BAY AREA WOODWORKERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



BAWA PREVIEW -- 11/18/82

NOVEMBER 18TH MEETING DATE: Thursday, November 18

TIME: 7:30

PLACE: 64 Golden Gate San Francisco (415) 771-1894

HOST: Dave Dempsey

DAVE DEMPSEY will host the November meeting at his shop. Dave is a very imaginative and skilled turner who has elevated bowl making to both an art and a science. His presentation will cover turning techniques and adhesives technology — another area in which he has accumulated considerable expertise. So, bring your questions and get ready for what promises

be a highly informative and interesting presentation.

David Dempsey is a native California who has demonstrated a commitment to the environment in general and to wood in particular. Having studied at Long Beach and San Francisco State Universities, he opened his own studio in 1977 to pursue an independent course of study and research.

Specializing in the hand turning of wooden bowls and plates, Dempsey has opted for using smaller laminated blocks of wood in his sculptures rather than a large single block. One reason for this choice is that less wood is wasted. Also, the contrasting colors and grains of the different woods interact and become a part of the design itself.

Dempsy achieves forms which seem to have universal appeal by means of redefining classical shapes and themes in contemporary mode. The lines are clean and simple, yet elegant in effect.

Dempsey backs up the aethetics of his laminated sculptures with solid technological research. The careful selection of proper glues in combination with structurally compatible woods, enables Dempsey to achieve a thin, delicate quality on selected sculptures without sacrificing durability.

Sculpture, without sacrificing durability.

The dovetail joint is as much a part of woodworking as sawdust, and JIM ROBSON has some new information on this classic joining technique. He has developed a new jig which is simple in design, easy to build, and can be made from readily available materials. Jim will demonstrate the process of making both tail and pin cuts in infinitely variable sizes using his innovative method.

ELLIS GOLD is the creator of Artsource a publication described as a showcase for artists and a source directory for buyers — espebially architects and interior designers. He will be at the upcoming meeting to introduce his project and will also be available to offer suggestions on how to market yourself and your work.

The subject of group insurance and insurance in general has come up several times so far. On Thursday, we will have an expert present to make a survey of our needs, explain what's available in the way of coverage, help us explore options and answer questions you may have. ESTHER "b" WOESTE is an independent agent with a great deal of experience in health and accident group plans and coverage for the self-employed.

SOURCES - RESOURCES

Lacquer Service at 15th and Petrero can match your color and fill your cup for \$4.25. Luther says to try them.

GM International in Woodland at (916) 662-3244 can fill your screw needs at good prices. Try them for prices on double threaded, hardened, relf tapping screws, including square drive heads and bits. Marty, Al and Ross think they are good.

Elsa at Fine Woodworking, in Sausalito, is always interested in meeting woodworkers and seeing their portfolios. Stop by at 1201 Bridgeway, or call 332-5770.

EDITORIAL.

It's becoming very obvious. The members of this association have lots to offer each other. The meetings continue to be jam packed with information and enthusiasm. Most people left the last meeting at my shop at 9:30 to 10, but the last few didn't go home until 11:30! There is always one more point to make or question to ask.

Next meeting we'll have a questionnaire to fill out about what services we offer. With that information available in list form, we'll have a better idea of who we might call on to help with a project or who to refer our customers to. It seems to me to be a continuation of the association being a resource. (Special thanks to Al Wengard for taking the time to put the questionnaire together.)

Another reminder that in another month (December), we choose new officers. We've been fortunate to have found so many qualified people to take on the responsibilities necessary for an organization like ours to function in the professional way we've seen for 5 months. A lot of us have grown in our positions. We've learned a lot and we've set up some systems and procedures that our successors will find helpful in continuing the quality of the association. But I'm also sure the next officers will bring new ideas and I'm looking forward to seeing the old and the new merge into a new texture for the meetings and newsletters to come.

The job of editor has not been easy for me. There has been a lot of hours to put in and anxiety about meeting a deadline people are counting on. But there has been much on the opposite side to counterbalance the workload. I took on this job because I wanted contact with other woodworkers. I've certainly been satisfied in this area. There are some fantastic crafts people out there (and we've seen a good sampling in our "spotlights"), most, modest and needing a vehicle like the association to offer them a chance to share some of their skills and knowledge.

I've also been able to see up close the growth of participation of the members and friends. Ed Stover had a dream for this newsletter. He made it what it is today, teaching me along the way. Dan Brown, with much experience in layout, has slipped into the position of Technical Assistant. Ross Barker has been following an interest in writing for many years and continues to be available to meeting interest people in the wood business and write to us about them. Nancy Krompotich dreams up new columns for us and searches out fellow woodworkers for useful information to pass on to us. Thanks to you all.

