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As The Burl Turns

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Central Oklahoma Woodturners Association

Proud to be a chapter of The American Association Of Woodturners

Know Your Turner

By Virgil Young



Larry Slief, an extraordinary Top Turner started his long and illustrious turning career while living in Pittsburgh, PA in 1946 with a homemade lathe. He took a 1750 rpm motor, attached a Jacobs chuck to the motor shaft, made a tail stock with a bolt using two jam nuts for adjusting and started turning. He said he made a lot more chips than turnings, but he was having fun.

His family tried to make a farmer out of him as he was growing up. His dad had passed away at an early age and his mother and uncle was trying to make a go of it. Larry said that he had plowed all day one time with a four-bottom plow pulled by a John Deere tractor. After stopping about sundown, he looked around at what he had accomplished for the day. It didn't look like much to him, and he decided that farming was not for him.

So, he applied to and was accepted at Kansas State University. He majored in Electrical Engineering and while there he got some lessons in life. He lived in private homes for cheap rent, worked at the collage cafeteria so he could get his meals, and once a week mailed a package home to his mother - his laundry. She would do it up for him and mail it back.

In order to get money he joined the Army ROTC, which paid \$27.00 a month and furnished uniforms. Larry said that the girls liked those spiffy uniforms. At graduation he was commissioned 2nd Lt and was assigned to a battery of artillery searchlights. He served just under five years in active service, was discharged, transferred to active reserve and finally retired after 21 years as a Lt Col. Not bad for a Kansas farm boy!

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Know Your Turner *continued from page 1*

In 1944 Larry married his beloved Ruby and for 57 years they shared each other's lives. Not blessed with children, they still had each other.

He finally got a real lathe. He bought a Shop Smith in 1954. He said he got it mostly for the 9-inch table saw. However, he got in some turning time also. This was about the time he started turning tops. He was standing in front of the lathe with a small block of wood in his hands wondering what he was going to do with it. The image of a top came to mind, and as they say, the rest is history. He had trouble coming up with a proper tip. Turning a wooden one didn't last and nails put a hole in the linoleum floor. Ruby didn't like that in the least. He wound up using a 1/4" steel rod with the end filed into a ball shape. He had so much fun making tops, it developed into his specialty.

He now has a 1940 vintage Delta that has a good story behind it. Ask him about it. It turns tops, also. Larry is one of those good solid persons. He retired from OG&E after 31 years, bought a home in 1973 that he still lives in, is a charter member of COWA, is always working and doing for the turners club. He has a lot of knowledge and talent he is always ready to share. You should take the time to just sit down and talk to a real piece of history. It's fun!

Club Picnic Photo Highlights... thanks to Virgil Young



Welcome To New Members

- Ken Esslinger from OKC
- Dean Brown from Mustang
- Marion McDaniel from Dallas
- Richard Nowlin from Edmond

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, July 8th - Club Meeting

Lidded Box Club Challenge

Use your imagination to turn a lidded box of any size or shape. As a reminder, don't forget that we meet at 6:30pm at our new location:

Metro Technology Center

4901 S. Bryant

Oklahoma City

(405) 392-2648

Friday & Saturday, July 11-12th Club Demo

Midsummer Nights' Fair Norman

We will be demonstrating at the Lion's Park from 6pm to 11pm. 400 Block S Flood Street, Norman

Tuesday, September 9th - Club Meeting

Instant Gallery and Bring Back

Tuesday, October 14th - Club Meeting

Thin Wall Piercing Demonstration

Mike Blackard will demonstrate his talents and the fine art of thin wall piercings.

November 7th to 9th - Beavers Bend Folk

Festival

We will be demonstrating at the Forest Heritage Center Beavers Bend State Park

Tuesday, November 11th - Club Meeting

Turning a Southwest Pot Demonstration

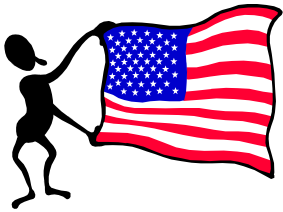
Wayne Furr will demonstrate how to turn a southwest pot with three natural edge openings

Tuesday December 9th - Club Meeting

Instant Gallery and Bring Back

Friday, December 12th - Club Christmas Party

Spencer Senior Center



Presidents Message

AAW Grant for AV Equipment

We applied for a grant from the AAW to upgrade our Audio Visual Equipment and we received \$1,300 from them. Dale Jones has purchased the needed equipment using additional funds from the club's treasury as approved by the Board.

New Jet Lathe

The Club is now the proud owner of a new full size Jet 16-42 Lathe with electronic speed control. The kind folks at Metro Technology Center will allow us to store the lathe in a room next to our meeting room.

Beavers Bend Masters at Work Event

Bill Johnson has been selected to represent our club at this Beavers Bend Folk Festival Event. Each of the five clubs from SWAT will be competing for the \$1000 first prize and we certainly expect Bill to come home with a smile (hint). Also, each of the five clubs may send 10-15 pieces from their club to be displayed for the

public to vote on and a \$100 prize will be awarded to the winner. If you intend to sell the pieces be sure to include the price with it. Joe Millsap not only won the prize one year but also sold a piece for a handsome sum. We also intend to continue the Joe Millsap tradition of the Weenie Roast, a very popular and fun event at the fair for many years. If you haven't signed up to participate in this yearly event you are missing out on a lot of fun with great folks out there. We hope that you will sign up to be there this year.

Joe Millsap Tools

Norma Millsap is in the process of getting ready to sell all of Joe's turning tools and equipment. She plans on selling the larger pieces of equipment first then the smaller items after that. As soon as we have more details about it we will pass it on to our members.

Jim
