



IWG News

The Newsletter of the Island Woodturners Guild

April 2025



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:
Don Costello

Vice President:
Don Robinson

Treasurer:
Chris Leach

Secretary:
Michael McEwan

Members at Large:
Hovan Baghdassarian
Virginia Lee

Past President:
Tim Karpik

Interim Newsletter Editor:
Virginia Lee

The IWG gratefully acknowledges the support of the following companies:

[Artisan Wood to Works](#)
[Chipping Away](#)
[Industrial Plastics & Paints](#)
[Island Blue Print](#)
[KMS Tools](#)
[PJ White Hardwoods](#)
[Richelieu Hardware](#)
[William Wood-Write](#)

THE PRESIDENT'S TURN

Spring into Action: A Seasonal Call to All Woodturners

As the blossoms bloom and the days grow longer, it's time to embrace the season of renewal—not just for nature, but for our workshops and creative spirits too! Here are a few important reminders to inspire and prepare us for a vibrant spring.

1. Spring Cleaning for a Fresh Start

A clean, organized workshop is the foundation of creativity. Take some time this month to tidy up your space—dust off those tools, reorganize your wood stash, and clear out any clutter. A well-maintained workshop not only boosts efficiency but also ensures safety while working on your next masterpiece.

2. Support Our Community at Craft Shows

Spring is bustling with craft fairs, artist tours, and exhibitions. Let's rally behind our fellow woodturners by visiting their booths, spreading the word about their creations, and offering support. If you're participating in a show yourself, consider collaborating with other guild members for a shared display or demonstration—our strength lies in unity!

3. Seasonal Inspiration for the Garden

Spring offers endless possibilities for creating unique pieces inspired by the outdoors. From elegant birdhouses to whimsical garden stakes or rustic planters, these seasonal projects not only highlight our skills but also bring joy to those who use them. Let's get turning and fill our gardens—and others'—with our art.

A Final Thought

As we navigate this bustling season, let's remember the heart of our guild: shared passion, mutual encouragement, and the joy of crafting together. Whether it's a quick tip shared in the workshop, a kind word at a craft show, or a shared laugh over a challenging project, our community thrives when we support one another.

Here's to a productive and inspiring spring—happy turning!
Hope to see you on Saturday.

Don Costello

NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY April 26th: 1:00 p.m.



This meeting is an in-person demonstration by Andre Robin who will demonstrate how to turn a an eccentric trembleur using a string steady. *A trembleur is a French exercise from the XVIII century. The woodturner has to turn a long and thin piece using a “steady” and a “string steady”. It’s not only a technical exercise but also helps to study the different renaissance shapes. *from Google

The Teams invite to the meeting will be sent out on Thursday, April 24th. The demo will be followed by a presentation of the Show and Tell.

RECAP OF MARCH DEMONSTRATION



This meeting featured a hybrid demonstration by Craig Timmerman who showed us how to turn a **Flying Bowl**.

You can find the video and handouts on our website in the [Member's Only Area](#).

NEWBIES' CORNER

We are very pleased to introduce a new regular contributor to the newsletter, A.M. Turner. A.M Turner will be contributing articles aimed primarily at the newer turners in our Guild but the “oldsters” may even learn a thing or two.

The Wood Hoarder's Guide to Turning... Err, Storing and Preparing Wood

So, you've got the woodturning bug, huh? Welcome to the wonderful world where wood shavings fly, and sawdust becomes your new glitter. But before you can channel your inner lumberjack, there's the small matter of storing and prepping that wood. Because nothing says "craftsmanship" like not accidentally turning your project into a wobbly UFO. Let's dive in!

Step 1: Selecting the Right Wood

Picture this: You're at a wood store, drooling over those glorious chunks of maple, cherry, and o ak. It's like being at a bakery, but with fewer calories and more splinters. Just remember to check for cracks, rot, or tiny wood goblins. Nobody wants surprise critters making guest appearances in their masterpiece or their face shield.