And I can feel like I've given back something to an association that doesn't stop giving to me. The line for a new newsletter staff starts up in December with new elections. Don't crowd, there's work for all who want to contribute.

Martin Freedman Editor

BAWA SHOW

The BAWA Show Committee met on October 28th and decided to poll the membership at the November meeting to see who is interested in a woodworking exhibition. A questionnaire will be distributed and filled out at the meeting. Plan to attend.

A show, as now considered, would be open to BAWA members, but the committee has to know who is seriously interested in participating. When it should take place, the location or locations, how much money each person or shop would contribute, how many items of furniture, cabinetry, what would be offered, and how much space would be required, are all questions that need answering.

The committee members, Gary Carter, Mike Laine, Al Wengerd, Donald Dupont, and John Grew-Sheridan, felt that the presentation should take place either in April or May, or October or November. They think that at least six months

will be needed for preparation.

Several proposals were made by committee to encourage discussion at the November meeting. One is to have a low-overhead, low-markup, cooperative approach that will put the public in direct contact with the woodworker and designer and allow a lower retail price closer to what some customers would pay.

Another idea was to offer an alternative to the traditional woodworking show: organize an "Open Studios" format. This could be done on its own or be a follow-up event after a show.

The committee brought up numerous considerations concerning these proposals. We will be taking time at the November meeting to hear them and all of you who come and wish to join in the discussion. So, think about what involvement you want for yourself, and any ideas and information you can share. Come on down to Dave Dempsey's shop for another great meeting.

– John Grew-Sheridan

SHOP TIPS

(Contributions from members & others)

- 1. When you have a loose edge on veneer, plane a sliver of glue off a hot glue melt stick. Slide it under the veneer and iron it down.

 Passed on by Chip Galusha.
- 2. When using a cabinet scraper on end grain, wet the end grain with water first and the scraping is easier and quicker.

 From Cabinetmaker's folklore
- 3. Round 1 edge of a putty knife and keep the other edge square. This works well when forcing something like wood putty into a hole. The rounded edge won't gouge the wood. Contributed by Luther Greulich.
- 4. When asking for advice on adhering brass to wood....Old French wood working lore recommends rubbing a clove of garlic along the brass to make glue adhere better.
- 5. When putting on veneer edging, spread white glue on the plywood and put veneer tape over it. Iron the area so that the moisture in the glue is boiled out. Sand with 80 grit at a 45 degree a to crease the veneer, then go back and cut the veneer flush with a knife.

 Contributed by Lewis Buchner.
- 6. If you planer or jointer produces ridges in the wood, move 1 blade 1/16" to the left and another blade 1/16" to the right. This will eliminate the grooves for a while. This one is Chip's also.
- 7. Lubricate the edge of a cabinet scraper before running over it with a burnishing tool; this gives a smoother, sharper edge.

Association Officers

Chair & Co-Chair Ron Hazelton/Lissa Coolidge

Secretary & Assistant
John Levy/Luther Gruelich

Teasurer & Assistant
Robert Schneider/Gary Delnevo

Newsletter Editor & Assistant
Martin Freedman/Edward Stover

Membership Application

Bay Area Woodworkers' Association

P.O. Box 421195, San Francisco, CA 94142.

Name Home Address
Home Telephone () Work Telephone ()
How did you hear about the Association?
Check here if you do not want to have your name given to other Associations or businesses.
Enclosed is a check or money order for \$20., my membership dues for a one-year period in this Association.
Signed
Date

WHERE ARE WE GOING? WHERE ARE WE FROM?

The transition from the folk craftsman, who made furniture and other ordinary household items before this industrial age, to the contempory "artist-craftsman" is a metamorphosis developed by a complex web of social and economic influences. Increasingly sophisticated echanical production techniques have changed society's needs and aesthetics dramatically, and the "artist-craftsman" is an influential participant in these changes. For lack of alternatives, most all household furnishings were once made of solid wood or clay, and they were made by hand. As new materials and machines developed, creative imaginations integrated them with traditional forms and techniques to develop new variations and styles. In the last fifty years, so many new materials appeared that society seems to be running ragged trying to keep up with itself and "New Fashions." Economic pressures, mechanized production, and the frenzy of trends and styles have pushed aside the old ways. The once common household in solid wood has all but disappeared, and the once common craftsman who worked for ordinary households is an endangered species, milling around in the new breed of artist craftsman.

