



IWG News

The Newsletter of the Island Woodturners Guild

January 2023



About the IWG:

The [Island Woodturners Guild](#) meets from 1:00 - 4:00 PM on the 4th Saturday of each month (except for July/Aug) at the Central Saanich Senior Citizens' Centre, [1229 Clarke Road](#), Brentwood Bay, BC.

Visitors are welcome.

Executive Committee

President:
Tim Karpiak

Vice President:
Don Robinson

Treasurer:
Peter Pardee

Secretary:
Michael McEwan

Members at Large:
Hovan Baghdassarian
Virginia Lee
Marlene Speckert

Past President:
Steve Werner

Newsletter Editor:
John Kilcoyne

The IWG gratefully acknowledges the support of the following companies:

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THE PRESIDENT'S TURN

Last Saturday, I was able to attend our Woodturning - Mini 101 class. It was a great day. John Kilcoyne did an amazing job of organizing every detail and it ran perfectly. I'm sure he spent a ton of time getting it all perfect. We had some of our most experienced turners helping and giving the students the benefit of their many years of turning. There was a lot of laughter and great instruction. I think all the participants had a good time and I'm sure they learned some valuable new skills. And they probably left with a list of ideas of things they would like to try. Thank you to all the participants and all our wonderful members who gave up the better part of a day to make this a great success.

I was reminded of when I attended my first beginner class a few years ago. Well, maybe more than a few! But the one thing I remember is the welcoming and generous attitude of the people who were involved in the class. Even as a beginner I felt I was part of the group.

I've come to realize that woodturners love to talk about their craft and are usually willing to explain how to do the things that they do. It's a great way to keep the skill evolving.

We have some great demos coming up this year. Starting this month's meeting with Donna Zils Banfield. She does some amazing embellishments on her turnings!

We will be meeting at the guild hall so, if you can, come out and meet with the other members of the group. And bring something for the *Show and Tell* table. I love seeing what other people are making. For those that cannot attend, there will be access through Zoom. Look for the email link later in the week.

I'll see everyone at the meeting this Saturday!

Tim Karpiak

NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY JANUARY 28: 1:00



Our next meeting will feature a remote demonstration by Donna Zils Banfield on the surface embellishment she is using on her latest body of work. She will show how she designs the patterns, creates the layers, textures the surface using a rotary carver and wood burner, and adds colour using a dry-brush painting technique.

A turner for over two decades, her work is very highly regarded for her use of texture and colour. She is a frequent demonstrator at clubs and symposia throughout the U.S. and, as members who attended her presentation at the AAW Symposium in Portland can attest, her demonstrations are clear, comprehensive, and inspiring. A presentation not to be missed!



You can see more of Donna's work on her website at: <https://livealifelessordinary.com/>

This will be followed by our regular *Show and Tell*. A reminder that if you are unable to attend in person, please forward photos of your work to Virginia Lee (remoteva@gmail.com) no later than January 25th.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February

John Beaver will deliver a remote demonstration on turning a wave bowl. (<https://www.johnbeaver.net/>)



March

Dedicated to issue of homemade jigs, members will bring in jigs that they find useful in their turning activities.



April

This meeting will feature a remote demonstration by Rudy Lopez. (<https://rudolphlopez.com/>)



May

This meeting will begin with our annual general meeting which will include the election of a new Executive. The balance of the meeting will hopefully see one- or two-members volunteer to provide demonstrations. **If you are willing to do so, please contact Tim Karpiak.**

June

Our last meeting of the year will feature a remote demonstration by Emiliano Achaval. (<https://www.hawaiiankoaturner.com/>)



NOVEMBER RECAP



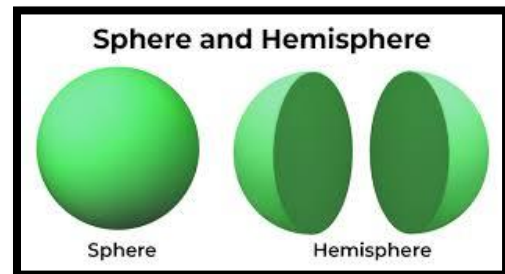
Tod Raines provided an informative and engaging demonstration on turning a *Bowl in a Bowl*. The following are the highlights.

