Digital Recording

Tape No. TBFP1

Place Recorded <u>Hiseville</u> , KY		rded <u>December 6th, 2010</u>
Informant <u>Tom Blumer</u>	nberg Collector L	uke Fisher
Tape Counter No.	Description of tape contents	
0:00-0:19	Introduction of the interview with Tom Blumenberg	
0:20-1:00	Tom tells me that he's from New Jersey and moved to Hyears ago. He's 50 years old and lives with his wife and tway to Hiseville when his in-laws moved down here.	
1:01-1:25	He tells me he also works at Dart container as his actual and hunt as other hobbies	job and he loves to golf
1:26-2:23	Tom tells me he started making bowls because his wife sthat were turned on a lathe. He got the lathe and went of made mushrooms. He got bored with the mushrooms at making the bowls that he's making now	out with his wife and
2:24-2:41	Tom tells me that he just loves working with wood; he so the age of 14 and even helped tutor wood shop when he	•
2:42-3:13	Tom explains that the art of bowl making isn't lost, but in People don't like a simple bowl people would rather have put up and display. He also says that the tools are getting making it more of an art rather than doing it as a job.	ve a real pretty bowl to
3:14-3:47	He tries to make around 300 but isn't sure as he's only be little over a year. He spends around 2 hours a day during garage, and sometimes all day on the weekends if he isn	g the week in the
3:48-4:27	the first bowl he makes he said turned out pretty well. S and he's actually had some blow up on him. He doesn't sales every bowl he makes. He's kept a few for his wife a he's sold a few of them.	have the first bowl as he

4:28-4:58	He says you need to make sure on segmented bowls you get them glued right. If not the appearance wont look as good and they could blow apart when turning them. Getting them glued together in the beginning is a tedious job.
4:59-5:25	He feels he's much better at making the bowls now that he was. He says he's not as "artful" as he would like to be and points out some people in Louisville that he thinks are really talented.
5:26-5:37	the hardest part of making the bowls is the fact it's tedious as he needs to keep his mind occupied.
5:38-6:14	when starting to make a bowl he has no idea what the bowl will look like other than the colors with segmented bowls. He starts to turn the bowl and it starts to take a shape from there, he has no preconceived ideas about the shape.
6:15-6:58	you can get tools in Louisville, and has acquired some over the years as he's been working with wood for many years. But most of his good tools he has gotten from a store in Louisville. The tools are easy to get but there just isn't as many stores around as you would like.
6:59-7:30	to make woodturnings you need good kiln dried wood. The reason it needs to be kiln dried is so the glue will adhere to the wood. Also if it isn't the would could distort and change the shape of the bowl
7:31-8:06	He cuts the sleeves off his shirt so they don't get caught in the lathe. He also makes sure he wears glasses, and when his wife is out there he makes sure her hairs up because "that would hurt"
8:07-8:57	you could buy wood chunks to make a solid piece bowl, or you could get a dead tree out in the woods. If you get the tree in the woods you need to make sure it gets kiln dried if you don't it will change shapes on you even if the trees been dead for 15 years.
8:58-10:24	Most of the time you just find a piece of wood you like, attach it to a chuck which screws on to the lathe. Start the lathe at a lower speed as the piece of wood is out of balance. Once it's in balance you increase the speed till you get it to the shape you like. Once it's the shape you like you sand it and you put a finish on it. You can lacquer it or put an oil finish on it. Oil finish is for food grades so you can eat right out of the bowl. For the most part once you get it on the lathe you start turning. You need many different tools to turn a wood bowl as some tools won't go inside the bowl as well as others; some are made to take more wood off while others are made to make a smoother finish.