This historical old goat, with his box of moulding planes, etc., is impressed with our modern woodworking machines. They are fast, accurate and efficient, even if they do mess up the woodworker's environment a bit. The glue they use, these modern women and men, it's retty good stuff. And from all around the country, and even from all around the world, we have a remarkable selection of veneers and solid woods in a variety of thickness, width and length. Too bad all of this wood isn't air dried like it used to be, but there must be some price to pay for these modern times.

Thoroughly impressed with the shop and the wood lot, the old goat wanders into the gallery to see what's being made these days. Slick new shapes slink around the floor and walls in shiny woods that scream for attention. Bold forms and patterns arrest the eye, proudly displaying precision joinery done with clever machines. A couple of quiet, modest pieces almost go unnoticed in the collection, surrounded by such an exciting crowd. The pieces and the prices are staggering. Clearly, this is a collection of art, intended for the eyes, clean hands, and gracious surroundings of the well-heeled. It all looks useful and built to last for centuries for people who don't need anything.

And the old goat wonders what these new artistcraftsman make for themselves, for their friends and for their neighbors. So after work, he catches a ride home with a dusty woodworker in his old pick-up. Home is a modest apartment in the flatlands, a changing neighborhood. The furnishings are hand-me-downs from grand-parents and parents, with an occasional solid piece from the flea market or garage sale. Orange crates for shelves and records. There is one piece our artist-craftsman made, an early piece that never sold. Nothing else? Sorry about that; handmade furniture is ART, for investors, collectors and the supply siders. We can't afford it, we just make it. The old goat hopes we're happy in our work, because it's a pretty strange scene, these modern times.

Mike Lane

DOVETAIL ROUTER JIG -- INFINITELY ADJUSTABLE AND HOMEMADE

When Jim Robson started out to make a dovetailed box to house family pictures, he quickly came to the conclusion that there must be an easier way to cut the dovetails and pins without fussing with complicated, manufactured jigs.

He did a little experimenting and came up with a device to make an infinitely adjustable dovetail jig using a router, with most of the components homemade, at a cost of less than \$75.00 (excluding the router and bits). In fact, without including the cost of a couple of c-clamps, the whole jig cost falls to under \$50.00. The jig can be built to accomodate any size dovetail cuts; it is limited only by the bit widths available.

The principal parts of his jig are: a) a platform to support all parts and work; b) 3 carriers to hold the router; c) supports to hold the work vertically; d) spacers to index the lateral movement of the carriers; e) router bits by Ekstrom-Carlson and a Rockwell router.

The jig functions by presenting the work vertically for horizontal router cuts. One series of cuts

is required for the tails by using a standard dovetail bit in the router, 2 series of cuts for each pin are required, using standard straight router bits. The router carrier is locked into place when cutting, then relaxed to traverse laterally.

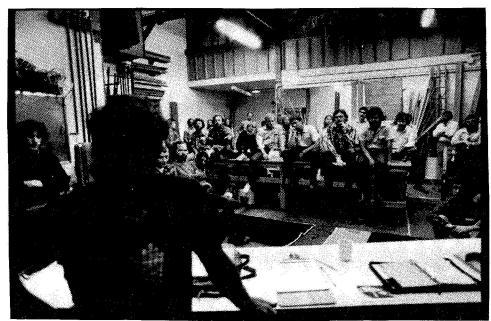
A number of uniformly wide spacers are moved from the right of the router to the left after a cut has been made.

His jig is designed to make 1/2" and 3/4" dovetails. Cuts for dovetails take about 3 minutes per side, while the pins (which require 2 cuts) take about 6 minutes per side.

The beauty of his design is twofold: spacers of different widths can be made to translate how far apart each pin and tail will be from its adjacent one, and the jig can be accommodated to use any router bit width available on the market.

Jim is an engineer, formerly with Bechtel and Firestone. He currently works at the Grew-Sheridan Design Studio in San Francisco.

- by Nancy Krompotich



"The Home-court advantage

CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

For Sale: '73 GMC van. 9 feet from driver's seat to back door. Power steering, automatic, Needs work. \$500 or best offer. Call Marty at (415) 658-1622.

Experienced woodworker seeking employment in shop environment. I am knowledgable in most shop tools & equipment. Have had about five years experience in woodshops. Call Tim Hearn at 621-5649 to see portfolio, or write me at 1310 Clayton #8, SF, 94114.