A. PRELIMINARY STEPS

1. The Blank

The essence of this project is to turn a hemisphere which is exactly one-half of a sphere.

Accordingly, the thickness of the blank must be one-half that of the diameter.



For the demonstration he chose a blank that was roughly 6" square by 3" thick.

2. Template



As was apparent from his demonstration, it is essential that you turn as accurate a hemisphere as possible. Accordingly, Tod recommends that you make a template of the desired size.

B. TURNING A HEMISPHERE

Step 1: Roughing Out

He mounts the blank on the lathe using an Elio drive (right).



As mentioned in previous newsletters, this is a popular drive with many members which can be used on both dressed and rough log blanks. Designed by an Alberta turner, it is only available from Tod's store (<https://woodturningtoolstore.com/product/elio-dr-safe-drive-2-5/>) (US\$65)



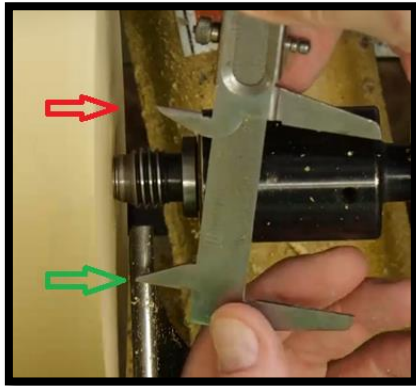
To round the blank, he uses a 5/8" bowl gouge with a swept-back grind. The handle is held firmly against his leg and the flute is set at approximately 45 degrees.

Note: *Tod starts with a square block in case he decides that he wants to turn a square edge bowl. As this means that there will be substantial chips flying off the corners of the blank, he is careful to stand outside the "line of fire". If you have decided to make a round bowl, you should cut the blank round at the bandsaw.*

Once the blank is rounded, he flattens the face of the blank using a pull-cut.



Step 2: Turn a Tenon



While you can use a straight rule to mark the size of the tenon, Tod illustrated how to do this using calipers. With the upper jaws set to the desired diameter, he rests the calipers on the tool rest and adjusts the end jaw (Green) on the spinning wood until a perfect scratch circle is obtained.

Warning: Never let the other jaw tip (Red) touch the wood. Otherwise, it will catch and fling itself who knows where.



To remove the waste wood surrounding the tenon, he makes a series of stabbing cuts with the bowl gouge beginning at the rim and working inwards.



He finishes the tenon by turning a dovetail edge to fit the jaws of his chuck using a pointed spindle gouge.



Once the tenon is set, he begins to shape the bottom of the bowl using a pull-cut on entry and then transitioning to a bevel-rubbing cut.



Step 3: Turning the Hemisphere

To turn a “perfect” hemisphere, Tod uses an appropriately sized template and a 1/2" bowl gouge.



Normally one would cut from the tenon to the rim on a side grain blank for the cleanest cut as the wood fibres will be supported. However, as his tool handle would not clear his lathe, he initially began turning towards the tenon until he could adopt the preferred direction.

He stops frequently to check the surface using the template. For fine tuning, he drops the handle and rotates the tool to shear scrap the surface.



To identify any remaining imperfections, he adopts a technique used for turning a sphere which involves a short fitting from a vacuum hose or plumbing fitting. For a project this size, he recommends a diameter of 1.5”.

When the “pipe” is held on the surface of the turning, any rocking indicates a high spot. He marks the centre and then uses a shear cut to remove it.





As an alternative to a bowl gouge, he demonstrated how to use a teardrop scraper to shear scrape.

He then power sands the outside of the turning.

C. HOLLOWING

With the blank now mounted in a chuck, he flattens the top surface and then hollows the bowl.

