



CHATTERMARKS

The eNewsletter for Woodturners of Western Puget Sound-

Jay's Back!

Last year, **Jay Shepard** joined us at our May meeting and talked about watching paint dry. On the surface, not a thrilling topic, but we were all mesmerized to watch as he transformed his 'plain' turnings into *artistic masterpieces*. I think that night we all realized what a great teacher he is.

Jay started his career with two degrees in art from Central Washington State and Arizona State. However, the idea of the "starving artist" didn't appeal to him, so with the need to provide for his family he sought out a job with the Department of Ecology, where he worked in waste reduction and recycling.

Initially, Jay used his artistic talents and woodworking skills to fashion hand-crafted furniture in his spare time. Over the years, he discovered woodturning and is almost exclusively turning wood in his shop.

So, the artist and teacher is back! He'll be with us at this month's meeting on March 30th speaking on the **Elements and Principles of Design**. As we progress from basic bowl turners to craftsmen—(or is that craftspersons?), we begin to realize that



there is a difference between banging out a bowl and creating a stunning piece of art. The differences sometimes are very subtle, and we've heard bits and pieces of design techniques from various demonstrators.

Members of the Peninsula Woodturners are fortunate to have a high standard of finished product that can be seen in each month's Show and Tell. Although daunting to the beginning turner sometimes, it sets the bar high enough that we all strive to improve to the point where we proudly display our work next to what others bring.

With this month's demo, we will be getting a crash course in art and design as Jay has been able to apply to his work over the years. Go to [here](#) on our web site, and download a handout from Jay that you can print on your home computer before the meeting. Bring it with you to take notes on,

as I'm sure that Jay will be enlightening us on the details

Don't let the size of the handout scare you. Jay is covering all the bases and as we have discovered in the past, will make the seemingly complicated

be something to be enjoyed and kept as a reference.

See you at the meeting—JTC



March 2016

Regular meeting is the last Wednesday, of the month

Meet & Greet at 6 PM followed by announcements at 6:30.

Kitsap Adventist School Gymnasium
5088 NW Taylor Road
Bremerton.

Other activities include

Featured Demonstration, Refreshments, Show and Tell, Wood Auction, Sandpaper & Glue sales.

See our website at

OPCAAW.COM

Visiting with Tones Briggs

Pun Intended, my month as president of this club spins in an endless cycle. It begins with the middle-of-the-month Board of Directors' Meeting, which is immediately followed by composing my newsletter column and various announcements. Then, comes the preparations for the General Meeting itself — a blending of all the priorities and personalities to achieve a worthy “show” — and the inevitable post-meeting follow-up activities.

There's one other event that occurs virtually every month; one I look forward to a great deal: a visit with Dennis 'Tones' Briggs.

Tones' official status with OPCAOW is Chief Mentor, coordinating our new-woodturner advisory panel. But, he's also **my** chief advisor, offering feedback on club goings-on and providing background on policies that were initiated long before I became involved.

Tones is one of the friendliest men I know, and his wide, constant smile is bracketed by an affinity to laugh. He is married to Kyong, a Korean-born woman who is a wonderful gardener. Tones spent his career operating a tavern in Seattle's University District, later opening a convenience store.

He earned the nickname through his days of playing softball. The story goes that someone chided him for being “Bench Tony,” and the name stuck. He doesn't like his given name, Dennis, so very much.

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MY MEETINGS WITH TONES ALWAYS involve coffee and doughnuts, usually first thing in the morning at his shop or mine. Last week he pulled up under the canopy

of trees outside my shop in Port Orchard in his sneaky-quiet hybrid with a tray of sugar-topped muffins and a low-fat latte for me. He had an Americano.

As always, we caught up each other on our personal lives. In the last half of 2015 he lost both parents. The aftermath of those losses has pretty much dominated his daily life since December.

On this visit, getting his shop organized was on his mind — he and Kyong purchased a new fixer-upper on the Waterman shoreline in Port Orchard last year — and he had it on his mind to review my methods of organization. As it happened, my shop was fairly neat at that moment.

Tones was his usual courteous self, politely noting my overhead lumber storage system, not quite questioning the structural integrity of the overloaded two-by-eight but checking twice before walking under it.

