The Old Saw
The Newsletter of the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers

November 2006
Volume 18 No. 2

Classic Shaker Pedestal Table
Choosing Woods

Calendar

Nov 11 Period Furniture
Nov 18 Guild Meeting
Nov 25 GSWT
Dec 2 BIG
Jan 13 Period Furniture
Jan 27 GSWT
Feb 3 BIG
Feb 17 Guild Meeting
Mar 10 Period Furniture
Mar 17 Small Meetings
Mar 24 GSWT
Apr 7 BIG
Apr 21 Guild Meeting
May 12 Period Furniture
May 26 GSWT
Jun 2 BIG
Jun 16 Summer Trip
Jul 28 GSWT
Aug 4-12 NH Craftsmen’s Fair

dovetail keys • how to approach a furniture project • free wood at the lathe • crown molding • osgood on design • tool review • build a tapering jig

Photographing Your Work

classic shaker pedestal table

photos by Paul Miller

cherry chest by Paul Miller
Growth and the Future

It has been a Guild tradition over the years for the president to write a column in each issue of *The Old Saw*. The message has been used to ask for feedback, announce changes and new initiatives, request help, and often as a bully pulpit to wax philosophical about our avocation. I had envisioned that when my time came to write this first column, I would sit down at the computer and magically there would emerge a masterpiece of great literary merit. Sorry, but this will not be the case. Instead you are going to get a couple of short topics, each of which by right should be the subject of a full column of its own.

When I first joined the Guild over ten years ago, we were a much smaller group of about 150 members and meetings averaged 25-40 people. We met in a wide variety of member’s shops all over the state. Based on the available shop size, members were often asked to pre-register for the meetings. Slowly over the intervening years the guild grew at a rate of 20 to 30 additional members per year. About three years ago, we seemed to reach “critical mass” and our rate of growth accelerated. A variety of factors including the general growth of woodworking as a hobby, recruiting success at Sunapee and Canterbury, word of mouth referrals, and press exposure all contributed to this growth. We now stand poised to break the 500 member mark in 2007.

Growth has presented us with a number of issues that have to be dealt with if the guild is to remain a healthy and vibrant organization. More importantly, it has presented us with a variety of options and opportunities to enhance value of being a guild member and to improve the guild experience for all of us. The question becomes one of – how do we deal with the challenges of growth; where do we want to go; and how do we get there? Your Steering Committee is currently in the process of setting up a strategic planning committee to examine these issues and to develop a five year plan. In the next issue of *The Old Saw*, there will be more about this process. Expect over the next year to hear much more on the future of the Guild and about how to add your input.

In a related topic, I made a short mention at the annual meeting about the possible formation of additional sub-groups for the guild. Currently we have BIG (Beginner & Intermediate Group), the Period Furniture Group and the...
The next Guild meeting will be held on November 18th at the Cheshire Career Center at Keene High School in the Construction Trades Lab. The regular session will be from 10am-12pm followed by one hour for lunch. There is a two hour demonstration from 1pm-3pm. Bring your own chair and lunch.

The guest presenter is Jere Williams. He will demonstrate how to incorporate sculpture or flowing design into furniture making. Jere has been building studio furniture for ten years. He earned his masters degree from Georgia State University in 2002. His work has been featured in both public and private art collections. Jere moved to New Hampshire with his wife and two children and presently teaches at St. Paul's School in Concord. Jere authored the Master Class article *Use an angle grinder to sculpt flowing joinery* in the August issue of *Fine Woodworking Magazine*.

This should be a very educational and interesting demonstration. – **Sal Morgani**

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**Volunteer Opportunities**

The Guild needs your help. We have two volunteer positions open at this time.

Bob Trahan has done yeoman service for a number of years as our librarian. He is unable to continue the job of storing and transporting our library of DVD disks. We are looking for someone willing to take this on. Of course, this means you would have access to the entire library all the time.

The League of NH Craftsmen’s Fair at Sunapee, NH is a major event for the Guild each August. Dave Anderson organized our most recent effort, and as current president, Dave needs to make way for new blood. We are looking for someone to take overall responsibility for organizing the volunteer effort. This is an important job for the Guild that will put you in contact with a cross section of our membership.

Autumn is upon us now, and the guild and woodworking seasons are shifting into high gear as the summer yard implements and the vacation toys get stowed for the winter. Take part in guild events and make use of your guild benefits. Your membership is useful only if you use it. On a final note, stay aware of what you are doing in the shop at all times and think safety.

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Granite State Woodturners. Each holds its own series of five to six meetings per year on topics of interest to its members. Several members have suggested additional areas where they think there is enough interest to form a new sub-group. The process of forming a new group is simple and straightforward. A member makes an announcement at a meeting or in *The Old Saw* that he or she is forming a group on a particular topic. An organizational meeting date is set and the group elects or appoints a contact person. The group members themselves decide what direction to pursue and how often they will meet. The challenge here is finding someone willing to take the first step and begin the process. It is important to note that the organizer does not have to be an expert in the area of interest. They only need to take the initiative and be willing to organize. The guild officers and steering committee will offer assistance and advice.

*Suggested topics have been Hand Tools—Old Tools, Finishing and Restoration, and Design.* If you have any interest in these topics or have a topic of your own, step forward at the business meeting portion of the next guild meeting in November or contact me by phone or email.

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From Manchester/Nashua...

Follow Rt101 West
Entering Keene, at 3rd light, take right onto Rt 10/12 North
Take 1st exit, West St
Turn left at bottom of ramp
Stay straight to go onto Park Ave
Take left onto Arch St at blinking light
Keene High School will be on right
Turn into parking lot “C” at far end of the high school
Large white overhead door is the Construction Trades Lab

From Concord...

Take I-89 North
Exit 5—Rt9 West (42 miles)
Rt 9 will merge with Rt12 S (just stay straight)
Take 1st exit after merger, West St
Turn left at bottom of ramp
Stay straight to go onto Park Ave
Take left onto Arch St at blinking light
Keene High School will be on right
Turn into parking lot “C” at far end of the high school
Large white overhead door is the Construction Trades Lab

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**President’s Message**

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President's Message — continued
**Q** JAPAN DRIER – What is the purpose of “Japan Drier” and does it have a useful place in the furniture finisher’s arsenal?  
– Greg Benulis

**Brooks Tanner replies:** Japan drier reduces the drying time of oil and oil based finishes. It is a metallic salt, usually cobalt, that acts as a catalyst aiding in chemical linking of the molecules.

Japan drier should be used in very small quantities since excess use can cause a darkening of the product or even cracking. Use of the drier also increases the gloss of the product and should be tested on a sample if a sheen level needs to be matched. Drier should be added only to the amount of product that is to be used. If Japan drier is added to a can of product, gelling may occur, even if the can is sealed. Since drying time is reduced, leveling is also reduced and brush marks may show more.

Should it be in a finisher’s cabinet? Absolutely. Sometimes I use it because I don’t have the twelve hours for normal drying; or its late in the day and the customer is coming in first thing in the morning. Reduced dry time also reduces the likelihood of dust getting into the finish. Also adding drier ensures that the product will dry. This is sometimes a concern if dissimilar materials are mixed or if an unknown oil finish has already been applied to the wood.

**Bruce Hamilton replies:** I’ve been familiar with Japan driers since I started my finishing career thirty years ago. All I had readily available at the time for a table top finish was varnish. At Johnson’s Paint store in Boston, where I purchased my varnishes, it was recommended that I put some Japan drier in my varnish. Since I didn’t have much experience with varnishes, I couldn’t tell whether it did any good or not. I had that can of Japan drier until last year when I finally sent it off to our town’s household hazardous waste day collection.

**Q** How effective are Japan dryers in oil finishes?  
– Herm Finkbeiner

**Herm Finkbeiner replies:** Japan drier refers to metal salts that are oxidation catalysts and usually is a cobalt salt, cobalt linoleate or cobalt naphthanate, that is added to drying oils like linseed, walnut oil, safflower oil or lacquer to accelerate the curing. Painters use them for the same purpose and probably much more commonly than furniture makers. Without a drier, a lacquer such as used on Japanese lacquerware can take 3-4 months to harden. However, it can take just a week or less with a cobalt salt accelerant. I have no idea how effective they are in an application like wood finishing where a significant portion of the oil is absorbed into the wood and its oxidation is intrinsically slower as a result.

**Q** LATHE RUNOUT – How do I make sure a lathe is running true (round)?  
– Bob St. Laurent

**Brooks Tanner replies:** Measuring lathe runout is a relatively simple procedure. Tools needed are a dial test indicator and a magnetic base, or other base to hold the indicator. A base and indicator set which will work well for this application is often on sale at MSC for $25.

To make the measurement, attach the base to one of the lathe weighs and place the tip of the indicator perpendicular to the inside wall of the morse taper. Rotate the lathe by hand and watch the indicator needle. Stop the rotation at the lowest reading and set the dial to “0”. Now rotate the lathe until the needle reads its highest. This reading is your runout. Repeat this test on the outside of the shaft. The taper should be concentric with the same runout to the outside of the shaft but is not guaranteed. Similar procedures may also be used in measuring runout of other tools such as your table saw, drill press and chop saw.

**Joe Barry replies:** To check the truth of a lathe, grasp and try to move the spindle to check the bearing play. Then put a point center in both the headstock and tailstock and slide the tailstock up so they are tip to tip. Adjust the tailstock if they don’t line up.

If you have a patternmaker’s or machinist’s lathe, you can use a test bar (a known straight round bar with centers at each end) between the centers. Slowly feed from the headstock to the tailstock using a dial indicator. Watch for any deviation.

For those of us with a regular wood lathe, use the dial indicator secured to the bed with either a magnetic base or a clamp. Check the spindle for run-out.
Here is an elegant little joint that is very easy to make and adds a touch of class plus the mystery of a dovetail to the un-initiated. Use this on a box or a picture frame to strengthen a corner. It has all the appearances of a dovetail joint but fits unique applications where you would have a hard time doing a real dovetail.

Make the simple jig shown to hold the project against the router fence at a 45° angle to the table. In this picture frame jig, notice there is only one guide board. It’s not necessary to have the frame fully contained. Just be sure to make the corner of the frame touches the table with no gaps at the table or against the guide board. Be consistent in your positioning on all four corners. Clamp the frame to the jig and cut a dovetail slot through the corners on a router table.