As there are two rims to turn, he selects an appropriate rim thickness and doubles it. In this case, he opted for $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick rims which meant an overall thickness of $\frac{3}{4}$ ".



He uses a parting tool to define the edge of the inner rim and then a bowl gouge to hollow.

Unlike the case with an end grain bowl, he does not bother drilling a depth hole in a side grain bowl.

A consistent wall thickness is essential in order to turn the outside rim. He uses digital outside calipers for this purpose. (KMS: \$40)

Note: He aims for consistency within $\frac{1}{100}$ ".



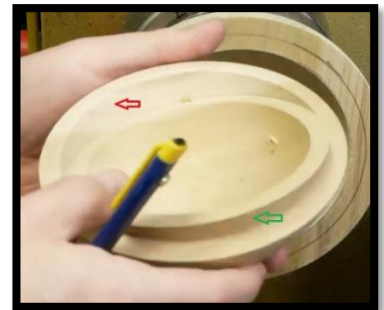


To clean up the inside, he uses the teardrop scraper.

D. TURN THE INNER RIM

The first step is to determine how much exposure you want of the outside of the inner bowl (green arrow) and thus how much you want on the inside of the outer bowl (red arrow).

In this case, he opted for 3/4".



Rather than making a hard (unsupported) entry with the bowl gouge, as previously noted he uses a parting tool to make a small shelf which will support the bevel of the bowl gouge.

In order to ensure that the rims are of equal width, he divides the earlier measurement of overall thickness in half and checks this with his digital calipers.



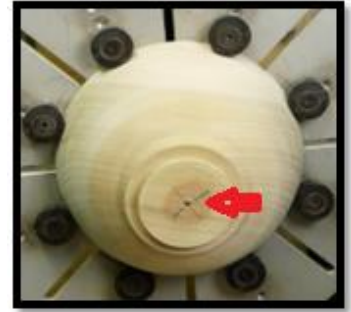
He uses the teardrop scraper to fine tune the thickness of the outside rim and to clean up the surface.

He then uses a skew to produce a sharp corner on the inside.

E. SHAPE THE BOTTOM

He removes the turning from the chuck and mounts it in his Cole jaws.

The centre point (right arrow) on the turning allows him to use the live centre point to centre the turning.



Note: As they do not provide a very secure hold, Cole jaws must be used at a slow speed. The jaws will have the **maximum** speed indicated on the rim – typically 600 – 800 rpm.

Taking very light cuts, he uses a bowl gouge to blend the bottom to the side curvature and finishes up with the teardrop scraper and sandpaper.

F. MAKE A CUP CHUCK

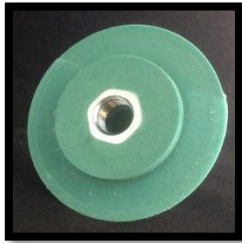
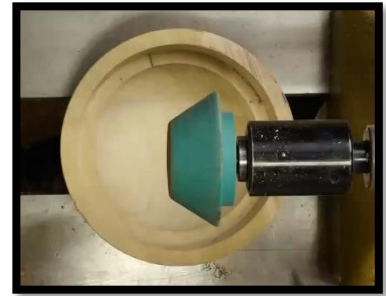
The next step is to make a cup chuck which will allow the turning to be held off centre.



He uses a piece of scrap wood and hollows the inside so that the bowl will fit snugly in the cup. There is no need for a perfect fit, but the bottom of the turning must clear the bottom of the cup.

Note: *Tod indicated that a vacuum chuck could be used if you have one.*

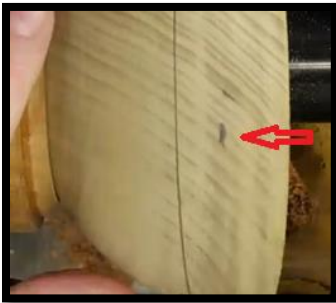
The tailstock needs to be engaged to “jam” the turning into the cup chuck. While you can easily make a protective cover on the live centre using wood and craft foam, Tod uses a commercial product called *Rubber Chucky*.



