

Echos From the "BAT" Cave

Baltimore Area Turners

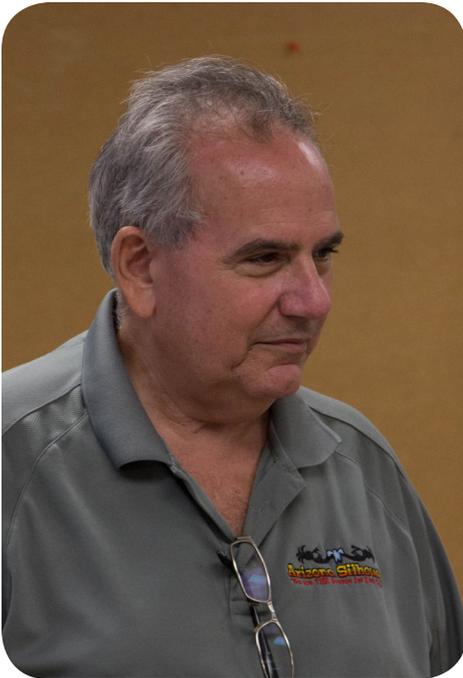
BALTIMORE AREA



TURNERS

September, 2016
Volume 11, Number 9

MASTER PENMANSHIP AND MAWT SYMPOSIUM



Pen turner extraordinaire Barry Gross (*left*) came down from PA to give BAT excellent instruction in casting acrylic pens.

Later in the month the first Mid-Atlantic Woodturning Symposium was held in Lancaster. Mark Sfirri (*pictured below*) was one of several excellent demonstrators.

Thanks to Clark Bixler for contributing to this issue.

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*Photo
by Clark
Bixler*

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Live demo - Barry turns an acrylic pen.

A GROSS OF PENS

Barry Gross returned to BAT to demonstrate making his trademark cast acrylic pens. He began by showing his pressure pot only to explain that he used it for storage – all of his casting is done without resorting to vacuum or high pressure. He showed a short PowerPoint presentation with the theme of ‘You’re only limited by your imagination’ which featured pens made with little starfish, abalone shell pieces, fishing lures, circuit boards, acrylic paintings, beer caps and more.

He showed how to embed a picture in acrylic – open it in a Word document, size it to wrap around tube (use a fat pen like the Gatsby for best results), print on plain paper or Avery labels using an InkJet printer (not a laser), roll it onto a tube, being sure to remove any trapped air, and cast it with the seam side down. He said he usually pre-paints the roughed up pen tubes with cheap acrylic paint as a background.

Casting is done in 3 steps – first, mix up one ounce of resin and fill the mold to 1/8” -1/4” deep, break any bubbles with a stick and allow to harden on a level surface. Then, weight the pen tubes with BBs and plug the ends with rubber stoppers and place in the mold. Two



Barry brought a few example pens to show.



A pen with a surgical theme.

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Printed pictures and how to apply them to a tube.

tubes are placed in each mold. Mix up another ounce of resin and pour over tubes to cover them half way. Remove air bubbles from around the tubes and allow to cure for 24 hours. Finally, apply enough resin to cover the tubes completely and cure for another 24 hours.

Pop the finished casting and, using a band-saw, cut the ends to the top of the rubber stoppers and split the casting between the tubes. Remove the stoppers from the cut ends with a dental pick and remove the BBs. Barry uses a [Squaring Jig](#) to square the ends of the tubes, not a barrel trimmer. They are finally ready for turning.

He demonstrated roughing with a sharp HSS spindle roughing gouge, then used skew chisel. He sanded lengthwise with 320 grit to remove tool marks, then wet sanded with [Cushioned Micromesh](#) pads up to 12,000. He buffs with a [buffing system](#) and inspects for scratches using 10x magnification.

He answered many questions along the way, including about his experience with [Aluminite](#) casting. He said that it sets very quickly and requires a pressure pot pumped up to 40 PSI.

After his excellent demo, he offered a large assortment of [casting kits](#) and other pen-making equipment. Thanks, Barry, for this excellent demonstration.

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PEN-ULTIMATE



The three steps in Barry's casting technique.



Roughing the cast pen blank with a spindle roughing gouge

TURNING THE ULTIMATE PEN

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Finishing the roughing



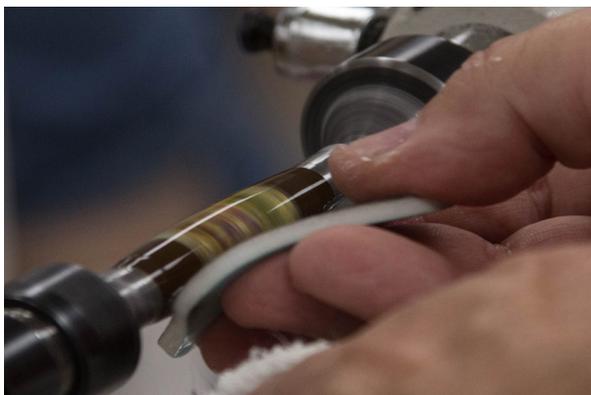
Shaping and smoothing with skew.



Sanding with paper.



