



Guild News

VOLUME XV

NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 1997

February Program

One might say that a proper title for our February program is EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SANDING AND SANDERS (not Leonard). Dale Lewis and Nelson Brooks, both talented professional woodworkers, will present the do's and don't of enhancing wood through the appropriate amount of elbow grease. They will suggest to us that many a finely built project became ordinary due to insufficient sanding and finishing, and they are going to demonstrate as many sanding machines as they have time for. One many of us may have never seen except in magazine advertisements is the PERFORMAX drum sander. Nelson has one and will demonstrate it. There are a myriad of other sanding devices, many of which we are already familiar with, but we might learn some new or different applications from these men. Nelson plans to emphasize the technical aspects of sanding and sanders, and Dale will hone in on the techniques of sanding. This is one program you don't want to miss.

January Program

First off, we owe Dale a word of appreciation for convincing Roger Keel to come and present us a program. Then, or second off, we owe Roger a huge vote of thanks for his presentation. Roger is the owner of Roger Keel Refinishing which is located on 22nd Street, across from

Birmingham Wholesale Furniture. It became obvious immediately that this is a man who knows refinishing (wonder if BO knows refinishing). We will not attempt to repeat the chemical formulation of some of the products he uses, but he obviously knows what will work best on any given project. We have visited his shop and the refinishing we saw finished, or almost finished, was spectacular. There were many questions from the floor, and Roger was able to answer them all. We certainly appreciate Roger taking the time to prepare his presentation and making his way to our meeting and sharing with us. Thanks, Roger.

Biography of Dale Lewis

Continuing the presentation of biographies of our officers, we now present DALE LEWIS, Vice-President and Program Chairman. Dale is a native of Birmingham having been born in West End (please don't hold that against him) and he doesn't seem to be the least bit ashamed of it. He attended Hueytown High School and then the University of Alabama where he got his B.S.A. degree. He was a Public Television producer for thirteen years when his background in art was manifested. Then he was employed by University of Alabama - Birmingham (UAB) where he was a media specialist, doing graphic art and photography. While at UAB he secured a Master's degree and progressed through about two-thirds of another before, as he puts it, he decided he knew all he needed to know about everything. During this

time at UAB, the year being 1960, he chanced upon a woodworking shop that was making contemporary furniture. The seed was planted. He immediately secured books on woodworking and began to make contemporary furniture for himself. Visitors and relatives visiting him would comment (brag) on his work, and he would sell them one of whatever it was they so admired. One thing led to another and it wasn't long before he was involved in commission work extensively. As he explained it, he began selling to support his habit. Some three years ago he took early retirement from UAB, built a new home with a beautifully designed shop in the back yard and began a new life. Dale shows his work all over the South and a few other places as well. The only thing he does not divulge is who either dreams up the names of his tables and works or helps him dream

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Wow! What a pleasant surprise to see such a large turn out at our January meeting. Sometimes it is really difficult to get out on those cold nights, but Roger Keel made it all worthwhile. Roger's discussion of types of finishes and finishing techniques was great and just enough to whet our appetites. We're hoping for a follow-up workshop with Roger in the Spring.

Speaking of finishing — you simply cannot get that nice finish without proper preparation. So many times we spend countless hours building that "something special" and then fall short in preparing for the finish. This leads us to the February meeting featuring sanding techniques. I'm sure Dale and Nelson will make this an enlightening evening.

I was at Thuston's Saw Works the other day talking with Fred Baker (and admiring the mortising jig he recently built), and our conversation got around to the woodworking class planned for the Spring. Fred tells me that he and Mike Key are ready to put the final touches on the preparations and will be ready to present the plan at the February meeting. The "sneak preview" he gave me revealed a well thought out series of programs and something I'm sure the Guild will be proud to support. By the way, Fred has taught several woodworking classes and always receives rave reviews.

The "Show and Tell" at the January meeting was great — keep it up! (I still haven't figured out what Jack Perry had in that plastic bag.)

Unfortunately, we did not have enough time for questions and answers at our last meeting. This will be a part of the February meeting.

As mentioned above, the attendance at our January meeting was great, but there were still a number of members not in attendance. Let's all make phone calls to these missing members and have the largest turn out ever at the February meeting. (Or bring a friend who is a prospective member). See you February 13th!

Dan

them up. Take a moment to tell him we appreciate his serving as Vice-President and for the job we know he will do this year.

Ben Neighbors

There was a ceremony at the January meeting that was and is much deserved. Ben took on the TOYS FOR TOTS, now called TOYS FOR CHILDREN program some ten, repeat TEN, years ago. During that time our Guild has made an outstanding contribution in toys at Christmas each year, several of which exceeded 1,000 toys. It takes some kind of dedication and assertiveness to get a bunch of bohunks like us to respond to a plea for toymaking, but Ben had the knack of inspiring us to comply, and we truly appreciate the time and effort he has devoted to this project. He has decided it is time for someone else to tackle this program and retired at the end of last year. In recognition of his dedication he was awarded an appropriate plaque and made a LIFETIME MEMBER of the Guild. Great job, Ben.

