

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME VIII

NUMBER 6

JUNE 1990

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Now that the Spring Show is behind us I hope all of you are planning your toy production for TOYS FOR TOTS. We plan to kick off the program early this year so every one has plenty of time to produce lots of safe, rugged top quality toys. Some scrap wood suitable for many small toys has been available the last two meetings. If you need some, check to see what is available. If anyone has wood they would like to share please bring it to the meetings. I am sure there are members eager to turn it into toys.

The Fall seminar on finishing is tentatively set for September 22, 1990. That seems to be the weekend with the least football activity in Birmingham. Mark your calendar now.

The big bi-annual International Woodworking Fair (IWF) is coming up August 24-27 in the Atlanta World Congress Center. The show is intended for manufacturers but many of the companies that cater to the small shop will be there. The show completely fills all of the World Congress Center — it would be hard to walk through the whole thing in one day. If you haven't been to IWF the experience is well worth the effort.

NEXT PROGRAM

JUNE 14, 1990 • 7:00 P.M.

Our spring evening classes are concluded and with much success. Our program will be brought to us by Fred Baker, Dale Lewis and Ivan Kronberg, the instructors for the classes. They will present some of the students who will display some of the things they made in

the classes. Jerry deVenny, co-instructor of the carving class will introduce the program. By attending this meeting, you can determine whether you need to attend the classes which will be offered in the fall.

LAST MEETING - MAY 10, 1990

We had a most interesting diversion in our pursuits of fine woodworking (no pun intended). Mr. Robert "Bob" Taylor, Forgemaster, Alabama Forge Council brought a butane-fired oven (forge), an anvil and all the tools needed to forge (hammer) hot metal. There are a variety of hammers and tongs necessary to handle the red-hot metal. You sure had better handle the metal with tongs, for if you attempt to hold a hot piece bare-handed you will discover why the fellow who picked up the hot horseshoe in the blacksmith's shop and dropped it so quickly explaining it doesn't take him long to examine a horseshoe. If you are interested in purchasing an anvil you can expect to pay about \$3/lb. for a used one or \$4/lb. for a new one, and they start at around 100 pounds — so figure it out for yourself. Mr. Taylor brought along several colleagues just as devoted to this ancient art and they wanted us to understand, from the start, there is a difference between a blacksmith, who creates art and utilitarian objects, and a farrier, one who shoes horses. These men utilize a variety of sources for material; for instance, they can use RTS (rear truck springs) which they secure at auto junk yards and similar sources for other metals. We learned it is necessary to attain a temperature of 2100° in the forge to get the metal ready to

work, but if the piece is overheated it will likely shatter when struck with a hammer. After a piece is formed into the object intended, it is usually necessary to restore the temper that was removed in the heating and reheating, and this is done by immersing the object in a pail of water or a container of oil, depending on the use to be made of the piece. These men make chisels for woodworking, calipers (both single and double), and decorative garage or barn hinges, candle holders, sconces, etc. We appreciate these men sharing their form of art with us.

KERRY'S ANTIQUES

First off, we had to listen to a feeble explanation of how difficult it was for him to decide what to bring and show us. Our fears were vanished, however, when he produced three antiques. First, a pair of Winding Boards — these were two boards some 1" x 3" x 30", one of which had two white (bone, probably) inserts along the top edge; after a board had been jointed, for instance, the Winding Boards were placed on the board and if you sighted down the top edge of the first board and could see more white on one side of the inserts than the other, the board wasn't flat. Our ancestors weren't so dumb were they? Second, a Wimble Brace — you know, a brace as in brace and bit, but this brace had about twice the length of the back leg as the front, and this creates twice the speed of the chuck in the shorter front leg. Third, and last, a Jarvis — this was used by wheelwrights to make wheel spokes, or stated another way, a super spokeshave. Is there no end to the wonderful antiques Kerry brings us? We hope not.

DOOR PRIZES

After consulting the sign-in sheets and asking Leigh Ann Brooks, Nelson's daughter and guest, to call out a number, Dale Lewis was awarded a forged single caliper, made by our program guests; next Leonard Sanders' number was drawn and he received a double caliper made on the forge by our program guests; next, Ivan Kronberg won a Guild cap (with logo); and Perry Owen won a Guild tee shirt (also with logo). In case you have forgotten, Walter Barnett still has a few caps, tee shirts and golf shirts which you may purchase at ridiculously low prices.

SHOW AND TELL

We kind of hit the jack pot tonight. First off, member Bray displayed a Windsor chair made of Oak, Birch and Pine, and a mighty fine job too; Dale Lewis had several beautiful lathe-turned boxes (with lids) made of oak and bubinga; Wallace Williams showed several well-done turned bowls and weed pots. Thank you, gentlemen, and now we want some of you others to bring some of your items so we may learn from you.

ATTENDANCE

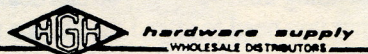
Just a word to you members who don't make all the meetings. We still hold court on the second Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. at Acton's. We are maintaining a respectable volume of attendance by having fully 50% of us in attendance, but some of you are missing the fellowship of our members, the "shopping" at Acton's as well as the programs being brought to us by Gene Benitez, who works hard to bring a variety and instructional programs so we may go home better informed than before we came. Y'all come.