The embedded nut (3/4" x 10 tpi) will fit most live centres. (US\$40)
https://www.rubberchucky.com/store/p1/No-Nose_Chucky.html#/

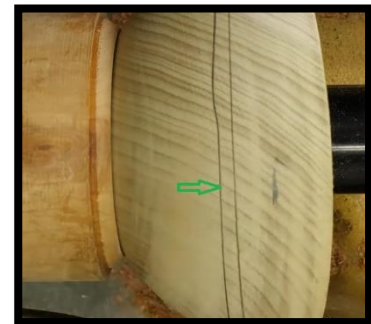
G. MOUNTING IN THE CUP CHUCK

The bowl needs to be mounted off-set in the cup chuck. As his desired reveal was 3/4" he wants 1.5" from the rim, at the highest point.



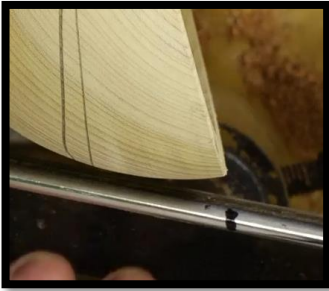
He arbitrarily tilts the bowl and at the “high point” he makes a pencil mark at 3/4" from the rim (left).

Starting on the rim at the lowest point, he draws a pencil line around the bowl. Using a process of “trial and error”, he shifts the bowl until the last pencil line is 3/4" from the first mark (right).



Note: For greater security and to keep the turning from shifting, you could run a bead of hot melt glue around the join between the bowl and the cup centre.

H. TURNING THE OUTSIDE RIM



With the tool rest aligned with the curvature, he makes a mark on the tool rest to show where the highest point is. This will allow him to see where he will start turning wood.

Using a spindle gouge (or a small bowl gouge), he takes a series of very light passes being careful to follow the curvature of the bowl.

Note: *As there will be considerable chipping when you cut through the rim, he advises wearing a glove.*



As he nears the edge of the inner rim (at the 3/4" mark), he takes extra care to not go too deep with the cut in order to ensure that the rims are equal width.

As he continued, he realized that he was going to have trouble with this turning. The explanation is that the turning is off centre by approximately 1/16". (Photos below)



As a consequence, the width of the inside rim varied (right)



The demo bowl (left) can be compared with the preferred outcome on the other bowl.

While this might have been a result of a “poor” hemisphere, “poor” cup chuck or live centre movement, it provided a valuable lesson on the critical importance of precision in turning this project.

I. OPTIONS

Tod noted that there are many variations you could consider including a bowl on top of a bowl which he noted would be much easier to turn.



MINI-101



This past Saturday, the Guild held a 1/2-day course for 10 new members.

The session covered safety issues, sharpening, and an introduction to cutting techniques using a spindle roughing gouge, spindle gouge and bowl gouge all under the guidance of experienced members of the Guild.



Participants report that it was a very valuable session, and many thanks go to all those who made it so:

Barrie Baptie, Graeme Evans, Tim Karpiak, Virginia Lee, Mike Neal, André Robin, Don Robinson, and Tim Soutar.

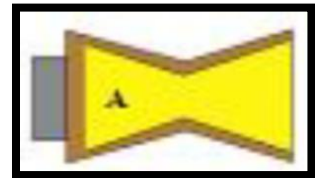
HOW DID HE DO IT?

I first saw this piece by Keith Tompkins over 10 years ago and have puzzled over how he turned it ever since.

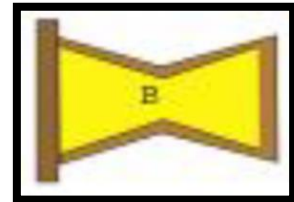
I recently found the following explanation that he provided to the *South Auckland Woodturners Guild*.