Step 2: Storing Wood Properly (AKA Hoarding with Style)

You'd think storing wood is as simple as dumping it in the garage, right? Wrong! Here's the art of sophisticated wood hoarding:

- **Keep Wood Dry:** Your wood deserves better than that damp, musty corner. Elevate it on pallets or racks. Think of it as giving your wood the five-star treatment.
- **Control Humidity:** Your wood is high maintenance, like a celebrity. Keep the humidity steady. Dehumidifiers and ventilation are your best friends here.
- **Stacking:** Sandwich your wood with stickers (the wooden kind, not the sparkly ones) between each layer. It allows air circulation and gives your wood a cozy blanket fort kind of vibe.
- **End Sealing:** Slather those ends with commercial end grain sealer, wax, or even some leftover latex paint. Will prevent rapid moisture loss and dramatic cracking episodes.

Step 3: Drying Wood - The Waiting Game

You've got two options: the patience of a saint or the impatience of a modern-day woodturner.

- **Air Drying:** Stack your wood in a covered, well-ventilated area. This could take months to years. It's like aging fine wine, but with splinters.
- **Kiln Drying:** If you need your wood dry pronto, think about kiln drying. You can find some plans online for a shop made kiln. Drying time: a few weeks. It's like express shipping for your wood.

Step 4: Preparing Wood for Turning - The Pre-Game Warm-Up

Your wood is dry, now it's time to prep it for the big leagues:

- **Cutting to Size:** Cut your wood into manageable blanks that won't turn your lathe into bucking bronco.
- **Removing Bark and Debris:** Use a drawknife or chisel.
- **Inspecting for Defects:** Give your wood the once over for any hidden surprises. Mark any no-go zones.

- **Balancing the Blank:** Ensure your blank is balanced before mounting it on the lathe. Unbalanced blanks lead to lathe-induced dance parties. Fun, but dangerous.

Step 5: Safety Considerations - Because Your Fingers and Lungs Are Kinda Important

Let's not forget safety. Here's the rundown:

- **Wear Protective Gear:** Safety goggles, a dust mask, and hearing protection. Because looking like a sci-fi character is a small price to pay for keeping all your fingers.
- **Ventilation in your workspace** is very important, not just for dust but also chemicals and odours.
- **Sharp Tools:** Keep your tools sharp. Dull tools are just asking for trouble and lead to more work and a lot more sanding.
- **Secure the Blank:** Make sure your wood blank is securely mounted. Tighten everything like your life depends on it. Because it kind of does.

Conclusion

By now, you should be an expert in wood hoarding, err, storing and preparing wood for woodturning. Just remember, proper storage and prep can make the difference between a beautiful bowl and an accidental abstract sculpture or some attractive firewood.

If you're itching to turn wet wood, stick around for our next installment: "*Wet Turning: When Patience Is Overrated.*"

Happy turning, and may your shavings always be curly! 🪵 ✨

A.M. Turner

P.S. If you have a specific topic you would like me to write about just let the guild know, they will pass it along to me.

