



**Woodturner** n. A person who enjoys the art and process of shaping wood into various forms

“ask not what your guild can do for you; ask what you can do for your guild— you get back what you put in”

**LOCAL AAW CHAPTER**

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### *Message from* **Richard Pikul, President**



Another year of turning meetings has come to a close. We had a successful year and are looking forward to improving again next year.

Our novice members have dramatically improved, thanks to the continuing skills development meetings taught by Michael Bonnycastle and the Turning parties organized by Penny McCahill and Nancy Hooper. A thank you to the members who assisted during the hands on nights at the skills development meetings and another thank you to the members who hosted turning parties in their workshops.

The regular meeting and seminar program this past year was outstanding. Steve Mushinski was able to fill every meeting with world class turners from far and wide and even from our own membership. He was able to do this while also taking care of the library and our web site. This next year, Jack Wallace will head the newly formed programming team. Arranging incoming and member demonstrators has become too large a job for one person to handle, so Jack will have support to make these arrangements.

A thank you to Chris Darrah, who not only brought in David Springett for a full day seminar and two days in Fred Klapp's workshop, but also 'shared' him with most of the woodturning groups in Ontario.

Jack Wallace and Peter Kaiser organized our spring competition this year. This was a 'first time' for both and they took on the job with understanding that the competition was to be significantly different than in the past. The "Salon 2007" evening was quite successful, and we received more than the usual number of entries. It was good to see almost double the Novice entries – lets see if we can double it again next year.

This year's Salon was a good learning experience, and we have received good suggestions for improvements for next year's competition. Start planning your entries for next spring – lets see if we can get three from every member!

Michael Finkelstein has taken this newsletter through another successful year of publication. All bi-monthly issues will continue to be available on our web site – take a look through them all, there are many articles that are as good as those found in any woodturning magazine. In fact, one was republished in a well-known magazine.

This was an election year for our guild and we have added some new members to the executive. It has also been decided that 'job' responsibilities will no longer be shouldered by only one person. Many of our members, would like to help, but cannot commit to being the only person to take care of a guild responsibility due to work schedules, holidays, going south for part of the winter and other reasons. We will have a key person responsible for each 'job', with at least two members, also able to do the work for each guild responsibility. This will allow part of each team to be absent without affecting the responsibility and can include those who cannot commit to the entire job on their own. We will be contacting the membership to describe the different positions and to fill each team later this summer. Have a great summer!

I challenge you to turn something 'completely different' for the September meeting! **Richard Pikul** [rpikul@sympatico.ca](mailto:rpikul@sympatico.ca)

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# The Founding of the W. G. O.

By Mark Salusbury

## *Introductory Remarks*

Penny McCahill writes: Assembling information from a past that I was not part of has been both fascinating and challenging. Some morsels of information were well documented; others not. Mark Salusbury had vivid memories of how the WGO began. He had played an active role in the early years and his recollections follow.

In addition to Mark, there were several guild members who had been significantly involved twenty years ago but who had since 'disappeared from WGO life'. Communicating with them was exciting, not only to me as researcher but also to those members who were surprised at being contacted 'out of the blue', so to speak. In some instances, it became evident that the rekindling of a connection with the WGO generated a spurt of warmth or joy in their varied lives.

Please, read and enjoy Mark's recollections that follow. Also check out the WGO website in the future for a more extensive presentation of our history, and if you have any comments about what you see in either place, please do not hesitate to contact me. (E-mail [penny@technolinks.com](mailto:penny@technolinks.com) or telephone 905-508-2969.) The telling of this story has the capacity to prompt a variety of perspectives (It already has!) and your feedback and possible contributions are encouraged.

## *Mark's Recollections*

January, 2007

The Woodturners Guild of Ontario came about initially out of the interests of two men: Greg Gage and Mark Salusbury. The year was 1988.

Greg Gage was the Maintenance Foreman for Novopharm Pharmaceutical in Scarborough and Mark Salusbury owned the fledgling Fleetwood Tool Supply, also in Scarborough.

Greg was a keenly interested novice in the craft of woodturning in all forms, from bowls and 'green' hollow vessels to architectural and furniture spindle turning. He was so keen that on the days the Woodturners' Association of Eastern Ontario (W.A.E.O.) held their monthly meetings in Ottawa, Ontario, (then the only active woodturners' club in Canada to my knowledge) he'd work his full 7a.m.-to-430 p.m. day in Scarborough, drive for four and a half hours to Ottawa, attend the woodturners' meeting until 11.00 p.m., drive the four and a half hours home, grab a few winks, and then go to work for 7:00 a.m.



