The Great Sharpening Debate
drafting for woodturning

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

surface preparation • book reviews • tool review
fantastic flip stop • going pro • inlay a simple box

Jere Osgood

Blanket Chest

curly maple
cedar of lebanon bottom panel

Calendar

Sept 13  Period Furniture
Sept 14  Luthiers - New Date
Sept 20  Annual Meeting
Sept 27  GSWT
Oct 4    BIG
Oct 11   Hand Tools
Oct 18   Small Meetings
Nov 8    Period Furniture
Nov 15   Guild Meeting
Nov 16   Luthiers
Nov 22   GSWT
Dec 6    BIG
Jan 10   Period Furniture
Jan 18   Luthiers
Jan 24   GSWT
Feb 7    BIG
Feb 21   Guild Meeting
Mar 14   Period Furniture
Mar 15   Luthiers
Mar 21   Guild Small Meetings
Mar 28   GSWT
Apr 4    BIG
Apr 18   Guild Meeting
May 9    Period Furniture
May 16   Symposium - Tentative
May 17   Luthiers
The Guild Experience

It has been traditional for guild presidents to take their last Old Saw column and give thanks to the many officers, Steering Committee members, and others who have made meaningful contributions during their term of office.

Following this tradition has become more difficult for each president as the years have passed and the guild has grown. We are no longer a group of 100-150 meeting in a member’s shop five times per years and perhaps running a single symposium or other event. We have been over 500 strong for more than two years now and with Sunapee, our special interest group meetings, symposia, the reintroduction of Wood Days at Dave Emerson’s, and the regular meetings, there are now over 38 days each year when we are active. Each of these events requires at least one organizer and a number of volunteers to take on various other tasks. How does one thank this great group of people without slighting someone by leaving their name out of the list?

Frankly, it can’t be done without errors and omissions, so I’m going to take the easy and cowardly way out. I would like to thank each and every one of you who have contributed time, auction and raffle items, and your skills to make us a successful organization these past two years. Your hundreds of days of volunteerism make us what we are. I truly appreciate the assistance and support you have given me. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my time as president and yet I am looking forward to passing the job along to someone else.

As many of you know, I have wanted for a long time to start a hand tools special interest group in the guild devoted to choosing, using, maintaining, making, and collecting human powered tools. This fall, as someone else takes over the responsibilities of president, I will have time to realize that goal. Elsewhere in this issue of The Old Saw you will see the notice for an organizational meeting of the hand tools group. If you have an interest in any aspect of hand tools such as rehabilitation, use, or collecting, this might be your ticket.

Elsewhere in this issue you will see a report of our success at Sunapee this year. The money raised by the raffle will keep our scholarship strong and support our efforts. The level of participation this year exceeded all previous years and at one point on the last Saturday we had nine simultaneous demonstrations going. With all this activity, we are reaching the point where our 20 foot x 40 foot tent is becoming very crowded. May such happy problems continue for years.

The annual meeting this year will feature a Guild first. As part of the day, we will have a cookout run by the YMCA for us at the bargain rate of $7 per person. The annual auction as always, is your chance to recycle. Donate your unused items and spare lumber and replace it with something new at a bargain price.

I look forward to seeing you all on Saturday, September 20 at YMCA Camp Lincoln.
Sept 20th, 2008

**Annual Meeting**

Garrett Hack to give featured talk…

“How to Work Effectively and Efficiently”

It is that time of year again. The Annual Meeting this year is in Kingston, NH at the YMCA Camp Lincoln. This is a great site for a meeting and worth the trip just to look around.

We will try to hold to the following schedule:

- 9:00 - 11:00 Auction
- 11:00 - 12:00 Business Meeting
- 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch
- 1:00 - 3:00 Demonstration

Let’s start by getting there early so we can set up auction items so people can look them over.

**Auction** – We all have some of those tools we were always going to need but never do. Why not turn these into cash for the Guild Scholarship Fund. As usual, the main man will be Jon Siegel whose only request is, “No firearms or hazardous waste” and I will take it from there!

**Seating** – There is plenty of picnic tables for all to have a seat but if you need a back rest, please bring your own chair.

You will notice as you walk in, there is a chair we could all fit into but it is in the hot sun, and it is going to be a sunny day. If not, we got it covered so show up rain or shine.

**Parking** – Please do not park in front of the office building. Parking is off to the left prior to the office area, plenty of room. Fire laws!

**Lunch** – You can bring your own lunch or for $7.00 the camp staff will be cooking hot dogs and burgers, chips, veggies, cookies and soda. I can handle that! Help out the YMCA.

**Demonstration** – The gods were with us and we have the good luck of having Garrett Hack doing the demo.

Garrett Hack is a furnituremaker, author, and woodworking teacher from Thetford Center, Vermont, where he also runs a small homestead farm. Internationally known, his work and Federal inspired brick shop have been featured in numerous magazines and books. He is a contributing editor at Fine Woodworking and has written two books, *The Handplane Book* and *Classic Hand Tools*. Garrett spends about a third of his time teaching throughout the country, Canada and beyond, and is former chairman of *The Furniture Masters*. Garrett has also been a regular contributor to *The Old Saw*.

“**How to Work Effectively and Efficiently**” – Garrett’s talk will look at some ideas and ways to improve your work habits to do better work, probably more quickly and enjoyably, and certainly make fewer dumb mistakes. This might be as simple as learning and then using a good marking out system, or understanding the many advantages of a speedy story stick over a ruler. Through some short demos Garrett will illustrate the efficiency and accuracy of hand tools and how they fit into the balance between working by hand and machine. – Syd Lorandeau

**Scholarship Committee Report**

This was a very significant year for the Guild’s scholarship program. With twelve individual grants, three large grants and the first of the Jack Grube educational grants, the committee saw a huge increase in requests and in monies given out. For the first time in the history of the program, more money was distributed than collected. However, with the accumulated funds we are in no danger of running out and look forward to another year of increased requests.