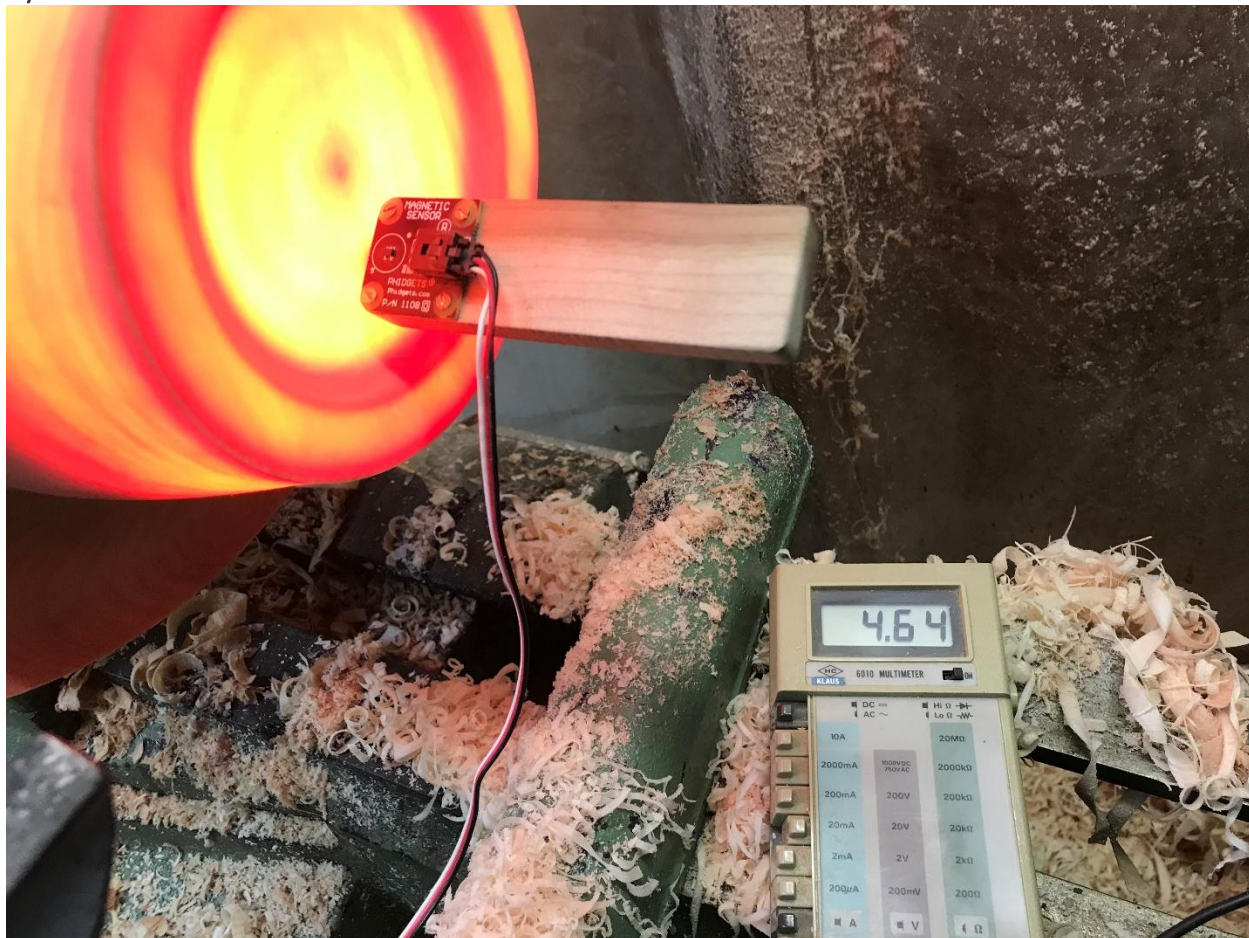
A.M. Turner – Bio



Nestled in the serene forests of Vancouver Island, **A.M. Turner** is an artisan, storyteller, and master of craftsmanship. With a cozy workshop filled with well-loved tools and the scent of fresh cedar, Turner finds magic in the details and loves to share them with others who are interested in the delicate art of turning wood and the quiet beauty of handmade things. A.M. Turner celebrates the connection between craft and storytelling, inviting readers and woodworkers alike into a world where imagination and tradition intertwine.

ELECTRONIC THICKNESS MEASURING DEVICE

By Dave Roberts



When I started turning cowboy hats, I was using a light bulb in a jamb chuck to gage the thickness of the top of the hat. I first used an incandescent bulb but it would burn out while turning due to vibration. It was difficult to remove the hat, replace the bulb and then return the hat to the jamb chuck perfectly as it was. The tolerance is very fine so any wobble is not acceptable.