We reviewed my lathe setup — a Jet 14-42 with 600 pounds of ballast loaded onto its base — and discussed the possibility of adding wheels for portability. I'm skeptical about lathes that aren't secured since I turn so many irregularly shaped blanks, but Tones thinks it would work.

He made a point to examine my new woodturning tool rack, a design of my own invention that will be featured in an upcoming article in AAW's *American Woodturner* magazine. He has a keen sense of how-things-work and he instantly saw that the key to the design was an angled shelf that pushed the heel of the tool into position. I didn't need to explain. He figured it out immediately.

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Tones Briggs

SPOTTING ONE OF MY favorite tools, his face brightened. “Ah, ha! Here’s a tool I recognize—a Ted Bartholomew special.”

That particular tool is one I picked up with my current lathe, a very long-handled tube made from a gun barrel with a removable HHS tip on the end. I like it because it gives me plenty of leverage and can reach way up into a hollow form or vase.

“Ted was the man who got me into woodturning,” Tones explained. “I was a woodworker — *not a woodturner* — back in the 1990’s and stumbled onto him at a Seattle Center show. He had made hats, turned out of wood; and I thought that was incredibly clever.

“So, I wanted to see how it was done and signed up for one of his workshops. There were six or eight students, and every one of us used these tools,” Tones recalled, fondly.

That day, he turned his first vessel, a short mahogany bowl with a slight overhang that held a lid. Tones keeps it in a display case in his house, along with other creations by world-class woodturners. That simple vessel carried all the trademarks of his current work: a well-sanded surface, crisp corners, and very subtle flairs where the lip and base end.

“That’s probably the only tool I ever saw Ted use. In fact, I don’t know if he ever used a gouge.”

Bartholomew passed away this last December.

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FROM THAT MOMENT, Tones was hooked on woodturning, beginning his journey of spinning and creating wonderful objects. There were other turners that influenced him along the way, including Bonnie Klein, Molly Winton, Dick Sing, and Dave Schweitzer.

“All of those people provided me with inspiration and technique, but it took some time to get it all sorted out. It has certainly been a rewarding and satisfying journey since that first day with Ted.

“Schweitzer and I got together and turned something every single Thursday

night for years and years,” he explained. They shared an interest in developing superior tools and new methods of working with them, often pulling a piece of steel out of Dave’s shop and improvising.

Among the massive amount of tools he owns are several original Dave Schweitzer creations, including a shop-made hollowing tool and some crude gouges. These are, of course, the forerunners to what is now known as D-Way Tools.

The two of them grew together, honing their skills, especially with ornamental objects and hollow forms. In recent years he has become particularly known for his wonderful Christmas ornaments — small maple burl globes with needle-thin finials extending top and bottom — but he still turns bowls and other hollow forms.

That is, he did until recently. The new house has been a year-long project, requiring a complete renovation to suit his needs. He gutted nearly everything, including the kitchen, several bathrooms, and all of the utilities. Much of the work he did himself, so it comes as no surprise that there is remarkable attention to detail work throughout.

The last part of the project is his woodturning shop. He’s in the process of trading off equipment that’s too large for the new space and designing space-efficient storage. Gone is his large Powermatic lathe and 220-volt bandsaw. He has purchased a smaller, more compact sawing unit for cutting blanks, and will rely on his smaller Jet lathe for the time being.

“I really haven’t been able to turn anything for almost two years,” he laments. “There has just been too much going on.” And that’s a shame. In my opinion, the world is a better, more enjoyable place when his chips are flying.

Russell Neyman is a writer, woodworker, and historian and is president of the Olympic Peninsula Woodturners. He operates a cabinet shop in Port Orchard and teaches woodturning.



"The safest thing you can do with a lathe is not turn it on."

- Russell Neyman

Lathes-An Odessey

The Olympic Peninsula Woodturners is dedicated to being an educational forum and brings you the 'best of the best' to stretch your knowledge and challenge your comfort zone.

But what do you do if you are a beginner?

