

BAY AREA WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

April 1986 - Vol. 5, Issue 4

Box 421195 San Francisco CA 94142

FROM THE EDITOR

This issue is a different kind of newsletter. For the benefit of any of you out there who haven't heard the news, on April 4, 1986, in the middle of the afternoon, a devastating explosion and fire, one of the worst in the history of San Francisco, totally destroyed the largest building in the Bayview Industrial Park. The building housed more than 60 woodworking shops, craft studios and similar small businesses. Nothing was saved. The material loss exceeded 10 million dollars. At least 8 people are known to have died, including BAWA's treasurer, Frank Wallis. Frank was one of at least 12 BAWA members who had woodworking operations in the building. In addition to members, many of our friends worked there. Many were injured. Those who worked in the building and survived the fire have lost their shops, their tools and equipment and their livelihood.

On April 8th, BAWA held an emergency meeting to assess the loss and determine what could be done to provide moral and material support for all those involved in this tragedy. It turned out to be one of the largest meetings we've ever had with well over 100 people in attendance. It was truly a moving experience to see so many of our members come together in a showing of mutual support in the wake of this event. In addition, a number of visitors appeared; suppliers, city representatives, real estate representatives - all offering their support and generosity to the survivors who were burned out. Below is a sketchy, and possibly inaccurate list of some of the suggestions, actions, ideas and offers of help that came out of that meeting. But it was a very active and fast-paced meeting and as they say in the Academy Awards, I'm probably forgetting to mention someone.

- * Wakes were announced for Frank Wallis and Bob Shoemaker.
- * Bob Newhall announced a non-denominational group headed by Father Robert Arpen to talk about the loss.
- * Cynthia Huntington has names of post trauma groups.
- * Hugh Patterson needs additional surgery and blood. Donations can be made at Irwin Memorial Blood Bank.
- * People were urged to write to the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services asking that Bayview Industrial Park be declared a disaster area.
- * Sue Lee, from the Mayor's Office of Housing and Economic Development, offered help to relocate victims. Kate, from the same office, discussed the availability of loans up to \$25,000. for victims.
- * Assemblyman Art Agnos is seeking state aid.
- * Beth from Intersection, a non-profit group, talked about grants which are available through them. They also offered to act as a clearing house for donations.
- * Gail discussed the Craftsman's Emergency Relief Fund through the American Craft Council and the possibility of writing articles for Fine Woodworking and Craft Report on the disaster and the recovery process.
- * Lew Buchner offered to operate a computerized service to connect victims with specific needs with donors of materials, tools, equipment, machinery, working space or other services. Anyone with anything to donate, lend or share can call 822-7300 and give details on Lew's answering machine.
- * Elliot offered temporary shop space. Call 822-3377.
- * Scott Page offered temporary shop space. Call 655-9595.
- * The following distributors and businesses offered generous discounts and payment terms to victims: CHS, Western Hardware, Sartor Saw Works, Sunhill Distributors, White Bros. Lumber.

- * For those in need, committees are being established to handle legal problems, tools, materials, shop space and emotional support.
- * Martha Sauger offered to help find a building to relocate artists who were burned out.
- * Chip Galusha needs help to rebuild a hotel furniture order which was destroyed in the fire. Call him at 563-2370 or 563-8151.

IN MEMORIAM FRANK WALLIS - ROBERT SHOEMAKER

On Friday afternoon, April 4, 1986, Frank Wallis and Robert Shoemaker were finishing off a set of display cabinets that they had been building for the previous two weeks. They were cheerful; all the parts had been pre-sanded to 120 or 180, the job had been staged up, mutual satisfaction expressed and a simple colored lacquer finish was well under way. In the front of the shop, Hugh Patterson, an art student whom Bob knew, was helping; probably wiping down some cases with tack rags, or helping to move cabinets in and out of the spray booth. He had just started a new job and was happy with the sense of creativity and purpose in this new workplace. The never-ending battle of the FM radio was at some stage; ancient rock and roll if Frank was at the controls, calling out, "yes, yes, yes! Who remembers this one? Herman and the Hermits, 1963!", or almost anything if Bobby chose; jazz, classical, punk or whatever caught his mood. It was 3:19pm, and the light was yellowing slightly through the west-facing skylights. In a shop one floor below, an illegal fireworks plant exploded. In that instant, Bob and Frank were gone and Hugh was badly injured.

Bob was the younger of the two. Only 26, he had been on his own since his middle years of high school in Buffalo, New York. Bob's father was of Hungarian stock, an electrician, with a powerful will. Bob inherited that will, and when their home became too small for the two strong men, he moved in with family friends so that he could finish high school. His mother, Ann, is Croatian-American, a heritage that Bob enjoyed claiming.

