

**MARCH 2018 DEMONSTRATION
RIPPLE FINNED HOLLOW FORMS WITH ED SIEGEL**

On Tuesday, March 13th, members and guests of the Central New York Woodturners gathered at the Camillus Middle School for their monthly meeting. Master turner, and part-time comedian, **Ed Siegel** informed and entertained as he described a new technique called the *Rippled Finned Hollow Form*. Ed learned about it on the AAW forum and gave it a try. His early experiments were about 50% successful with drying related failures in some due to the fins not rippling as they dried or the piece splitting as it dried. Ed discovered that ash wood dried with relatively few cracks while maple and birch were good for rippled effect and minimal cracking. Unfortunately, Ed reported that his use of black cherry was largely unsuccessful.



Ed spiced up the demonstration while turning a Grecian urn with such one-liners as: What’s a Grecian urn? Answer: About minimum wage. His longer jokes featured such stories as his job interview success in New York City [ask Ed to explain].

This turning technique requires a piece of green wood with the pith approximately centered in the piece—preferably a branch or stem. The piece can be of any size as long



as you can hollow it out. Ed used white ash about 4-5” in diameter and 10-

12” in length. The piece was mounted between centers on the pith and turned round using a roughing gouge. All the bark was removed and the piece rounded into a cylinder. A tenon was added to one end.

The piece was then put in a chuck using the tenon and slowly rotated while bringing up the tailstock to get the piece well centered. The end of the piece in the tail stock was squared up and trimmed. Then the piece was shaped into a Grecian urn vase shape using a spindle gouge (a roughing gouge or bowl gouge could be used). A waste block area was left on the chuck end of the piece and the bottom of the vase defined for later



cut off. The overall design idea was to create a central area of the cylinder with a fairly regular cylinder or a gradual change in diameter to feature the ribs later in the turning process.

After the piece was well shaped, including the top opening and rim, the tail stock was removed. The top opening and rim were cleaned up. Then a Jacob’s chuck was used with a Forstner bit and extension to drill out the inside to a diameter just less than the top opening and ½” less than the height of the designed vase. As is ALWAYS the case when drilling, Ed repeatedly pulled out the bit to remove the accumulated chips from drilling. Ed held onto the Jacob’s chuck each time the bit was pulled out to ensure the



Did you know that the AAW has a forum where you can share ideas about woodturning? It’s another benefit of a membership in AAW. Check it out [here](#).

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whole assembly did come loose if the drill bit jammed and the Jacob's chuck Morse taper pulled out of the tail stock quill.

The top opening was cleaned up and made a diameter that presented well. The entire rim and exterior of the piece should be sanded at this time. Ed did limited sanding to avoid dust accumulation in the room. The area where the fins

were to be cut was marked off leaving a defined top and bottom area without fins.

Ed cut the fins with a parting tool so that the wood left

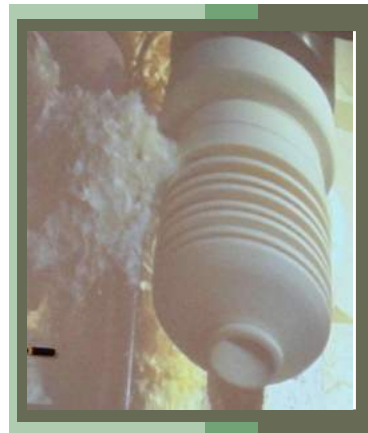
was perpendicular to the central axis of the piece and of uniform depth. The width of the wood fin was about 1/8" to 3/16" wide



and of uniform thickness. The slot was the width of the parting tool that was kept very sharp from repeated use of the grinder or a hand held diamond hone. Ed kept the speed up around 1,500 rpm's to get a clean cut.

When all the parting cuts were a uniform depth and all cuts

complete, the speed was turned down to 250-300 rpm's to facilitate sanding. Some pieces will have more fuzzy grain on the parting cuts than others that needs to be removed at this stage. Ed sanded the outside shape of the vase and the slots with the full series of grits from 120 to 400. The drill hole depth was compared to the outside base of the vase to ensure parting it off would leave about 1/2" of solid wood. The vase was then parted off from the waste block in the chuck with a slight undercut to leave a slightly concave rim on the base and a slight rounding of the outer edge of the base.



The wet and sanded piece then must be dried as slowly and carefully as possible to prevent cracking and to foster rippling in the fins. The fins can be wrapped in plastic wrap or periodically misted with water to slow their drying time compared to the thicker top and base. Ed experimented with wrapping a wet paper towel around the fins and microwave heating the piece to foster warping in the fin. Ed tried the microwave for 2 minutes on high at first and then 30 second bursts while he observed changes in the fins.

WARNING: be very careful of how hot the piece becomes when handling the microwaved piece. Ed also experimented with putting wedges in the slots after heating in the microwave to encourage rippling in the fins while the piece dried.

Final sanding and the application of the desired finish should not occur until the piece was fully dry. Due to the difficulty of applying finish inside the fin slots, Ed suggested spray on polyurethane or oil.



Submitted by Chad Dawson
Photos by Shelly Duval Kent and Phyllis Radford