Then with the dovetail bit still at the same height, cut a dovetail male part, typically from a scrap of contrasting wood. Set the fence for a light cut and make a pass on each side of the board. Test the fit of the dovetail in the slot after each pass. Slowly adjust the fence to take a deeper cut. A couple of tips: 1) make the cut on one side at a time. Symmetry is not necessary on the resulting dovetail key. 2) shim the cut with a piece of paper making the cut not as deep. Then if another very light pass is required to get the key to fit, remove the paper shim. This key, like all dovetail joints, is easy to over-cut and with a result that is too loose, so take your time here.

Use the table saw to rip (separate) the dovetail from the main part of the stock on the table saw leaving a little flash. Cut it into lengths and glue into the slot.

Trim to fit with a flush trim saw or your disc sander. And finally sand and finish. Very strong. Very elegant.

**Ask This Old Saw! - continued**

using the dial indicator while rotating the spindle by hand. You can then check your various chucks for run-out also.

*Geoff Ames replies:* Before running your lathe, insert a spur pointed drive center in the headstock and a spur pointed center in the tailstock. Loosen the tailstock and move it to the headstock. The two centers should touch point to point.

Sharpen your gouge. Then set up your lathe and turn a spindle round with no chatter. You can then run a pencil in the center of the spindle and observe if the spindle is marked evenly around the full circumference of the spindle.

If you turn a long spindle, you may experience some wobble at the center. This is normal and usually requires a hand behind the turning or a steady rest.

If you are scraping rather than cutting, you will experience rough going and will need to sharpen your tools far too often. Often what seems to be a poorly running lathe is a turner who needs a little practice or a lesson.

*Jon Siegel replies:* All lathes run true if the axis stays in one place. Maybe the centers are poorly manufactured and don’t run true (replace or re-machine them). Maybe the bore doesn’t run true, or the threads don’t run true, but you can’t fix these things. And they don’t

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Choosing Woods

very woodworking magazine has project articles with plenty of instruction. What’s often missing – and it can add up to a sizable chunk of time – is deciding which woods to use and how to choose quality boards for the project.

When it came to picking woods, the Shakers simply used what grew in their forests. They understood the unique properties of each tree. We have far more choices from all over the world. Many books describe each in detail and it’s a good place to start when designing a new project. I also rely on my experience as I carefully consider a wood’s color, grain, figure (the unique character of the grain such as curly, quilt, birdseye), stability, workability, the width of average boards, and hardness which relates to how that species will wear and take and hold detail.

There’s no mystery why over the years mahogany, walnut, and in certain regions cherry were so often used for the most fashionable furniture. They are stable, easily worked, they can have beautiful figure, come in wide and clear boards, and they are a warm color with subdued and alluring grain. They are ideal from all points of view. Yet, as the Shakers showed so well, beautiful objects can also be made from the most humble woods.

Woods and colors fall in and out of vogue. Where once dark woods were the rage, today it’s the warm tones of cherry or the clean lightness of maple. The color of a wood is far from static. In weeks, cherry can go from a bland pink to a rich deep red, and if it happens to be in the sunlight, it can eventually bleach to the warm flesh tones of pear. The purples in purpleheart fade, as do the rich reds of paduk to quite different tones entirely. Light woods tend to darken and dark woods lighten, but not always in the way you might expect. To add to the challenge, each tree is a slightly different color. The best way to understand these changes is to make samples, finish some and put them in and out of the light. They help me to communicate to a client the way their piece will age and the color evolve.

Workability and hardness, often linked, come to mind next when choosing a wood. Am I building a chair where strength is foremost, or a cabinet where it is not? Soft woods such as pine and butternut can’t take and hold fine details well, but they can develop the most beautiful surfaces with a patina that records every ding. Elm, black locust, and quilted birch are harder and tougher and so ornery that I think twice before using them, or add a good measure of extra time to my estimate. Figured or quartersawn woods always take extra effort. Ebony, rosewood and most of the exotics do as well since they are so hard, but the effort is worth it for the crisp clean edges and fine details they take and hold.

For internal case parts, drawer sides and shelves, its hard to beat basswood, aspen, tulip poplar, or white pine. They work easily, are stable, a light color, and fairly easy to find in wide clear boards. Of these, pine is a favorite for wide case backs or drawer bottoms.

The grain and figure of a wood can have a powerful effect on a design. Too often I see highly figured woods used to carry a weak design, trying to make the piece somehow more dramatic. While too much can be overwhelming, richly figured wood or quartersawn sparkle can add much allure to important focus points such as a tabletop, drawer faces, or door panels. The strong contrast of some sapwood against a darker heart (such as cherry) can also add interest.

White and red oak, white ash, and elm have such robust grain that it can dominate any design. To me they are masculine woods, suited to the rectilinear forms and bold details of Craftsmen work, not something delicate or ornate. They all bend well and are so strong and tough that for steam bent chair parts or drawer

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The Four Points

how to approach a furniture project

In my last article in this series, I discussed how to approach a furniture project. How to have the right “I can do it” mental attitude. I would now like to continue our journey and convey to you what I have learned as to why one piece of furniture may look OK, but another similar design looks great.

Kathy (my wife) and I were browsing this store which had eighteen century reproductions, when this piece caught our eye. It was a tiger maple highboy. As we approached, you could see that the wood was absolutely beautiful. Perfect stripes, evenly spaced, and stained just right to bring out the stripes without clouding it. But there was something wrong. Stepping back and looking at the outline I realized that it was the proportion that I did not like. The legs were too short, even though they were beautiful in their own right, they were too short for the highboy. It made it look squatty and top heavy. I realized that there was a fan carved in the lower center drawer. It was perfectly executed but you could not readily see it because of the maple curl.

Kathy and I discussed the piece at length on the way home. This is when I came to realize that a fine piece of furniture not only has pleasing proportions, but the wood selection must be compatible with the design, the workmanship must be impeccable and the finish must enhance the piece. These are the four points that distinguish a fine piece from a mediocre one – design, wood selection, workmanship and finish.

Design – I guess no discussion on design can be done without mentioning the Golden Mean or Golden Rectangle. Architects and artists believe that this proportion is aesthetically pleasing. Basically it is a ratio of the longer side to the shorter side. If your cabinet is 1 unit high then it is 1.618 units long. I made two-recessed cabinets on either side of my fireplace. I first drew a set of plans to one quarter inch scale. Something didn’t look right but I couldn’t tell what it was. I got the idea to draw the outline of it full scale on the wall where it was going. That’s when I realized it was too narrow for it’s height.

Holding up a full-scale drawing also helps with the perspective. When I drew the Flame Finials on my Tall Case Clock, they looked great looking at them face down on the drawing board. But when I taped the drawing to the wall, the finials were seven feet above the floor and they looked much too small.

Wood Selection – As stated before, the wood must compliment the design. How many times have you seen someone at the wood bin just picking out pieces that seem to look OK? How great can the piece turn out to be if so little thought is given to the wood?

When I buy a piece, I try to measure and lay out how I will cut it and the relationship of the grain and figure for each component.

Pick a species compatible with your design and period. Pick a type to enhance the design not in conflict with it. Highly figured woods usually do not go with carvings. Tea table tops look wonderful in figured wood, but legs do not. Drawer fronts of figured wood become the focal point if the dividers and sides of the cabinet are straight grained. Raised panels and blocks are good in figured wood but the stiles and rails should be straight grained – both for stability and contrast.

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You can find hundreds of descriptions on how to install crown molding with a quick Google search. They will tell you the basics of the miter cuts and the cope cuts and this is all well and good. A great source for molding installation help is the Brosco catalog. It has a whole section on cutting and installing moldings and it is free at your local lumberyard. What they usually do not mention is the differences between using crown on a piece of furniture and installing crown in a room or on a building.

The fundamentals of crown molding and most moldings in general are easy. Mitered cuts are always used on outside corners. Inside corners are generally done with cope cuts. In some inside corners of 45° or less, you may have to do an inside miter because the back cut of the cope gets feathery. Make sure the moldings are the exact same profile and thickness. Most common moldings might have the same catalog number but may have slight differences if they come from different mill runs. Try to buy from the same bundle. Custom moldings are usually very accurate. For most furniture work, you will be purchasing very small quantities and it should come out of the same mill run.

I make all the moldings for my cabinets with either a shaper or a Williams and Hussey molding planer. Williams and Hussey will custom grind most any profile I send them. There are some mills that will do short runs. Just remember the knives are expensive and you will pay for them if it is a custom profile. The big mills want a minimum of 700 lineal feet. You can find endless molding companies on the web that will sell you eight feet or so in hardwood.

Molding is usually cut upside down and backwards. I typically mount a wooden fence to my miter saw and draw a line on the fence, this way I am always cutting from the same angle (photo 1). I make a fence if I have an extensive project (photo 2). This fence is not worth the labor if only a couple hundred feet are involved. I cut moldings using a 10˝ sliding compound miter saw. You can also use a hand miter box or a table saw.

Life is easier when applying crowns to furniture if the cabinet is square. That way you can cut 45° angles. If it is not square, you will have to cut outside miters at angles that are half the degrees as the corner – 22.5° to 23.5°. Depending on the way the cabinet is built, you may be able to apply the molding to the top rail with blocking behind the molding. Or perhaps you can screw it to the top of the cabinet. This would have to be a profile on the edge of a wide board and not a traditional molding stock. In other more elaborate pieces, you will have to use blocking to attach the crown (photo 3).

I generally glue the molding to the cabinet. This is tricky, especially when the piece starts sliding due to the lubricating effect of the glue. I try to make provisions for this by grooving moldings (lower molding in photo 3) or brading them behind copes.

House interiors, both old and new, are not square. This has to do with the way sheet rock and plaster are applied. Exterior work is generally square and plumb. Interior crowns are fairly easy. First, in most houses, the material is pine. It is soft and easy to work though Monterey pine out of New Zealand can be very hard, and is common. Hardwood is more difficult and prefinished is painstakingly precise. I usually make a test piece for the cope and the miter each about two feet long. I use this to test the corners of the room. This gives me an indication of how I will have to adjust the cut. I do this by eye. With experience you can see a degree or two. Sometimes it has to be adjusted for a slight compound which, if not too severe, I do with a low angle block plane.

