



a local chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

Meetings held on the second Tuesday of the month at The Friends School
110 East Main Street
Moorestown, NJ 08057

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VP HOWs Assistant
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MEETING SUMMARY:

Tonight's meeting included a thorough demonstration by Kurt Hertzog on sharpening woodturning tools. Kurt has been a frequent demonstrator and instructor for many years, covering all facets of woodturning. He has demonstrated before for DelVal Woodturners, including a custom pen demonstration in October 2013, and an all day workshop for us back in October 2009. Kurt is a past president of the AAW, and has written extensively for a number of publications. Check out his website for an incredible array of information and resources at kurthertzog.com.

Elections for the club were held with the current slate of offices reinstated for another year. Thanks to Mark Allen for stepping up to become the VP Program Setup officer for the group.

NEXT MEETING:

The December meeting is our holiday party, to be held on December 12th at the Meeting House adjacent to Main Street. Setup will begin at 5:00pm, food should arrive by 6:30pm, and dinner will begin at 7:00pm. There will be a tool raffle for paid members, a show and tell, the club challenge Snowman, a 50/50 and the annual Polyanna.

Phil's open house will be held the week after on December 19th at 7pm.. Subsequent month's schedules are as follows:

- 1/9/18: Mini Symposium with various presentations
- 2/13/18: Introduction of HOWs. Signup from 7pm to 9pm.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Utah Woodturning Symposium: May 10-12, Provo UT. Registration typically begins in January.
AAW 32nd Annual International Symposium: June 14-17 2017, Portland, OR

NOTE:

Guest 60 day memberships to the American Association of Woodturners (AAW) are available on the AAW website. Check this out if you're not already a member.



Kurt's tool caddy fully stocked



Kurt's tool caddy mostly empty as tools were being sharpened and passed around

Kurt provided a very entertaining, and thorough presentation on sharpening, covering the practical considerations including safety, step by step instructions for a variety of tool types, and also reviewing his analysis of the overall process. Considering the fact that sharpening tools is typically regarded as a boring topic, it was impressive to see how he held the audiences attention through the entire presentation. Here he is in a typical moment, with his iconic facial expressions and arms gesticulating which served to keep all eyes on him during the demo.

In this newsletter, we will explore some of the concepts mentioned, show some pictures of the various edges on the grinder and off, and repeat gems of wisdom he mentioned in the session. It is simply impossible to regurgitate everything that was mentioned or shown in the session, but other resources, including articles on Kurt's webpage that deal with sharpening are available for a more thorough understanding.



tools piling up as they made the rounds through the group

Kurt began with a general description of his experience, including his past work as a production engineer in the automotive industry. He's been turning for 20 years, and has written extensively for various magazines such as Woodturning Design and the AAW, but has decided not to write anymore.



gouge cut with the 45 degree platform rest



scraper cut with the 45 degree platform rest



Kurt travels with his 7 inch Baldor grinder with 1 inch wide wheels, primarily because all of his tools are shaped with the somewhat rare 7 inch radius. If he didn't, he would have difficulty touching up his tools should he encounter the more common 6 and 8 inch grinders while traveling. He said any size grinder is acceptable, but once you start with one, you are somewhat committed to that size.

Whatever sharpening system you choose must be convenient. Your grinder or other sharpening system device must be extremely close to your lathe, or you will not use it often enough. Kurt places his directly adjacent and at 90 degrees to his lathe so he can simply turn to touch up a tool.

"Touch up is easier than sharpening."

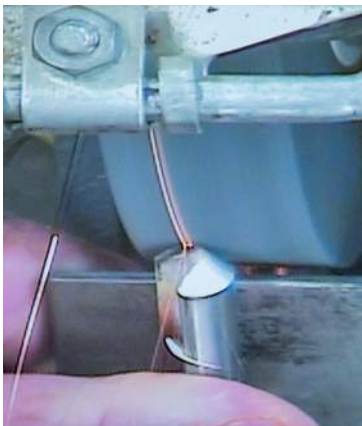
Regarding grinders, he said that speed doesn't matter, although a slow speed grinder is easier for learning as material won't be removed as quickly. He does not think a variable speed unit is necessary. He uses his Baldor for all his turning tools, although he has a Tormek for other tools.