As with any skill - music, language, or woodturning—none of us start out an expert. There is that dreaded "learning curve" that we all must experience. There are sooo many questions. And too many "it depends" answers.



Recently, at the last sawdust session, the question was asked, where to go for basic information on the most basic of subjects? So, in an effort to address that, I will attempt to fill in the holes with what I've learned over the past couple of years. I'm not an expert, by any means; but since it hasn't been so long that I was standing in front of my lathe wondering what I was doing there, I think I have a good sense of what those basic questions can be.

Your lathe and your tools are the most basic of those things that you will deal with. The lathe will be your first challenge.

Many of the members can tell you that they started with a **ShopSmith**. So did I. A ShopSmith is different in a lot of ways, but it has the basic attributes that can get you started, and usually at a good entry price. You may not be using it in 5 years, but it's a good starting point.

A ShopSmith is variable speed lathe. That's good. It uses a Reeves Drive, which is not so good if you have a really big unbalance block of wood that you need to start shaping at a slow speed. Reeves Drives' low end is usually around 450 RPM. Of course, if you're a new turner, you shouldn't be jumping on a large unbalanced chunk of wood—until you know more about what you're doing.

I remember that one of my first bowls

was a big piece of alder that had been growing on my land. I didn't have a band saw, so it was a rough piece of wood. Very unbalanced. I had no business starting with what I did, but then that's been the theme of my life.

I do remember chasing it **all over** my shop as the ShopSmith walked around on the floor from that very unbalanced piece of wood. I took it off and on the chuck many times as I used a chainsaw to trim more pieces off in an attempt to get it balanced.

Not long after I struggled through that bowl I built one very big, very heavy table and bolted the ShopSmith to the top. For extra measure, I loaded the bottom with about 500 lbs. of wood blanks, just in case. No more walking for you, bud.

Eventually I bought the band saw that goes with the ShopSmith and life got easier.

One idiosyncrasy of the ShopSmith is that it's built backward from other lathes. The motor is the movable part whereas the tailstock on other lathes is the movable portion. It's not something insurmountable; you just have to get used to it.

My next lathe was a "standard" small Harbor Freight brand that I bought at an auction. I paid a fair price for it, and it was also a Reeves Drive. It was somewhat underpowered, so I could bog it down too easily unless I was turning something fairly small. I switched from one to the other lathe each having its own advantages. One good point was that both had spindles of 1" x 8tpi, so I could use the same chuck on both. (Chucks—a huge topic all its own to be dealt with in another issue) To explain, 1"x8 tpi means the diameter of the shaft of the spindle is 1 inch with 8 teeth per inch (tpi). This is pretty much standard, unless you get into the bigger lathes that are 1-1/4" x 8tpi.



ShopSmith with band saw attachment

"There are sooo many questions. And too many "it depends" answers."

"If you're a new turner, you shouldn't be jumping on a large unbalanced chunk of wood—until you know more about what you're doing."

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Still, I was vexed with the Reeves Drive. Too many times it would have been better (for me) if I could have had the thing spinning slower than 450 RPM. At a downsizing of a turner's shop in Port Townsend, I bought a homemade bowl lathe. AND it had an electronic variable speed! Oh Joy! The problem? It had no tail stock. Mmmm, that could be a challenge. Well no problem. I had the other two lathes with their tail stocks to use when the piece needed to be stabilized.



Homemade bowl lathe with electronic variable speed control.

The home-made bowl lathe proved to be quite a lesson for me. When I was inspecting it at the sale, I saw that it had a 1 inch spin-

dle. Great! The guy also offered to sell me three chucks along with the lathe. Double great! After I got the lathe home, cleaned it up and painted it; I made a huge discovery. Because the lathe was "homemade" and because it was very old, the spindle was 1" x 10tpi. Gaahh!! Whadaya mean 10 tpi? I thought 1 inch was always 8 tpi! Now those 'new' chucks won't fit my other lathes. Groannn.

Also, being older chucks, they don't make replaceable thread inserts any more. Any turner will tell you that there are always ways around a situation; and indeed, I was able to adapt to my peculiar predicament. As time went on, I used the two Reeves Drive lathes less and less. Only when I had something that was substantial enough to require a tailstock would I use the ShopSmith or the Harbor Freight.