**Mark Salusbury**

Mark on the other hand, had a general interest in 'woodturning', as much as he had in all other areas of the combined crafts within 'fine woodworking'. Having just started Fleetwood Tool Supply, an industrial/retail outlet for quality woodworking equipment, tooling and supplies in the spring of 1988, he was looking for a way to contribute to the woodworking community and create a niche for the firm to distinguish Fleetwood Tool Supply from other woodworking specialty tool stores.

It was Kemp McMeekin, owner of Tree Heritage of Merrickville, who, in a conversation with Mark Salusbury, suggested we start a woodturning club in the Toronto area. Kemp was a supplier of lathe chucks and turning tools to Fleetwood Tool Supply and an active member of the W.A.E.O. He knew of Greg's interest in woodturning and his mind-numbing journeys to Ottawa, and thought that a club in the GTA would become popular, based on the interest in the craft in the Ottawa region. It would also be a way to maintain Greg's health and sanity.

Mark thought about it. At Fleetwood Tool Supply, there was space which could be made available behind the showroom that could easily be converted into a meeting and demonstration room, about 700 sq. feet, and Fleetwood had the machinery and supplies already in-house which could be provided as 'demo' product to get the club going.

Over the following few weeks, Mark met Greg for the first time, instantly becoming friends. As woodturning customers came into the store to buy accessories or supplies, Mark asked for their thoughts about getting involved with a woodturning club if one were formed at the store; the response was immediate and overwhelmingly favorable.

A few of Fleetwood's most keen clients and friends were contacted and an executive was formed to get the 'club' going. Greg Gage was elected President and Mark Salusbury Vice President with Susan Salusbury, Mark's wife and Fleetwood's Treasurer, voted club Secretary/Treasurer until the club was firmly established. I recall this being in the Spring of 1989.

A few options for a club name were suggested. Then we thought it'd be a good idea to see if any other group had used the names we had come up with; so Mark contacted his company lawyer who suggested we settle on The Woodturners' Guild



**Susan Salusbury**

of Ontario, in case our group grew to represent a provincial body of like-minded woodturners. He conducted a title search for us and registered the name pro bono.

On the evening of our first meeting, Greg went after work to a rental supply firm he dealt with for Novopharm and got about forty chairs and a large coffee percolator, which the firm donated to our cause, put them in the back of his pick-up truck and drove over to Fleetwood Tool Supply where we set them up in our newly created space. Greg continued procuring our seating and coffee urn every meeting, monthly, and for all special 'demo' meetings during the years we met at Fleetwood.

Greg and Mark had worked nights to reconstruct and decorate the guild's new 'home' installing doors and cutting large window openings into the dividing wall to create viewing areas between the 'meeting room' and the showroom. Clear red cedar trim and fresh coat of birch white paint finished it off.

The first equipment we used was all brand new and 'state-of-the-art'; a General 260 lathe (no riser blocks as we hadn't invented them yet) with manual variable speed, an Axminster self-centering four-jaw chuck with standard and 'O'Donnell' jaws and a set of the best Henry Taylor HSS turning tools including the just introduced 'deep fluted long-and-strong bowl gouge' all donated from stock and provided to learn with.

Our first meeting that spring, we had about a dozen or so budding turners out but that number quickly grew over the following months. We met monthly until June then suspended meetings until the fall.

In September of 1989, we started our first full year of meetings beginning with democratic elections. Greg Gage, President and Mark Salusbury, Vice President retained their offices while Susan Salusbury stepped down to be replaced by new members in the positions of Treasurer and Secretary. I believe also, a new position of 'Membership Secretary' may have been created and filled at that time.

The WGO grew by reputation and in numbers quite rapidly to the point that Greg had to bring sixty folding chairs; many evenings our 700-square-foot room was filled to "standing room only" with late arrivals watching the proceedings through the openings we'd cut through the wall from the showroom.

We were able to provide group and individual learning experiences in our 'classroom'. We also provided the magazines, books, tools, accessories, machinery, and supplies that we all needed to continue the learning journey in our home shops.