After a semester of college, Bob got a call from his buddy, Michael Furey, who was living in Boulder, Colorado, and had found that there was another world out west. Bob was on the next bus. In Boulder, Bob worked in his first cabinet shop, learning the basics. Then, when summer came he and Michael began hitchhiking around the country. Michael says they logged more than 20,000 miles in their journey. When they were ready to work again, they separated; Michael went north, Bob came south to "get culture".

Bob worked in San Francisco for the next eight years, with Geometry and in his own shop, and with me. He learned finishing from Ken Gwin. Brian McLachlan worked with him for years and talked about his "good energy". I knew him for the last two years of his life. We did many projects together, and I never failed to marvel at the cleanness of his work, his willingness to look closer and closer at the surfaces and edges. Whether he was building the post-modern artistic furniture that was his real love, or a linen closet for someone's apartment, he never deviated from the highest standards; never lost the energy necessary for the final inch of the project. Younger than his co-workers in age, he was our peer and our brother in the shop.

This maturity was reflected in the whole man. Before Bob's father died, they made their peace, and Bob became the man of the family. Reading between the lines of his mother's letters, he saw that she got the help she needed when small domestic emergencies arose. A corian countertop job, done on the weekends, became a new kitchen range; a restaurant cabinet and a television cart translated to a washing machine.

Frank Wallis was 37; he'd just had his birthday on February 5th. He was raised in San Mateo with a brother and sister, and moved to Los Angeles to attend UCLA after high school. Frank wanted to see the country, and dropped out of school to travel. He liked what he found in Boston, and settled in. He was to live there for 13 years. Frank worked as a waiter for many years, and had marvelous stories about his experiences. But it wasn't enough for a man with his creative energies. New England is full of beautiful antique furniture, and Frank was intrigued. His girlfriend was selling jewelry in flea markets, and Frank began carrying home the crippled chairs and abused tables that he found in adjoining booths. "look at this", he'd say to Dawn, "I'll bet I can fix it". He could. He talked his way into a shared workshop with three other cabinetmakers, and kept his eyes open. "I used to sneak around when my shopmates were working to discover their secrets", he told me. Shy and self-effacing, it was years before he discovered that most cabinetmakers were eager to help one another. He never interfered without a request, but if anyone asked, Frank would step over in an instant with a willing smile; it was just impossible to unload a truckload of plywood or lumber alone if Frank saw you. Frank's shop in Boston had long, smooth wooden corridors between machines, and when Frank was turning on the lathe, he wore roller skates to move around the shop. Like many of Frank's slightly eccentric ideas, his friends couldn't figure out if it really saved energy, as Frank claimed, or if he just enjoyed it. The two ideas are not mutually exclusive.

When Frank was 32, he returned to California. He felt that his parents were beginning to get on in years ("Mumsy and Dadsy", he called them, parodying his obvious and open love for them), and San Francisco was the obvious metropolitan area to head for. He got a driver's license (his first), rented a truck, and accompanied by his girlfriend, Beth, and their pet rabbit, Lily, headed west. He worked here for a short time with a cabinetmaker, then came in to share shopspace with me in 1982. They were sharing a house with Al and Jean, friends since grammar school days, and Frank settled in to learn California style casework. With his homemade cheese sandwiches and coffee cup, he'd tour the complex, getting to know Ed Gottesmann, Happ, Chip Galusha, Lew Buchner and others during his lightning lunch breaks. Frank learned European hardware, medite, lacquer finishing and the other cliches of commercial work in this area in months. The profound grounding that he had in solid wood furniture construction and precision turning was not so quickly imparted, but it gave him a solid base that shone through in the projects he dived into here in California.

It was a happy shop that was destroyed that Friday afternoon. Frank loved to laugh, to make people smile; watching him do the funky chicken with a tool in one hand is one memory that will never fade. Bobby had more dignity, and Frank would crack him up with extravagant praise; "look at that! Shoeguy, you're a genius, no two ways about it". We may never know what threads pulled them together at that moment, but it cannot be considered a bad or ugly way to die. They were upright and respected men, masters of their craft, in the company of those who loved them.

Larry Borsian

* * * * *

IN REMEMBRANCE

Death has claimed from the woodworking world two gifted men from Northern California.

DOUG AYERS, the Mendocino sculptor, slipped away unexpectedly last November and the completed work that he left will be sold starting April 19th at the Ayers-Britton-Long GALLERY ON Main St. in Mendocino and at the Los Robles Gallery on Hamilton Ave. in Palo Alto from May 19th. Doug had a driven talent that he freely shared with others. He shall be missed.

