

TURNOUT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NORTHERN TURNERS INC.

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From the EDITOR

I have regurgitated four articles from the past, 2005, 2007, and two from 2006. Hope you enjoy them.

Seasoning of timber with a Microwave Oven

It is possible to season timber from green to dry and stable with domestic microwave ovens. The process has been used on banksias as an example because it is more of a problem than the majority of timbers, in fact, many woodturners have considered the timber is too difficult to work with. The method outlined here takes the wood green off the chainsaw to the finished product.

Green timber has just been removed from the tree at the chain saw stage. At this stage it is heavier, but easier to turn because the gouge has a cooler, cleaner cut. And there is no sawdust to complicate the process. You may see the moisture on the end of the block of wood on the lather and can feel the dampness of the shavings removed.

Rough out the shape of the object that you plan to create, whether it is a bowl, platter or vase. Wherever you can, remove the pith or centre of the piece of timber, because the pressures of drying out can create tremendous pressure between the outside and circumference and the centre. Cut the shape so that there is only about one centimeter of wood remaining. So, you have a piece close to the final shape, but there is no need to sandpaper at this preliminary stage of the process.

A suitable microwave has 900 watt power output and a 23 litre capacity. Set the power to 60% of full power but you can try different settings for different stages of drying. The wooden piece is soaked in water, because drying defects are more likely to appear on the outside, or you can place a container of water in the microwave with the wood, so that the drying is not too severe. The microwaves penetrate through the fibres which is a different process from drying in the open air. Also keep the piece in a plastic bag for ease of handling because there is considerable heat involved. Set the time to 5 minutes and press the start button then leave for the required time. Leave for a while (up to a week) between 'cookings'. You may need as few as four 'cookings', or as many as seven 'cookings'. A conventional stove will heat the outside first, which is the situation that you need to avoid.

You may wish to keep a special microwave for woodturning because you do not want your meals smelling of Silky Oak or whatever.

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Maintain a notebook with the weights of the wood. It is suggested that you draw six to seven columns because you need to record the date and weights after each 'cooking'. This is another situation where it is useful to have the piece in a plastic bag. Each oven treatment will reduce the weight of the piece of timber until there is no difference between the wood after heating, allowing to settle, the reweighing.

There is a formula for determining the moisture content:-

% moisture content = weight of moisture multiplied by 100, then divided by the oven dry weight.

You may find many items with 100% moisture content, or, in other words, there was as much water as wood before starting the seasoning.

Failures do occur using this system. A piece of Banksia was too large and had a curved urn shape. The curve was too much influence on the rest of the barrel shaped bowl of the shape turned. Another two pieces that one hoped to turn into a small lidded bowl split all the way down the timber.

If the piece that you working with has been reduced to 12 to 15 % moisture content, then it is table enough to complete. Put the piece back on the lathe, checking for any distortion to an oval shape. Here there is an option, pretend that you were designing an oval bowl, or turn to remove any distortion of misshaping due to the heating and drying process.

After turning to the finished shape then it is ready for any surface or lacquer that you select.

This method gives you more control of the seasoning.

Author Jack Croucher

Berwick District Woodworkers Club Inc.

Ed June 2005

Note from George Pastuch

If using this or any other drying process utilising the microwave, let the piece of wood cool for an extended period before placing it back on the lathe. Any moisture trapped inside the timber is 'super heated' and the release of super heated steam can cause bodily harm through burning and/or can create an explosion shattering the piece as you begin to turn it.

	Third Saturday programme	
July 20	Shallow dish inspired by the Vaughan Richmond demonstration in Nov 2018. Small burl or figured wood approx. 150 x 40. Brass tubing - from threaded brass fitting as used in plumbing (3mm w or so walls). 6mm dowel, normal tools, super glue.	Bill
Aug 17	Turning a classic bowl in 30 minutes? Scroll chuck – preferably with 45 or 55 mm jaws. Blank preferably cut into a round about 150 to 200 dia x 50 to 65 or so thick. Usual tools but especially bowl gouges, Super glue, Danish oil, cloths etc	Ron

ALTERNATE TURNING MATERIAL

At the July Northern Turners monthly meeting, Roger Humphries demonstrated turning using alternate materials.

And to show that nothing is sacred, Roger glued an apple onto a piece of timber, placed it into a chuck on the lathe and promptly turned a lidded container.

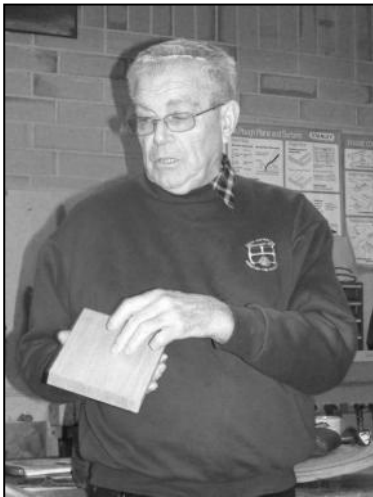
All watching were amazed. The only people that complained were the ones that were sprayed with apple juice!!!

Well done Roger.

From archives— July 2007 Woodgroup Newsletter



From the Editor—Archived from the Southern Turners SIG report Woodgroup Newsletter August 2006. The following is part of that report.



Our guest speaker for the day was Dick Pillar, who gave us an informative demonstration of preparing projects for final treatments – planing, scraping and sanding. Dick then drew the raffle and had the colossal cheek or good fortune to win it himself. Thanks, Dick!



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WOOD-N-THINGS SAYS FAREWELL

Wood-n-Things has now been disbanded. The final work day was held on Saturday, 7th October. The concept for this SIG was first suggested by some members of the Northern Turners who wished to use their woodworking skills helping the community.

During the past 9 years we have assisted 23 kindergartens and toy libraries by repairing or rebuilding various toys and play equipment. The most common task has been making replacement pieces for jig-saw puzzles (as shown in the following summary of completed tasks for the last 7 years).

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOYS</u>	<u>PUZZLES</u>	<u>GAMES</u>	<u>REBUILDS</u>	<u>SPECIALS</u>	<u>NEW TOYS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
2000	128	128	18	9	28	3	314
2001	106	224	32	14	13	27	422
2002	93	163	29	12	27	25	352
2003	93	92	30	6	17	10	248
2004	70	163	23	20	13	27	316
2005	112	97	11	11	10	24	265
2006	56	167	6	9	22	12	263

Although we saw the tasks for the kindergartens as being interesting and useful, our most rewarding work has been our association with I.D.S.C. and Novita. We have constructed a variety of equipment and aids for these special children. Ron Adams has been a regular visitor to these centres as he designed (and mostly constructed) the equipment to meet their special requirements. Ron has also been our Organizer/Leader for the life of the group and the members wish to thank him for his work and dedication.

Anne Kerr

P.S. By-the-way I heard a whisper at the last workshop (but cannot remember who said it) that now the first Saturday of the month is free a person would be expected to tackle that list of jobs his wife has posted on the fridge!



Archived from Woodgroup Newsletter Oct 2006