10:25-11:31	a burrell makes the best piece of wood for a bowl. A burrell is like a wart on the side of the tree and the grain inside is distorted. It gives you a great look to a bowl and you just want to look at it. Also sap wood, sap wood is the white on the outside of the wood. Like walnut you can have a dark wood with white and it just attracts the eye.
11:32-12:16	Segmented bowls are the majority of the bowls he makes. You can use different colored woods to where you can have a checkerboard pattern or a stair step pattern. Making different designs and colors is what he loves to make the best.
12:17-12:50	He has the look of the bowl in mind when starting to make the segmented bowl, but doesn't have an idea about the shape, shape comes as he starts turning like the solid bowl
12:51-13:22	Good wood for a segmented bowl is kiln dried wood, and hasn't found a bad wood. He likes to just use woods that contrast in color as he doesn't stain any wood he uses its natural color.
13:23-14:19	To start making the bowl you need a good straight piece of wood. Then you decide how big a ring you want to make and how many rings to a bowl. You can start with a 22 ½ degree angle to cut your pieces you will get 8 pieces to a ring. If you want more you go to a 15 degree angle to cut your pieces and you will get 12 pieces per ring which gives you more pieces and gives you more design. The more pieces the prettier it looks.
14:20-16:18	Once the rings are cut you glue the pieces together making sure there seems all fit right because if they don't it wont look very good. Once done you sand each ring perfectly flat so when you stack and glue them there is no gap in the rings. Once that's done you put a bottom on and attach it to the chuck and put it on the lathe like a solid bowl and start turning. In the beginning sometimes the bowls would blow up and hit the ceiling and his head and that's why he wears glasses. He's gotten better and the tediousness of getting the sections together is what he likes comparing it to golf as it drives you crazy but you keep going back to it
16:19-17:14	Tom tells me that he also makes vases, segmented vases, pens, segmented pens that have strips of wood glued together.
17:15-17:51	The process of making a pen is close to making a bowl you just attach them to the lathe differently. Making a segmented pen you attach them in a straight fashion instead of a circle like a bowl.

17:52-18:15	Toms says they also make cutting boards, different sizes for cheese or bread. But for the most part he likes making bowls. You don't turn a board you just sand it flat and finish the edges.
18:16-18:37	Not many people make custom orders, most people say you're the artist make it and I'll buy it
18:38-19:18	He rarely makes a bowl and wants to keep it, there are some he makes and likes and some he makes and his wife likes. But he likes to sell them as well if he kept them all he would be awfully cluttered in the house. He has kept two plus one on the table she likes.
19:19-20:43	to sell the bowls they go to different craft shows, such as Glendale where they have a craft show. They also go to the farmers market that they go to almost every Saturday. To sell there everything has to be made or handmade. They basically are going somewhere every Saturday from April until the end of December building up inventory in the colder months.
20:44-21:36	to set a price he figures out how much wood is in the bowl and time that he says isn't worth anything. He does it for the love of making bowls so making money isn't the priority. He makes a little bit of money but not much. He's been told by people that he doesn't charge enough and he tells them that he doesn't want to take them home either. Every body is a challenge and he loved making them, that's the satisfaction that he gets out of the bowl not the money.
21:37-22:15	His favorite part is watching people stare at the table full of bowls for an hour not knowing which one to buy. He loves watching people's facial expressions, everybody has to pick the bowl up and touch them.
21:16-23:19	One person he works with looked at him and asked "how do you bend the wood" and he told her that it was a secret. Some people have asked where does he get the work from and his response is "from the garage." Many people haven't seen something like this around here so they just assume it came from somewhere else. People just want to know how do you do it and he says most of the time he tells them "I can't tell you"
23:20-23:57	He said that nobody's made a negative comment on the bowls. People just can't believe how pretty the bowls look and wonder why he doesn't do it full time. He says again that it's a hobby and if it ever becomes a job he will quit.
23:58-24:49	Around Christmas he has many returning customers that people buy for Christmas gifts. He's had people buy them as wedding gifts shipping them to

	Japan, Australia, Texas, Florida, and California. It makes him proud to know that people appreciate his work.
24:50-26:24	He says the mess surprised him, he didn't expect there to be that much. Start the car up the next morning and dust would fly out of the vents. So he added a room with an exhaust fan. Then he added a room for wood storage, and then had to invest in a chainsaw to cut down some trees. Its a lot more work than just buying a lathe.
26:25-27:28	asking if he could go back and change anything he jokes about getting married, but mentions having to rewire a few things because he's wanting to get a bigger lathe. But overall he'd try not to make everything to suit people but just do it because it makes him happy. Somebody wanted five bowls the same and he killed himself trying to do that. Now if somebody asks for a bowl to be the same he says there all original.
27:29-27:53	He still doesn't want it to become a job but says he could do it as a retirement job to have some extra cash to go golfing. He doesn't ever see it becoming a full time job.
27:54-28:39	Man in Louisville at Choice Woods says that Tom should triple his prices. They are trying to get 25-30 dollars an hour for work and Tom does it for enjoyment so he keeps his prices lower.
28:40-29:18	He didn't think there would be that many people liking the bowls, he thought he would sell a few and give some away as gifts. But he enjoys it and so do other people so he will take it.