

Echos From the “BAT” Cave

Baltimore Area Turners

BALTIMORE AREA



TURNERS

April, 2013

Volume 8, Number 4

HOME, SWEET HOME



No foolin'. April saw BAT's inaugural meeting at its new home, the Boumi Shriners temple (*above*). After President Yaakov Bar Am welcomed the packed house (*below*), we were treated to excellent presentations on two different techniques for surface embellishment: Chemical Treatment of Wood by Jim Oliver and Chip Carving by Clark Bixler.

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Cherry blossoms frame the main entrance.

BOUMI TEMPLE

Thanks to BAT Veep, Bob Pegram, for arranging a permanent home for our club. Bob has been an active Shriner for years. The [Shriners](#) are a fraternal organization which provides state-of-the-art care for children with burns and orthopedic conditions in 22 hospitals in North America.

Our meeting space is a large room on the first floor and has enough storage space for our equipment. Enter through the back door - our room is the last one on the right. There is ample parking behind the building and more in front.



Spring flowers were blooming all over.



We use the tradesman's entrance in the rear.



Jim shows a bowl . . .



. . . and a platter treated with Copper Sulfate

CHEMICAL TREATMENT

BAT remained absorbed in retired chemist, Jim Oliver's presentation on chemical treatments of wood. The techniques he described were common practice before the easy availability of aniline dyes and can still be used. He had many examples of bowls which had been treated with his techniques.

Bleaching - he recommends 2-part bleach made of 30% H_2O_2 and Sodium Hydroxide. This will not last long after mixing and can bleach skin. It can be difficult to obtain. Deck Bleach (Potassium Percarbonate) can give the same results with two applications. Brush it on and let it dry overnight. After the last application, neutralize with white vinegar. Household bleach (Sodium hypochlorite) doesn't work.

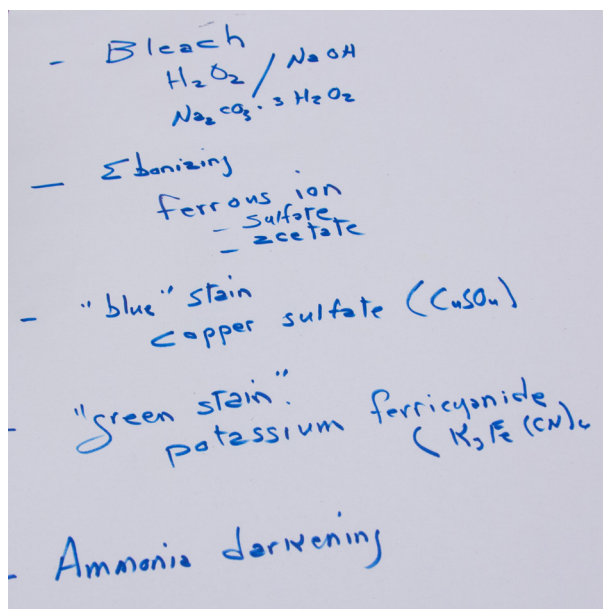
Ebonizing- applying Ferrous ion to wood to darken it. Use Ferrous sulfate or Ferrous acetate (which can be made by immersing steel wool in vinegar). Be sure to isolate your other work from the solution - the stain is hard to get out.

Yaakov suggested adding India Ink to black dye to achieve the True Black he likes inside his hollow forms.

Copper Sulfate - a blue crystal which turns most wood green. Solubility in water can be enhanced by adding ammonia. He had examples of Ash, Birch and Bradford Pear.

Potassium ferricyanide - an orange crystal which turns wood yellow. After exposure to sunlight, the yellow turns to emerald green or blue.

Ammonia staining - start with Janitorial Ammonia (10% Ammonium hydroxide). Suspend the piece above a puddle of the ammonia in a sealed container. White Oak darkens dramatically, Osage Orange will darken to brown in days. Jim said he uses a wire frame to suspend his pieces in the container. This was a fabulous demo with lots of beautiful examples of the techniques. Thanks, Jim!



Jim's presentation outline.

TIPS AND TRICKS

TIP - whenever coloring wood with chemicals or dye, always test the wood first - different woods react differently. Also, be sure to label all chemicals.

Jim Oliver



Clark shows an elegant chip carved platter (*left*) and carved gourd in a marking device (*right*).

CHIP CARVING

Clark Bixler introduced BAT to the theory and practice of chip carving. When he started carving in 2007, he did chip carving because it only required a knife, an apron and a protective glove.

Chip carving is based on tessellation - tiling shapes to cover a surface. It is used to enhance simple shapes made from plain woods. Advanced chip carving is done on curved surfaces, such as most turned pieces.