Acton Moulding & Supply, Inc.

We continue to enjoy the hospitality of Ron and Sue Acton who have hosted our Guild meetings about fourteen years, now. It has been and we hope will continue to be a mutual appreciation between our members and the Actons. Please turn to the back page of the Guild News and see their new advertisement. It has been several years since this ad was revised or changed, and it now more correctly describes the service and materials available. In case you don't know it, be advised that when we visit Acton's whether it is to buy tools or materials, or our monthly

Guild meeting, you are now on Holy Ground. Remember where the auto parts store was in the right hand back corner? Well, there is now a Baptist Church meeting in there, complete with pews and everything else needed to hold a worship meeting. Now how many Guilds can make that statement? We surely appreciate being a part of the life of Acton Moulding & Supply, Inc.

Show and Tell

This feature of our Guild meeting goes back many years and continues to be a popular pause in our program each month. We say each month because not many months pass that we don't have some show and tell works. Before listing those at the January meeting, let us take a moment to explain it doesn't matter what you are making, or have made, all of us are interested in what it is made of, what techniques were used to make it, and what kind of finish was used. It can be an ornamental object, a tool, a new way of doing something, a new or different kind of material, or just about anything you are doing, no matter what, we all are interested. So, please bring anything you think we would like to know about. At the January meeting we had:

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 PM at Acton Moulding & Supply Co. Information concerning the Guild may be secured by writing P.O. Box 506, Helena AL 35080.

Steve Onisick	Dowels made with a router
Frank Jones	An Axe handle
Jack Perry	Key Ring
	Fishing Puzzles
Paul Mancill	Bread knives and bread board
Leonard Sanders	Coasters made from scraps

For Sale—Trade—Buy

We hope by making a little space available to our members we can provide a service to them when they have need of a tool or something, want to sell a tool or something, or will trade something for something if agreeable. Let the editor know your wishes or needs. This month JIM ANCHORS has a need. He needs a 6" stationary sanding machine (the kind that requires a 6" x 48" sanding belt). If you can accommodate him, call him at 967-1444.

Kudos to Harold Skalka

It is always thrilling to learn that one of our members has achieved something great or has had an honor bestowed upon him. We were informed that Harold Skalka, Chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at UAB School of Medicine, has received a significant grant from Research to Prevent Blindness to support research into the causes, treatment and prevention of blinding diseases. Congratulations Harold but don't let that interfere with your woodworking.

Dues for 1997

We can't pass up the opportunity to remind all of us that our dues are due and payable in January of each

year. If you were not present in January you certainly may make your payment in February. If you missed January and will miss February you may mail your \$25 to Charles Yearby, 433 Westhills Court, Bessemer, AL 35023. We don't wish to make such a big deal of this; we know everyone is good for his dues, but it has been the practice, and still is, only those members whose dues are paid by February will be included in the annual roster of the membership. We want everyone in the roster and thus this pitch for everyone to pay up. 'Nuff said.

The Show

We want to keep our annual show before everyone. It is such a fine moment in our year when The Show, after being judged, is opened to the public. Now we are not suggesting you have to make an exquisite anything, but we are suggesting that the projects our members have made over the years measure up to those of any Guild anywhere. The several categories of projects available make it possible for EVERYONE to enter something. Don't be frightened by the judging—the judge is always a professional woodworker who has been through the mill of learning his trade by making some or all of the things we make. He is very tolerant, not at all critical, but just goes about his job of evaluating what we have made and entered in the show. It is a thrill to win a ribbon and surprisingly easy to win one so begin now, this month, to plan and make an entry in this year's show.

Workmanship of Risk

It seems like every time someone does a project which entails dovetail joints invariably the first discussion revolves around whether they were cut with a chisel and a saw, or with a router and a dovetail jig. Personally, I think that this is neither the most important or the most interesting question.

Twenty some odd years ago or so a friend gave me a very nice book called The Nature and Art of Workmanship by David Pye. I read some of the book and, of course, looked at all the pictures and then, typical for me, I put the book away and forgot about it. When the December '96 issue of Woodwork magazine arrived, I was delighted to find that there was an article about the craftsmanship philosophy of David Pye. It's a philosophy that I personally agree with. Dye defines workmanship as either the workmanship of risk (the chance of screwing up exists) or the workmanship of certainty (little or no chance of screwing up). He felt that it was pointless to differentiate between a board that was sized by a table saw vs. a board that was sized using a hand saw. To Pye, the only question would be: Is the board sized true and precisely?

What should we look for when we look at a dovetail joint or, for that matter, any other detail of a piece of workmanship? Is it precisely done? Is it aesthetically pleasing? Is the detail sized proportionally to the application? Does it contribute to the function of the piece? How much risk was involved? (My scrap pile is a personal testament to the risks of using a Leigh dovetail jig.) Then, if there is any time left after answering these lofty questions, we might ask: "Hey, how'd ya cut dem dovetails?"

Paul Mancill