I then decided to use a modern LED bulb, this presented a new challenge as the wattage is not close to the incandescent, I was using so gaging the thickness was still difficult. As I have some knowledge in electronics from my working career with CN Railway, I decided to build a simple electronic device to measure thickness. This device will measure up to almost 1/2" thick material but is better suited to 1/4" and less. It is very simple, inexpensive and useful to gage thickness wherever you can't reach with a caliper or fingers. Once you turn enough hats you

can gage the thickness by the sound of your cut but this takes many hats and a keen ear, this device helps reassure your thickness.

The first photo is a cowboy hat on the jamb chuck with a light bulb inside along with a rare earth sphere magnet. The hall effect transistor is mounted to a thin piece of wood with 2 rod style 1/4" rare earth magnets which are drilled into the end of the wood and sits just proud. Once the magnet on the wood device finds and attracts the sphere magnet inside the hat the transistor conducts and outputs a voltage.

The transistor output is fed to the digital multimeter and provides an accurate representation of the thickness. Simply slide the device around and the sphere magnet will follow, when the material changes in thickness that will be represented on the multimeter. This device needs a little bit of fine tuning to place the rod magnet in the wood with respect to where the transistor gets mounted but is straight forward.

The meter voltage is simply a pre-determined value by measuring a piece of flat wood say 2 mm thick, the meter should read about 4.5 volts. Then when your work piece is 2 mm thick the voltage reading should be the same at 4.5 volts DC. As the wood gets thinner that voltage will increase as the transistor is getting closer to full saturation. The supply voltage is 5vdc and if you removed the wood and placed the two magnets together then the transistor will saturate and your meter should read full supply voltage.

I used an Apple iPhone wall adapter with a USB port and then took an old pc mouse with a USB cord, cut the cord off the mouse and that became my 5-volt supply. I purchased a Hall Effect transistor in a little package, it came mounted on a circuit board with a resistor and capacitor along with the connector and cable for \$12. Using a digital volt meter for the display and lastly a 1/2" sphere magnet with two 1/4" rod magnets and some wood. The circuit is simple and can be made by anyone that knows how to solder and use a voltmeter.

I used 3 pieces of arbutus (Madrone) to match the density of the wood to the wood I am turning. The desired thickness is 2 mm the other pieces are 4 mm and 8 mm so as to get a reference to thickness with the meter. It took some minor tweaking with the magnets mounting them in a thin piece of wood and then mounting the circuit board so as to get a voltage output on the meter. Basically, the circuit conducts with the presence of magnetism and then outputs a voltage.

When I place the sphere magnet onto the probe magnet the transistor saturates and outputs the nominal 5-volt supply voltage. With a 2.5 mm piece of wood between the two magnets the transistor outputs 4.5 v dc and with the 4 mm piece of wood that changes to about 4.2 volts.

So, if you're turning any object that you need to measure thin wall thickness you can use this device.

As an example, my calipers don't fit inside a vase or in this case the hat so I put the sphere magnet inside the jamb chuck and use the probe on the outside so it attracts to the sphere magnet and see what the voltage on the meter displays. The lower the voltage the thicker the wall thickness - the hat in the above photo reads 4.64 vdc so the thickness is less than 2 mm.

Parts required.

Magnetic sensor www.Phidgets.com P/N 1108

<https://www.phidgets.com/?tier=3&catid=5&pcid=3&prodid=78>

Hammond Box 1591-A

Hammond Box 1591-M

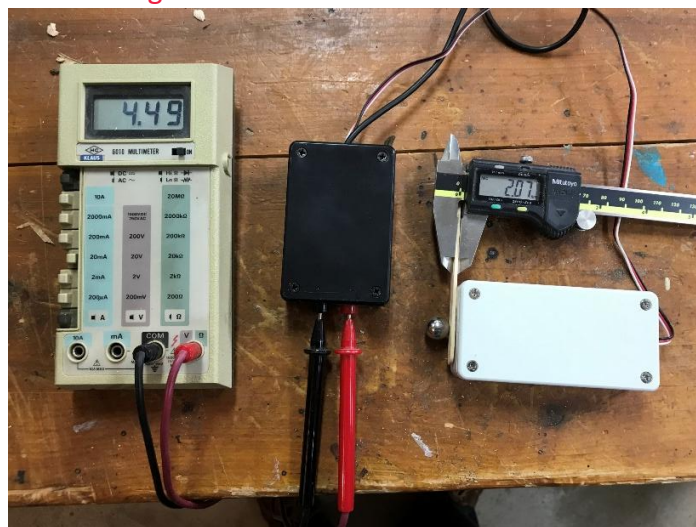
1 red and 1 black female jack that accepts your meter leads.