In the summers of 1989 and '90, Greg and Mark travelled to Arrowmont School in Tennessee and learned new skills from contemporary 'masters' like Ray Key, Del

Stubbs, Mick O'Donnell, Alan Lacer and Bonnie Klein. During the September to June months that the club met, we'd pass on what we'd learned at Arrowmont by doing demos to the members and along with demos that other members also did, we all learned from each other.

Not to diminish the other 'Masters', the two weeks that Greg and I spent as students of Del Stubbs was very special for us all. Del was woodturnings' 'golden boy' internationally; to be lucky enough to spend any time with him was amazing but to get two weeks was almost unheard of.

In many ways the 'father' of contemporary turning', Del was a superb technician, a wonderful turner with incredible control and eye-hand coordination; plus, he was a great and inspiring demonstrator and teacher. He taught most of the turners of the day through workshops and/or through his hugely popular video, the first of many produced by the Taunton Press. What he taught Greg and I became the foundation for all of the turning we did thereafter and for what we inspired in others for many years. Most importantly, Del taught us to think about the cause and effect of all our actions and to feel what was happening in the turning process in the minutest detail. We learned to appreciate the way the fibers of the wood were being severed with the presentation of any given tool and how to use any keen edge to its fullest. Del helped us to understand that woodturning is a full body inter-sensory experience; that delicate control and relaxed understanding would make us better turners. We all benefited from that revelation having already realized that the 'brute force' approach was neither satisfying nor productive.

At every meeting of those beginning days, Larry Lalonde would sell 50/50 draw tickets for donated prizes that woodturners would lust after, including bottles of wine, turning tools, abrasives, blocks of wood and turning blanks, etc. We raised an astounding amount of money for ourselves in this way, with all the proceeds going to the club's coffers to buy tooling, materials, audio visual equipment and to defray the costs of bringing in guest turners to offer us new perspectives and techniques.

In the months that followed and until Mark decided to close Fleetwood's doors in the Summer of 1991, the WGO met monthly, September through June. We hosted a number of 'special' guest turners. Among them were included Francois Lambert, a hollow-form expert from St. Polycarpe, Quebec; Michael Hosaluk, a fine emerging creative turner from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Bonnie Klein, internationally recognized as a premiere 'small object' turner from Renton, Washington, U.S.A.; and Mick O'Donnell, an excellent creative and technical turner from northern Scotland.

Following the closing of Fleetwood Tool Supply, within a couple of years, the WGO also hosted Vic Wood, a wonderful creative production turner and educator from Australia, a close friend of Richard Raffan and friend and former colleague



of Ontario's own superbly talented creative mind, 'designer/maker' Stephen Hogbin. The Vic Wood seminar was so highly anticipated it became a multi-club event which we held in the wood studio of Sheridan College of Applied Arts and Technology in Oakville. We also hosted Richard Raffan who conducted a series of demonstrations, group and private workshops held at the late 'Record Tool' located in Pickering. Record kindly provided the use of their showrooms, lathes, and tooling for events which lasted over several days.

With Fleetwood closing, through the hard work of Michael Bonnycastle, the WGO found a new home at Markham District High School where we continued to meet for several years until forced, through school board politics, to relocate to the current high school venue in Pickering.

### ***Concluding Comments***

From Penny McCahill



Two photos from the early days have been made available by Denis Lalonde, now of both the Kawartha Guild and the WGO.

We believe that the photo on the left was taken in the early 1990s at the Durham Woodworkers' Club on Ulaili Road in Oshawa. In those days, the Oshawa Group belonged to the WGO. From left to right are Denis Lalonde, Jack Rogerson, Murray Gibson

(deceased), Ian Waymark (guest turner from Technitool Canada, Vancouver Island), Emil Baumgartner, Rudi Riss, and David Walker. The photographer was Bruce Jones from Oshawa, whom we are trying to locate.

The photo on the right was probably taken in October, 1990 at the Toronto Wood Show.

From left to right are Larry Lalonde, Derek Jones, Marty Groneng, Jack Bennet , John Hopkins, Betty Scarpino, Bill Usher, Dave Moores, Roly Anderson , Emil Baumgartner, and Michael Bonnycastle.

As noted above, an expanded account of the founding and development of the WGO will appear at [www.wgo.ca](http://www.wgo.ca) . Many people (including celebrity turner Michael Hosaluk) have already made contributions that have been helpful or interesting in putting this story together, and those folks will be identified on the website alongside their insightful remarks, fond memories, or descriptive contributions. We will also provide access to the earliest official membership list on record so that you will have a chance to stroll down memory lane and connect with turners from days gone by. *How might you participate in this storytelling adventure?* Think about it and let me know, please!