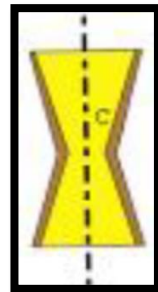
"First, I turned a tube, one end supported in a chuck (A).



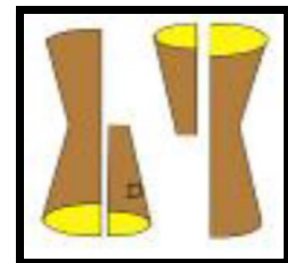
Then I reversed it to finish the other end. I made a groove in a waste block that fit the open end of the tube, about 1/8" (3mm) deep, and glued the tube to it. Using a steady rest, I hollowed the remaining wood out (B) and then parted off.



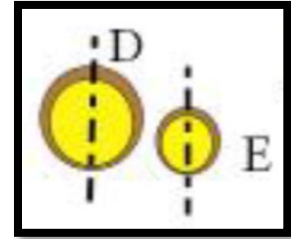
I cut the tube carefully down the centre with a pull-saw (C), and then flattened both pieces on plate glass with abrasive.



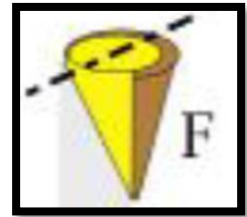
I then turned a smaller form (D), that had the same profile as the tube, which was then cut in half and flattened.



[I] then cut an even smaller form (E) that had the same profile as the tube, which was cut in half and flattened.



Then I began to assemble; one half of each smaller form (D and E) was glued to form a spiral.... (Figure (F) shows the result of gluing half of (D) and (E) together.) [This] was then glued to half of the original tube.



So, each half of the tube now had a spiral form on opposite ends. Then, all was sanded, and the two halves of the tube were reassembled. After careful fitting and cutting the leading edge away, they matched perfectly, since they were once one piece. ...The only real sanding needed was at the glue joints. The bottom is a mirror image of the top, so if the turning were inverted, it would look just as it does now. Hope that answers how it was done.

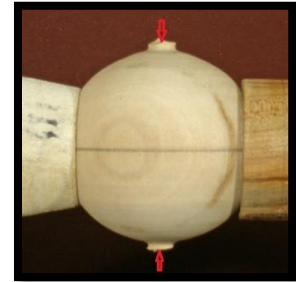
So, it turns out to be a piece of cake... so long as you can turn to within a thousandth of an inch to have the pieces mesh perfectly!!!!



You can see more of Keith's spiral forms on his website:
<https://www.keithptompkins.com/>

SPHERE TURNING: CUP CENTRES

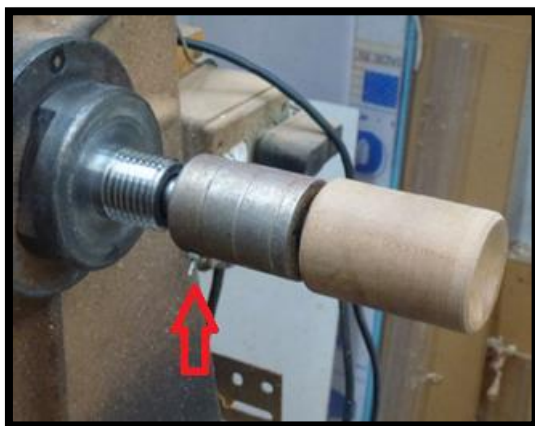
A sphere is initially turned between centres. While there are many different methods of doing so (freeform, template, “Soren-Berger octagon”, “Light and Shadow”), they all require the subsequent use of cup centres to remove the nubbins (right: arrows)



A few years ago, Tim Soutar found himself turning multiple spheres of varying sizes. Accordingly, he decided to make a dedicated set of cup centres.

As these needed to be made of a dry stable hardwood that threads well, he opted for arbutus.

After turning a cylinder with a tenon, he mounted the blank in a chuck. He then drilled a hole and tapped the appropriate thread (3/4" x 10 tpi) for mounting on his live centre. He repeated the process for 4 different sized cups.