For Sale: Powermatic shaper model 66, 1" spindle, 2 hp, 22v, 1 ph with cutters for windows, interior and exterior doors. Excellent condition. \$1800. Call Chip at (415) 386-2383.

Chair Caning Supplies. Cane webbing, rush, round and flat reeds, ash splints, hickory, rawhide, tools and instructions, friendly advice. The Caning Shop. 926 Gilman St. in Berkeley, CA...zip is 94710...phone (415) 527-5010. Free catalog.

Wanted: Quality original and limited edition pieces for Flood Gallery, a S.F. fine art gallery specializing in custom furniture. Call Rory at (415) 387-8333.

Wanted: Finisher to work in our shop on call. Color match, lacquer spray, "antiqt e" finishes. Call Rose-Carter Co. at (415) 621-3054.

Wanted: Band saw, any condition, min. 16" capacity. Call chip at (415) 386-2383.

NOTICES

Officer's election in December. Think if you want to run and get those dues in if you want to vote.

Think about why we're meeting on Thursdays. Maybe another day would be better for more people (especially those who have not been able to come to any meetings). We'll spend a few minutes discussing at November meeting. If you, as usual can't come on Thursday, call Luther at 644-3715 and he'll relay your concerns.

A source catalog questionnaire will be available at the November meeting. Al Wengerd, following up on Dave Dempsey's suggestion of last meeting, plans on taking information about skills of association members and interested friends at our meeting and working the information up into a usable catalog for us and our clients. Be prepared to tell it all (in a few words, please).

New Hot-line number — any questions to ask or information to give, contact Luther Greulich or his machine at 664-3715.

SHOWS AND DEMOS

The Christmas Carousal at the Embarcadero is including some space to show off a few pieces of fine furniture. The Grew-Sheridans will have a piece there. Go to the Old Taylor and Ng space December 15 - January 1, and not only get some tree trimmings but also see some pretty woodworks.

OCTOBER HINDSIGHT

A Critics Review of the October Third Thursday Gathering.

Marty Freedman, who hosted the October soiree in his Oakland shop, seized the home court advantage and was the first of many speakers to take the floor. Marty discussed the business of contracting out cabinet work and noted that it can be frustratingly anonymous for the woodworker since professional trade publications tend to acknowledge contractors and not cabinetmakers.

BAWA Chairman Ron Hazelton proposed a sawhorse and pushstick competition for future meetings, which was met with approval by most members. (Might relay races and parlor games be on the agenda for future BAWA meetings? Stay tuned.)

Ron also proposed Saturday workshops on special topics as a way to streamline the bloated BAWA general meeting agenda.

Gary Carter said that the show committee needs a chairman.

Luther Gruelich's intended five minute "Safety Tips" presentation became a fifteen minute debate as various members demonstrated their favorite ways to operate a table saw. No casualties were reported.

During attorney Robert Hunter William's half-hour discussion of woodshop liability, many BAWA members listened intently, took notes and asked questions. As the Legalese flowed, however, several scofflaws were seen slinking out the back door of Marty's shop to drink beer and cavort in the hallway.

John Grew-Sheridan, gluepot virtuoso, demonstrated the considerable virtues of good old hide glue in applying veneer. Among its many advantages are its small set up costs, its response to heat in ironing out ripples and its usefulness in odd applications. John recommends a bookbinder's supply company as the glue's best source.

Lastly, Chip Galusha disclosed his secrets for creating an ash table with four sculpted and curved legs. Those who saw it said that it looked nearly animate, ready to bound away impatiently as the meeting droned on. Fortunateky, both table and Chip stuck around to tout the benefits of the power adze, a rare tool that can be attached to an ordinary power grinder to carve quickly with much less noise than pneumatic tools.

A LITTLE GIVE & TEAK

"There's always a way to make something cheaper," muses Burt Axelrod as he inspects two sheets of teak veneer. One is the variety ordinarily found on teak plywood. It feels as thin as typing paper and translucent light shows through its open grain when it is held up to the sun. The other veneer is a sample from the plywood stocked at B. Axelrod and Company Teak Lumber. It's more than twice as thick as the first veneer and is opaque against a strong light.

Like many hardwoods, good teak is becoming more scarce. A walk through Burt's spare and alry warehouse tends to confirm this. Pallets of choice teak are neatly sorted into beams and planks with much open space between stacks, as though not enough select lumber can be found to fill the racks.

Thailand's six-year-old embargo on lumber products has reduced the world's supply of teak, but it has not reducec deforestation as intended. Valuable trees are cut illegally to supply the black market that the embargo created. Thailand now imports hardwoods from Borneo and Malaysia, where the governments encourage cleZr cutting to make way for coconut plantations. Coconut oil produces income more quickly and steadily than slow-growing hardwoods.