Highlights include supporting a high school shop program, supporting the NH Furniture Masters as well as the Luthiers subgroup. With the size of the Guild now, and the continued funds coming from the Sunapee Fair, auction at the annual meeting as well as funds from the Turning Symposium, the Guild should be able to make annual grants totaling approximately $6,000. – Peter Breu chair Scholarship Committee

**Directions**

**YMCA Camp Lincoln**

- From I-93 to 101 East to Rt 125 South.
- Head south on Rt 125 for 6.7 miles. At traffic lights turn right onto Main Street.
- Go 0.8 mile, turn right onto SPC 4 David Bunker Street.
- At stop sign, go straight across to Rockrimmon Road
- Go 0.9 mile and turn left onto Ball Street for 0.6 mile.
- Turn left onto the road that leads to Camp Lincoln YMCA Camp – There is a large Camp Lincoln sign.
- The drop off area for auction items and people who have trouble walking is in front of the Office Building. There is a large parking area off to the left before reaching the area in front of the Office Building.
- Custom directions at www.ymcacamplincoln.org
New SubGroup

Hand Tools Group Organizational Meeting

If you are interested in any aspect of hand tools, you will be interested in this new guild special interest group. The vision for this group is to provide a forum for discussion, the exchange of information, and demonstrations and training in the use of hand tools.

How we focus the group and where we place most of the emphasis is dependent on the interests and desires of the guild members who attend this first meeting. If you are interested and want input, you need to show up for the first meeting.

There are a number of topics and potential areas of concentration that immediately come to mind.

For the user or person who wants to learn how to use or improve their hand tool skills potential topics include – selecting a new or used tool, tuning and setting your purchase, new vs used, choosing a basic tool kit, and what tools can replace power tools. A couple of others areas to explore are instruction in using everything from spokeshaves to molding planes and even the making of your own tools.

There are also options for those interested in collecting hand tools such as focusing on brands, how to value a tool, history of particular types of tools, and cleaning and storing your tools.

These are only a few samples of ideas that come to mind immediately. If you have other thoughts or potential area of interest to explore, please voice them at the meeting.

The first organizational meeting will be Saturday, October 11 from 9:00am until noon at Dave Anderson’s shop at 146 Jennifer Drive in Chester, NH. Contact Dave for directions and to register for the first meeting.

Dave Anderson: 603-887-6267 or email at dsachester@gsinet.net

October Small Meetings

We have four small meetings lined up for October 18, 2008. They are diverse and quite exciting.

**John Whiteside** will be presenting *Guitar Building Techniques* and their application to other woodworking projects. In his own words, “You won’t be building a guitar in this meeting, but you will learn enough to decide whether or not you want to. Furthermore, guitar building employs a lot of techniques and skills that have application to other sorts of woodworking and I shall emphasize these.

John will go through an overview of the entire building process, from wood selection to finishing, stopping to elaborate on aspects and techniques of interest to the group. These might include (depending on the group’s preferences) choosing quarter sawn wood, surfacing highly figured wood, resawing, bookmatching, dealing with curves, heat bending, inlay, achieving 1/1000th of an inch accuracy with hand tools, how sharp is sharp enough, properties of unusual woods such as holly, ebony, Paulo Escrito, and Indian rosewood.

We will also consider making forms and jigs, when and when not to use various glues (such as Titebond, hide glue, fish glue, epoxy, and superglue), scarf joints, unusual table saw techniques, hiding gaps and flaws, pore filling, a look at the latest water based lacquer, and a few comments on the most important topic of all (to me) which is the correct mental attitude with which to approach difficult and demanding woodworking projects.”

John lives in Fremont, NH. He will offer this workshop from 9:00am-12:00pm.

**Grant Taylor** will be presenting a *Carving Workshop* for seven hands-on participants. He will use inset letter carving to introduce carving to those interested individuals. Emphasis will be on the stop cut and other techniques which apply to carving in general. He can accommodate seven participants for the hands-on and another five to watch. He will demonstrate sharpening and if you have your own tools, please bring to sharpen.

Grant, who lives in South Acworth NH, will offer this workshop from 10:00am-2:00pm.

**DJ Delorie** is going to dazzle us with some computer wizardry. He is going to unravel *Google Sketchup*, which is a Free downloadable program for the construction of woodworking and architectural projects. This download is available to any of you that have a computer with an internet connection. And remember, the download really is Free. This workshop will go over how to navigate this program and produce your favorite project in three dimensions.

Please note – you will not need a computer the day of this workshop, nor will you need to have downloaded the program prior to the workshop in order to take part.

DJ lives in Deerfield, NH and can accommodate twelve people for this workshop. This workshops hours will be from 10:00am-2:00pm.

**Steve Fourcier**, the owner of Tru-Cut Sharpening Company, located in Charlestown, NH, will demonstrate a variety of *Sharpening Techniques*. He will cover carbide saw sharpening and retothing, bandsaw sharpening, setting & retoothing, planer & chisel sharpening, saw geometry, tensioning and straightening, grinder wheel applications & maintenance, and hand sharpening tricks and tips.

Steve can accommodate up to twelve people for his workshop. The hours will be from 10:00am-1:00pm.