I make gauge blocks for the height of the molding.
and mark a series of dashed lines around the room referencing from the ceiling. I cut the molding and nail it to the studs and strapping. If there is no strapping, I make blocking by beveling framing stock and nail this to the studs.

**Why cope the inside corner?** As usual, wood movement is one of the culprits. Also, sheetrock methods that form corners greater than ninety degrees. If you imagine an inside crown corner mitered, the top or bottom will open up as the humidity changes through the seasons. This depends on when it was installed. The cope, due to the overlap, reduces the chance of the joint opening.

If you slightly back cut the cope, you have some flexibility if the inside corner is out of square. Outside miters, if executed properly, are glued, jointed or glued and nailed. This greatly reduces the chances of the joint opening.

I recently worked on a house I had previously worked on ten years earlier. The project was two rooms of floor to ceiling raised panel work with shell corner cabinets. The house was built in 1712 and time has removed any sense of plumb and level. Sometimes I wonder if they were ever plumb and level. The house is a four square which means two rooms front and two rooms back. You can walk through the entire house and end up where you started. However, in this house, there is a step in the kitchen and no other step in the house. The ceiling had different heights with beams and an assortment of problems. The owner said “I want picture rail molding and make it look good.” I cringed inside and said no problem. That is a fairly easy project requirement. I felt the picture rail was out of place but, the client insisted.

The picture rail is the first molding above the panel work (photo 5 on page 11). This needed to be the same height around the room. The crown on the corner cabinet needed to tie into the main crown molding above the picture rail. The problem was a ceiling height change above the fireplace. I fabricated a custom piece of crown to fill this one area. This was a difficult design problem that was not fully worked out on the drawing board. Only when on site and the installation was near completion could I see what it needed. Also note the crooked ceiling left to right of the fireplace.

Crown moldings are not always used for ceiling corner applications. Crown molding can also be used on mantels, pediments, capitals and a variety of different work (photo 6 on page 8).
Don’t let fear of a “catch” stop you from learning good technique. The recurring theme of Frank Pain’s classic book *The Practical Woodturner* is, “Cut the wood as it prefers to be cut.” By this he means shearing down grain with a cutting tool guided by its bevel. He also writes about scrapers, and how to use them in their proper place. “Many like this tool as it has no funny ways, and requires little skill in its use.”

**The Cut vs Scrape Dilemma**

If you have read some of my previous articles, you already know the difference between cutting and scraping, and that scraping is almost never used in spindle turning. You also know that I pursued the scraping method first, had to unlearn that, and start over. If I can do anything to help you in your learning process, it would be to save you from that mistake.

I see many beginners who scrape most of the details, because they have experienced too many ruined pieces caused by the “catch” of a cutting chisel. After this has happened a few times, it is possible to fall back into the habit of scraping.

Sometimes I get a catch. For decades I’ve been trying to eliminate this error, but I can’t. This is the downside to cutting chisels, but I think that whatever your level, your goal should be to reduce the number of catches and not retreat to inferior methods just because it seems safe.

**What is a Catch?**


**What Causes a Catch?**

The shear angle of the cut causes sideways force on the chisel. This works against the force from the bevel riding the wood and the blade riding on the tool rest. These three forces must be in balance. When they are, the tool rest does all the work, and you can hold the chisel very lightly in the tips of your fingers. Catches occur when the forces go out of balance beyond the ability of your hand to control the chisel. Usually a catch is over in less than ¼ of a second (two or three revolutions) so you don’t have time to react. Occasionally you can feel it coming and recover.

The amount of energy which is released at the moment of a dig-in depends on many factors. Light weight workpieces may slip and stay in place, but heavy pieces possess considerable kinetic energy, and a catch which leads to a full dig-in can be dangerous. We hope the chisel is not wrenched from your hands, as we don’t like flying objects with razor edges. Other dangers induced by a catch include workpieces dislodged from their mounting, or pieces of the turning breaking off.

**Why Scraping Should Not Be Used in Spindle Turning**

Scraping is a process that works quite well with the grain direction, but very poorly across the grain. The photographs show the effects on flat pieces of wood. Pairs of mahogany blocks are arranged with the grain crossed. The first two photos show the application of the tools, and the third shows the results. A cutting tool (carving gouge) produces almost as good a finish across the grain as with the grain, but a scraper (convex card scraper) produces a decidedly poor finish across the grain. In spindle turning, the tool is always moving across the grain, therefore scraping is the wrong choice.
Benefits of the Cutting Method

- Cutting results in a better finish than scraping and therefore requires less sanding. This is how the old timers got a perfect finish before sandpaper was invented.
- Cutting chisels stay sharp longer than scrapers.
- Cutting chisels produce less force on the tool edge because of the high positive rake angle. This results in less vibration.
- The rubbing of the bevel is a fundamental part of the cutting method. This dampens vibration of the workpiece.

Learning to use cutting tools, requires practice of specific skills that will help you avoid catches and develop confidence. This will be the topic of my next few articles. For now I will simply leave you with one final quote from Frank Pain. “I am anxious that you should enjoy the sense of achievement that comes when you master the action of wood-turning tools.”

CROWN MOLDING – continued

Remember that lumber yard crown is reasonable priced and can be a less expensive way to practice before diving into expensive hardwood moldings. With a little practice, you will gain the skill to add crown to your projects. Also, the internet is a great place to find how-to examples.
I have always taken pictures of the things I created, but when I started woodworking full-time, I knew that I would need to make professional quality pictures of my work. You may need the pictures for any of several reasons — to market yourself and your work, as a record or “catalog” to show prospective customers, as part of the application process to get into juried shows, or perhaps to create a website. I had seen some of the portfolios of the Furniture Masters work and I knew that my snapshots were not going to make the grade.

Most of the sources of information I researched strongly suggested that you hire a professional photographer to take your pictures, and for top quality work, this is probably good advice. The problem I faced, however, was that I was woodturning a lot of lower cost objects at the time and the cost of a professional photographer could have exceeded the income I would get from selling the objects. Also, I knew that I would not run to my professional every time I created a new item for sale. Thus many of the pieces I created would never get photographed well. There had to be a better way and for a “DIY” mentality like mine. The answer of course was to learn how to take quality pictures myself.

I was fortunate to be introduced to a retired professional who offered to have me visit him in his studio. He showed me the basics of taking quality photos of products in a studio environment. He introduced me to the kind of equipment I needed and demonstrated how to use it as we took pictures of my work.

The Background

The background of your picture is one of the first indications that an important object is being viewed. For your work to be presented well, it must be the dominant item in the photo. In fact, it should almost always be the only item in the picture. A background must not distract from the central point of the photograph — that of presenting your work. Thus it needs to be plain, without any distracting pattern or detail. This is distinctly different from your normal family photos which often are intended to show the subjects in situations, such as your family at home on Christmas or perhaps in your vacation setting.

The horizon is a distraction that needs to be eliminated. The way to eliminate it is to have the background be without any sharp bends or seams. This could be the line formed between the floor and a wall. It should be smooth and continuous from the bottom (front) of the photograph under the object up to the top (back). Bed sheets do not work. Bed sheets that have been very carefully ironed to remove all wrinkles do not work. They still look like bed sheets when photographed.

The best practical solution I have found is to buy professional photographic background paper. It is not that expensive in the overall scheme of things and is an investment that, if carefully handled, can last a very long time. One popular brand is Savage. If you buy the wide rolls through mail-order, the shipping will be as much as the cost of the paper. I bought two rolls for the same shipping cost as one roll. A good local camera shop may have some in stock but will not likely have a full selection available. You will need
to build or arrange a support to hold the roll behind and above the back of the object unrolling what you need to pass under the object toward the front bottom of the picture.

The paper comes in rolls of several widths from about two to twelve feet and many colors. I bought white paper about nine feet wide and cut the roll on the tablesaw into two parts, 3½ and 5½ feet wide. Generally those widths have served me well; for larger pieces of furniture I have sometimes regretted having cut the paper. However, most of the time I use the smaller width and I am not sure how I would have handled and stored the nine foot width, anyway. You should get whatever widths and colors are suitable for your work.

Many professionals use a neutral gray color and for some objects black is used. I have found white to be very acceptable. I think it depends on the color of your work as you don’t want your work to disappear in the background or have an objectionable color clash. Once you choose a satisfactory color, you should stay with it so all of your work has a consistent look. The paper needs to be clean, without blemish, and without folds or creases. If it is not perfect, cut off the blemished area and use a clean section.

Lighting

Proper lighting is absolutely critical and is probably the single most important aspect to quality photography. It is also the most complex and challenging thing to do well. Distracting shadows, inaccurate color reproduction, poor focus, poor contrast with washed out detail and glaring reflections all contribute to a negative image of your work. These problems can all be minimized by paying attention to a few principles.

Light can be used in any color but for photography we generally use “white” light. This has a roughly even mix of red, green and blue. However, even lights that are perceived as “white” can be different in ways that are important for photography. Color is measured on a scale in degrees Kelvin (K). Two important light sources are daylight which measures 5500K and tungsten which measures 3200K.

It is important that the camera settings, film (if used) and lighting be balanced if the color of your work is to be photographed accurately. Depending on the setup used, an imbalance will tilt colors toward either the red/yellow or the blue end of the color spectrum. Note that if you are using tungsten lighting, you must remove any interference from daylight from the area either by closing window shades, which is difficult to do well, or by shooting at night. All of the light sources that can affect your photography should be consistent.

The brighter a light source is, the smaller lens opening (aperture) is required and the faster shutter speed that can be used to get a correct exposure. A small aperture (measured on your camera as a high f-stop) translates to a sharper picture because the depth of field is greater. This means that your entire object remains in better focus from the front to the back. A fast shutter speed makes sharper pictures because there is less time that the lens is open to be affected by vibration or other movement. Thus you want to have the highest practical intensity light source you can get. I use three 500 watt tungsten quartz lights for all my product photography and even then my shutter speeds are fairly slow. The downside is that these lights consume power and are very hot.