2 each 1/4" by 1/4" rare earth rod magnets

<https://www.leevalley.com/en-ca/shop/hardware/rare-earth-magnets/magnets/rod/40076-rare-earth-rod-magnets>

1 each 1/2" rare earth sphere magnet

<https://www.leevalley.com/en-ca/shop/hardware/rare-earth-magnets/magnets/ball/45088-rare-earth-spherical-and-hemispherical-magnets>



In the left photo the device reads 4.56 vdc and the digital caliper reads 1.96 mm this gives an exact reference voltage. The right photo shows the transistor probe and cable connections cleaned up in small plastic Hammond cases.

Author's Bio: After retiring Dave and Alison moved from the East to the West Coast taking to the shop full time on Pender Island BC. Dave and Alison both have a previous woodworking background from making furniture to each building a home. Both Dave and Alison are self-taught woodturners and turn a variety of large and small pieces varying from pepper mills and

bowls to very large artistic pieces. The local woods they turn are sourced from storm damaged trees, pruning, development and through some local arborists. Healthy trees are not harvested for any of their work. Dave's technical efficiency and mechanical aptitude has enabled a smooth transition to wood turning and figuring out how to innovate Alison's ideas. They continue to innovate with new designs and techniques creating unique one-of-a-kind art pieces.

SOURCES FOR INSPIRATION

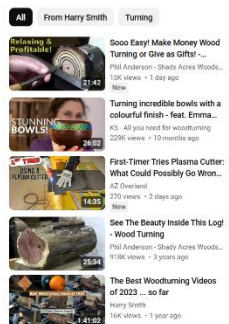


Are you a member of the [AAW](#)? There are lots of resources for turners as well as a forum and a learning portal. The AAW also holds a yearly symposium and is offering virtual attendance.

In the recent AAW magazine, on the topic of our upcoming demonstration, there is a write up about trembleur turning by Bernard Azéma, France. You can read more [here](#). Andre's work is right up there and will be informative to watch and learn.



Woodturning - The Most Viewed Videos of All Time!



YouTube is also another great source of woodturning videos. Use your own discretion as some of the turners are not following proper safety guidelines and may not be experienced turners. On the other hand, you can watch some spectacular fails and learn

from other turners' mistakes or get some unique ideas for your own turnings.

Do you have favourite sources for your "research"? You can let Virginia know by [email](#).

RAFFLE

We have a raffle at each meeting. The \$5 tickets can win you a prize AND help us pay for the hall rental. Look for the member with the coffee can to purchase your tickets. Tickets are drawn during the Show & Tell.

OUR NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

Thanks to the previous newsletter editor, John Kilcoyne, our newsletter archive is a treasure trove of woodturning information. The articles feature in-depth "how to's" on a wide variety of woodturning techniques. You have to log in to view the archived articles. This is another benefit of guild membership.

WOMEN IN TURNING



2025 Pacific Northwest Women in Turning Scholarship



With the help of a generous donor from the Seattle Woodturners, the Seattle chapter of Women in Turning (WIT) is now offering a Pacific Northwest WIT Scholarship (\$500), to be awarded annually to an outstanding emerging woodturner for use towards professional development opportunities. To be eligible, applicants must be women or otherwise under-represented woodturners who reside in the Pacific Northwest (including British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Northern California). The scholarship is intended to encourage woodturning as a lifelong pursuit, extend the accessibility of the craft, and contribute to the cultural vitality of the Pacific Northwest.