So that I may sign you up for the workshop of your choice and give you specific driving directions, please contact me at one of the following:

Ed Orecchio: ejorecchio@verizon.net or at my home phone of 603-542-0322
The Craftsman
Richard Sennett. Yale University Press. 2008. $27.50

The crafts revival is over half a century old and has a rich literary tradition. Unfortunately, it would appear that Sociology Professor Richard Sennett is unaware of that rich tradition. Instead, he lives up to the undergraduate canard about the “fuzzy studies” department in colleges and takes the reader for yet another ride through the thoughts of “dead white men”. The Greeks and the philosophers of the Enlightenment are the core of this rambling and inconclusive book. Rather than the reflective, broad, worldview of contemporary craftsmen that includes the Oriental approaches to craft, Sennett remains firmly rooted to the Eurocentric past.

Instead of a book about the craftsman and his relationship to his tools, materials, and products we get the musings of philosophers who watched work but did not participate except in long scholarly missives. I was reminded of an office sign I was given by one of my ergonomics clients: “I love work. I could sit and watch it all day”. Or, better yet: “Those that can, do.

I enjoy a book with deep scholarly detail and amusing factoids similar to James Burke’s Connections. In fact I am a great fan of Thomas Pynchon (Gravity’s Rainbow), and Michael Ondaatje (The English Patient) in which the author maintains the literary tension through continued partial revelation and non-linear story telling. However, in Sennett’s case I believe this book to be an unorganized hash that never comes to a conclusion. It just sort of peters out… In some ways it felt like I was reading a pile of 3x5 cards with notes for a book that had yet to be organized into a coherent order.

There were a few nuggets worth digging for through this mill tailings of a book. One was the concept of the 10,000 hour rule. It takes about 10,000 hours of practice to become expert at anything: athletics, music, or craft. My experience would support this conclusion. To philosopher’s such as the author there is an underlying and revolutionary subtext to Diderot’s Encyclopedia. He interprets Diderot to be contrasting the “honest work” of the craftsman with the wasteful and indolent life of the aristocracy. Interesting point, but certainly not what I would consider central to Diderot’s masterpiece.

I will close with a quote from the book that would best summarize it to the potential reader: “Such ambivalence about the man-made has shaped the fortunes of the craftsman. History has conducted something like a set of experiments in formulating the craftsman’s images as drudge, slave, worthy Christian, avatar of the Enlightenment, doomed relic of the pre-industrial past.”

Squaring the Circle: Geometry in Art and Architecture
Paul A. Calter. Key College Publishing. 2008. $89.95

This was a serendipitous discovery in my local bookstore. It was displayed in the window with the other local authors and dragged me into the store to buy their only copy. Paul Calter is a Professor of Mathematics Emeritus at Vermont Technical College and a visiting scholar at Dartmouth College. He has spent several years pulling together this book as a textbook (thus the price!) for interdisciplinary courses in the use of geometry in art and architecture. It is profusely illustrated and written for a reader that may not be fluent in math. Plus, in keeping with the needs of the college age student it has a web site that can be accessed using a code in each volume.

Ever since my second attempt at Geometry (which involved a football coach bouncing me off a wall and telling me “Barry, you can and you will learn this stuff!”), I have had a fascination for the use of geometry in constructing and describing the world. This volume just replaced about two feet of bookshelf space in my library. It clearly describes many of the mathematical concepts used by modern woodworkers: the Golden Section for proportion; the Fibonacci sequence for sizing drawer progressions; geometric constructions for chip carving and inlay stringing; layout and development of complex shapes for furniture; and much more. Best of all, it is written in a way that allows you to dive into the chapter of interest without having to read all the previous material in the book. Plus, for you DaVinci Code fans out there, he also has an appendix on the use of number symbolism in Western art.

Believe it or not, this is a math book that is an enjoyable read! I recommend it without reservation.
Q FREE WOOD – If an arborist offers you free wood, under what conditions is it worth doing? And, what is the process of turning it into usable lumber? Andy Young

Mike Cyros replies: From a bowl turner’s perspective based on my experience, this is often the best way to find quality wood that can be easily turned into bowl blanks for green turning on the lathe. The first question to ask is what is the species of wood. Any type of maple, walnut, cherry, apple, or even box elder for close grained woods, or oak or ash for open grained woods make for great bowl material. Avoid species like willow.

Generally, I’ll ask for limbs or trunks that are a minimum of 8” in diameter, and gladly accept crotches or burls which are great sources of beautifully figured grain. Only when I’m within 24 hours of turning the green blanks (to avoid drying and checking of the lumber), I’d cut the limb into chunks of a length that is a couple of inches longer than the diameter with a chainsaw.

The next step is to rip down the middle of the blank to remove the middle 1” or so that contains the pith of the tree. I do this by setting the blank on its side, and cutting down the left side of the pith, with the cut running parallel to the grain of the wood. This rip cut can be tough on your chainsaw’s blade, sometimes quickly dulling a normal cross cut blade. I’d suggest having a spare chain that has been sharpened especially for rip cutting.

Once the rip cuts are completed, you’ll be left with two opposing bowl blanks with the bark on the outside curve, and the inside flat face without the pith. Coat the end grain of the bowl blank as soon as possible with a wax sealer unless you plan on turning within the next couple of hours. Prepared green bowl blanks can check relatively quickly if left untreated.

Bottom line – an offer from an arborist to provide you with lumber should be seen as a great opportunity for any bowl turner!