You need to control contrast and shadows to produce really good pictures. A bright point source of light can throw really strong shadows which can distract from the product image you want to present. Try this on a Windsor chair sometime with all of its spindles, legs and stretchers. Either too strong or too weak a contrast can prevent your product details from showing to advantage.

One way of controlling this is to have as broad a source of light as possible. If you are outside on a bright sunny day, you will throw a strong distinct shadow. This is because the sun, even though it is very large, is so far away that it is acting as a point source of light. Almost all of the light striking an object is coming straight from the point source and strong sharp shadows appear at the edges where the object blocks the light from passing behind it. If you are outside on a cloudy overcast day, your shadows will be much weaker and less distinct or sharp. This is because the light from the sun has been dispersed by the atmosphere so that the light appears to come from all directions.

To reduce shadows and contrast, you want light to strike the object from all
directions. You can achieve this by using multiple broad light sources close to the object from several directions. This also gives you the flexibility to control shadows and contrast by placing lights at different angles and distances from the object. Perhaps you want to bias a shadow toward one side of the object or to arrange the contrast so a particular feature or detail is enhanced, either lighter or darker. Within limits, adding a light to the side of the object that is showing a shadow reduces the shadow, sort of like washing it out. Conversely, adding that light will tend to create a shadow on the opposite side of the object. This is why you need the broad light sources. Simply adding more point sources of light will create multiple hard shadows for a very unnatural look.

Reflections or glare are caused when light reflecting off the object is directed at the camera lens. This is one reason you should never use the on-camera flash unit to take serious pictures. To reduce the reflections, place your lights at an angle so the reflection goes off to the side away from the camera lens. For objects with flat surfaces, this is often easy to do and is a good solution. Also objects that are not highly reflective are easy to photograph well. In fact, I understand that some photographers even use a dulling spray to reduce reflections on difficult objects. The most difficult objects to photograph have highly reflective curved surfaces. A mirrored ball would be an interesting item to test your skills on. From my own experience, woodturned bowls often are difficult. My current solution for this involves post processing the image with computer software, after having done my best with the lighting setup.

So, what lights should you buy and how should you set them up? There are a huge number of choices as you will see if you explore the websites or catalogs of some of the larger photographic suppliers. I bought a lighting kit, in a case, and stands and umbrellas. It was expensive, nearly $800, but it is top professional quality, it works very well and it is what my mentor told me I should get. You can get by with much less.

The umbrellas reflect the light back toward the object as a broad source of light. I usually use one light on each side of the object about 45 degrees from the path from the camera to the object. I adjust the position of each light, its angle, height and distance, for the best effect. The third light is often placed above the object and to the side to light the object's top surface.

Other options for lights include photofloods and strobe lights. The strobe lights are used by professionals but have the disadvantage that you can't really see the effect until you see the result in the photograph. Other means of reflecting light can be used such as white posterboard sheets. Light can also be diffused by passing it through a translucent medium.

If you want to have a serious look at understanding photographic lighting, the best resource I have found is the book *Light – Science & Magic* by Fil Hunter and Paul Fuqua (*Focal Press 1997 – Second Edition*).

**The Camera**

In spite of the many camera advertisements to the contrary, I think that the price of the camera equipment you buy is the least important factor in taking quality pictures of your work. I started with a good quality 35 mm SLR film camera with quality lenses and I certainly could take good photographs with that equipment. I waited quite a while but later, when I wanted to join the digital revolution, I was not ready to invest a large sum in a digital camera. The technology and camera prices were just moving too fast for me. I finally bought a small consumer-oriented snapshot digital camera when the price of a quality brand 4 megapixel camera hit my target. That is the lowest resolution that I consider for taking quality pictures that can be enlarged. Today, 6-10 megapixel cameras are common in the consumer price range. My dream camera is a 10 megapixel or more SLR with interchangeable lenses. It is now rapidly approaching the price point where I would think seriously of buying. Maybe I can get it next year.

**Film vs. Digital**

The only practical option when I started was to use film. There were many difficult issues. I needed to match the color temperature of the film to the lighting and that meant that I bought special film that was only available from professional sources, at higher cost and lower availability. I used Kodak Portra Tungsten film with a 3200K color temperature to match my tungsten lighting. To reduce the grain in the image and to ensure a sharp image, the film needed to be a slow-speed film (ISO 100 or lower), which meant long exposure times. Long exposure times create sharpness issues due to vibration. A tripod and a cable release are necessary to make sure the camera does not shake.

I always used the highest aperture setting (smallest lens opening) to get the sharpest picture possible. This, along with the slow film speed, made exposure times of 2 seconds or more. A special gray card is used to find the correct exposure setting. By manually setting the aperture in aperture mode, and filling the camera's frame with the gray card, the camera's light meter can be used to get the correct exposure time. Then the camera can be set manually for both aperture and lens speed and the picture taken without the gray card. If this process is not used and the camera is used in auto mode, the exposure will not always be optimum. I do not understand all the technical reasons why this is the case, but trust me.

With film, there is a delay in seeing the results of the photography usually of several days. This meant that if things did not come out right, I would have to set up everything again and reshoot. After I had the pictures, to post-process them I would have to scan them into my computer at a high resolution. To make the scanning effective, I had to get prints developed that were larger and more expensive. I found that the one-hour turnaround developers were not able to provide the necessary quality and print options I wanted.

All of these issues were relaxed or eliminated when I started using a digital camera. I highly recommend that you consider one. If you need to continue using film, I hope that the information here will help you take better pictures.
waiting for developing the film, I could really experiment with lighting setups and camera settings. Also, with no film to buy and develop, I could take all the pictures I wanted at no cost. The only time it cost me money was for paper and printer ink if I thought a photo was good enough to print. I could take all the pictures I wanted, load them into my computer, view them in detail and process and print only the special ones. I could delete anything I thought was useless, although it is not in my nature to do that very often. I backup my pictures by writing them to a CD from my computer.

The digital camera gives you full control over all the camera settings, even more than the film camera. I still need to pay attention to the same issues I had with film photography. I continue to use a tripod for all of my product photography. I don't have the ability to use a cable release with my digital, but I can use the camera's self-timer to delay the shutter for two to ten seconds after I press the shutter button. Instead of buying special film, I can set the camera's white-balance setting to the Tungsten value.

I continue to use a small aperture (high f-stop) setting for sharp pictures with the best possible depth of field. I am a little less concerned about manual exposure settings with the gray card. However, it is still available if I need it. I will sometimes use either an automatic mode or aperture-priority mode to make my photo session take less time since I can quickly go to my computer and view the results.

Post Processing

I post-process all my photos on the computer using Adobe Photoshop. There are many other programs available. Some are for free on the internet. Some come with your digital camera. However, I don't have much experience with these. You will need more than simple cropping and red-eye reduction programs. Photoshop is by far the leader with professionals and is a complex and expensive program with a steep learning curve. I think it is also the best. Like anything else you will get out of it what you put in for effort and whether you should make the investment depends entirely on your commitment to it. I know there are other less costly ways of accomplishing much of what is needed to process your photographs without getting into all the esoteric things that Photoshop can do.

There are several things I do to process my pictures. First, all pictures will need to be cropped to fill the frame with the object and to center it as you wish it to be shown leaving appropriate space around the object. I then go over the picture very carefully to remove all defects, the dirt spots and specks, unwanted color variations, etc. I will touch up any unwanted glare and reflections. Color and tonal adjustments can be done to correct the picture for color and exposure. I will sometimes give the white background a hint of color to complement the object or soften any of the white harshness. I may use the gradient tool to give a little interest to the setting. There are many other possibilities.

One ethical comment is appropriate here. Your goal is to display your product at its best, not to make a work that you did not produce. These programs are very powerful. With care and skill, you can produce any photograph you want. These days, you can not always believe what you see in a picture.

Photography as Craft and as Art

Everything we have explored so far is the technical side of photography – the craft side. If you pay attention to all of these details and execute them well, you should be able to produce quality photographs that accurately present your work. A photograph that does not offend the viewer is only the first goal, however. You will also need to think about how you want the viewer to see your work and this is where the art side of photography enters the picture.

When you are setting up your lighting, take the time to consider the orientation of the work to the camera and how the lighting affects what you will see after the picture is created. The positioning of the product, the details that are shown, the background, the shadows and shading, and the highlighted portions are all part of displaying your work at its best. Just as when you make a piece, both craft and art need to come together before the work can be considered outstanding.
Throughout the nineteenth century, the Shakers with their motto “Hands to work, hearts to God”, produced furniture of extraordinary quality. Perhaps the finest known pedestal table was one made around 1830 at Hancock Shaker Village, Hancock, MA.

Simplicity and perfection, two of the high ideals pursued by the Shakers, seem to radiate from this table with its harmonious lines and minimalist composition. Like so many Shaker creations, there is nothing flashy about it. You’ll find no inlays, veneer, carving or brass. Decorative features like these were considered “superfluous”, and therefore avoided by Shakers, for they believed them to have a tendency to feed the pride and vanity of man – traits foreign to a heart given to God.

By eliminating all decorative distraction, you are left to work simply with material and form. As a maker of high-end custom furniture, I have always found the prospect of reproducing this Shaker table a refreshing challenge, and a “back to basics” reminder that the core beauty of an object lies in its form.

When making this table, I feel forced to confront the question of what exactly constitutes a great design. And the answer always seems to be something like this – a truly successful design should be able to pass, for lack of a better term, what I would call “the flat black test”. Meaning, if painted completely flat black, would the design still succeed?

I think this design quality is what people are getting at when they speak of a given design’s “honesty” or “directness”, something Shakers knew plenty about. So it is no surprise, like the Truth they lived for, this pedestal table needs no embellishment and stands the test of time.

Making the Table – Shaker pedestals tables were most commonly made from cherry and maple. Although disinterested in extraneous embellishment, Shakers were not opposed to using beautifully figured wood on occasion. My cherry and curly maple reproductions seem to be most popular.

For best effect, select stock that is wide enough to make up the 17½” top in two matched boards. You can start with 9” wide 4/4 stock or thicker 9” wide stock to be resawn and glued up for best effect. If you can’t find material that wide, beginning with 4/4 stock at least 6” wide, yielding two glue joints, will do nicely.

