



CHRISTMAS TREES AND GNOMES (AAGE RENDALEN)

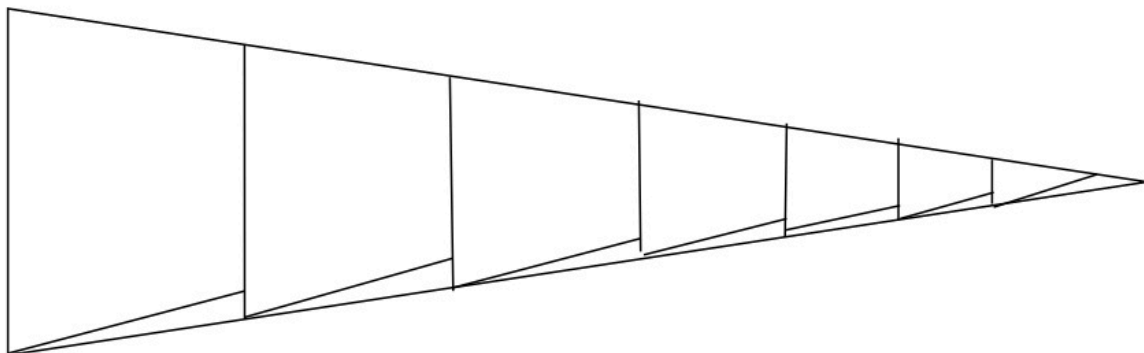


Aage showed how you can easily make a turned miniature Christmas tree and a gnome. To turn a Christmas tree, you can use any wood you want. He prefers cedar, which provides a lot of natural color and some bark at the bottom, features that people (read: women) like. Cedar does not require any paint. It can be left natural or you can add a finish for a deeper color.

You start by turning a cone. Then you mark off the stylized branch sections. You are supposed to have an uneven number of them for design purposes, but as long as the end result is acceptable, don't worry about that. Preferably, the top two-three branch sections should be shorter in height than the lower ones to create an illusion of a receding top.

Once you have marked off your branch sections (with a pencil or a chisel), turn a taper from the bottom rung to the first branch division. Then repeat until finished. You can use whatever chisel you are comfortable with. A skew works great, as does a very forgiving and easy to use home-made tool with three sides (see picture below).

Here is a simple illustration of the turning process.



This is what the home-made 3-face tool looks like, together with its sharpening jig (essentially, a hex nut with set screws).

This simple home-made tool is perfect for making Christmas trees, if you are uncomfortable using the skew.



Aage then went ahead with his gnome demo. In his words: "I prefer using cedar and hemlock for gnomes because they don't shed their bark with age. To make a gnome, center the blank at the bottom and off-center it on top. That way you enhance the illusion that the gnome is wearing a bark coat, since the off-centered head results in more wood being removed from the front than the back/neck area. See picture below.



You will notice that I leave a segment above the hat. That is so that the blank will not tip when I carve its face. For those of you reluctant to get into carving, you can simply punch in a "face" by means of a curved chisel, as in the examples below (incidentally, the two gnomes my wife got in 2003 and which she wanted me to copy. That is how I got into turning. As you can see, their faces are very simple.)



The gnomes were turned by a Norwegian farmer. The Christmas tree I turned years ago. As you can see, the bottom rung should have been wider and slightly taller.



Here are some of my gnomes awaiting final touch-up carving and sanding.”

A gnome carving tutorial



To secure the gnome, I use a piece of MDF with a block of wood nailed into it. Using a quick-release clamp I can hold it safely and release it quickly to move it from side to side. It's important to use both hands when using chisels to make sure you don't cut yourself.



When they come off the lathe, they look like this. I leave a circle of wood on top of the hats in order to keep them from tipping when secured in the clamp. It also allows me to care hats with a folded over tip.