Q PLYWOOD CHOICE – When making kitchen cabinets, should I use standard plywood or baltic birch? Roger Bradley

Bob LaCivita replies: When making kitchen cabinet boxes, there are a number of choices from particle board core melamine to various plywoods as well as solid wood construction.

Regarding plywoods, I do not know what standard plywood is. Baltic birch is overkill and very expensive. If the cabinet interiors are closed, meaning no glass doors or open shelving cabinets. I would use prefinished maple plywood. No finishing.

If you want to color the interiors, you could use a shop grade rotary cut birch or a plain sliced maple depending on your budget. Remember nobody looks inside kitchen cabinets even though they are the most used cabinets in the home. If the cabinets are open, I would use the same species as the face wood.

Brooks Tanner replies: I use baltic birch in construction of some of my products, for acoustic purposes.

In general, if the project does not warrant baltic, I don’t use it. Baltic often arrives at my shop looking a potato chip, anything but flat. As a base for acoustic shelving, I often need to use my wide belt sander with a jig to sand the shelf flat. I buy baltic thicker than is necessary for the job to allow for the loss in flattening of the ply.

In finishing, baltic tends to have a lot of “fuzz” that sticks up and needs to be sanded after the wash coat. It also is very thirsty and soaks up lacquer like a sponge.

When making kitchen cabinets, I use prefinished ply. The finish is UV-cured and very tough. It also looks good and saves me labor. Just make sure that your table saw is clean and will not scratch the finish. Prefinished ply is available in many species, however, maple is most often used in kitchen applications. Being a light wood, it helps with light and the ability to see in the cabinet.

Q SECOND HAND MACHINERY – Where can second hand machinery be purchased? – Roger Bradley

John McAlevey replies: eBay? Sometimes. But the problem is the machine you want may be in Kansas or Michigan and shipping it to you makes it less of a good deal. I check Craig’s List and often see some really good deals. Don’t just check your own state. Check all New England states and/or however far you are willing to travel.

Then there are the local dealers. Boshco in Massachusetts. Woodshop Machines in Bow, NH and my favorites Plaza Machinery and Woodshop Specialties in Vermont. Woodshop Specialties specializes in rebuilt classic Powermatic machines.

There are also the want advertisers and you can put a nice shop together over the course of a few months by reading “Uncle Henry’s.”

Dave Emerson replies: Used machinery just doesn’t seem to be available like it was. Maybe if you are a classified ad junkie or into Craig List.

Joe Barry replies: First know what you want or need – not always the same thing! Then know what you are looking at. There are some old tools out there that are best used as boat anchors due to safety or usability issues. Then look at price for new and used tools at auctions and on eBay. That way you know what
is a fair market price. Unfortunately there are a number of school shops and even professional shops being liquidated. Regrettably, there are also a lot of us old farts kicking the bucket and our families have no use for our “junk” and just need to clear the house for sale. Keep your ear to the ground and be ready to show up with cash, a truck, and some friends. Before you buy that great deal, think twice. I passed up on a great antique 36” bandsaw last year because my barn floor wouldn’t support the weight and I would have had to cut a hole in the loft floor above to accommodate the upper wheel. But, boy, it would have been sweet!

Water Based Finishes – Is it possible to get good results with a water based clear finish? If so, how? The quick drying and low odor benefits sound good, but how can you get smooth results? – Peter James

Bruce Hamilton replies: I don’t have much experience with waterborne finishing materials but they have come a long way since they were introduced maybe twenty years ago. Andy Charron, who was a presenter at the recent Wood Finishing Symposium and a member of the Guild, wrote an excellent book on waterborne finishes in 1998 called Water-Based Finishes, ISBN 1-56158-236-0. I think it is a great place to start for anyone contemplating using waterborne finishes.

I recently had an occasion to use a waterborne finishing material when repairing the finish on a white, antiqued table. I needed a finish that was water clear and would not turn yellow. I called my local Sherwin Williams store and they had several products available. I chose their Wood Classics Satin Interior Polyurethane Varnish.

I followed the instructions on the can. This material sprayed very well but it can be brushed or padded on too. It dried moderately fast with a uniform sheen. Drying times are not as fast as regular furniture lacquer and will vary depending on the humidity in the air. I suggest that you take the same precautions regarding dust as you would with any varnish. It will raise the wood grain when applied to unfinished wood. You have to follow the same steps as you would with a water stain by lightly wetting the wood to raise the grain, letting it dry and then sanding it lightly on a slight diagonal to cut the raised fibers off.

If you spray waterborne finishes, you must use a respirator so as not to breath the fumes. The material may not be flammable but it is still toxic to breath. As always, experiment on some scrap wood first.

Dust Collection Grounding – How important is grounding of 4” and 5” ducting of dust collection systems in our shop? We all read about explosion hazards, but we hear conflicting issues on whether this concern is warranted. – Don Larnard

Brooks Tanner replies: Please ground your system. Sawdust traveling through a tube acts as a Van De Graaff generator. The static charge is incredible.

I have in the past I used a plastic hose from my dust collector to clean out the bottom of my saw. If I did not keep in continuous contact with the saw, which is grounded, I would draw an arc that was actually painful. This plastic hose was only 12 foot long. Sawdust within the tube is extremely explosive due to the small bits of wood being lofted and surrounded by air. One small spark can ignite the mixture into a significant explosion.

In my shop, I use grounded metal pipe for ducting. Previous to this, when I was a hobbyist in my basement, I used PVC pipe. In this scenario, unshielded, grounded wire should be run inside the pipe to drain the charge.

If you run an un-grounded system you may be lucky and never have a problem. However, if you do have a problem, you could loose your house and possibly your life. It only takes a few minutes – be safe.