January sadly brought the death of BAWA member DAVE HALPERN. Quiet and introspective, Dave may not have been known to all of you, but his woodworking and being part of the woodworking community was of great importance to him. Those of us who knew Dave remain challenged by his determination. His work was careful, exacting and graceful - an expression of all he wanted to be. He too shall be missed.

Doug and Dave, who never met except through those of us privileged to know them both, validate the importance of trying, always trying, to lead the kind of life that pushes limits and supports human growth and creativity. It is an honor to have known them.

Carolyn and John Grew-Sheridan

THIRD THURSDAY PREVIEW

The general meeting will be held at 7:30pm on April 17th. Our featured event will be a presentation by two professional designers and builders of stairs. Tony Dominski of West Edge will introduce us to his specialty, metal spiral stairs, and Louis Kern will talk about his world of wooden stairs. It should be a very informative evening. The meeting will be held at West Edge, phone # 822-3055, in San Francisco. To get there from 101, take the Army St. exit and go towards the bay. Turn right on Evans and go to the end, about 3½ miles. Go through the gate to AAA Shipyard or Hunters Point Naval Station and stop and announce yourself to the guard. Continue and turn right at the first stop sign, right again at the second stop sign and go 2 blocks. Look for a lighted metal spiral staircase and sign for West Edge on the left. Park on street.

We will also be having followup discussions about the Bayview fire and related topics. The executive meeting will be at 6pm, preceeding the general meeting, at Bonanza restaurant on Evans St. across from Sequoyah Supply

CALENDAR

TWO IMPORTANT SHOWS OPEN

NEW DESIGN CONCEPTS with an emphasis on lighting, seating and floor covering has opened at the California Crafts Museum in the Chocolate Building (above By Design in the SW corner) in Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco and will be installed until June 15th. The Museum's phone number is 771-1919.

FINE WOOD will be showing at the Euphrat Gallery on Stevens Creek Blvd. at De Anza College in Cupertino until May 8th. Call (408) 996-4836 to confirm when the gallery will be open.

On the 7th floor of Macy's Union Square in San Francisco, American Style/The Arts and Crafts Movement will be presented from May 9th to June 30th. The display of textiles, glass, mixed media, metal, wood and ceramics will be open during regular store hours. Two dozen west coast furniture designers and makers will be in the contemporary crafts portion of the show. Watch the Chronicle for a complete calendar of activities.

The annual national competition called American Contemporary Works in Wood is now searching for entries. For an application form, write to: ACWIW, P.O. Box 747, Athens, Ohio 45701.

WOODWORKING WEST WOODTURNING SYMPOSIUM '86 is being held April 24-26th in Provo, Utah. The cost is \$160. and for last minute information call (801) 378-6494. There is an intensive program scheduled.

LAPSTRAKE PRAM WORKSHOP

All steps in the lofting and construction of a traditional 10 foot lapstrake Herreshoff Pram will be covered in a workshop by Simon Watts, April 20-26. Participants will build a complete pram during the workshop. Simon, a contributing editor of Fine Woodworking, has taught this and similar courses throughout the country. For more information, call the Grew-Sheridan Studio, (415) 824-6161.

MAKOTO IMAI, master Japanese woodworker, will conduct a saturday seminar on June 14th in Sonoma County. The primary topic will be a hands-on discussion of plane sharpening. He will also discuss his experiences in Japanese woodworking and timber frame construction. The cost is \$30. which includes lunch. Class size is limited. For more information, call Gail Julian at (707) 829-0827 or Steve Smith at (707) 823-1490.

WORKSPACE 86, an annual exhibition and conference for the office environment. Exhibits are free, and there are also some interesting seminars for a fee. May 28-30, Moscone Center, San Francisco. For more information call 776-2111.

The PAN PACAFIC LIGHTING EXPO and the ARCHITECTURAL HARDWARE & DETAILING SHOW will be held May 4-6th, Concourse East at Showplace Square, 635 Eighth St., San Francisco. There will be seminars and entry fees. For more information, call 621-4761.

The third annual SONOMA COUNTY WOODCARVERS FESTIVAL will be held May 3-4th at the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts.

From May 27th through June 28th, the Elaine Potter Gallery will present CALIFORNIA, an exhibition of the work of important and emerging California artists. Featuring the art of over 100 artist-craftsmen, the focus will be on California design. The exhibition will coincide with the American Craft Council's National Conference hosted by the Oakland Museum, June 4-7th. For more information, call 431-8511.