Once glued up, the top can be rough sawn to the 17½” diameter. In order to speed up the process, a round template and carpet tape. Then with a router, trim using a flush bit cutter followed by a 3/4” roundover set to a depth that creates the desired thin edge look to the 9/16” thick top.

To make the column, begin with a 2½” square, 18½” long. Turn the column to the dimensions noted and sand. Take special care when turning the bottle shape on the column for this is the step that most often makes the difference between the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Making the Table – Shaker pedestals tables were most commonly made from cherry and maple. Although disinterested in extraneous embellishment, Shakers were not opposed to using beautifully figured wood on occasion. My cherry and curly maple reproductions seem to be most popular.
transition from a convex curve to a concave curve as the heavier portion of the “bottle” moves upward to the narrower stem. This may take some practice on some waste stock before you are comfortable with trying it on the real thing. Be patient, and study the curve of the original. When you are turning this section, you are like a surgeon operating on the “heart” of this design and standing shoulder to shoulder with the Shaker brothers of history.

The sliding dovetail into the column is achieved using a jig custom made to fit on my Conover lathe. You can make one to fit your lathe using some stable material. I used 1” MDF and found it worked very well because it is strong, stable, and easy to work.

Once aligned and bolted down on the lathe ways, a router fitted with a 1/2” dovetail bit is used to cut the slot. First, the bit depth is set to create a flat area the same 3/4” width of the legs on the lower section of the column. Then guide rails made of stable quarter sawn hardwood are carpet taped to the router plate. This allows the dovetail bit to track accurately cutting a smooth and straight slot. *Note the masking tape on the guide rails providing a micro adjustment – tuning the fit over the jig sides.* Don’t worry if the dovetail bit is not perfectly centered in the flat area because you simply flip the router around and run it again ensuring a centered slot.

Move to the next 120° mark using the index head on the lathe and repeat the above steps until all three are routed. Finally, using a sharp chisel, you will need to chop clean the rounded shoulders left by the dovetail bit.

The leg stock is dressed to 3/4” thickness and the leg profiles are traced around the 1/4” masonite leg pattern. Note the grain orientation should run from the top of the leg to just above the foot, giving the slender leg more natural strength.
You can nest the oddly shaped legs for better yield. I have found that a 6” x 24” board will yield six legs. The legs are then carefully sown out to the line on the bandsaw.

At this point you can carpet tape the legs together and smooth the curves, using spokeshave, files, and scraper. Or simply use a drum sander. To cut the dovetail on the leg, I use the same dovetail bit used to cut the slot in the column but this time on the router table. By trial and error on some scrap ¾” leg stock, the dovetail bit height and fence location are set to make a perfectly fitted sliding dovetail into the column. Note the auxiliary fence I made from rock maple to provide a greater accuracy while riding over my now slightly warped router plate.

Once fitted, the legs must be tapered from ¾” thick at the column to ¾” at the foot. I hand plane these using a notched profile board to hold the legs firmly to the bench top. After tapering, fit the legs into the column and trace the arc of the column onto the top of each leg. This arc curve is blended with a slight offset where the leg meets the column, then carried down the length of the top of the leg. Such subtle rounding over of the top of the leg visually links it with the round column, and on upward, beautifully relating to the curve of the round top.

Finally, the relatively straight forward cleat must be sawn out using the tilt setup on the tablesaw, combined with bandsawing the wider taper, and cleaning up with a block plane. The 1” tenon is then glued up, clamped, and the oak wedge glued and driven in until tight. Note the wedge spreads the tenon into the end grain of the cleat, rather than along the grain that could possibly split the cleat or weaken quickly. Be careful to cut the countersunk screws short enough so that they do not come through or pimple the top.

The finish is a water-based aniline dye stain on the curly maple – Early American honey-tone amber. I followed this with one coat of Danish oil and two coats of blonde shellac. Finally, to offer greater protection, I used a final coat of pre-catalyzed lacquer – Lenmar dull rubbed sheen.

Ask This Old Saw – continued

have anything to do with turning a workpiece round.

Q Routing Uniform Slots – What is the best way to route uniform short slots (⅛” to ¼”) such as those used to allow screws to slide? – Roy Noyes

Joe Barry replies: You have several options to guide the router.

- Use a fence along an edge
- Clamp a fence or straight edge to guide the router base
- Use a guide collar with a slot cut into a piece of plywood or masonite.

However, our good friends at Lee Valley/Veritas have come up with an ideal solution for doing screw slots. They now make two router bits that will rout a slot with either a flat bottom or countersink – stock numbers 16J11.60 and 16 J11.70. The newest Rockler catalog also has them now – part numbers 28441 &c 21660.

These bits will rout the counterbore slot and the slot for the screw shank with the one bit. Very sweet! Another item that should be considered is the elongated washers by Lee Valley from a design by Chris Becksvoord. They are made in two sizes for #10 and #14 round head screws. These require a ½” or ¾” wide slot – 50K35.01 and 50K35.02.
Most of our Guild presentations are about execution, so it was refreshing to have NH Furniture Master Jere Osgood speak to us about design during our recent annual meeting.

For many of us, woodworking involves building to a set of plans, or perhaps, copying an existing piece. However, where do the plans, or more to the point, the artistic conceptions behind the plans come from? Suppose we were interested in building something original or at least with original elements. Where would we start?

Jere is certainly the right person to help us. His pieces are strikingly original and have been widely honored. The achievements of his over 40 year career are astonishing. He has pieces at the Smithsonian in Washington, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Craft and Folk Museum in New York, and the Currier Museum in Manchester.

In a conversation before the talk, Jere explained that his goal for the presentation was to have at least some members achieve a personal insight or breakthrough, to realize that design is a separate discipline or activity that it might be interesting, and certainly within their capabilities to explore. He also cautioned that design is an obscure topic, difficult to talk about. He wanted at least a few members in the audience to realize that. While it is easy to copy a plan, another approach is to use one’s own ideas in building a piece.

Part of the presentation was a slide show. Pictured here, for example, is one of his famous “shell desks.” This is clearly a piece of the highest originality, let alone extreme difficulty of execution. But again, Jere’s point in this talk was not execution, it was answering the question, “How do you create a design?”

In answer to that, Jere gave some approaches that have helped him. First and foremost, design involves giving a distinctive personal element to a piece. Where might these elements come from? Well, from all sorts of places depending on our interests and tastes. Design might be informed by, say, mathematics or mythology. For Jere, the ideas come from nature. He observed that there are no straight lines nor right angles in nature. Furthermore, nature is always moving. This implies, for him, building pieces that do not have straight lines, and are suggestive of movement, particularly water, air, or trees swaying. However, concessions to functionality must be made since we, after all, are building furniture. Thus his tables have flat tops, as does the desk shown. This particular design is inspired by a turtle shell. The domed top closes. When closed, it is basically a four foot dome sure to be the focal point of any room. Notice in this the implied (actually, real) incorporation of movement and change of state. Likewise, the slender tapered legs, which are laminated, were inspired by flowing water and are a hallmark of much of his work.

To come up with such ideas, Jere advises us to carry sketch books and to make a point of sketching design ideas in them wherever we may see them. Such ideas could be the bend on a river, the cresting of a wave, the curve of a tree limb, even the flight path of a bird. The main point is to develop the habit of seeing what is around us with new eyes.

Also, consider the human element. The human eye takes in about 15° of visual angle at a glance. Thus if you want to create movement and involvement by the observer, you must make your pieces large enough so that someone has to make eye movements, or even move about, to see the whole thing.

I noticed something striking about both Jere’s remarks and also the questions. I later confirmed with Jere that this was so. Whenever he or the audience spoke of execution, they used active verbs – measure this, cut that, laminate the other thing. Whenever he spoke of design, and in the few audience questions that dealt with design, and not technique, the verbs were passive – see this, feel that, let an idea come to you. It would appear then, that design is a fundamentally different activity than execution, one that uses a different part of the brain – right versus left hemisphere, if you like. You let the ideas come to you rather than hammering out ideas, so to speak. The key step seems to be carefully preparing yourself to be receptive by using techniques such as the notebook.

In sum, this was a most intriguing and tantalizing presentation and certainly achieved Jere’s goals, for as a result, a number of us are seriously engaged in the question of design.
A common problem among beginning woodturners is finding a good source for turning wood, both for practice and producing finished items. I remember all too well the days when I was scrounging 4 x 4 cutoffs and oak pallets and buying expensive hardwood pieces in hard-to-find dimensions. I even bought wood on eBay, where a $15.00 chunk of wood cost me nearly $25.00 to ship here. I wondered – where I would find anything decent for turning a bowl?

Well, the good news is that there are sources for good wood all around us here in New England, many of them absolutely free. With some diligent searching, you can probably find more wood than you can turn. The flip side is that most free wood is from fresh-cut local trees and it has to be handled within reasonable bounds to produce desirable results.

If you turn miniatures, or small tops and toys, there are plenty of sources for free scraps from hardwood manufacturing businesses in dimensions you can use. If so, your unmet needs may be few. The problem comes when you start looking for larger chunks to make bowls or other objects that are larger, or especially thicker, than commonly available kiln-dried sizes. This is where development of your wood scrounging skills will come in handy.

**Getting started**

Free local wood often means “green”, or unseasoned wood, and there are some basic guidelines for handling green wood that should be learned. For starters, anyone embarking on the green wood-scrounging journey really ought to invest in Michael O'Donnell’s excellent book *Turning Green Wood* published in 2000 and 2001 in the UK by Guild of Master Craftsmen. It is available from all the usual turning suppliers. This book not only has some beautifully illustrated green turning projects, but has all the information you’ll need on how to handle, store, and season green wood, including how wood moves as it dries, standard methods of rough turning, air-drying, and remounting for finish turning, as well as ways to expedite the drying process by drying bowls in the microwave oven.