Rust Spots – What are the different methods to remove rust spots from power tools? – Andy Young

Joe Barry replies: 0000 steel wool and elbow grease works well. There are also rust erasers. On a machine which doesn’t need to be dead flat and accurate, like a disk sander, I’ve taken my random orbit sander with a 320 grit pad to it – that sound you hear is the purists wanting to tar and feather me.

Handplane Tuneup – What are the essential steps to tune up an old handplane? Are there any good articles on tuning from Fine Woodworking? – Jim Bradley

Al Breed replies: Frog – this controls the throat opening and carries the blade adjustment. Take it off, clean it and oil it. It should line up with the casting or be forward of the casting at the throat.

Blade – Sharpen at about 25 degrees, hollow ground. Any pits in the blade will result in tiny ridges in the work. Grind the corners very slightly round so that they won’t dig in. Work should look polished. If the blade will not reach the work, it may be so ground down that you’ll need a new one.

Cap Iron – Needs to be ground so that the edge is tight up to the blade with no small cracks for chips to get stuck in. For general work, it’s about ⅛th from the edge, closer for a light fine cut. Plane will clog if it’s too close and chatter if it’s too far.

Throat of Plane – For fine work like tiger maple, set the blade in the plane and move the frog up for the desired opening. If the throat clogs in a fine cut, file the inside of the throat to bevel the metal away from the iron. This will remove any obstacles in the way of the exiting chip. File only the inside of the throat, do not enlarge the opening at the sole.

Lever Cap – This should be just tight enough to keep the iron in place. Too tight and you may break the cap or adjustments will be hard. A very slight turn on the screw increases the pressure considerably.

Sole of the Plane – I pay virtually no attention to this unless it’s obviously warped or bent. If so, flatten it on a granite stone with waterproof black paper. Waxing the sole will reduce the amount of effort to push the plane an astounding amount.

When planing, I always tip the plane
When I was growing up, I remember that after dinner almost every evening, my father would clean off the table so he could do his homework. This consisted of unrolling multipage blueprints of construction projects. From these prints, he would estimate the cost of every piece of lumber, window, door, and cabinet in the project, and it was his job to make working shop drawings of all the custom aspects. When I worked summers at the shop, he taught me how to make drawings of cabinets.

This was the beginning of my education in drafting, but later I studied graphic science in college, which consisted mainly of descriptive geometry. Ten years later I found myself teaching “mechanical drawing” in high school, and as I always say, you never learn something so well as when you must teach it.

**Drawing Turned Furniture Parts**

While some objects require the traditional “three views”, and some only two, in general turnings require just one – the profile view. This consists of two outlines (object lines) placed symmetrically around the center line. In addition, sharp features are drawn as lines across the object. They represent the edge view of circles.

Drawing a woodturning such as a table leg, does not lend itself to conventional “mechanical drawing” methods, because designs for turning simply are not mechanical in nature. Rarely is there a straight line in a woodturning. And the proportions of a table leg, for example, which is eighteen times as long as it is wide, does not scale well on a normal rectangular sheet or screen. For these reasons, I have always done my drawing freehand with a pencil.

**Here is my method:**

1. Fold the paper in half on the long axis.
2. Open the paper like a book. The fold should still be visible, and this is your axis line.

Rub the back to transfer the line.
3 Draw a very light guideline parallel to the axis which represents the radius of the turning.

4 Draw the outline of the turning with a very soft lead – Photo 1.

5 Fold the paper again so you are looking at the back of the drawing.

6 Rub over the lines with a stylus or any smooth hard object. This will transfer the line to the other side with perfect symmetry – Photo 2.

7 Go over the transferred line to darken it to appear the same as the first side – Photo 3.

8 Draw the lines across the turning at the feature points. Since I am not using a T-square, I use the sliding triangle method to create perfectly parallel lines square to the axis – Photo 4.

An excellent type of stylus for rubbing drawings can be made from a large nail, as shown in the photo. Grind or file the tip to a rounded shape, and then polish it with a buffing wheel until it shines.

Always draw full size. It is a waste of time to make a small scale drawing. The full size drawing provides a quick way to mark out the features along the axis by laying the drawing, folded now the opposite way, directly on the turning – Photo 5.

Set your calipers directly from the drawing – Photo 6.

Adding Dimensions

Because these drawings are full size, it is rarely necessary to add dimensional size numbers to the drawing, but you may want to do this if you prefer to take measurements from a graduated caliper or from a ruler, or transmit the drawing, possibly reduced, to another woodturner.

There are specific rules for adding dimensions to drawings, and whether you use a computer or a pencil to make your drawings, you still need to know these rules, just as a writer needs to know the language, whether he uses a pen or a word processor.

Woodturnings require special treatment when dimensioning because of their proportions and the multitude of diameters which often need to be specified. The most common error I see is the placement of dimension lines inside the object. This causes great visual confusion with the cross lines on the turning, which of course are object lines.

To place dimensions on a spindle turning, diameters are given off to the side of the object, and are connected by a horizontal leader with an arrow which touches the object where the diameter is to be measured.