Beginning to wet sand



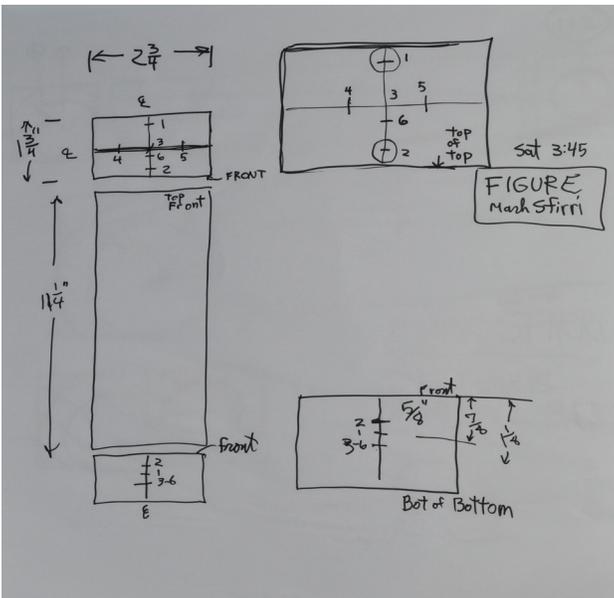
Wet sanding to 12,000.



The finished pen.



MAWT SYMPOSIUM



Mark Sfirri turned a number of multi-axis projects. Each one began with layout instructions for the blank; a marvelous mashup of left brain and right brain. He made it look easy.



All Photos on this page by Clark Bixler

by Clark Bixler

The inaugural symposium of the Mid-Atlantic Woodturning Association was also my first time attending a woodworking symposium. I wasn't sure what to expect, but, it turned out to be a worthwhile experience.

Before the sessions started the first day, I took a tour of the instant gallery. The turnings on display were amazing. The entries were as varied as the contributors but all could be considered works of art.

There were four sessions each day with a variety of projects. From Cindy Drozda turning a gilded ornament and Mark Sfirri doing a multi-axis turning to newer turners like Eric Lofstrom and artistic turnings by Derek Weid-

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Al Stirt turned and carved this beautiful bowl.



MORE MAWTS

(Continued from Page 5)



man. There were other familiar turners like Mike Mahoney and Kurt Hertzog. Every session was interesting.

Regardless of the project, each instructor covered the basics: safety, alertness – paying attention to what you are doing, sharp tools, and light cuts for a smooth finish.

There was also a room full of vendors so that anyone could purchase turning tools and related items.

The value of this symposium cannot be calculated. The close location made it convenient. The gathering of instructors and participants made for a good weekend of sharing. I am looking forward to the next symposium.



Three of the MAWTS demonstrators are featured in this issue. Look for more to come in future issues



(Clockwise from upper left)

Kurt Hertzog demonstrated egg ornaments. He showed how to empty the egg shells. He turned a base for one showing how to fit the egg. He showed many examples of painted eggs and pierced eggs and demonstrated piercing. He also showed how to use segments of a failed bowl to make a hanging stand for ornaments.



PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE

Ken Liester brought in an Apple pear and a Red Oak whistle with an Osage fipple, a tool handle and a Walnut and spalted Maple board bowl.



Ken's entries.

	Handle	Apple/Pear	Board Bowl	Whistle	Shakers
Chuck Cohen			x	x	
Richard Dietrich	x				
Ron Ford	x	x	x	x	
Greg Ham	x	x		x	
Louis Harris	x	x	x	x	
Don Keefer			x		
Wayne Kuhn	x				
Steve Langrall	x				
Ken Leister	x	x	x	x	
Bill Marr				x	
Bob Rupp	x		x	x	
David Smith				x	
Bob Sobczak	x	x	x		
Charles Stackhouse	x	x	x		

SPECIAL RAFFLE

David Ellsworth's two demo bowls were raffled in a special raffle. The large cut edge bowl was won by **Ted Rein**, the smaller natural edged bowl was won by **Ed Cohen**. Congratulations!



David Ellsworth Demo bowls

RAFFLE NEWS



Raffle – A BAT brand-ware shirt, a Black Oak spindle blank, 4 varieties of Brown Wood planks, a Maple bottle stopper blank, spalted Maple, Hickory, Cherry and Mulberry splits, Elm burl, Osage, Oak and Tree-wood bowl blanks, a spalted maple log, a rough turned NE Pecan bowl, Woodturning Magazine from July 2016, and three BAT Gift cards were donated by generous BAT members to the September raffle. (Also, a pepper grinder mechanism was donated by Barry Gross.) Thanks to all.

BALTIMORE AREA TURNERS

Baltimore Area Turners usually meets every month on the second Wednesday of the month. The next meeting will be held at the Boumi Temple at

5050 King Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21237-3325

Next meeting:
October 12, 2016 at 7:00 PM

Agenda: Doug Thompson, Toolmaker to the Stars



BOARD ELECTION

BAT wants you! The heart and brain of BAT is its Board. To quote outgoing President Ron Ford, “The Board is always looking for new talent and ideas, so please consider stepping up and becoming a member of the group. The time commitment is small, just one monthly meeting of less than two hours, but the contribution you can make will have a positive impact on our club going into the future.” Deadline is November.

Is the club meeting your needs? Do you have ideas as to how better to spread the Joy of Turning? Consider becoming part of the group that makes it happen.

Speak to any current Board member if you are interested.

PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE #5

BAT President Ron Ford has announced the fifth President's Challenge for 2016:

October – Turn a set of Salt and Pepper shakers, at least 4” high.

As an option for more advanced turners, you may turn a set Salt and Pepper mills.

(This is the fifth entry in the Fourth Susan Shane Memorial Iron Man Challenge.)