texturing tool (310H), multi tip Hollowing tool (RS200kt & RS100kt), easy beader (814H series), spindle master (812H series) and more!

Rockler Woodworking & Hardware is located at 11977 St Charles Rock Road, Bridgeton, MO.

Limited space is available.

Please RSVP to 314-209-1116 or

e-mail: store19@rockler.com

My First Shows

By Matt Keim

In 2007, my father and I decided that we would try to get into the Schlafly Bottleworks Art Outside fall art fair. From that decision, my approach to woodturning changed. This now meant that I was going to try to sell my work, requiring me to put a price on my time. Wow, is that a difficult process. Prior to that moment I had only given my work away with no assessed value, no care about time spent or the cost of wood. These new thoughts changed everything.

I created a figure in my head of what I would need to make per hour spent on the lathe. I had to determine if I was fast enough for my work to sell at comparable prices to others and fall into that minimum hourly rate. I certainly could not sell salad bowls for more than the pros. If the market for a 10" salad bowl, 4" deep, is \$50... that's it. I can't demand \$65 because it wouldn't sell. I began to finish bowls in batches of 15-20 at a time instead of 1-2, keeping track of the total time from rough-out to finish. I determined that I was fast enough to make bowls and price them in a range I thought would sell. Next, I looked at spoons and utensils but determined that I could not produce them fast enough to compete. So, I have not turned more than a couple. This process went on for every item I made from there forward. I assessed lidded boxes, vases, hollow forms and many others. The items that were the most difficult to produce at a fast rate and at a high quality, were functional items. With functional items I was competing against many turners as well as commercial companies for the same customer. I decided that I needed to add something extra to all functional items, some detail to catch the eye.

In April I came across an article on a chainsaw competition to be held in Pacific, MO. Booths were free but 15% of all sales was to be donated to the Children's Miracle Network. Not a bad deal. So, I bought a tent; my dad made me three tables and Micki and I tried our luck. We did fairly well at the event but decided that it probably was not the correct type of event for me to sell my work. We did, however, have a great time talking with people while demonstrating on a mini-lathe and watching the chainsaw carvers create full-sized characters from a log. Also, I was approached by two vendors interested in wholesale purchases.

As time went on, I continued to build up stock for a possible upcoming show. I began experimenting with dyes and surface treatments to set myself apart. I developed a set of pictures I felt would get me into the juried shows and I sub-

mitted them to Schlafly, Washington and Queeny Park for their fall, juried art fairs. I felt that juried shows would be a better venue for me since many of my pieces would sell for over \$100. As it worked out I was accepted into all three.

My neighbor and I built a booth. I like to call it a poor man's Pro Panels. Micki developed a logo, signage, display theme and painted the booth for me. When complete, it did a great job at showing how woodturned art could be displayed in anyone's home. I believed that a well designed booth would greatly increase sales. Our booth turned out great and I was confident it would make a difference.

The first show was at Queeny Park, "Cool Art/Hot Jazz." We set up on a Friday morning and worked through several unexpected issues. The largest issue being that the lighting I purchased a few days before did not work. The bulbs were all bad and, it turned out they were non-standard. I tried specialty lighting stores, hardware stores, on-line stores but...no luck. Micki found new lights while I worked the booth. Friday was very slow. The customers who came into the booth left without looking at any specific piece. After a few hours we began to wonder if the whole show would be this slow. Saturday came and the atmosphere did not change much. There were customers coming in and out of the booth but no one was buying. By the end of Saturday, I had only sold a couple of bottle stoppers and a few spinning tops. Not a single bowl, vase or goblet...nothing over \$16. Now I started to wonder: Do people not appreciate woodturning? Are my prices too high? Am I making the wrong items? Is my work not good enough? I barely slept Saturday night as my mind raced about what I could do to change Sunday's outcome.

Sunday came and the crowd changed. Suddenly, people were picking items up, asking questions and showing their appreciation for the items I had created. This was great! I needed to see interest in my work, if not purchases of it. By the end of the day, I had enough sales and appreciation of my work to be happy with the show and the overall experience. Several customers commented on how much they liked our display and its' layout, which meant a lot...since we had worked so hard to get it done.

Micki and I sat down afterwards and began to prepare for the next show, only two weeks away. We added new signage, rearranged the shelves and I turned like mad in my free time. Schlafly was next in line and I was better prepared. I had a better system down for accepting credit cards than before and adjusted a few prices based on my experience at Queeny Park.

Schlafly was a two-day show, Friday and Saturday, only. This meant I would have less time to market my work to the customers. The forecast was calling for rain on both days. We set up the booth in a few hours on Friday morn-

ing. Micki spent time touching up the paint so there were no scratches. Then we waited.

As opening time rolled around, I was tense but very happy with the display. We had about 80 items out for sale at any given time. Within half an hour I had my first sale. We were off and running. Friday went well for the first few hours but then came the rain. As it turned out fellow club member, Bernhard Voss, his wife, Peggy, and his cousin's wife were in the booth when the rain started. They helped us move my turnings away from the leaking seams in the tent and we had a great time chatting while the rain came down. After the rain, passed there were very few customers left. I had no sales the rest of the evening. We went to bed at 2:30am and were back at the show by 8:00am to try again.

Saturday was great. The day was full of interested customers. People were buying, talking about that special tree in their yard or searching for a unique gift. We had a great day and could not believe how many people loved wood. It rained on and off all day but the crowd stayed. There were times when customers were waiting for a chance to get in! By the end of the show, everything I brought was out and for sale. What a good feeling. This was by far my best show experience yet. I was invited to other shows around the state and saw repeat customers from Queeny Park. As the day ended, we packed up and went home...happy that we decided to try.

Selling your work at shows will certainly put you through a variety of emotions in a short period of time. You'll be anxious, nervous, happy, sad and maybe even mad. In the end, if you are willing to listen to your customers comments, you will go home a better turner. I have participated in 7 shows now and have enjoyed the experiences they have given me. I am a better turner as a result and more confident in what I can accomplish.

One piece of advice, if you're thinking about selling your work at show, spend time visiting local shows to see how other turners operate.

Library Notes

By Rich Hinkebein

Here are a few items that will go into circulation in the Turner's club library at the next meeting. Cindy Drozda's *Finial star*, Trent Bosch *Vessels of Illusion* and three by Neil Scobie: *Making a tree platter*; *Making an erosion bowl*, and *Making a wave rim bowl*.

All of these may appeal to your creativity. They cover topics of coloring and carving after the turning is complete.

We also have the next two project DVD's by Rex and Kip and the two project DVD's by Nick Cook, who will be with us this year.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - WOODTURNERS OF ST. LOUIS

NAME _____ DATE _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

E-Mail _____

Check applicable boxes below:

Please consider receiving newsletter by email only. It saves a little paper, costs less, you'll receive it sooner and it's in color.

Bring this application to the next meeting along with your check . Or mail to:

Woodturners of St. Louis
c/o Walt Ahlgrim
10 Ramblewood Ln
St. Louis, MO 63141

Make check payable to: *Woodturners of St. Louis*

New member

Renewing member

Individual Membership (\$30)

Family Membership (\$45)

I would like to receive the newsletter by email

I would like to receive the newsletter by snail mail.

Applications for membership in the American Association of Woodturners are available at each chapter meeting.

WOODTURNERS OF ST. LOUIS

Katy Hinegardner
9 Blue Heron Ln.
Wellsville, MO 63384

Next Meeting:

January 25, 2009
1pm
Pre-meeting, 11am
At Woodcraft

**Remember
to pay your
dues for 2009.**