With a blank secured on the live centre, he installed the centre in his headstock.

Note the bolt locking the live centre (left) to prevent it from turning.

He then turned the various faces on each of the 4 centres.

Note: *With no tailstock pressure, light cuts must be made on the face.*



A completed sphere.

PLANNING FOR 2023-24 AND BEYOND

The Executive will soon begin planning next year's activities. While I am not a member of the Executive, the following are some of the issues that I believe should be considered. These are not offered as hard suggestions but rather are intended to prompt discussion amongst members as to how we should proceed.



INTRODUCTION

For new members, the following is a brief overview of our past practice in organizing meetings.

2007-2020

Historically, the organization of the ten monthly meetings was the responsibility of the Vice-President.

Eight of the meetings involved demonstrations by Guild members. The other two meetings, one in the fall and one in the spring, involved in-person demonstrations by professional turners. These consisted of a day-long demonstration on Saturday, followed by two day-long workshops at a member's shop on the Sunday and Monday for six members each day.

The major costs were the demonstrator fees (\$800 - \$1,000/day) and airfare plus expenses (\$1,000 – \$1,500). (A member would volunteer to provide accommodation and meals at their expense.) To cover the costs, members were charged \$40 for the plenary session and approximately \$175 for the workshop.

2020 – 2023: THE COVID YEARS

The onset of COVID prompted a shift from in-person to interactive remote demonstrations (IRD). While one professional demonstration was offered during this period (which included a day-long presentation and two workshops), it was poorly attended, and we lost over \$2,000. Accordingly, the Executive decided to rely exclusively on IRDs for external demonstrators.

Unable to find a member willing to assume the traditional responsibilities of the Vice-President, in March 2022, the Executive adopted an extraordinary plan for the current operating year. Six meetings (Sept, Nov, Jan, Feb, Apr, June) would consist of IRDs by professional turners and responsibility for organizing these sessions was divided amongst Executive members. The average cost of each IRD was estimated to be approximately \$425 and the Executive decided not to charge members for these events. The remaining 3 meetings would involve demonstrations by Guild members.

ISSUES

1. Vice-President: Organization of Meetings

Hopefully someone will step up and assume the traditional duties of the VP. Failing this, it is hoped that 2 or 3 members will agree to serve on a panel of the Executive sharing the responsibility for organizing meetings.

2. In-Person Professional Demonstrations

It is uncertain whether we will see a return to regular in-person professional demonstrations and workshops. One obstacle is the fact that we have very few members whose shops can accommodate seven lathes. Moreover, many leading turners are no longer interested in offering these.

Historically, many professionals were ambivalent about the rewards of these sessions since they involved day-long travel to get here and another day travelling home. This was particularly the case for those turners who live in the Eastern and Central U.S. which is the most common location. Secondly, over the past few years, many professionals have invested a great deal of money in IRD equipment and are looking to recapture these costs. In a similar vein, many of these individuals have invested in expensive teaching studios which contemplate “students” doing the travel. At a minimum, we will likely find the “pool” of experienced demonstrators reduced.

(The trend towards professional turners abandoning in-person club demonstrations is discussed on the AAW site at: <https://community.woodturner.org/discussion/local-club-value-statement>

3. IRDs

IRDs are cheaper than in-person demonstrations (at least in terms of overall cost) and have been invaluable in allowing us to see the work of turners from around the world. While it is clear that we will continue to offer these, I think we should consider reducing the number of these from this year.

While prompted in part by financial concerns, it also reflects my view that we should do more to highlight member skills and interests. As witnessed by the demonstrations of Rob Dunlop and Gil Heise, as well as *Show and Tell* sessions, there are many excellent turners in the Guild, and this would increase the opportunities for them to showcase their work and techniques as well as providing a better opportunity for questions and an exchange of information.

Needless to say, this will require members – **beyond the usual suspects** – willing to step up.