## Recent Goings-on in the WGO

### ***Rudi Schafron's Turning Party a Blast!***

From Party Participants

Bob Spahn: If sharp tools are the keys to successful turning, Rudi has the jigs and techniques to make this mysterious chore a simple process for the novice or for those who think they have mastered this important skill. All who attended had a great day and certainly learned a lot from Rudi's unpretentious practical experience and demonstrations. A special thanks to Rudi's wife, Hanna, who made the day even better with her supporting ways and sumptuous food.

Gerald Armstrong: Hats off to Rudi and Hanna who opened their home and Rudi's shop to four students keen to learn bowl turning. And learn we did! Rudi's technical expertise and patience make him a fine teacher. He spent instructional time with us in groups and individually. I wanted to learn more about sharpening and thanks to Rudi, the next time I make sparks, I'll end up with a sharp turning tool. Thanks to Rudi and the club for providing such a terrific opportunity.

Bruce Good: Rudi reshaped my bowl gouge to make it less aggressive. He gave me tips on bowl turning including instruction on draw *cutting* as opposed to scraping. He also gave me my first lesson in power sanding. To me, the most

important thing he did was to create a sense of camaraderie so that I gained courage in our shared art.

Penny McCahill: The focus was intended to be on bowls but thanks to Rudi's flexibility and ability to cater to individual needs, we did bowls and spindles and sharpening! Rudi started out by saying to his very varied clientele, "I don't know what to teach you; so tell me what you want to learn!" We did and it was great!



Thanks to Bob Spahn for the photos!

### ***Follow-up to Bob Rollings' 2006-2007 Turning Parties***

From Penny McCahill

This is an invitation to the ten turners who attended one of Bob Rolling's two Turning Parties during the past year: Your participation is now strongly encouraged in the Fall of 2007 when we will meet in my shop for a hands-on collective review of what we learned from Bob and what we have achieved because of his step-by-step meticulous demonstrations and coaching. Hopefully, with the ongoing practice that Bob inspired, in conjunction with collaboration amongst us as learners this coming fall (now don't be shy! ☺), we will bring a satisfying conclusion to what were very challenging and 'heady' Turning Parties. The date for this Fall 2007 TP will be announced at the September meeting; so, in the meantime, practise your segmenting techniques! Be prepared to bring samples of your efforts to our session in early November.

### ***"THANK YOU, Turning Party Hosts!***

From the W. G. O.

Another 'turning year' has nearly come to an end and it is time to thank the nine generous Official Turning Party Hosts for hosting a total of forty-two turners at eleven TPs over the past year. Thanks for helping to promote growth and camaraderie within the WGO! Hosts include Bob Rollings, Vince Lebert, Penny McCahill, Dave Simmons, Victor Dewaepenacre, Keith Reynolds, Rudi Schafron, Michael Finkelstein, and Dave Moores.



We already have five members committed to hosting a Turning Party during the coming year, so get ready! It's agreed that Turning Parties are both fun and worthwhile and so, if you have an inclination to serve as a Host, or if you would like to attend a TP with a specific focus, let us know! We will strive to support your learning curves!

### ***The 2007 Annual Salon***

From Penny McCahill

The WGO depends completely upon the good will of its members. Volunteers who step forward to organize major events, such as the first Annual Salon, are critical to the WGO's success. Jack Wallace and Peter Kaiser were this year's organizers. They had terrific support from the Executive Committee and greatly appreciated John Buccioni's (Woodchuckers') generosity. Special thanks go to Jack Wallace for turning and donating the Experienced and Novice 'Best in Show' trophies to the WGO. Enjoy these photos of a memorable evening!



**Some of the members of the audience at the Annual Salon.**



**The stage set-up at the Annual Salon: On the right, the three judges examine a bowl entry. Specially positioned cameras and equipment allowed the audience to see the details of each turning as it was being judged and to learn the judges' scores.**



**Some of the entries at the Salon. On left, the 'Experienced Best in Show' trophy is on display.**



**The three judges examine a large segmented bowl entry. This bowl by Bob Rollings eventually won the 'Experienced Best of Show' award.**



**Additional entries in the competition.**