

Turning in the Age of Corona, Episode 14

Santa Cruz Woodturners

August 18, 2020

We've boldly entered our sixth month of viral weirdness, along with a massive roll cloud, violent windstorm, thunder and lightning, and now red skies with temps pushing 100. We're lucky, though...Death Valley hit 130, and we're not gridlocked on an LA freeway.

That combination qualifies as a good reason to spend more time in the shop, provided you have power, of course. Adversity has a way of fostering creativity among turners, and Episode 14 offers a testament to that!

Dan Albridge generously provided some lovely walnut rounds to a number of SCW members willing to take a little drive southward last month, and he's been chipping away at a huge stack. He found one piece with all sorts of termite damage and punky bark, but he hesitated before tossing it into the firewood pile. (Firewood when it's 90+ outside is a somewhat remote concept.)

Intrepid with the gouge, Dan dove through all that scuzzy stuff and found this beautifully figured future bowl waiting for liberation...



Beauty is everywhere, but sometimes it hides from the casual viewer.

Maarten Meerman, as usual, thinks big when it comes to outer space but small when it comes to turning. Here's his latest in a series of hollow forms which are dwarfed by a penny.



It's Purple Heart, caught right at the junction of sapwood...but he wasn't injured.

Jim Baker was one of the 20+ SCW members who watched Glenn Lucas' captivating remote demo 2 weeks ago...live from Ireland. Glenn offered "Turning a Thin Walled Bowl," and Glenn regards "thin" as 2 mm.

Jim decided to give it a whirl live from Aptos, but as all honest turners will admit, it got a bit nerve-wracking when that vessel started deforming as it thinned. Jim pulled up a tad short of his ambitious original goal with this neat Bay Laurel bowl. He's going back in before long.



Note to Jim: look at the back of the bowl...close to the watchful Scotty dog. That crisp line shows how thin you made it...guessing 4 mm! The foreground, an optical trick by the camera lens, makes it look thicker than it was.

John Wells stays busy regardless of the dreadful wind and rain, the scorching sirocco, and the tectonic upheavals deep beneath the redwoods of Boulder Creek.

However, this time, he's raised the ante. Kauri Wood, retrieved after 45,000 years in a New Zealand bog, has some unique characteristics which have also intrigued Larry Dubia. If you guessed this variety, we owe you a frame-ready certificate of amazement.



Here's a detail of the textured rim:



Here's a deep Kauri bowl, along with an ancient bark inclusion and a texturing touch reminiscent of prehistoric dot rock art paintings in Australia...and Utah.



But bowls do not live by exteriors alone...here's a medallion texture deep in the well.

Back when we were doing in person demos last year, John showed us eccentric turning techniques to make “footed” chair legs. Many of us responded to the challenge to make one of our own. The experience reminded me of when my 7th grade social studies teacher described the Wobblies of the early 20th century. Some of us channeled Wobbly Hobbies in the early 21st century.

This time, John made a set of Wobbly Gobblies of different woods...see if you can pick them out.



That's it for the show and tell...send me some of yours for the next episode!

Remember that a month from now, Saturday, September 19, we'll be doing tag team demos of chain saw applications for turners—featuring Raf Strudley, Roy Holmberg, Dan Aldridge, John Wells, Sue Broadston, and me, too. We'll open the gates to Sue's Orchard at 8, do our socially distanced gathering until 9, and then it begins! After the demos, we'll have box lunches and beverages. Bring eye and ear protection...and your mask! **Fine to bring a prospective member, too!**

Look out for details and an RSVP in a few weeks.

And a few more sneak previews on the next page:

October 17, we'll be doing a remote demo with master turner Ed Pretty of Vancouver BC. People can't cross our Northern Border in person, but Zoom does! Ed's going to take a new angle on the first turning lesson you ever had...the nearly Biblical Writ of A-B-C (Anchor-Bevel-Cut). Fasten your seatbelts for a little controversy!

November 14—the second rather than the third Saturday—we'll be treated to Scott Grove's remote demo on inlays. Scott is a regular on the AAW pro circuit, and this will be a rare opportunity for a small audience—just us—live interaction with a master.

December 12—again, the second rather than the third Saturday—we'll come back home to Santa Cruz for a photographic, step by step, multimedia demo by Roy Holmberg...master metalsmith, clever woodturner, and mischievous artist.

Here's Roy with one of his projects—a scaled down Harley made of vacuum cleaner parts. The segmented wooden wheels and sprocket were turned on a wood lathe. Let somebody else go shopping that day...this one is a keeper.



Enjoy the sunshine,

Wells Shoemaker
President, SCW

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