First I draw a mid-line along the nose down to the breast. Then I mark off the side areas that need to be chiseled off. I also draw a nose and the eye brows. I'll be putting a chisel on the brow lines and tap it with the mallet. This creates a stop cut so that when you start cutting from the nose towards the brow, you won't cut off the brows accidentally.



Here the cheeks have been cut away and the chisel is lined up at 45 degrees along the brow line. It's possible to do all this with a sharp whittling knife, but it's safer to use chisels because both your hands are out of harms way.

Gnome tutorial p. 2



The brow line has been chisled at 45 degrees. A U-shaped chisel is used to cut a groove below the nose. You don't need a special chisel for this, but it makes it easier.



The nose has been cut free at the bottom and the round chisel is used again to cut along the outside of the nose towards the eye sockets. I use a flatter chisel to widen the eye socket, but a sharp knife will do.

Next I cut away more of the cheeks to liberate the cheek bones. I push the release button on my clamp and turn the gnome sideways and fasten it again. It takes two seconds.



Here the gnome is on his side, as mentioned above. At times I'll do this with my knife while holding the gnome in my left hand (in a leather glove), but it's always safer to secure the gnome and use a chisel.

At this point, it is a bit rough, but that will be taken care of a later point.

Gnome tutorial p. 3



I now use a flat chisel to even out the area below the gnome's nose and use a curved chisel to pound in the profile of his mouth. This can also be done with a carving knife. Under any circumstance I use a carving knife to widen the mouth. There are many ways of carving a mouth; I use a fairly simple method.



I now draw the beard's outline. You can make it wider if you like. Then I use my U-shaped chisel to create a groove along the beard's edge.

Later I'll carve away most of the wood outside the beard.



Here you can see the groove line marking the outline of the beard. I use my U-chisel to carve the beard. The one thing to remember with the beard is never to carve straight lines. Lines need to curve and intersect.

You can also see that I've removed some wood outside the beard line.

Tutorial p. 4



Here I'm using a chisel to knock off the excess wood from the top of the hat. I'll turn the curved chisel upside down so that it cuts downwards and inwards, once I've knocked off the circle. You can also do this with a carving knife. I use the knife in the middle a lot. It's a Swedish Mora knife with a short blade. For carving you want short blades.



After roughly shaping the hat tip with a chisel, I use a knife to finish it off.

Whenever I use my knife, I grab the gnome in my left hand, now covered in a leather glove, and put my left thumb on the back of the blade, in place of a mallet. Whittlers have always done this to maintain control of the knife, keeping it from slipping.



To save time, I use a drill to do the eyes. At times, I'll carve them, but when you're working in soft wood, such as this (hemlock), details are hard to carve because the wood will crumble so easily when you try it. Wood carvers preferably work in bass wood, which is considered the best for carving details.

Some concluding remarks

1. If your knife slips when you have a leather glove on your left hand, you may get a nick, but normally you won't hurt yourself seriously.
2. Use a mallet with chisels. It helps you keep extremely good control of your cuts, so that they don't go too far.
3. I'm no expert at this. I've taught myself. In the beginning I thought my gnomes were okay, but after doing a hundred of them this fall, my latest ones are definitely better than the early ones. You learn as you go. If you ruin a piece, it's only wood.
4. You can use any wood you get hold of, but it seems like the bark stays on softwoods better

S h o w a n d T e l l



Ray Deyo
Autumn Bowl



Ray Melton
Spalted Maple Natural Edge



Chuck Mosser
Maple Burl & Glass



Dick Hines

S h o w a n d T e l l



Dick Hines



Bill Jenkins
English Walnut Top with Walnut Legs



Bob Silkensen
Open Segment



Cecil Barrett
Humming Tops

S h o w a n d T e l l



Terry Moore
Maple, Purpleheart, Spalted Birch



Rick Crook



Mac Derry
Maple & Walnut



Jim Bumpas
Cocobolo Turned and Carved

S h o w a n d T e l l



Andy Hammer



Jim Zorn

E d i t o r s P i c k



Dick Hines

From Our President

Suffice it to say, I am looking forward to our December meeting with the annual “Show and Tell” of members’ best turnings of the year, a seasonally sensitive Challenge and the camaraderie as we celebrate the holiday together. In preparation for the gathering, let’s take a minute to reflect on 2015. But to do this, it will be important to decipher the meaning of 141, 9 (X2), 3, 2, 1 and 1330.