Kurt sets one side of the grinder with a rest at 45 degrees, as most tools have a 45 degree bevel. He uses the Wolverine sharpening jig set up to work on both sides, but primarily uses the jig on the right side and the platform on the left side.

"Your sharpening system must be convenient."



left rest set at 45 degrees, right set just below 90 degrees



sparks from the grinder will follow the gouge as you just reach the edge of the bevel



"The angle doesn't matter."

Kurt said that despite all the literature to the contrary, the angle of the sharpening cut doesn't matter, as the wood doesn't know what angle the cut is. All that matters is that the edge is sharp. He recommended you put a good set of rests on the grinder, as the ones that come with most grinders are not good enough. His rests require a wrench to change the angle, so they remain firmly at the desired position.

He sets his right hand rest to the position required by scrapers, just less than 90 degrees. All scrapers use the same angle.

The grit of the wheels doesn't matter in Kurt's opinion, as mostly you should be simply touching up your tools with frequent sharpening, which doesn't require a rough grit. If you place the tool in ice before beginning, you will keep it sufficiently cool for your fingers. Major changes in a grind should only be accomplished over a few days, with partial grinding each day to avoid overheating the tool.



scraper edges at less than 90 degrees



scraper sharpening on the right hand rest



All eyes focused on Kurt and he described tool sharpening.



sharpening skews on the left hand rest



Clubmembers getting to see the tool edges up close as they were passed around.



then honing the skew spanning the hollow grind area

When do you sharpen?

1. Before the tool is dull
2. After special setup for a specific kind of tool (sharpen all of that type of tool)
3. Before the money cut



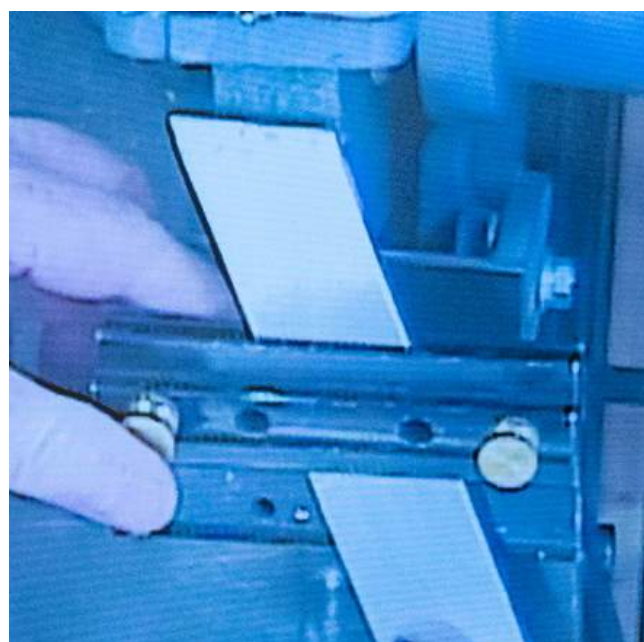
Specialty tools may need a custom approach. A ring cutting tool must be honed from the inside of the ring. A diamond dressing wheel is shown to the right. Wheels need regular dressing to renew the surface which tends to get burnished if not cleaned up occasionally. This also keeps the surface flat. Kurt regularly moves his tools from side to side on the wheel to avoid creating a divot but dressing must still be done.



Carbide tools can also be sharpened by simply rubbing the top surface on a sharpening material such as sandpaper. This should be done in a circular motion similar to the diamond honing process.



Diamond hones and typical honed edges. Honing is done in a circular motion, and no lubricant is required.



Angled skews can be sharpened freehand on a rest using some control such as running your finger along the rest edge, but a jig approach would involve a plane blade holder such as the veritas sharpening jig. This device will ensure a straight and consistent edge.





Mark brought in some of his turned stone bottle stoppers.



The Ellsworth Signature Gouge requires a special jig which rotates the tool properly on the wheel. Freehand is also an option, but the movement takes practice.



Dave with a cool T-shirt.



Checking the tool caddy at the end of the night assures Kurt of going home with all his tools. Thanks to Kurt for a great demonstration.