I’ll offer a few thoughts on turning green wood, since it is one of my favorite topics, as well as a potential difficulty for novice turners. One of the pitfalls of turning green wood is that wood shrinks and distorts as it dries. If you want to put a fresh-cut apple or maple branch on the lathe and turn a beautiful candlestick or goblet, you can learn a lot, have a terrific blast getting sprayed with sap while generating twenty foot long strands of wet linguini, but the finished product will most likely be marred by severe cracks as it dries. Until you learn to handle and select appropriate pieces of green wood so it doesn’t crack during the drying process, its better to concentrate on mastering tool control, sharpening, safety, and having fun than worrying about what happens to the wood when it comes off the lathe. If you want to make a piece that will be stable when your efforts are complete, you’ll have to use air-dried or kiln-dried wood.

There are many benefits to turning green wood. Green wood cuts much more easily, tools stay sharp longer, there is less heat and essentially no dust in the turning process, and if you turn objects thin enough to dry and warp without a second, finish turning, you can allow the wood to obtain a shape of its own – started by you, but shaped by mother nature, too. Thin-wall turnings are also dry and ready for finishing in a matter of hours or days, not weeks or months. My favorite thing about turning green wood, though, is learning about trees themselves. Once I started collecting turnable chunks of local trees, I was inspired to learn to recognize trees by bark, buds, twigs, and leaves, and found great joy in walking the woods trying to identify the trees I saw. A few still send me looking for my field guides, but I feel as if a new world has been revealed to me by learning about the living trees that supply the wood we use.

**The Tools**

While you are waiting for your book to arrive, you can begin assembling the tools you’ll need for handling green wood when you find it. This will certainly include saws, wedges, pry-bars and safety gear, but one of the most essential things you will need is some way to seal ends of logs so they don’t crack extensively. The most common way to do this is to paint on a waxy substance that slows down the loss of water from cut surfaces so the wood can dry slowly and evenly avoiding most of the end-grain checking, at least until you can process the logs further. The most common product is called Anchorseal, though there are other brands, such as...
Woodcraft’s Green Wood End Sealer, and other end grain sealers. This is a product you will want to get before you start looking for fresh-cut wood, as many woods will begin checking within minutes of felling the tree, so when you find good turning wood, you’ll want to be ready.

Not everyone involved in wood turning has, or needs, a chainsaw. Chainsaws can be very useful tools, but they are exceedingly dangerous if not used with the utmost care and attention, and many of us know someone who was injured or even killed using one. If you are not comfortable using a chainsaw, either take a safety class or learn from a seasoned (two-armed, two-legged, ten-fingered) old pro, or consider limiting your turning to pieces of wood that can be cut by other means. There are very high-quality crosscut (hand) saws for both one or two persons that can be used to efficiently cut found wood down to size, which usually means small enough to fit on your lathe or bandsaw.

Finding Free Wood

One place to start looking for free wood is in your firewood pile (or with permission, your neighbor’s). This is a great place to find wood for practicing tool control and basic spindle turning methods. If most of your work is spindle turning, this may be as far as you ever have to go for nice turning stock. There’s a lot of perfectly good wood that gets burned as firewood, so if you don’t need 24 of something to be exactly the same, your nearest firewood pile might yield some surprising finds. Some of the nicest curly maple I have ever seen was in a friend’s firewood pile. He readily agreed to give me a few big chunks from which I made a lidded jewelry box that became a graduation gift for his daughter. Chunks of firewood can be carefully split, or riven, to useful sizes, and if still high in moisture content, can be cross-stacked and air-dried for turning later.

Lots of good spindle and small project turning wood is readily found in firewood stacks, and even good small bowl blanks in logs that are halved, but not quartered. If you buy wood for heating and need larger chunks for turning bowls or other faceplate turnings, consider buying some of your wood in green log lengths, and cutting up (and sealing) the best pieces for your turning addiction, then process the rest for the woodstove. If you were going to buy the wood anyway, you could consider even this source of turning wood free – you just get a little less firewood, and some healthy exercise.

Neighborhood trees can be a good source of free wood. All you need is cooperative neighbors, and a keen ear for the sound of a chainsaw, or a regular walking route, which allows you to notice that trees are being cut. Beware that trees that grow in someone’s yard very often contain potentially dangerous hardware – eye hooks, nails, barbed wire, or other metal objects that could cause a problem when cutting logs or turning at the lathe. Remember that many landowners are not comfortable with some stranger coming onto their land and using a chainsaw to cut up logs. Even if they give or sell you wood, they might want you to do any chainsaw work off their land to lessen their liability.

Local developments are not really good sources for turning wood unless you know some of the key personnel involved and speak up early. Usually someone is hired to clear the land and they need to get it ready for heavy equipment as soon as possible. The last thing they want is to be pestered by people that pose a real liability for them, and they probably will not want you walking the land looking for desirable logs or stumps. Keep in mind that logs piled at a landing site are very dangerous to fragile things like human bodies. If you see something you especially like at a development or future construction site, you’d be best to turn on the charm and start a conversation with someone on the jobsite – maybe they can be persuaded to leave the log for you, or drop it off to one side for you. When you come across an area with a lot of logging activity and you think there are good prospects for obtaining turning wood, you might attach a card to a log or piece of equipment asking for someone involved to call you if they’d like to sell any logs to you for turning. If you get a response and get to speak to someone, they may even offer up a free log or some short segments if you’re only interested in small quantities. You might also be able to buy some wood pretty cheaply or even trade wood for a bowl or two. Most people who work with trees are pretty interested in what we make from them, so showing a finished piece or two will usually get a conversation started. I figure even if a rough looking character on a skidder isn’t often found at art galleries, he may have a niece or daughter who’s graduating or getting married someday, or a girlfriend who would like a nice gift, so showing a pretty finished turning can often result in free wood, especially if you offer to make them something.

Roadside Logs

One of the best sources of turning wood is roadside and power line tree trimming projects. These are often carried out on a regular schedule by electric utilities, which usually chip up the smaller stuff, and leave larger diameter pieces cut to firewood length for the landowner. Please remember that just because there’s a nice looking log sitting near the side of the road, you still need the owner’s permission to take
Tapers are used in many furniture pieces. From early American to modern free-form designs, tapers add height, depth or esthetic elegance. Cutting tapers can be tricky. Of course you can always rough cut the tapers and then carefully hand-plane them to the desired size, but that means adding still more scraps to your scrap barrel without taking any out to build this jig. For repeatability, and ease of use, this basic taper jig will save you a good deal of time and frustration!

A well tuned table saw can be counted on to keep stock absolutely parallel to the rip fence. A Taper Jig is designed to defy that sought after perfection by intentionally feeding the stock out of parallel with the rip fence. Please keep in mind this article outlines a very basic tapering jig. You can add more adjustments, hold downs, blade guards, etc. to develop that “perfect” tool for your shop, and as with all jigs, most of the fun in building them is customizing the function to your needs and desires!

When designing your own taper jig, first look at your existing rip fence and figure out how you might design the jig to work with it. The method shown here (figure 1) is designed for a Biesemeyer fence, but it shouldn't be difficult to modify the concept to work with any other fence.

This mounting method here is nothing more than an inverted ‘groove’ to slide over the vertical fence board. It is easy to put on and remove from the fence, and provides plenty of stability while using the jig. Best of all, it uses up some of those long skinny scraps of plywood and solid stock that seem to accumulate so often in the scrap barrel.

After you’ve figured out a way to mount your jig to the fence so that it slides smoothly, is secure, and hopefully easy to get on and off, fabricate it about 26” long. Remember to leave room for the pivot locking arm. Figure 2 is a view of the jig closed up (zero taper) so you can better see some of the things you might want to consider in your own designs. Mark the closed width on the jig to aid in setting up.

On the right side is the ‘Fence Mount.’ Attached to that is a bit of plywood I’ll call the ‘Sled’. This piece is about 4” wide, and as long as you might want depending on the length of tapers you might be cutting on a routine basis. I would suggest building it between 24” and 30” long.

To make sure the ‘Sled’ rides on the table surface while the mount is snug against the fence top, it should be fitted in place. Put the mount on the fence and snug it down tight against the top of the fence and top of the ‘groove’ in the mount. Now move that 4” wide piece of plywood against the fence mount, and trace a line (see figure 3). Cut the ‘Fence Mount’ on the bottom edge of the line and it should fit perfectly!

Next, drill a hole in one end of the plywood ‘Sled’ to allow a ¼ “T” bold to slip through it. The hole

Figure 1. Mount design for Biesemeyer fence
should be pretty close to the end and roughly centered although placement isn’t really all that critical.

For you hand tool enthusiasts, you’ll like this part. Flip the ‘Sled’ over, with the ‘T’ bolt inserted in the hole and trace around the head. Mortise out the area to allow the head to fit flush with the sled bottom.

If you like, you could secure the ‘T’ bolt in the mortise using a dab of silicone, some super-glue or even epoxy. But since I sometimes scavenge parts from old jigs I don’t use much anymore, I like to leave that sort of hardware available for use later. I don’t have a scrap barrel full of these!

With that complete, attach the ‘Sled’ to the ‘Fence Mount’ with screws, and glue.

On the left side of the Jig is the actual Tapering Fence. This is simply an ‘L’ bracket fabricated from more of those pesky long, narrow plywood scraps. The length is the same as the ‘Sled’.

The vertical piece (the fence) is about 2½” to 3” for most cutting applications. Screw and glue the fence to the horizontal piece. Attach a block to the front end with about ½” to ¾” sticking out to the left side of the fence. This pushes the stock you are tapering through the saw blade. Since this ‘stop’ will likely run through the blade too when cutting narrow tapered stock, it’s a good idea to attach it with screws so it can be replaced easily as necessary.

For a pivot hinge, cut a piece similar to that shown in figure 4. Screw one end to the ‘Sled’ using two screws. Or use one screw and glue. This keeps the end from rotating and shifting the fence assembly forward or back. Cut yet another narrow stick of plywood a few inches long, and about ¾” wide. Place it between the ‘Sled’ and Fence assembly to provide a gap between at the pivot hinge point. Now secure the other end of the pivot hinge to the fence assembly using one screw so the fence assembly pivots left and right.

Attach that spacer piece to the fence assembly at the opposite end (figure 2) and the whole assembly will be parallel to your fence!