I had finally reached a point in my turning where I was ready to make a quantum leap. I stumbled upon a lightly used Jet 16-42. Electronic Variable Speed. 1-1/4" x 8 tpi spindle, and with more gouges than I really needed. I was also at a point where I had the money that I could

invest in this new machine. That probably was my biggest hurdle to cross.

Since my purchase of the Jet, my ShopSmith and HF lathes have fallen into disuse. They are now destined to go on the sales block.

So what did I learn in this rambling odyssey of learning the craft of woodturning? First, I was able to get into the biz on the low end, while discovering if this was the hobby I really wanted to pursue.

Next was discovering opportunities. A lathe is not what you expect to see at your average auction. However, the HF one popped up, as did a larger Delta band saw that replaced the smaller ShopSmith I had been using.

With the homemade lathe, I learned that all is not as it seems. Be sure you know what you're looking for and looking at before you whip out your checkbook.

Unless you are independently wealthy or entirely lucky, patience is a virtue that will have to be your partner until you find that perfect lathe for you. Know what you want. You can imagine it into reality if you believe that you can. Don't settle. Leave that to the cable people.

I had a guy tell me one time to buy my second boat first. In other words, don't go cheap and plan on upgrading later. In my case I should have bought my last lathe second and not gotten bogged down with the other two. However, sometimes in the journey, one doesn't really know where he wants or needs to be, so the odyssey must be played out to fully understand.

But then, that's life. Full of lessons.

I hope to make this a regular column targeting the newer turner. There are enough of us I'm sure that it will be of service. Please send your questions or ideas to op-caaw@gmail.com. I promise not to embarrass



Jet 1642 EVS lathe



Before you flip the switch, check one last time to make sure it is safe.

Chuck keys are removed. The piece is secure. Everything is clear of the work area AND the RPM is not too high.

If possible, buy your second boat first.

Calendar of events, shows, classes and other things

2016

March 30—	Monthly meeting. Jay Shepard—Design elements for Woodturners.
April 16—	Open Shop—Finials. Jeff Child's place near Quilcene.
April 27—	Monthly meeting. How to take a chunk of wood to a bowl blank using a chainsaw and band saw.
May 25—	Liam O'Neill Postponed until next year due to a personal situation.

Contest for March

Don't forget the March contest, which is **Spheres, Eggs, or Bocce Balls**. Any size, any material, any details. The design is up to you.



Burl pick-up at Dave Schweitzer's

For those of you that have done this before, the pick-up for ordered burl will be April 2 at Dave Schweitzer's place near Sheldon, WA.

If you've never done this, Dave has friends that come up from Oregon with a trailer-load of Madrone and Maple burl. You can reserve a quantity of it through Ralph Lindberg at 360-779-5979. The cost will be \$1.25 per pound at the time you pick it up. First come, first choice.

Rules—If you order, be sure to be there and pick up your order. At the end of the day, there *may* be extra left overs, but no guarantees.



Ray Ewing's Open Shop

Last fall a 100 year-old Big Leaf Maple tree started coming apart in the driveway of Ray Ewing. Deemed a hazard, Ray took the rest of the tree down and began turning bowls, platters and urns. He soon realized he had more wood than he could handle and hosted an open shop on March 19th to give other members an opportunity for instruction in turning logs into



blanks using a band saw and a chainsaw. As an added bonus, everyone got to take home as many pieces as they wanted, and Ray cleaned up his yard.

With his multi-decade experience in woodwork and turning, Brad Stave gave an introductory session in chainsaw work and then turned the group loose. Before long the place was buzzing with saws. Piles of wood blanks and mountains of sawdust followed.

Several of the attendees said that things learned that day went way beyond what Brad taught. Such is the synergy of an open shop when members can share their individual experiences for the benefit of the rest.



Allen heads up Session

On a Sunday, February 28, Jimmie Allen invited several experienced turners to join him in presenting a *Sawdust Session* at the Kitsap Adventist School Gym. Obvious from the attendance, the session was well received.

Chips were flying as Jimmie was demonstrating box making. Also creating a



"A dull chisel is just a screw driver."