ART/CULTURE/FUTURE, the American Craft Council Conference, will be held June 4-7th at the Oakland Museum. Art/Culture/Future will examine issues of vital importance to all who are involved with crafts. An exciting program is planned, including 9 panels, many highlight speeches by nationally known personalities, demonstrations, open studios, a film/video program and "forum" and a program of 50 individual papers. Preregistration is required. For more information, call 272-0600. If you wish to volunteer for this event, call Gwen Jennings, 237-6845.

During the ACC Conference, a SPECIAL MEETING OF CRAFT GUILDS AND ORGANIZATIONS will be held. This will be an opportunity for representatives of craft groups to get together for networking on a national level. This meeting will deal with information exchange, common concerns and issues of guild/organization survival. For more information, contact Craig Dreeszen, Arts Extension Service, Division of Continuing Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003, or call (413) 545-2360.

Rosewood Tool Supply will sponsor a benefit tour of the Sigma Phi House on Piedmont Avenue in Berkeley on April 27th from 2-5pm. The building was designed by Charles and Henry Greene in 1909 for W. R. Thorsen and is sometimes referred to as their "ultimate bungalow", as it translates the informal Southern California style to the Bay Area climate and the sloping site, as well as the more formal living habits of the Thorsens themselves. The house retains the Greenes' sensitive use of material, their characteristic detailing and design, and is one of the few examples of their work in Northern California. The cost is \$15. For more information, call Rosewood Tool Supply, (415) 540-6247.

NOTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

What an enjoyable meeting we had last month at Gary Bennett's shop. Gary is one of those rare individuals who can be humorous, creative, outrageous and charming all at the same time. This is a man who is refreshing just to listen to. While Gary was talking and showing slides of his work, it occurred to me that he is, in a way, bigger than life in that he represents a part of us, or at least a part of me, that rarely comes out because of inhibitions or a more conservative background, or maybe just plain lack of insight. In any event, Gary seems to give expression, not only in his words, but also in his work, to some of those things that the rest of us may be unwilling or unable to express for ourselves. On the other hand, maybe I'm just talking nonsense. Nevertheless, I thought it was a great meeting. I think Gary's work is uncommonly creative and some of his pieces, the clocks in particular, were funnier than some of the best jokes I've heard. Thanks, Gary, for your hospitality and for sharing with us your thoughts, ideas and knowledge. Your techniques are fascinating and your artistry and craftsmanship are superb.

Peter Good

San Francisco Chronicle
April 11, 1986

GREW-SHERIDAN STUDIO

Woodworking classes and supervised independent study since 1975.

Fully equipped shop.
All skill levels are welcome.

500 Treat Avenue
San Francisco 94110

824-6161

Bayview Fire Fund Set Up

San Francisco artists and woodworkers have set up a fund to help colleagues who lost their livelihood in the explosion and fire at the Bayview Industrial Building.

Checks or money orders may be made out to the Intersection/Bayview Fund and sent to the Intersection Organization, 766 Valencia Street, San Francisco 94110.

B.A.W.A. EXECUTIVE ROSTER, SPRING 1986

Chairman	Bob Newhall 2326 Grant St. Berkeley, CA 94703	532-0999, 848-5025
Co-Chairman	Don Dupont 38 Beta Ct., B-6 San Ramon, CA 94583	831-9754, 283-0765
Secretary	Norma Brooks 4973 Elrod Dr. Castro Valley, CA 94546	537-4096
Treasurer	Frank Wallis 1050 Z Revere St. San Francisco, CA 94124	822-4119
Newsletter Editor	Peter Good 1966 Tiffin Rd. Oakland, CA 94602	530-3198

**PLASTIC LAMINATE
SALES & FABRICATION**

Formica • Wilson Art
Laminart • Nevamar
Dura-Beauty • Pionite
• Metallics •

CORIAN
AVONITE



Parkmead Products
930 45th Ave.
Oakland, CA 94601
532-5931

CLASSIFIEDS

SHOP SPACE WANTED: I have woodworking machinery, including a Rockwell 13" planer, which I will share if you provide the shop space in Oakland or Berkeley. Charles, 453-8810 or 658-7911 (message).

FOR SALE: 14" Yates American table saw. 2HP, 3PH. \$1000. Stuart Welch, 663-1775.

Shop space available in the east bay with some amenities. 32¢ per square ft. Any size up to 8000 sq. ft. Call Brian, 655-8391.