Deadline: August 1



Scholarship Criteria:

- Applicant must be a woman or otherwise under-represented woodturner;
- Applicant must be 18 years of age or older;
- Applicant must be a resident of the Pacific Northwest (including British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Northern California);
- Awarded to the applicant who best articulates their creative intent and the anticipated educational impact of the scholarship as well as demonstrates the highest quality of work (based in equal measure on technical merit, composition/design, originality of work, and clarity/effectiveness of ideas);
- Scholarship to be used for classes and professional development opportunities (e.g. residencies, mentorship, etc.);
- Scholarship recipient agrees to give a presentation/demonstration relating to their educational experience:
 - Recipient's resulting work will be promoted at a Seattle Woodturners meeting/event and will be featured on the club's website/social media channels;
 - The Seattle Woodturners will cover any costs associated with travel and lodging;
 - Recipient agrees to donate a signed art piece for the annual Seattle Woodturners auction;
- Applicant consents to the use of application images/content by the Seattle Woodturners in marketing materials promoting the scholarship, including:
 - Bio;
 - Headshot, photograph(s) of work, logo, or other image to be published with bio;
 - Applicable social media handle(s) and/or website address;
- Applications will be reviewed by a committee of representatives from the Seattle Woodturners and will include external artists and arts professionals;
- Scholarship committee representatives are not eligible to apply;
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.

FINAL CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS IT'S YOUR TURN

Again, we are asking members to step up to volunteer. The hard-working core group of members feel the pressure of keeping the Guild going and have the constant worry that ***if enough members don't step up, the Guild will cease to exist.*** The Guild can only exist with member involvement. This year comes with changes to our Executive, and we need more members to step forward to contribute to the continued growth of the Guild.

Volunteering for these positions really won't take up a lot of your time.

Who We're Looking For:

Volunteer Positions

- **Newsletter Contributors** for articles or ideas for the Newsletter. *Happily, a few members have stepped up to contribute articles to the Newsletter but we can always use*

more. What type of articles would you like to see in the Newsletter?

- Help with the Audio/Visual setup and take down for the in-person meetings. Training will be provided. This position is a fill in position to cover for the A/V volunteer(s) in the case of absence.
- Mentoring
- Assisting with workshops
- People to assist with the set up and take down of the meeting room. We've had a wonderful uptick with volunteers helping!
- We need one more volunteer to be an assistant A/V person. Training will be provided. Assistant A/V volunteers are needed to fill in when our main A/V volunteer is unable to attend. Without the A/V volunteer, our meetings cannot be streamed and we would also be limited in our ability to put them up on screens for the meetings.
- 101 Workshop Mentors and Assistants –for next year 2026
- Demonstrators: Demonstrate a skill you have learned as a woodturner or provide ideas for demonstrations you would like to see. The demonstrations can be:
 - in your workshop as a remote demo (we come to you)
 - an “in the can” demo where your demo is videoed in advance and you appear in person at a meeting to narrate it and answer questions
 - or at in-person at the meetings.
 - If you can't or don't want to demo, your ideas for demonstrators/demonstrations are welcomed.

A note on stepping up to be a demonstrator: IRD's are expensive and while we currently are “healthy” financially, if we depend totally on having IRD's or having outside demonstrators attend our meetings, our financial resources will not continue to be sufficient to support our meetings.

We appreciate feedback from you about our choice of demonstrations. We get some negative comments but suggestions are few and far between. Do you have a favourite turner you would like to do a demo for our Guild? Let us know.

Benefits of Turning Up: *Keeping the Guild active!*

How to Turn Up: To learn more or to offer your time, contact Don Constello at president@islandwoodturners.ca. Contact Don Robinson (tycondon@shaw.ca) for demos and Virginia (remoteva@gmail.com) for newsletter contributions.

PARTING OFF

Thanks to A.M Turner and Dave Roberts for their contributions to this edition of the newsletter. Thanks to Andre for stepping up to do his demonstration and thanks once again to the members of the Executive for stepping up to provide support and encouragement for all members.

CONCLUDING THOT