A major activity each month is “Show-and-Tell”. This is where many of us derive the incentive to try something different, add a new technique or produce a different shape. It’s also an opportunity to receive constructive input and proudly display what we have accomplished. Forty-two of our members brought 141 pieces to “Show-and-Tell” this year!

Where would we be without our demonstrators, those individuals we collectively learn from. Whether it flows smoothly or not, the knowledge gained throughout a demonstration is invaluable. Some of the best demos have complications which show us what can go wrong (a typically hidden ingredient). We watched 9 of our members in the front of the room in 2015.

It’s unfortunate we only have one annual opportunity to help young people learn how to turn bowls at the Department of Forestry camp. It can be a long day and quite hot sometimes, but the personal reward is worth it. Adding another choice to what a young person can do is an investment on our part. We sent 9 members to the camp this year.

Similar to so many others, I need to be challenged occasionally to show myself what I can do. Apparently you agree because of the turnings entered in 3 of our four Challenges (egg, miniature and jewelry). Hopefully this month’s Challenge (ornaments) will be the best one of all.

Sometimes a specific meeting demonstration needs to be replaced with hands-on experience. Just watching a variety of techniques or listening to the dialog among a group of fellow turners can be more valuable than a planned demonstration. Not included in the number of demonstrators mentioned above, many of you participated in our 2 workshops.

And what an opportunity we may have from the 1 guest speaker this year. It was a unanimous hands up when Dawn Flores asked for volunteers for her art project.

Finally, and everyone should know this one, we sent tops to 1,330 smiling children around the world this year. That’s a bragging right!

Candidly, I’m only the messenger this month as this letter is not from the President. Actually, it’s from you to you (or is it “y’all” to “y’all”?). This is what you did. Congratulations and I wish each of you a joyous and safe holiday as well as a most successful New Year.

RAY

Christmas Party

December 17th

Club will provide Ham, Turkey, Dinner Rolls, cups, plates, utensils, and condements.

Club Members will contribute : using last names,

A-G Appetizers or Side Dish

H-Q Drinks

R-Z Desserts

All members feel free to share your favorite [Christmas](#) Dessert!

The Horton's will provide Hot Cider

Come and have a good time together. Bring your best friend and a new club member.

There will be 3 Tables set up for:

- A. [Christmas](#) Ornament Challenge table
- B. Your Best Turning this year.
- C. Gift exchange drawing get which is optional.

December Challenge
(Ornament)



Here we are packing shoeboxes. It takes a whole lot of help to pack 2,160 shoeboxes. Again, thanks to all who contributed tops.

December meeting

12/17/2015

January meeting

1/21/2016

February meeting

2/18/2016

March meeting

3/17/2016

April meeting

4/21/2016

May meeting

5/19/2016

June meeting

6/16/2016

July meeting

7/21/2016

August meeting

8/18/2016

September meeting

9/15/2016

October meeting

10/20/2016

November meeting

11/17/2016

Financial Report

Balance 6,742.32

**RICHMOND
WOODTURNERS
QUARTERLY
CHALLENGE**

The Challenge will now be regularly scheduled for the third month of each quarter (March, June, September, and December) with the subject announced at the beginning of each quarter and included in the newsletter. Entries will be placed on a table separate from the Show-n-Tell. Members attending the meeting that evening will select the Challenge winner by popular vote. Voting will be accomplished by placing a token (provided on the table) in the cup (also provided) for the entry of your choice. The winner will have the opportunity to speak about the piece, how it was made, type of wood, any special processes or finishes used, etc. It's a change to have a little fun and get everyone involved one way or another.