The illustration of the bedpost finial on the next page shows many of the mistakes often made when placing dimensions on drawings of spindle turnings:

1 Dimension lines should not be inside the object.
2 Extension lines should not touch the object.
3 Dimension lines on length should align in a single row.
4 Fractions should be drawn with a horizontal division line.
5 Dimension numbers should all be drawn the same size.
6 Dimension numbers should be placed inside a break in the dimension line.
7 Dimension and extension lines should be lighter than object lines.
8 Arrowheads should be of correct size and weight.
9 Overall length should be given for reference.
Ask This Old Saw! – continued

Draw the Transition

With the exception of the Windsor style, most furniture turnings require one or more parts of the turning to remain square. The square part is sometimes called the “pommel”. The angle of the transition can be anything from 0° (square transition) to 40° or more, or it can even be curved or decorated. In the illustration I am using a 30° straight cut, which is the way I usually make them. Note that the intersection line is a hyperbola, but for drafting purposes it is usually drawn as a circular arc.

The illustration shows two correct and two incorrect ways to draw the transition.

The Transition – Right and wrong ways to draw the transition.

The right and wrong way to place dimensions on a drawing. Note that extension, dimension & leader lines should be lighter (thinner) than object lines.
Surface Preparation

The final clamp is removed and your project is complete except for sanding and finishing. The sanding stage may never be exciting but with a basic knowledge of abrasive materials and techniques, the process can be made efficient and faster.

Surface preparation can be looked at in three stages: bare wood sanding, sanding between coats of finish, and final rub down. Each stage uses a different type of abrasive and manufacturers offer a great number of choices including aluminum oxide, silicon carbide, ceramic and more. Final rub down warrants a separate discussion so this article will consider the first two stages.

For bare wood sanding, aluminum oxide sandpaper is often the first choice. When used in power sanders, aluminum oxide grit well bonded to a sturdy paper backing is adequate. When sanding by hand, consider using aluminum oxide on a J-Weight cloth backing for flexibility and longevity. In my shop, I keep A/O J-Weight cloth in 60, 80, 100, 150, and 220 grits. The most used? 100 and 150 grit. On many woods, sanding to 150 with just a light touch of 220 is enough preparation for finishing, leaving the grain ‘open’ enough to accept stains and sealer coats.

Like many woodworkers, I use a random orbit sander in the coarser grits, but finish by hand in the finer grits to insure removal of swirl marks. Although we have all seen excellent results on projects where extra time is taken to sand with higher grits, I think the key is to treat each project individually. Creating a country look on pine will take less fine sanding than creating a burnished look on a mahogany reproduction. As a side note, some of the softer woods such as pine and fir sand well with the almost outdated but still available garnet abrasive. It wears down quickly, especially in orbital sanders, but it won’t clog up with the resinous softwood as much as aluminum oxide.

Moving on to the finishing state requires a change of materials. An often used abrasive in the finishing steps is silicon carbide, which is available in a full range of fine grits as both a wet/dry paper and a paper with stearate additive for lubrication. The most useful for me has been stearated silicon carbide with an A-Weight paper backing. My most used grit is 320 which I use between coats.

A tip for the truly frugal – don’t throw out your dry finishing papers. OK, you have to throw them out eventually, but there are many times when your worn 320 grit will act like 400 or 500 in the later finishing steps.

On flat surfaces, 320 grit paper will usually work well for sanding your sealer coat as well as the body-up coats of finish when you are using varnish, shellac or lacquer. You may find that stepping back to 220 or up to 400 is appropriate depending on how much leveling is needed or trapped dust you need to eliminate. In the sealer and bodying steps, it’s possible to wet sand, but I find it easier to see my progress, and it’s less messy to stay with dry sanding.

The treatment of curved surfaces and turnings can be tricky. When sanding between coats, it is possible to cut through the finish on delicate edges. Steel wool is a good abrasive in this instance, especially on turnings. Although 4/0 grade is preferred for its fine texture, consider 3/0 or 2/0 for faster rubbing between the body-up coats.

Those who apply water based finish may favor nylon abrasive pads over steel wool to avoid trapped steel wool flecks that could rust. Sanding a curved surface is also more efficient with cushion backed abrasive which is simply a light sponge backing on a sanding pad that helps to soften the pressure you exert on delicate finishes. If you have a typical ½” thick sponge pad with abrasive on both sides, try slicing it into two ¼” pads to make them very flexible.

Once the bodying coats are complete, including sanding between coats, treatment of the final coat is similar, but approach it with extra care. Take advantage of good lighting to look for any brush marks and work them down carefully with fine sanding.

This is a good time to apply the 90% rule. If it looks pretty darned good, but not perfect, you might play it safe and settle for pretty darned good. If you find a random bit of dust standing proud of an otherwise smooth surface, carefully slice the dust speck with a razor blade, rather than sand the whole surface.

Of course vacuuming and tack ragging is important before the final top coat and remember to vacuum yourself, the surrounding shop area, as well as your piece of furniture. Work with your cleanest finish containers and application tools, apply a final thin coat, and tip toe out the door.

by Gary Wood
OK so I’m exaggerating. The whole point is that you can take a simple box, embellish it with an inlay and really add a whole lot to the finished product. The process is quite simple and won’t add that much more time to the project.

I am going to assume that you already have a box built, or at least to the point that you are ready to inlay it. I suggest that you have your inlay in your hands before you begin building the box.

Inlays can be purchased on-line or in good woodworking stores. You may also make them yourself as I did for this article. But that is a topic for another day.

When choosing an inlay, keep the background shape basic (round, oval, square etc.), this will save you a whole lot of irritation – Photo 1. Cover the face (the good side) in veneer tape. A purchased one will most likely be covered when you get it. This will serve two purposes. One will be to keep your inlay together while you are handling it and the other is to protect it.

You will notice that I used blue painters low tack tape for this project – Photo 2. This is something I was experimenting with. Tape removal was quicker and easier than veneer tape. It did not leave any residue behind and I had no problems when I applied the finish. I definitely want to try it a few times before I recommend it.