AIR DRIED - KILN DRIED

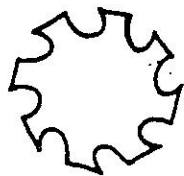
KOA

DIRECT FROM THE MILL

ALL DIMENSIONS AVAILABLE
LOWEST PRICES - WE SHIP

PACIFIC LUMBER IMPORTERS
(415) 530-3198

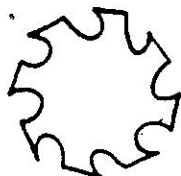
QUALITY SAW WORKS



Sales & Sharpening

CARBIDE

**Saws • Tools • Cutters
Wood • Metal • Plastic**



Planer knives & Handsaws

we service the trades

250 BAYSHORE BLVD.
SAN FRANCISCO
(415) 282-3060

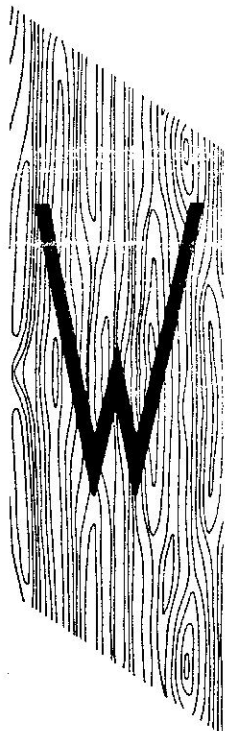
MACMURRAY PACIFIC

(415) 552-5500

568 Seventh St. San Francisco, CA 94103

**CAN'T FIND IT?
TRY MACMURRAY PACIFIC!**

*MacMurray Pacific carries an extensive line of
woodworkers hardware, tools and shop supplies.*



we offer a large selection of fine
woodworking tools for the shop
and professional carpenter at the
lowest prices.



WHOLE EARTH ACCESS

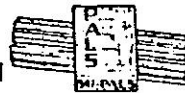
BERKELEY
7th & Ashby 845-3000

SAN FRANCISCO
401 Bayshore Blvd. 285-5244

SAN RAFAEL
863 E. Francisco Blvd. 459-3533

PLYWOOD AND LUMBER SALES INC.

- Hardwood
- Hardwood Plywood
- Lumber
- Hardwood Flooring
- Kortron
- Mouldings
- Marine Plywood
- Large Inventory



SMALL

(415) 547-7257

BUSINESS

5749 LANDREGAN STREET • EMERYVILLE, CA 94609

ROSEWOOD

The Woodworker's Resource

Call for a FREE newsletter!

1836 Fourth St. Berkeley

415 • 540 • 6247



HARDWOOD LUMBER & PLYWOOD

Hardwoods Since 1872

RETAIL-WHOLESALE

Red Oak • White Oak • Birch
Maple • Walnut • Ash • Cherry
Teak • Exotics
Custom & Stock Moldings
Laminated Maple Tops
Hardwood Dowels

Open

M-F 8.5 pm

SAT 8:30 - 2 pm

415-261-1600

WE DELIVER

4801 Tidewater Ave., Oakland Nimitz Fwy to High St.

SARTOR SAW WORKS

All Saws Sharpened or Repaired • Pick-up/delivery
Sales & Prompt Service

Carbide Saws and Router Bits Our Specialty

289 Bayshore Blvd., San Francisco
Phone: (415) 282-6093

BAWA DATA

The Bay Area Woodworkers' Association is an organization of woodworkers who have banded together to promote woodworking in both technical and aesthetic directions. This newsletter is a monthly publication intended to serve as a communications vehicle and a source directory for the membership of this Association.

Membership dues are \$20/year, for which any member may participate fully in the Association, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the By-Laws. This includes voting power on any issue brought before the membership for a vote, notification of the monthly shop talks and demonstrations put on by the Association, receipt of this newsletter each month, and privilege of participation in any special discount programs sponsored by local businesses in conjunction with this Association.

Checks for membership dues may be made out to the Bay Area Woodworkers' Association and sent to P.O. Box 421195, San Francisco, CA 94142. Membership cards will be issued to all members in good standing.

Copies of the By-Laws are available at all monthly meetings, or can be requested by mail.

The monthly shop talks and demonstrations are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m., at a location announced both in the newsletter and at the previous meeting.

The monthly executive committee meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of every month, and are open to any interested members. To arrange attendance, contact any member of the executive committee by telephone or the address given above.

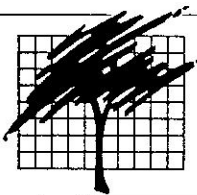
COMPANY

MACBEATH HARDWOOD



2150 OAKDALE AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94124
(415) 647-0782

930 ASHBY AVENUE
BERKELEY, CA 94710
(415) 843-4390



BAY AREA WOODWORKER'S ASSOC
POST OFFICE BOX 421195
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94142

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
DO NOT FORWARD