— Work Sharp sharpening people

mess on the floor were George Kromka showing us Skew techniques and Jeff Jackson doing basic bowl turning. John Elliott and Scott Overby were demonstrating tool control and pen making respectively. At a lull in the action, Jimmie took a long breath and said, "We should be doing more of these." All of the attendees, especially the newer turners would agree.

If you attended the sawdust session and learned something valuable, take a minute to let Jimmie or any of the other demonstrators know. If you have suggestions for any future sessions, let Jimmie know as he will surely be hosting others.



A Frenzy of Finishes

The last month's regular meeting was anything but regular. Instead of a single demonstrator standing in front of the audience, we had several presenters stationed around the gym giving their experience in the application of different types of finishes. From CA

glue to Wipe-on Poly to Lacquers, you could choose which station and topic that you wanted to learn more about.



This was *Frenzy II* as we had done the same thing last year which was hailed as a super success, worthy of a repeat perfor-

WOODTURNERS of OLYMPIA 2016 Symposium & Workshops

Michael Hosaluk and Bob Epsen will be the featured demonstrators at this year's Woodturners of Olympia (WoO) Symposium in July. Dates are July 23-27 in Olympia. For more information, go to [HERE](#) and register for the workshops.

Open Shop—Finials

Jeff Childs will be hosting an open shop at his place near Quilcene, WA. Mentor Dan Ackerman will teaching the art of finials.

Troy Kellington is donating his barely used and extremely clean **Ridgid 14-inch bandsaw** to the club to auction off as a fund raiser. We are still trying to upgrade our video equipment, and this donation will go a long way to help. Auction coming soon.

Single Axle Trailer

John Elliott has a small 5 ft x 8 ft trailer for sale. It is not currently titled and needs a deck and sides, but the frame and tires are in good shape. It also comes with a spare. \$150 Available for pick up in Port Angeles. 360-452-5673

Small Lathe #1

Jon Geisbush is selling a Delta 46-701 lathe. Variable Reeves Drive, 12" x 36" capacity, with spur drive, live center and 3" faceplate. Jon says it is in great shape and comes with a stand. \$375. 360-297-1773or 360-362-2883

Small Lathe #2

Jon Geisbush is selling a Comet lathe, made by Nova Teknatool. Ten inch diameter capacity with 6 speeds, from 500 to 3500 in steps. Speed change can be done quickly with a belt position change. Good Unit \$220 360-297-1773 or 360-362-2883

Don Mandella has a Shop Fox Model W1714 10" table saw for sale. It has heavy duty casters, 220v, 2 HP motor, 4200 rpm, approximately 300 lbs. **\$510.00.** 360-808-8187

ShopSmith Lathe and Bandsaw

Jim Conway has a ShopSmith, Bandsaw and a compliment of tools and equipment that will get the beginning turner set up in a jiffy. Talk to him about details. 360-531-0168. \$490.



To reserve your place in the class, call 360-303-7074. The Open Shop will be April 16, 10am to 2pm. Bring your choice of hardwood (1.5"x1.5"x6" and your chuck with a 1"x8tpi threads. Click [HERE](#) for more detail.

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Jim Conway,
Editor

The Mentoring Program

CONSIDER A MENTOR—The OPCA AW Mentors are a select group of artisans and professionals who we have designated to promote, encourage, and guide novice and intermediate woodturners within our organization. Mentors provide counsel on subjects like shop setup, equipment purchase, safety, wood preparation and specialized skills. These are some friendly folks willing to give you a point in the right direction.

While not actually a formal training program, meetings with mentors often become just that. In some cases, advanced formal instruction is available at

an hourly rate.

OPCA AW Mentoring is available only to members. Please bring your current badge with you to the first session.

The current Mentors are:

Dan Ackerman (Brinnon)	360-796-4155
Tones Briggs (Port Orchard)	360-271-6448
Bob Hickernell (Bremerton)	360-479-5501
George Kromka (Bremerton)	360-373-1028
Jim Leary (Kingston)	360-297-5872
Jim McFarland (Shelton)	903-352-9807
Brad Stave (Gig Harbor)	206-910-5459

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