Cut out a piece solid stock that is about an 1½” wide, ¾” thick. Cut its length to about ½” less than the distance between the inside of the fence assembly vertical piece and the inside of the ‘Fence Mount’. Radius one end as shown in figure 2. In the center, drill a ½” hole. This will provide a snug fit for a 1¼” long #8 panhead screw. At the other end, cut a ¾” wide slot to slide over the 2” long, ¼” “T” bolt. Attach the pivot locking arm to the fence assembly with the panhead screw and fender washer as shown. Slide the other end of the pivot locking arm over the ‘T’ bolt, thread on the locking handle, and it’s done!

On my jig, the total distance the pivot locking arm will travel is about 3”. The radius distance from there to the pivot point on the pivot hinge is 27”, so the maximum angle of taper I can achieve is 6.3 degrees. It doesn’t seem like much, when you put it in those terms, but that is a very dramatic taper!

To use it, simply attach it to your fence, set the desired taper, and slowly feed the stock through. Good luck, and have fun.

**Why a Spacer?**

Dave says the spacer is optional – “The gap created by the spacer simply allows free movement at the hinge without rounding the end or otherwise doing additional work – unless of course you prefer it that way. That’s the nice thing about building jigs, let your imagination take it the direction it wants to.”
Well, my memory is certainly not what it used to be, but I unfortunately cannot forget the promise I made to myself when I first read several years ago about the safety technology in the SawStop saw. I told myself that I would buy the saw if it ever came out since I knew that I would never forgive myself if I cut off a finger and had the chance to have a safe saw. Which is a round about way of saying I own a SawStop table saw as of six months ago.

I owned a Delta Unisaw for 20 years and I really liked it. There were a few things I would have changed (5hp, left tilt, better dust collection) but basically, I thought it was a great saw. So, when I went to see the SawStop I wondered whether I was being an idiot for wanting to change. The moment I laid my hands on the saw however, I knew that I would never forgive myself if I cut off a finger and had the chance to have a safe saw. Which is a round about way of saying I own a SawStop table saw as of six months ago.

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The safety system is amazing. Simply said, it really works. And, I know my saw works too since the brake fired the other day. No, I didn’t put my finger on the blade although I do wonder if I might be sloppier now that I am not worried. I am a XC ski coach and wanted to cut open an old XC ski to show the kids what little is inside. The moment I touched the ski to the blade, it disappeared!

It really is weird and spooky since it happens so quickly. For a moment I had to think about what had just happened. It turns out that the carbon impregnated plastic base of the ski is conductive enough to cause the system to fire. I had in fact thought for a moment before cutting the ski whether there might be a problem. “No”, I said to myself, “it’s just plastic, epoxy and wood.”

The brake system works by a weak electrical current being fed to the blade. When it shorts out by moisture or metal, it fires the brake into the blade, and simultaneously lowers the blade into the table – that is certainly why the blade raises so easily. There is an easy override when you are concerned – wet wood, possible metal or intentional cutting of conductive materials. And, it is not something you want to have happen every day since the brake cartridges are disposable, expensive and possibly ruin the blade.

Turns out that my Forrest blade was not ruined and the SawStop people will send me a new cartridge since they are very curious about accidental firings of the brake.

And was the ski hurt? Amazingly, there is not a single mark on the ski from the blade! SawStop claims that in the 40+ cases of people putting their fingers on the blade, none have required more than a bandaid. Having seen how it works in real life, I can believe their claims. They have a video on their website of putting a hotdog into the blade if you want to see it for yourself – www.sawstop.com.

So, what is not to like? Well, several things actually. First and foremost, this is an expensive machine. It costs about a third more than a Unisaw. The old adage that you get what you pay for may be true, but it is a big chunk of change, especially if you already have a nice saw.

Although it is better made than the Unisaw, it isn't perfect and required some fiddling and shimming in assembly – table top alignment for the most part. I need to have my machine on wheels to shift it around in my tight quarters and the wheel system available from an aftermarket supplier doesn’t work all that well. You do need to think each time before you cut anything about the possibility of metal (staples, nails, etc.) which I had rarely worried about before.

OK, should you buy one? I bought mine knowing that I would probably stop woodworking if I seriously injured my hand in an accident. If you are considering
**Workmanship** — You know it’s true; the first thing your eye is drawn to is the gap where the rail meets the stile, or the dovetail gaps, or the doors that just don’t quite fit in the frames equally all around. There is a simple way to ensure great workmanship. Practice, practice, and more practice.

**Finishing** — Let’s face it, by the time you get to this phase of your project, all you want to do is slap on some varnish and be done with it. You wouldn’t play seventeen holes of exceptional golf and then quit when you get to the eighteenth and go back to the clubhouse. So you should approach the finishing stage with the same effort as the other stages of your project. I save every piece of scrap from the project.

I then sand and/or plane it to the same degree as my finished piece. I use these as sample boards to try various combinations of oil or stain, and film finish, labeling each piece. I then choose the combination which I feel gives me the desired effect for the piece. Beware that the stain you used on the mahogany for your last project may look completely different on this piece of mahogany. Always try a sample block first.

So the next time you are thinking of making that special piece, not only will you believe you can do it but when you follow the four points, you have a truly great piece.

**Choosing Woods** — continued

ChOOsing wOOds — continued

parts. That’s the subject I will cover next, along with choosing boards, cutting them to maximize yield and quality, and tips for efficient milling.

**Tool Review** — continued

going to a cabinet saw for the first time, I would definitely recommend that you give it a look. If you already own a good saw, it will be a hard sell, but it depends on your level of worry about safety. I am certainly happy to let you come try mine. I know it really works both as a great saw and as a safe saw. I predict that you will see many more of these machines as shops begin to worry about the liability of not owning one. Sad to think that our legal system drives the buying of table saws!

Feel free to contact me if you have more questions! By the way, when I talked to SawStop about my ski episode, they said they are working on a band saw now! [Peter can be reached at peterbreu@comcast.net or 603-647-2327]
The September Period Furniture Group meeting was one of the best attended and most successful ever. Twenty five of us traveled to Moultonborough, NH to see Tom Zimmerman's shop and hear him talk about inlay and banding. By profession, Tom is an historic clock maker and repairer. Adjacent to his shop is his clock showroom.

For the presentation though, Tom introduced us to the art of making your own inlay. Often times, we are tempted to purchase pre-made inlay. But according to Tom, making your own can be deeply absorbing and gratifying.

Shown here is a display of raw inlay materials – strips of wood with contrasting properties. These strips can then be glued together in various ways to form sandwiches which are sawn into logs from from which the inlay patterns are sawn.

In making the sandwiches, it is very important to devise a means of clamping them securely from all possible directions. Wet with glue the strips tend to slide around at will rather like a salami sandwich over-lubricated with mayonnaise.

A finished inlay band is shown here. More complex patterns and shapes are also possible depending on how the elements and logs are designed to fit together. Pictured, for example, is one of Tom's pens, together with the inlay-like blank from which it was made.

Geoff Ames also spoke. Geoff is the original founder of the Period Furniture Group. Following his original inspiration that the group be a forum in which members help each other in building period pieces, we distributed and collected a questionnaire. Members were asked to list what kind of project they would most like to build that would be a challenge for them. We also asked what sort of projects and techniques they have experience with that they would be willing to help others with. As a result, some new collaborative relationships were formed at the meeting and the material collected is being collated so that even more “student-teacher” pairings may be more easily formed.

Since I have had to ebonize the red oak handles for some of the curly soft maple totes I am now doing (for contrast), I asked Wayne Marcoux for advice. He told me to use india ink.

I dilute the ink with an equal amount of water, coat liberally and let dry overnight. Then buff out the raised grain with 0000 steel wool and recoat. Two coats of linseed oil finishes the job. I don’t know how heavy use this would stand, but I think it would be ok.
Pinkerton Academy greeted us in a heartwarming way with Homecoming crowds, kids cheering, balloons all over the place and a couple of sporting events going on. What more can you ask for! The Guild is surely in an expanding mode as we had a number of new members introducing themselves and the meeting attendance was up over 15% from last year.

We opened the meeting with our annual auction. Jon Siegel brought the gavel down on many outstanding items with Jon keeping things moving with his Yankee humor. The top item was a like-new hollow chisel mortising machine going for $160. The “best buy” of the day was a super heavy duty dust port for $1. There were another 80 plus items in between too, and by the time it was over, we set a record of $1,510.25. That beats last year’s total by close to 25%. The money is destined for the general fund.

The auction ran a little over on time forcing us to combine the lunch period and business meeting. The by-law update was approved, new officers elected, plus we had reports from the Treasurer, The Old Saw editor and various committees.

Officers for the coming year are Dave Anderson – President, Dave Frechette – Vice President, Greg Benulis – Secretary, and Peter James – Treasurer.

Following lunch, Jere Osgood, took center stage. Jere’s subject was design. He also had examples of past projects with him and a slide show. When you hear a Master talk, it sure motivates you to try to bring your level of woodworking to a new level.

I would like to say thank you to all who stayed behind to help move tables, chairs, etc. Another annual meeting has gone by, but do not fret, as we have more meetings coming, see you there.

Free wood! — continued

it home! Many logs simply rot where they are left, so there are a number that would probably give some of the wood away if asked nicely. If your town or city road crew drops a few trees to widen a road, keep in mind that the side of the lower trunk facing traffic might be full of sand or gravel from plowing operations. Utilities tend to trim trees from spring through fall, while town road crews often clean up winter ice storm debris in the spring. Wood stores pretty well when frozen solid, but during warmer months, can begin to degrade right away.

Wood cut in the spring has a lot of sap in it, and lots of sugar in some species, so these can stain and spalt pretty quickly. If you find some premium blond curly maple in April, don’t store it all summer before turning it as the sugars in the wood will cause a black stain. In this case, it is better to rough turn something while the wood is fresh. Then dry the resulting bowl for finish turning later.

What species?

If you want free practice wood, I’d take whatever hardwoods are available, at least until you find through trial and error which ones you don’t like. I tend to ignore softwoods, but I’ve found some real nice hardwood chunks that were (with permission) free for the taking. In my experience, most of the roadside hardwoods that are left behind are Quaking Aspen, Big Tooth Aspen, White Birch, Yellow Birch, Elm, Red Oak, Black Cherry, and Sumac, though I’ve found Sugar Maple, Red Maple, Silver Maple, White Ash, Hop hornbeam (Ironwood), Beech, and other perfectly good woods especially in small to medium sizes. If you get to them soon enough, you can get a good supply of sound wood. If you come across logs that have been down a while, they may be starting to crack. But they might also be starting to stain, rot, or spalt, which can sometimes make the wood more desirable, but can raise other health issues, as well. Since safe handling of spalted woods is a topic unto itself, I’ll just say that you would be best to protect your lungs by wearing a mask or respirator when handling these woods.

