

FRANK BOWERS DEMO WORKSHOP

Cumberland Woodturners Club

October 28, 2017

Frank Bowers of Stone Mountain, GA presented an all day Demo on Saturday, October 28, 2017 to the Cumberland Woodturners Club. The Demo consisted of Frank talking about the uses of different turning tools to achieve the best finish so limited sanding would be necessary. The first piece that he turned was a green Cuban Mahogany blank that was out of round. By mounting it between centers it allowed him to position the blank in the best way to show the grain in the piece of wood. He then proceeded to evening up the bottom of the piece as it wasn't square. Once it had the bottom squared up he began shaping the sides of the bowl. He cut the tenon and made a foot to be used to hold the piece in a chuck. He made a mark with a parting tool to create a No Cut Line. The purpose of the line was so that he would not cut the bowl blank above that line in his shaping because the wood above that line would be cut away when we started working on the other side. He then remounted the piece in the chuck and proceeded to hollow out the inside of the bowl. Making fine cuts show as to not have a chance of a catch. He cut the interior of the bowl to leave a 10% thickness of the bowl wall as this was a green piece of wood and would have to be dried before finishing. Allowing enough wood to

reshape the tenon and the bowl when refinishing and completing it requires enough wood to get the job done.

He then talked about his method of drying green wood faster than just setting it in a quiet place to dry naturally. He uses denatured alcohol to speed up the drying process from 6-12 months to 6-8 weeks. He submerges the green turned bowl blank in the denatured alcohol for one (1) hour per quarter (.25) inches of thickness. After the soaking has been completed he removes the piece wipes it off and allows it to stand for a short period of time. He then weights it and records the date and weight on the piece with a marker. He then places the bowl in a quiet place out of direct sunlight and wind.

He then mounted on the lathe of piece that had been dried using the denatured alcohol method and proceeded to true up the tenon and reshaping the outside of the bowl. He made sure to make it as round as possible so that he wouldn't have unequal side thicknesses when he turned to the piece. He made note that the rim of the bowl needed to be sloped and not flat. He demonstrated how to make the cuts on the inside of the bowl to insure that there would not be much sanding required. He talked about using a Bottom Feeder bowl gouge to make the transition at the bottom of the bowl interior without burnishing the wood and to not cut a divot hole in the middle as it leads to having to sand down to that level. He said to leave the center spot a little higher so it could be sanded

down flat with the rest of the bottom service.

Then proceed to demonstrate how he uses the Bealle buffering system to finish the bowl with another bowl that had previously been turned to finish. He demonstrated how each type of compound should be used to obtain a finish that really shines. He also said that he uses sticky gloves to hold the piece while buffering as it can be taken from your hands and tossed across the room which is not desired. He also mentioned that he had been noticing scratches in his finished pieces after buffering and realized that it was being caused by his fingernails so that is another reason why he uses the gloves.

Here are the pictures that were taken during the Demo:







grain orientation and look that you are trying to achieve. Below are pictures of him turning this bowl.

He also turned a natural edge bowl from the other half of the green log of Cuban Mahgoney that he had rough turned the first bowl. He stated that he likes to turn natural edge bowls thin so they look better. Orientation of the blank on the lathe is very important from the beginning of the turning to obtain the