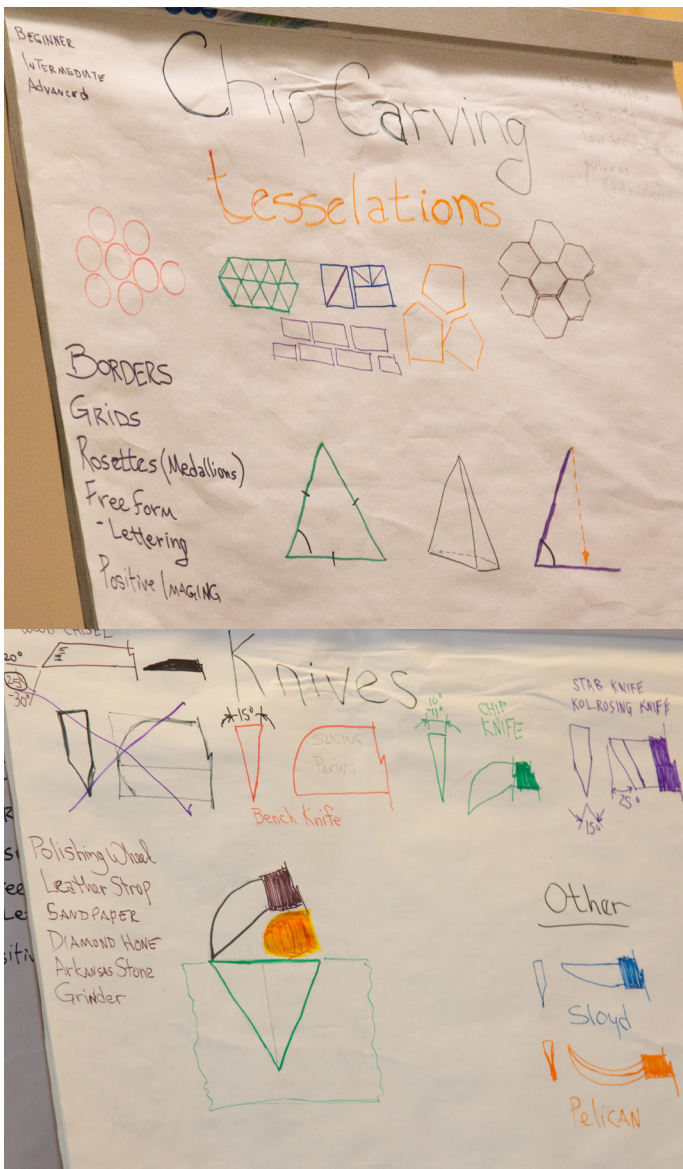
Layout - he uses drafting tools to layout patterns. There are many books of chip carving patterns. Clark covered borders, grids (which fill areas), rosettes, and positive imaging. All are composed of triangles carved by the chip carving knife. Paper patterns can be glued to wood and carved through. The grain is usually oriented vertically.

He showed many examples of carved patterns, some of which had been stained or painted. He showed a carved gourd which had been stained with leather dye and fixed with hair spray.

Some pieces had been sanded and coated with Deft Lacquer. The pattern was then chip carved out and the holes stained with contrasting stain. The end grain picks up the stain well.

He discussed different types of **carving knives**. He uses only a standard dropped point chip carving

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Clark's teaching aids



(clockwise from left) Ammonia staining; Copper Sulfate and effects on different woods; Potassium Ferricyanide - stains yellow at first, then ages to blue.

CHIPS

(Continued from Page 4)

knife which has been well-honed with a strop and compound. Sharpening usually consists only of honing.

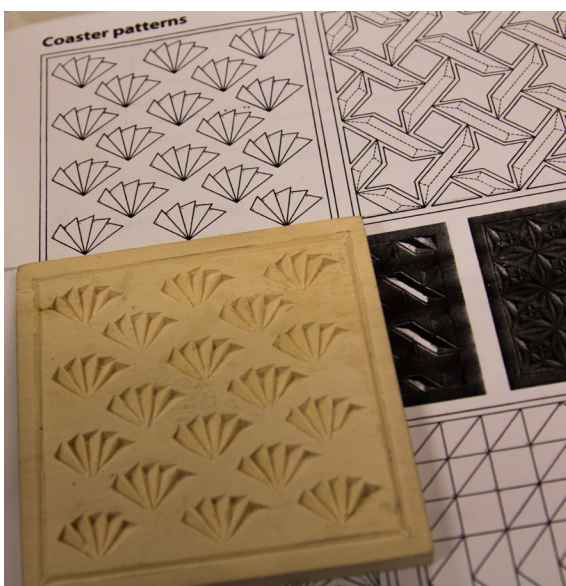
He also showed **Kol Rosing**, where sealed wood is incised, then the cracks filled with a contrasting pigment.

This was a thorough and well-organized presentation.

Thanks, Clark!

Zoom in on these photos to see the exquisite detail.

(clockwise from right) Examples of chip carving: Clock face, gourd, candlestick, panel with page from pattern book





RAFFLE NEWS

Chesnut and Red Maple crotches, Locust and Chesnut splits, Persimmon, Pecan, and Elm rounds, Treewood and Yew logs, Micarta Discs, Ambrosia and Cherry Spindle blanks, and PSI bottle stoppers were donated by BAT members to the April raffle. Thanks to all!

BALTIMORE AREA TURNERS

Baltimore Area Turners meets every month on the second Wednesday of the month. The next meeting will be held at the Boumi Temple at

5050 King Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21237-3325

Next meeting:
May 8, 2013 at 7:00 PM

Agenda: Show and Tell (President's Challenge)



KUDOS

Congratulations to Don Keefer. His work has been selected by the AAW for inclusion in its "[Currents](#)" juried exhibit at the 2013 Symposium. He's in elite company - only 25 of 130 submitted pieces were chosen.

Congratulations also to Keith Holt who was one of 13 nationally known turners also invited to participate in "Currents."

SUSAN SHANE MEMORIAL IRONMAN COMPETITION

Don't forget - you can catch up by submitting prior month's challenges at later meetings.

To participate in the Susan Shane Memorial Ironman Competition all you need to do is participate in the President's Challenge. Each participation awards one point. There will be multiple President's Challenges throughout the year. The person who accrues the most points at the end of the year will be rewarded. In case of a tie, all winners will be rewarded. We hope that folks will put forth their best effort into each challenge and we look forward to seeing the results.

(The term 'Ironman' is not intended to imply that participation has anything to do with gender. As Susan would have said, "Women can be Ironmen, too.")

PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE

BAT President Yaakov Bar Am has announced this year's second President's Challenge:

May - Turn a box using 3 different woods either laminated or segmented.