First start by placing your inlay where you want it, I added a few witness marks on the inlay as well as the work piece so I could put the inlay back exactly where it belonged. Once you are satisfied with it’s location, I “tack” it in place with tape from the back side. Next, carefully outline your inlay with a knife to create a stop – Photo 3. I like to use an xacto because it leaves a thin cut, remains sharp and is easy to control. Once I have traced around my inlay, I remove it from the work piece and go around once more to deepen and truly define the stop cut – Photo 4. Remember that you want this stop cut to be as deep as your inlay is thick. In the case of wood veneer, this is about 1/32”. 

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**Inlay a Simple Box**

…and make it worth a million bucks

1. Choose an inlay with a basic background shape
2. Tape your inlay to hold it together & protect it
3. Outline your inlay with a knife

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*by Guy Senneville*
Now we’re ready to “hog” out the cavity. I use a router with a base plate which is wide enough to straddle the cavity at any point. If the base of your router is not large enough you may need to add a sub-base. The reasoning behind this is to keep the bottom of the cavity level with the top of the surrounding surface.

Any flat bottomed bit will do but in my opinion the larger the diameter the better (within reason). I find that the easiest way to set the depth on your router is to place your inlay on a flat surface, set your router on top of it with the bit over its side. Lower the bit until it just touches your flat surface – Photo 5.

Begin to rout out the cavity going as close to the edge as you feel comfortable being careful not to go past your stop cut. I clean it up with a router plane – Photo 6. You could also build a template and use router collars. At this point your inlay should fit exactly in the cavity. Remember your witness marks and adjust as needed.

In order to glue the inlay in place. I start with a platen the exact shape and size as the inlay. – Photo 7. This will distribute even pressure over the inlay when you glue it up.

There are many opinions when it comes to glues. Remember we are not looking for any structural strength here, just to hold something in place. I have used white, yellow and liquid hide glue all with good success. They all have their positives and negatives. White is good if you are using dyed veneers because it dries clear. But, it is very water soluble. Yellow dries a brownish yellow color and is more tolerant of moisture. Liquid hide glue dries brown, is easily cleaned up while wet, is tolerant of moisture but can still be cleaned up after it dries. It can be finished over without much problem as well. This is one time when a little squeeze out is a good thing. Squeeze out will fill in the small spaces between the different pieces of veneer. This is an inevitable fact and is not a bad thing because it will help keep everything level.

Using a brush apply a thin even coat of glue to the cavity. Do not apply glue to the veneer because it will begin to curl before you can get it in place. I like to put a piece of waxed paper over the inlay to prevent things from sticking, followed by the platen then apply clamps or weight to complete the process – Photo 8. Once dry (overnight or so) you can remove the platen and clean the excess squeeze out. I have found that a scraper works well here. You can level the inlay with the surrounding area without much effort as long as the scraper is sharp. Avoid using sand paper because the dust created may infiltrate and stain the crisp lines from one area to another. A perfect example of this would be ebony staining holly.

From that, point on you should be able to finish as you usually do. I have sealed the inlay with a coat of blond dewaxed shellac in the past, that helped to fill the grain of the veneer but this is not always necessary. I will let the finishing process up to you.

Try it. The process is not that difficult. Soon people will be marveling at your handy work. Maybe that million is not that far away (if you inlay in gold)!

As a side note, I presented this memory box to a young man at his Eagle Court of Honor in June of this year. He is the sixth young man to achieve scouting’s highest rank in his family.
You have undoubtedly read about and even tried your hand at several different methods of sharpening your tools including sandpaper, oil stones, wet stones, diamond plates, and dedicated wet wheel sharpening machines to name but a few.

Three things remain common amongst all of these methods. The first is that they work well to produce a finely sharpened edge on any blade. The second is that they require practice until you are able to acquire the adeptness to be proficient at it. And the third is perhaps the most curious of all – whatever method you are using, you defend it as the best way to sharpen and can't understand why others do it differently or seem to be critical of your method.

Therein lays one of the great conundrums of woodworking – it’s all about the sharpest edge which allows you to cut and refine precise joinery that is the mark of any fine woodworker. But why so many different methods? I’d like to propose the Great Theorem of Sharpening, as well as a key Corollary to that Theorem:

**Theorem:** “For as many woodworkers as we have reading The Old Saw, we have as many different sharpening techniques in use, with each reader claiming their method is the best”

**Corollary:** “Sharpening is a matter of personal preference. Pick one system, invest, practice, and this will become the best method for you. Don’t expect others to agree with you!”

It all began for me when I took my first wood shop class in junior high school – that is where I got my first injection of sawdust that runs through our veins that sustains our woodworking obsessions. If you’ve already read this far into this article, I know that you too have the same condition that I do. In fact, we might want to add the word ‘obsessed’ in this context.

Well, looking back at it now, it probably began long before that as I suspect I actually inherited this condition. My great grandfather, Alfred Richards was from Nova Scotia, Canada. Like many Nova Scotians before and after him, he made his living on the sea. But his was a story with a pretty unique twist. You see, my great grandfather had a woodworking shop but his was rather unique. Many shops are relegated to basements or garages, or maybe we’re fortunate enough to have a dedicated building to call our shop. His shop moved up and down with the tides, and rocked back and forth with the waves.

Amazingly, my great grandfather had his workshop, complete with workbench, tool chests and tools on a converted Nova Scotia wooden lobster boat! He claimed his trade as a builder of lighthouses, of the wooden variety. The rocky and remote coast of Nova Scotia meant that there was often no other way to reach his job site other than by boat.

