

## **Adding Decoration to a Bowl by Fred Holder**

I don't turn a lot of bowls each year, perhaps 12 to 15 at the most, and often they are small bowls that are never finished because they were used to test a tool or show a student how to turn a bowl. I seldom apply any decoration to a bowl, but occasionally I do get an urge to try something different. This story is about such an occasion.

Nearly two years ago, I had rough-turned and cored a nice 10 inch maple bowl. I decided to finish it and do some form of decoration on it. The decision was to put a circle of 24 dots of a contrasting wood on the top of the rim of the bowl. So, when I finished turning the bowl, I left the top of the rim wider than I normally would.

This was shortly after I acquired one of Richard Benham's Rim Chucks so I tried using the Rim Chuck to turn the foot of this rough turned bowl to fit my Nova Chuck with large jaws. The bowl was a bit warped on top and somewhat out of round; however, it fit nicely into the Rim Chuck so I could turn the foot to fit my chuck (see the photo) below.

I never trust any of the reverse-chucking devices completely and normally give additional support with my cup-shaped live center as shown in the photo.



**Using a Rim chuck to turn the foot of my rough turned bowl.**

With the foot turned to fit into the chuck, I mounted the bowl in the chuck and final turned the outside and the inside. Incidentally, I used the cup-shaped live center to support the bowl in the Nova Chuck also. This

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allows more aggressive turning without concern of losing the bowl from the chuck.



**Turning the outside of the bowl when mounted in the Nova Chuck.**



**This cup-shaped live center doesn't mar the bowl's surface when used as support for the chuck.**

I used some reddish colored wood that we had in inventory. I don't know its name because it came from a scrapped-out crate. So I just call it "Crate Wood". This board was 3/4" thick. I used a plug cutter to cut enough plugs to fill 24 holes around the rim of the bowl.

I then used a Forstner Drill in the Oneway Drill Wizard to drill the 24 equally spaced holes, the maximum indexing positions on my Nova DVR 3000. Actually, I glued in a plug each time I drilled a hole. The glue used

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was Tite-Bond 2, which is the glue that I use almost exclusively. I've never had a glue joint fail with this glue, which is a good reason to continue its use.



**Drilling the 24 equally-spaced holes with the Oneway Drill Wizard and my 3/8" drive drill motor that had to be purchased to fit the collar of the Drill Wizard.**

Once the glue was dry, I turned away the tops of the plugs, finish-sanded, and applied finish to the inside and outside of the bowl.



**A view of the bowl from the side after sanding and finishing.**

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**A view of the top of the bowl while still mounted on the lathe.**

The bowl was now ready to reverse and turn the foot. I would have normally reversed the bowl onto my vacuum plate made by Vicmarc that I've had for a number of years. However, the Rim Chuck was easier to set up and worked very well. Again, for safety sake, I used tailstock support; something that I do with any reverse turning method, whether it is a jam chuck, a vacuum chuck, a Longworth Chuck, or the Rim Chuck.



**Turning the foot of the bowl. The tailstock was removed for final turning away of the little tenon in the center and for final sanding.**

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**I was pleased with the bowl and so was the person who purchased it.**

If you haven't tried decorating one of your bowls, perhaps it is time that you gave it a try. This was a very simple method, but only one of many ways to enhance the appearance of a fairly plain piece of wood. Give it a try.