

Pyrography

Burning on the Round

Notes for woodturners by Lee Nicolle

DO NOT USE WAXES OR FINISHES PRIOR TO BURNING!

DESIGNS:

Look for other rounded items e.g. pottery, so look at china painting, ancient Greek and Celtic designs. Folk Art, Carving and Pyrography books also give ideas.

Let the wood "talk to you" (light, shade, graining) and use it to your advantage e.g. cover a dark flaw or knot with the dark area of your design. Utilize the grain lines for your sky, horizon, clouds or distant mountains. Try to achieve balance and flow.

METHOD:

- 1) Have on hand a piece of scrap wood for testing the heat of your nib.
- 2) Never use blue tracing paper and try to have tracing faint enough for you to see the detail, but is not dominant and hard to burn over.
- 3) Tape design securely (if it moves during tracing you will have an awful mess to sort out). When you start tracing - check after a few lines that it's working. Check you have transferred all of your design before removing your tracing.
- 4) Difficult shapes e.g. eggs - break down pattern and design and then fill in gaps freehand. Use a rubber band to divide egg in halves, (mark with pencil) and then quarters.
- 5) Support your hand to bring it into a comfortable position by using a piece of wood, sand bag or books.
- 6) Always keep your nib clean. If you can feel it dragging it needs cleaning.
- 7) Turn work as you go. A support may be necessary for larger items.
- 8) Finish piece with your choice of varnish (e.g. Cabots Crystal Clear).