***Remember December's challenge is to turn an ornament**

**December Christmas Party
December 17th**

Club will provide Ham, Turkey, Dinner Rolls, cups, plates, utensils, and condiments.

Club Members will contribute : using last names,

- A-G Appetizers or Side Dish
- H-Q Drinks
- R-Z Desserts

January Snacks & Drinks

- (Bill Jenkins) Ice 10 lb bag with cooler
- (Bill King) Two 2-Liter Diet drinks
- (Bill Walters) Two 2-liter Regular drinks
- (Bob Hudson) Two 2-liter non Caffeine drinks
- (Bob Silkensen) Sweet Snacks (Cookies, etc)
- (Bob Tingle) Sweet Snacks (Cookies, etc)
- (Bonnie Cross) Sweet Snacks (Cookies, etc)
- (Brian Witt) Salty Snacks (P-Nuts, etc)
- (Bruce Robbins) Salty Snacks (P-Nuts, etc)
- (Cecil Barrett) Salty Snacks (P-Nuts, etc)

*You can switch with someone if you are unable to bring those items for the month assigned.

2015 Elected Board

President:	<u>Ray Deyo</u>
1st Vice President:	<u>Aage Rendalen</u>
2nd Vice President:	<u>Joanne Fisher</u>
Treasurer:	<u>Jim Bumpas</u>
Secretary	<u>Phil Duffy</u>
Newsletter	<u>Ray Melton</u>
Resource Manger:	<u>Jerry Fisher</u>
Membership Manager:	<u>Danny Luttrell</u>
Information Manager:	<u>Stan VanDruff</u>
Past President Board Members:	
Dick Hines	
Lee Scarbrough	
Mike Lane	
Jim Bumpas	
Dan Luttrell	
David Sterling	
Gerry Cambell	

Show and Tell

I hope you are enjoying the new format for the show and tell. When filling out your "ticket" please include your name, type of wood, and any description you would like. Also if you have small items such as ornaments or pens, feel free to bring a stand with you so that they will photograph better.

For sale or trade

If you have any items to list here, please email me at forsale@richmondwoodturners.org.

You can include pictures if you like. They will run 1 month unless notified to "re-run".

Committee Chairpersons

Barbara Dill (That committee is responsible for the camera changes in process.)	Chairperson of the AV committee.
Position Open	Chairperson for the Turning Competition committee

Visitors/New Members

1st Time Visitors

New Members

Terry Moore

Bill Talbot

Gary Peterson

Gordon Kendrick

Royal Wood and Georgia Wood

Dawn Flores

Upcoming Demonstrations

December, Christmas Party

January, Surface treatment, from burning to carving (Barbara Dill, Bob Silkensen, Matt Baker)

February, Workshop (hands on training) for balls/spheres. Which incidentally will be the first challenge for 2016. More info next month.

**RICHMOND
WOODTURNERS
INFO**

Dues: \$25 individual, \$35 family & \$15 student. Member applications are available upon request at meetings or via email.

Library: Contact the club librarian to borrow tapes and other publications related to woodturning. The list is on the website. Lose it and you bought it.

Website:

www.richmondwoodturners.org

Updated regularly and contains links to other VA clubs.

AAW Membership: Dues are \$53/year for printed, \$43/year for email. For this, you receive 6 issues of "The American Woodturner" a great resource directory (over 450 pages), a huge annual symposium, personal grant opportunities, third party liability protection, and much more. If you are the least bit serious about woodturning, you can't afford to miss out on all this.

**OPERATION
CHRISTMAS CHILD
SPINNING TOPS**

Thanks to all who turned tops. For 2015 we turned in 1,330 Lets get started for next years total.

Here is a link to a video to show just how easy they are to make if interested....

<http://youtu.be/UWpV9dBpbME>