"Thailand and Malaysia are trying to subjugate their native people because the governments want to homogenize their populations. One way to control native people is to deny them a way to make a buck. Previously, the people in these areas grew opium poppies, but our government has told theirs not to let the people raise opium. So when indigenous people become alienated, and are not allowed to sell poppies, they'll harvest lumber from royal lands. They wonder "What royal lands? What royalty? Aren't these our forests?" And that sets up a black market.

"Teak trees are chiseled with serial numbers and any lumber dealer who has logs not accounted for in the tax ledgers is in big trouble. To get around this, stolen wood is cut up immediately into small items. That's how teak bowls at Macy's and Cost Plus can cost less than the wood is worth."

Burt now imports most of his lumber from Burma, which still exports teak. Burmese teak is les likely to warp than teak from other countries, Burt claims.

"These are small mills, for the most part," he says. "Many employ just ten people. In Rangoon, they're large but nothing like American mills at a place like Eureka."

"The trees are cut to give the highest yield, so they reposition the log on the saw several times. The rippings are cut on a table saw into little bits and even the sawdust is used to make charcoal or to power a generator. The logs are precious and the yield is all important.

"Over the years, the quality of wood has been going lower. I saw one tree at a mill in Macao that was forty feet long and eight feet in diameter. I hardly see trees like that anymore. It was from a virgin forest in Borneo. But how long will there be virgin forest? The trend is toward small trees from more easily accessible areas and the substitution of species.

"Fortunately, the integrity of the people I deal with is excellent. I've never paid a bribe. There have been times when the person I was dealing with expected a bribe (every so often). The director of the state timber board in Burma ends up in jail occasionally for receiving illegal favors. But so far I've avoided all that probably because of my background in import-export."

Burt Axelrod moved to San Francisco from New York twenty years ago to "maintain some level of sanity." His import-export training in New York led him to open his teak company eighteen years ago. Since then, he has been to Burma and Thailand ten times. Most trips consist of a month of eighty hour work weeks, mostly from his brokerage point in Hong Kong. In his absence, a secretary and one employee maintain the warehouse south of Market Street.

"The exotic quality of the Orient fades after a while and it's hard work, so I enjoy the travelling less and less. In Bangkok, I stay with a family and all my free time is spent resting from the pace and recuperating from the strangeness."

In San Francisco, B. Axelrod and Company does about 70% of its business with yacht builders and boat restorers. Burt places some ads in yachting magazines but attributes most of his business to word of mouth recommendations. The remaining 30% of the business goes largely to contractors for "floors in Hillsborough houses and Mill Valley hot tubs."

Occassionally, an artisan or craftsman will come in "to buy ten board feet or so for a statue pedestal. I don't make much profit off that kind of thing," Burt says, "but I love that part of the business — to think that someone uses and appreciates this beautiful wood."

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-by Ross Barker



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The Sam Maloof workshop/ seminar on Dec. 4 is filled to capacity. But there are still spaces at the Friday evening lecture on Dec. 3. Call the store for details.



The Cutting Edge is running a special on the Makita wetgrinder. Bring in a dull chisel or planer knife, and give our demo-machine a workout. This \$224 machine is now on sale at \$190.

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SAWS



CHISELS

LUMBER

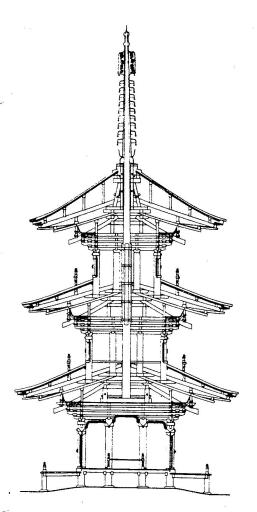


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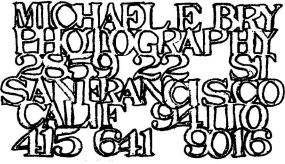
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"A good cabinetmaker is not someone who doesn't make mistakes, it's someone who can correct those inevitable mistakes quickly."

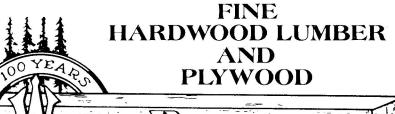
Martin Freedman



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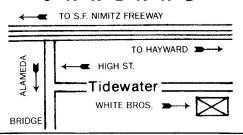
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