Since the preparation time for a 2-hour presentation is considerable, we may want to consider an option adopted by other guilds in which they ask 2 or 3 members each meeting to provide short, 20-30 minute offerings. These could be turning demonstrations or simply oral presentations on a turning topic. Another practice common amongst other guilds is to set aside 10 or 15 minutes at each meeting to answer questions from new (and not so new) members.

4. Attendance

As is the case with virtually all guilds in North America, remote access through Zoom has been indispensable over the past 3 years. It has allowed us to continue offering demonstrations as well as an opportunity to stay in touch during the worst periods of COVID. However, the lifting of virtually all prohibitions reflects a change from viewing COVID as a pandemic to one that, similar to the annual flu season, is endemic.

While our overall monthly attendance figures (50 – 60) are close to pre-COVID levels, only half attend in person. The latest demonstration by Tod Raines saw 28 members attend in person while 25 viewed his presentation on-line.

Leaving aside the fewer members available to help reconfigure the meeting hall and set up the A/V equipment, I am concerned about the adverse effect on the vitality and utility of our meetings. It is very rare for “remote” members to participate in the discussions or *Show and Tell*, and the meetings lack the engagement and opportunity for exchanging of information and advice on turning issues (and the social interaction) that was present prior to COVID and which lie at the core of the Guild’s very purpose. (And I would add, which was very evident at the Mini-101 course.) This is particularly important given the large number of new members that we have. Attendance at meetings provides an opportunity to get to know one another and provides an important opportunity for informal exchanges of information and advice.

While the low in-person attendance may reflect ongoing concerns with COVID, I do not believe that this is a significant factor. While an admittedly small sample, Groups 2 and 5 have been meeting in-person since the fall and attendance has consistently matched pre-COVID numbers.

Rather, I think that the more significant factor is the nature of IRDs. Without ignoring the many benefits, the interaction between members and the demonstrators has been very limited and the experience, in my opinion, has been very passive. In the words of one member, it often feels like “*viewing a video*” and accordingly I suspect that many members prefer to do so from the comfort and convenience of their home.

Contrast this experience with the demonstrations provided by Rob Dunlop and Gil Heise. On reviewing my notes, the in-person attendance for both of these was substantially greater than IRD presentations. They also featured far greater interaction between the demonstrators and audience members and, in my opinion, resulted in much more engaging and entertaining sessions.

If this assessment has any validity, it may reinforce the suggestion above to reduce the number of IRDs next year.

(While not relevant to future planning, there is an immediate concern given that we have 4 more IRD sessions planned for this year. Any suggestions for how we could improve in-person attendance for these sessions would be welcomed.)

5. Finances

From a bank balance of \$16,000 in 2019, the current figure is down to approximately \$11,000. These funds are intended to provide for equipment repair and replacement as well as meeting any shortfall in operating expenses. While this is still a healthy amount, the downward trend is obviously concerning. For example, our liability insurance premium for this year increased more than 50% from \$900 to \$1400. We can likely expect another increase this year and will almost certainly face increases in storage and IRD costs.

While some North American guilds are charging members for IRD demonstrations as a means of raising revenue, I do not think that this would be a good option. The administrative burden required by such a scheme – particularly for the President and Treasurer - would be immense.

Which leaves our annual dues. The current figure of \$35 per year, has not changed in over a decade despite rising costs throughout. Accordingly, I believe that the Executive should consider an increase in the dues.

To repeat. These are simply my personal thoughts on the issues that we face and possible responses. They are intended to generate an exchange of views. Comments or suggestions are welcomed. (jrk@uvic.ca)

PARTING OFF

Thanks to Tim Soutar for his cup centre photos and to the members of the Executive for keeping us informed and entertained. A special thanks to Tim Karpiak who has helped preserve our treasury by spending an inordinate amount of time tracking down delinquents who forgot to pay their dues!!!!

CONCLUDING THOT

THE HORROR OF BANANANNIHILATION!