BRASS TUBING

At first glance that is a strange caption for an item in the Newsletter. Upon further reflection, however, not so strange when it is explained why. Stephen "Steve" Powers, is the architect and builder of those beautifully made walking sticks shown to us a couple of meetings ago. Well, Steve has a problem. Recall the tips and the upper end where the handles joined the stick, these two places were tipped with brass. He has exhausted possible vendors in our area, and brass tubing is not to be found. He has located a source in Chicago, but he has to buy a minimum of 18' at a cost of \$60. This is more tubing than he needs, much more, he says and he hopes some of you will go in with him for an order and thus share the brass as well as the cost with him. You may call him at home 991-5691, or at work at 988-1012.

GUILD NIGHT SPECIALS

You may recall we now have an opportunity to buy "specials" on Guild Night



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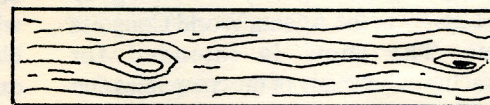
each month. In case you have forgotten, included in a box in the lower right-hand corner of Acton's back-page advertisement is a special offer good only on Guild Night. These "specials" are worthy of consideration because they are truly "specials" and since most of them are things we do, or are going to buy anyway, why not enjoy the "special." So, start the habit of looking at the special offer each month when you receive your Newsletter.

POTPOURRI

Diet is definitely a major factor in preventing diseases. Crews of sailors on long voyages were subject to scurvy because of the lack of vegetables in their menu. Lime juice was believed to be a remedy. It was carried on British ships; hence, the name "limeys," or English seafaring men.

"You missed school last Thursday and Friday, didn't you?" asked the teacher. "To be perfectly honest," replied the honest, little monster, "I didn't."

Alabama Woodworkers Guild Newsletter is published monthly for its members and other interested parties. Guild meetings are held monthly on the second Thursday at 7:00 P.M. at Acton Moulding & Supply Co. Information concerning the Guild may be secured by writing P.O. Box 506, Helena, Al 35080 or calling the Editor, Leonard Sanders, at 822-6876.



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KENTUCK CENTER

There were between forty and fifty of us who took advantage of the excellent opportunity to visit this fascinating place. As always, Craig Nutt was a friendly host, and seeing the shop from which his exquisite works are produced was worth the trip. His equipment is first class. The machinery we can remember was a Unisaw, huge planer, two band saws, overhead pin router, lathe with about a fifteen foot bed, a good dust collecting system, many hand tools (including electric), and a mortising cutter. What a machine. It is a German made MAK, and instead of using a hollow drill bit for cutting mortises this machine has a cutter, the width needed for the particular mortise, which oscillates from side to side and when the cut is completed no chiseling is needed because the cutter has cut the length, depth and width simultaneously and the mortise is finished. The operation takes some 10 seconds. His pepper tables must be selling well because he had some twelve legs (shaped like a red pepper and painted red) drying from being painted.

Moving upstairs we were awed by the shop of Anden Houben, maker of harpsichords and clavichords, and he makes them from scratch. All metal parts (pins to hold the strings), bone for the white keys, ebony for the black keys, boar tusk for another part, as well as all wooden parts are expertly crafted by hand. He is able to produce two a year, and only starts one on commission. In his spare time, if any, he makes guitars, and they are beautiful too. We appreciate his taking us on tour and giving us answers to our many questions.

Across the patio is a blacksmith shop. The gentleman working in there is an artist with hot metal. He makes really very pretty hooks for hanging flower baskets outdoors or other things indoors. His large door hinges (like for a garage or barn) were quite nice too. There were candle holders and other wrought iron objects completely crafted from the forge, anvil and hammer. Almost a dying art, so we are glad to get to see this ancient art in action.

Watching pottery being fashioned on the turntable is always fun. It resembles turning wood on a lathe, but is certainly different in that the clay is pliable whereas wood in the lathe is not. Tim Walker buys most of his clay from a company in Pittsburgh. It is kept in air-tight plastic bags until used, and when a chunk is readied for turning, he kneads it, like momma does dough, until the right consistency is attained. He works with an electric turntable, and only uses the kick turntable for certain operations.

Next door to the forge is the glass blowing shop. Nathan Goodson creates beautiful glass bowls. To say that is a gross understatement.



CRAIG NUTT

The bowls are mostly very large — like twelve to fifteen inches in diameter and of equal height. The swirling colors are beautifully done and when thumped, the ring of the class indicates high quality.

The last stop was the KENTUCK MUSEUM located in the Northport Civic Center. A gracious young lady gave us a tour, and luckily for us there was a bird house exhibit. Bird houses, you say? Well these were not ordinary bird houses. The imaginations of artists from all over had been allowed to run wild, and there were some wild houses there.

There must have been at least fifty on display, which will be auctioned at the end of the exhibit.

Once again, too many of you did not go on this trip. These trips are designed to expose you to the works of artists and professional woodworkers so you can get ideas and acquire knowledge of techniques of making and shaping objects to suit your particular tastes. It is hoped more of you will avail yourselves of the offerings for improvement your leadership strives to bring to you.



TIM WALKER

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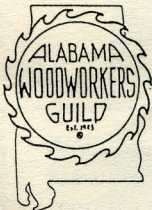
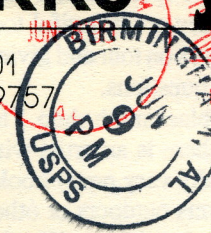
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