Storing wood for turning

Exactly how you store wood for your turning needs depends on the species in question and what you hope to make from it. I prefer to wax any cut ends immediately with Anchorseal and leave the wood in larger chunks and logs, to be cut to size later, as needed. This only works so long, however, as it is nearly impossible to successfully dry a full diameter log without cutting it into usable pieces. One good strategy is to cut logs down the middle (pith), and seal the cut ends. This allows the wood to shrink radially, and slowly warp, leaving the pith standing proud. If you can rough turn pieces from the wood before much staining or degrade occurs, that’s great. If not, you just may have reached the point where you have more wood than you can turn!
David Belser became a woodworker after a previous career as a software engineer. When he decided to change careers, he conceived of a product he could make. It was so unique that he appeared on the front page of the Concord Monitor with his invention – the Cryptex Tantalus. It is based partly on an idea in the novel The DaVinci Code because it is a locked cylindrical box which requires a secret code word to open it. David combined the buzz over the novel and movie with the idea of making his locked container hold a bottle. A new ingenious product, the Cryptex Tantalus, was born.

He has demonstrated the versatility of the lathe by employing it to fabricate a mechanism which resembles a bicycle combination lock. He has applied segmented rings, segmented tubes, faced disks and temporary glue-ups. He amazed his audience as he revealed the techniques he uses all of which he learned in just two years. In this, his first woodturning demonstration ever, he showed tremendous confidence and skill, and it was obvious that he put a lot of planning into the demonstration which included a discussion of the importance of intent to the creative process.

The most fascinating part of David’s demonstration was the hide glue. He demonstrated that the reversibility of hide glue makes it a better choice than the use of paper separators for temporary glue ups. Suddenly the paper method of making split turnings seems obsolete. David took the mystery out of hide glue by showing us how he mixes, heats and stores the glue. Then in an amazing demonstration he disassembled a turning with hot water!

Photos by Tony Immorlica
The first BIG meeting was held on the first Saturday in October. This year, rather than discuss individual topics, BIG will be building a cabinet from start to finish. I started the meeting with a talk on design and design parameters. The parameters are the restriction imposed by a particular project. It might be the budget, complexity, geometry, client and so forth. In this case, it had to be simple and easy for the BIG participants to absorb in the limited time we had. The cabinet has to be small and must be built in a short period of time.

I then showed a design progression with a half dozen sketches I have done for this exercise. The piece will be a wall hung cabinet with two doors and a drawer and have an eastern flavor.

Getting to work, I dragged in three giant apple slabs $\frac{3}{4}$" x 16" x 100" and showed how I picked the lumber, worked around defects and then designed around the chosen wood. Next I laid out the cabinet in full scale and went over the joinery options. I ended with a short discussion on the pros and cons of air dried lumber and how it should acclimate to the shop.

At the next BIG meeting Dec. 2nd, I will do jointing, planing and joinery for the cabinet. Come join us.
Annual Discounted Woodworking Book Sale – Nov. 18 Deadline

One of the advantages of Guild membership is the opportunity to purchase books at wholesale prices. We have arrangements with Taunton Press (www.taunton.com) and Sterling Publishing (which includes Lark and Guild of Master Craftsman titles – www.sterlingpub.com) and others to purchase books once a year at discounts of 20% to 50% depending on quantity ordered.

This year we are adding another publisher, Fox Chapel (www.foxchapelpublishing.com). Fox Chapel is a publisher but also sells books from other publishers such as Taunton but at lower discounts. If there is sufficient demand, I will also place orders from suppliers we have used in the past. However, we need a minimum of ten titles for each...

- Astragal: www.astragalpress.com
- Stackpole: www.stackpolebooks.com
- Tiller: www.tillerbooks.com
- Schiffer: www.schifferbooks.com
- Penguin/Putnam: www.putnam.com
- Sterling: www.sterlingpub.com

Orders will be accepted at the fall Guild meetings starting at the annual meeting in September. The last chance to place an order will be at the November meeting. Books should be available in early December for pick up at my home in Mont Vernon, NH, or at a future guild meeting.

I will have catalogs at the meetings, or you can view titles on the publishers’ web sites and email your order to me. If you email your order, you must include the following in addition to your name and telephone number:

For Taunton – The exact title, author, type of item (hard or soft cover book, video or DVD), the list price and the Taunton Product Code (NOT the ISBN #).

For all others – The exact title, author, type of item (hard or soft cover book, video or DVD), list price and the ISBN #.

All email orders will be acknowledged within one week. So if you do not get a response, please call me – I have vigorous anti-spam software. I’ll email you with the net cost when the books arrive. Payment is due immediately and the books are not returnable. This gives us a premium discount. Happy hunting for some really good woodworking books.

Note that discounted magazine subscriptions are also an annual event which takes place after the first of the new year – watch the February Old Saw for details.

Tony Immorlica – Book Coordinator
603-6763-9629 (evenings)
anthony.a.immorlica@adelphia.net

Woodworking Shows

Woodworks – Oct 27–29
Portland Exposition
239 Park Ave, Portland, ME
www.woodworksevents.com/home_me.shtml

1st Annual Woodworking & Tool Show & Sale – Nov 10-12
NH National Guard Armory
1059 Canal St, Manchester, NH
Friday 11am-6pm
Saturday 10am-6pm
Sunday 10am-4pm
45 tool manufacturers under one roof
7 live how-to demonstrations
including GNHW demo booth
Admission – $5 advance purchase, $9 at the door – 888-698-7638

Woodworks – Jan 12-14
Eastern States Exposition
1305 Memorial Ave, West Springfield, MA
www.woodworksevents.com/home_ma.shtml – Peter James

Estate Sale – Lumber

A colleague told me about a widow in Northwood, NH whose late husband had 37,000 board feet of lumber that she is selling through probate. I went to meet Janet Makarewicz, a very nice lady, and looked at the lumber. It’s pretty impressive both in quantity and quality.

A court ordered inventory was done for the sale. She is trying to sell lots that are 50 to 1000 bd feet in size.

Air Dried Lumber – 33,600 bf stored outside – 14,000 bf stored inside. All prices have been significantly reduced 50% or more below retail. Prices also include an additional multi-specie pile discount of 15%. Cash, check or money order. Buyer loads and hauls.

You can see the complete listing by going to the Guild web site at www.gnhw.org – Jack Grube

Contact Janet Makarewicz for an appointment.
603-942-5447 (evening), 603-396-1169 (day)
email: janet_makarewicz@metrocast.net

Upcoming Guild Meetings

- Nov. 18 – At the Cheshire Career Center at Keene High School. Jere Williams is the presenter. See page 3 for details.
- Feb. 17 – At University of NH. David Upfill Brown demonstration on tuning machines – “Taming the Beast.”
- March 17 – Small Meetings.
- April 21 – Stay tuned.
- June 16 – Summer trip.

Beginner & Intermediate Group

This year, Bob LaCivita is taking BIG participants through an entire project. The project is a small cabinet with a drawer and two doors. The design will have an Asian influence – simple and clean. The participants of BIG will obtain a comprehensive understanding of the steps, techniques and processes to accomplish the intended result.

The next BIG meeting is Dec. 2. Bob will show jointing, planing and joinery for the cabinet. The meeting location is at Bob LaCivita’s shop at 365 Stage Road (Rt 152) Nottingham, NH from 9:30am to noon. Please email or telephone (before 9pm) if you plan to attend.

Bob LaCivita
603-942-1240 or rlacivita@comcast.net

Granite State Woodturners

The next meeting of the Granite State Woodturners will be Nov. 25 from 9am to noon at DJ Delorie’s shop in Deerfield, NH. The topic will be segmented turnings. Contact Jon Siegel to be added to the e-mail notification list.

Jon Siegel – big@proctornet.com
Period Furniture

The next Period Furniture Group meeting will be held on Saturday, Nov 11 from 9am to noon and will be at John Whiteside’s shop in Fremont in southeastern NH about ten miles west of Exeter.

Following up on Tom Zimmerman’s highly successful presentation on inlay and banding at our last meeting, John will demonstrate the techniques he is learning for making curved decorative inlays. While his project is making a guitar rosette, the techniques are generally applicable to making decorative, side-grain inlay patterns with many individual elements that follow a curve. Such inlay can be found on the more decorative period furniture styles, such as Sheraton, Hepplewhite and Empire. Among other things, John will demonstrate how to fashion inlay elements to within an accuracy of less than $\frac{1}{100}$ of a millimeter using hand tools.

Directions are emailed to group members about ten days prior to the meeting. To get on the list, contact John Whiteside.

John Whiteside: 603-679-5443 or johninfremont@comcast.net

Personal Notes

Last February, one of our founding members, Roy Noyes, had a major fire at his home in Chester, NH. The fire completely destroyed his shop and all his hand tools. Here in part, is a letter Roy addressed to Tom Lie-Nielsen in late June…

…the fire completely destroyed my shop, all my machines and hand tools. Also destroyed was the kitchen and part of the barn of the 217 year old farm where I lived, and the rest was coated in thick oily soot. Not pleasant sights for 30 years work restoring them.

However, one of the bright spots since then has been your restoration of my precious Lie-Nielsen planes. My favorite, the No 4. jack plane was a sad sight; as were the other seven and the dovetail saw. However, I sent them to you on March 25th, without much hope that they could be rehabilitated.

Imagine my delight when you returned them to me only eight weeks later, looking and working like new. In fact the only way I could identify them as not being brand new was by the two holes that I had drilled and tapped in the side of the low angle jack to fasten a fence. My old friends were back and ready to go to work!

Even more amazing was the fact that you did this all at no charge, not even for the return shipping. I shall be eternally grateful to you and your company for standing behind your tools in such an exceptional way. – Roy Noyes

Hand tools damaged by fire – restored by Lie-Nielsen Toolworks, Warren, ME

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