

# The Third Annual Penturners Rendezvous

by Kurt Hertzog

The Third Annual Penturners Rendezvous was held this year on June 15th at the Holiday Inn in Provo, Utah. It is held each year in Provo on the Wednesday evening before the start of the Utah Woodturning Symposium. This year's Rendezvous drew well over 100 pen aficionados and outstripped available ballroom space.

Almost every woodturner turns pens at some time during his or her woodturning career. For many, it is an introduction to turning and allows them to make small items that can be completed in a short time at reasonable expense. Penturning offers a learning experience for mastering the turning fundamentals. Because it's viewed as a starting point and many turners pass through it, penturning is usually viewed as a simplistic beginner's craft. While this certainly can be true, there are many penturners who have made penturning a fine art. Exotic materials, hand-crafted components, special finishes, and creative adaptations have taken penmaking to as high a level as any other woodturning endeavor.

## AN IDEA IS BORN

A few years ago, several members of the Yahoo! Penturners Group on the Internet discussed the idea of having a gathering that would allow those who had only been "cyber friends" to meet face to face. The group was founded in November, 1999, and has since grown from a few members to almost 3000. Before the Rendezvous, while the members could always share conversation and

photos of their work via the web, only a handful of the members had ever met each other because membership spans the entire globe. Therefore, it was decided that the group would hold a meeting at one of the major woodturning symposiums because many of the members would probably already be in attendance. The Utah Woodturning Symposium was chosen, and the first Penturners Rendezvous was held in 2003.

The Rendezvous is a gathering for those who enjoy making, using, collecting, and/or designing pens. The Rendezvous enables penturners to meet each other personally, share ideas, trade pens, and meet specialty vendors and authors of penturning books. This year, as in the past, Kip Christensen, Rex Burningham, and Dick Sing attended, answered questions, autographed books, and mingled with the crowd (see **Figs. 1** and **2**). The Rendezvous has always been open to everyone and welcomes anyone with an interest in pens.

## BRIEF HISTORY

The first Rendezvous was held in a hospitality suite. There was a great turnout for the inaugural event with the pen display, one vendor, and a lathe in the corner for attendees to use if they wanted to show something to newly met friends. There was a lot of mingling, and great door prizes were given.

The second year built on the first and attracted more attendees, more vendors, and a few more impromptu



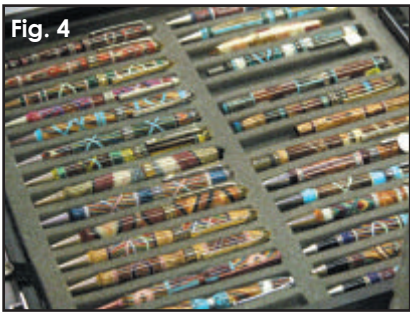
**Rex Burningham, co-author of *Turning Pens and Pencils*, chats with Ken Nelsen.**



**Dick Sing, author of *Pens from the Wood Lathe* and six other turning books, offers advice and answers questions.**



**Some of the over one hundred attendees at the Rendezvous.**



**Fig. 4**  
Tables were available for penmakers to display their work for examination.



**Fig. 5**  
People voted for their favorite pens in several different categories.



**Fig. 6**  
Ken Nelsen of Kallenshaan Woods displayed his laser-cut and laser-engraved offerings.

demonstrations of turning skills related to penturning. There were also more door prize drawings, including a lathe as the grand prize.

This year the event was an even bigger success. With the largest crowd yet, there were vendors, the pen display, ongoing demonstrations, show-and-tell tables, and prizes galore (see **Fig. 3**). Again this year we had a lathe as a prize in the door prize drawing. Even with over 100 attendees, there was virtually no one in attendance who didn't win a prize.

### PENS, PENS, AND MORE PENS

Attendees often bring their pens for display at the event (see **Fig. 4**). These pens are collected and brought to Provo to be displayed both at the Rendezvous and subsequently in the Utah Woodturning Symposium's Instant Gallery. A ballot box is included for attendees at the Rendezvous and the Instant Gallery to submit their votes for their favorites (see **Fig. 5**). Prizes are awarded based on the votes; however, the real purpose of the display is to help show the depth and breadth of penturning to other woodturners.

### NEXT YEAR

While we wind down after the flurry of activity needed to put on this year's event, we are beginning to plan next year's Rendezvous. It will again be held on the Wednesday evening before the start of the Utah

Woodturning Symposium. We hope to see you there!

You can find details on the Yahoo! Penturners Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/penturners/>. Photos and descriptions of this year's and past years' Rendezvous can be found at [www.turtlewoodworks.com](http://www.turtlewoodworks.com). For some additional photographs from the Rendezvous, see **Figs. 6** through **9**.



### Kurt Hertzog

Kurt Hertzog has been a member of the Yahoo! Penturners Group and predecessor groups since he started turning pens over ten years ago. While he turns other items from miniatures to funeral urns, he still enjoys turning pens and watching the state of the art grow. He has been a co-organizer of the Penturners Rendezvous since its inception.

Kurt will be demonstrating at the Totally Turning Symposium in Albany this October and did two rotations on "Extreme Pens" and two rotations on "Improving your Sharpening Skills." You can see more of his work in the member galleries at [www.wnywoodturners.com](http://www.wnywoodturners.com).



**Fig. 7**  
Bill Baumbeck of Arizona Silhouette had a display of his famous stabilized woods and other penmaking supplies.



**Fig. 8**  
Bill Jackman entertained the attendees with some turning demos.



**Fig. 9**  
Wayne Swindlehurst does an Enduro finishing demo.