



Ozzie holds a bowl he turned.

Staff photo: Laretta Phillips

Gordon Osborne: Woodturner

By Laretta Phillips
Beacon staff

What do you do when planting season is over and the greenhouses don't need so much of your attention? Gordon "Ozzie" Osborne from Hillside Orchard does something most of us don't do.

He picks up a piece of wood and runs his hand over it as though he is seeing what the wood wants. He cuts it to size, using just the right part of the wood. Then he puts it on the lathe and begins the process of turning and turning. The combination of the lathe, the cutting tools, and his skillful eyes and hands brings to life that piece of wood, turning it into something beautiful and useful.



When I arrived, Ozzie had just finished a large salad bowl he was making for a wedding present. After taking time to show me some of the bowls and platters and boxes he had turned for his wife, he took me into his shop, where I was overwhelmed by the abundance of beautiful pieces of wood.

He picked up first one and then another, saying things like, "This one is cypress that a friend brought me from Florida," or "Look at this piece of walnut." He had a piece on the big lathe he was using. One of his lathes he bought from the Steven's Mill when it closed.

I watched as the piece became a

beautiful bowl. I asked him about burl wood and he showed me some that he said had been drying for quite a while – maybe 10 years.

Ozzie has been turning wood for about 50 years. His father's cousin had a wood shop and did some turning and antique repairs. Ozzie liked to watch him and help him, and eventually he decided to try it himself.

He bought his first lathe. Then he bought a book by Peter Child from England titled *The Craftsman Woodturner*. Ozzie said he had the opportunity to meet Child once when Woodcraft Supply brought him over to the United States to demonstrate. Now Ozzie has a number of different lathes and uses them to

varying degrees. Ozzie considers himself a perfectionist, and his wife, Ellen, agrees. When asked how long it takes to turn out a bowl, he says that to turn it out only takes three or four hours, but the sanding and finishing takes much longer than the initial turning.

If perfection is what Ozzie has on his mind, I think he has accomplished that with the many beautiful things he has turned. Both Ellen and Ozzie say they feel lucky to be part of a community that has so many talented people.

Thank you both for spending so much time with me and for giving us so much of your talents and yourselves.

MooseMan Publishes Children's Book

By Heather Makechnie
Beacon staff

Andover resident Rick Libbey, who manages 14 Carrots in New London, has published a 20-page children's paperback: *Ricky and the Moose: The Story of the MooseMan*.

At Amazon.com it says, "The book is the true story about the author, MooseMan Rick Libbey, and his love for nature. Rick's story begins with young Ricky exploring nature at the pond on the family farm. The intent of the book is for the children reading it to have fun, enjoy the photos, but also to learn a few lessons along the way. The MooseMan shoots from a kayak and often 'works' with the same moose year after year. Kids love moose, and Rick's enthusiasm with the children is contagious. He loves speaking to them about moose and his adventures."

Says Rick, "Just a few years back the mission was all about the photos. Things have changed a lot. My products now include photos, notecards, calendars, moose and loon jewelry, and of course, the book. The business is growing, but the heart of it is still adventures in the wilderness and the stories that I just love to share with the young and old alike."

Rick continues, "It's all about the



moose and respecting their world. I've finally figured out how to work with them very peaceably. I make every effort to quietly observe them and not disturb their feeding. Moose are on a mission of survival ... summer for the moose is about getting ready for the upcoming winter and putting on enough fat to make it through to the next spring, when the cycle starts all over again."

"At MooseManNaturePhotos.com you will find a link to a small feature article from *Soonipi Magazine*. My friend Mary Gutsell wrote it, and I just like the way she presented my story of what I do and why. There is also a MooseMan appearance calendar and even a MooseMan blog."

Rick can be reached at HLibbey@tds.net, or 735-5323.

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