November 7, 2019 – Chuck Engstrom – Holding your Work

Along with wood prep and tool usage, learning how to hold wood on the lathe is one of the critical aspects of woodturning. This demo is intended to be a review of variations on the most typical methods of holding a workpiece on the lathe -- the many spur drives, face plates, chucks, and other methods available to us, with hints and tips for safe use of their possibilities. Many of these will be illustrated with close-up slides to make certain features more apparent, and there will be plenty of hands-on practical use variations shown as well.

Our friend Chuck Engstrom was actually paid to learn to turn. In 2000 he went to work for a manufacturer of lighting fixtures, where he was asked on his first day if he wanted to become the turner for the wooden center spindles of their chandeliers, some as much as seven-feet tall. Sure, why not? Many of the chandeliers have painted finishes which cover the catches and scars of the learning curve in his early work. A pair of natural-finish cherry chandeliers for Sidwell Friends School, which had to have flawless surface and matching shapes, was an important milestone a few years later. He still turns most of their chandelier spindles as an outside contractor.

In subsequent years he became the house turner for a supplier of porch posts and columns in Chestertown, MD, as was mentioned in *American Woodturner* by David Fry (Vol. 30, Dec. 2015, p.47). He expanded his repertoire into the usual varieties of turning that most of us try at some point – bowls, boxes, pens, and the like. A former president of the Chesapeake Woodturners, Chuck has been the woodturning instructor at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts in Annapolis for the last eight years. He showed us how to turn a small goblet in March of 2011: https://photos.app.goo.gl/jUGSiNFAJbYEgFmh8

This will be an excellent introduction for beginning turners and a meaningful review and reminder for the rest of us. I expect some surprises. Please plan to join us in November.