How many woodworkers do you know that have a bunk and a head within feet of their workbench? This gives a real meaning to the expression “sleeping on the job.” He would pack up his boat with lumber, food and fuel and take off in the calm seas under the evening sky, and quite literally, move with his workshop to his building.
site where he would remain anchored close by his work site.

As the years went by, he traveled all along the Nova Scotia coast, and even made a few trips down along the Maine coast to repair a few older wooden lighthouses. Sadly, I never had the chance to meet my great grandfather. I would have a list of questions for him a mile long as to the uniqueness of his craft.

His tools were passed along to my grandfather Jack Richards who over the years prided himself in showing me these tools which he was using in his workshop in his basement at home in Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

When my grandfather died, I inherited many of his father’s tools, including his sharpening stones and one of his surviving tool chests, and thus the legacy was passed along to me.

I live vicariously through my great grandfather whenever I pick up one of his tools. Why did my great grandfather choose oil stone sharpening? Well, I don’t know the real reason other than to imagine that the oil residue left on his tools probably helped keep them from rusting in the moist and salty environment of his workshop.

Were his techniques of oil stone sharpening perfected? Most definitely not. Come on, we all know that the level of perfection we strive for is impossible to achieve. Let me explain it in a mathematical way. You see, the state of perfection is a line on a graph that we can only approach asymptotically (meaning we can get close, but we never in fact reach it). Our rising curve represents our technique and the results we achieve.

At some point, we achieve enough for what we need. Perfection is a relative term that can be thought of otherwise as the next level beyond what we can currently achieve, and every time we get closer to it, it moves higher. Ever notice that before? We can always look at a task completed, and see it in such a way that we would do it better next time.

My great grandfather’s level of perfection was the keenness of an edge required to cut joinery in large timbers. We’re likely talking 4” thick mortise and tenons to join an 8” timber into a 12” timber. A perfectly square edge honed to perfection simply wasn’t required.

Further, try sharpening when your workshop is rocking back and forth, up and down. I guess what I’m saying is that the edges on his tools were far from what we call near-perfect. And, the techniques that were passed down to me through my grandfather when he gave me his father’s tools today seem woefully inadequate to achieve any degree of success other than, say, for a splitting axe.

Since then, through detailed hands-on training and lots of practice, I have come to appreciate both the art and the science of oil stone sharpening.

A few years back, I had an epiphany – the sort of big “ah-ha” moment, one of several we all have hopefully experienced at some point in our lives. This one, in particular (as there were several), came during a one month intensive class I took at the venerable North Bennett Street School in Boston’s north end. This specialized institute (the word “school” doesn’t do it enough justice) steeps its students in the perfection of hand skills required to achieve true fine craftsmanship. And sharpening is at the root. The very foundation and the key to success with hand skills.

This was where I finally learned the correct technique of sharpening with oil stones that has made a huge difference in my craftsmanship. I’d like to share this with you. Recognize that, like any recipe, there is sufficient freedom to allow the chef to tailor it to suit their own tastes and styles of working.

First, let’s start with the ingredients. The items in bold are to be considered the essential items you need for oil stone sharpening. The other items take you from a level of good old home-cooking to gourmet. Remember, substitution of ingredients is up to the chef, just don’t substitute salt for sugar.

**Key Ingredients for Oil Stone Sharpening**

- Norton Coarse Crystolon (Silicon Carbide) Oil Stone
- Norton Medium India (Aluminum Oxide) Oil Stone
- Norton Fine India (Aluminum Oxide) Oil Stone
- Norton Hard Translucent Arkansas Oil Stone (Extra Fine)
- Leather Strop & Honing Compound
- Norton Sharpening Oil
- Accurate Combo Square or machinists square
- Protractor
- 8” Slow Speed (1750rpm) Bench Grinder
- Ample supply of clean cotton lint free rags
- Magnifying lamp

Upon first review of the items listed here, you might wonder if I left out some type of a sharpening or honing jig or some other gadget that helps you achieve consistency. The reason is that you already have the best jig available to you in your shop. It’s your fingers. With a little practice, you’re fingers are all that is required to keep perfect alignment of your tools on the stones while sharpening.

**Step #1 – Oil and its use on the oil stone, and the proper use and care of your stones.**

1. The purpose of oil on the stone is to not only lubricate the stone and tool steel being sharpened, but to “float” a slurry of metal shaving so that the stone doesn’t become “loaded” at which point its cutting action will be greatly reduced.
2. Flood the surface of the stone with oil. I use a sealable salad dressing plastic container to store and dispense my oil. The oil I use is Norton’s Sharpening Oil which is essentially a refined mineral oil. The reason I prefer this oil to standard drug store mineral oil is that the constancy is much better suited to the task, so it’s worth the extra money to me.
3. Using your finger (I prefer the pad of my clean thumb), spread the oil across the surface of the stone. As you do this, your thumb will tell you if you have any contaminates on the surface of the stone which should be removed.
4. Use the full surface of the stone. Oil stones are a good choice because they stay flat for many years of use without reconditioning, whereas water stones require fussy resurfacing regularly.
By using the full surface of the stone, it will wear evenly for you over the years. See photo #1.

5 As you sharpen your steel edge by moving it back and forth on the stone, you are actually removing particles of metal. Once there is a noticeable amount of grey color in the oil slurry (actual fragments of metal from your blade), it is time to remove this from your stone.

By using the full surface of the stone, it will wear evenly for you over the years. See photo #2.

6 If you have contamination on your stone (lint, sawdust, etc.) that you can feel with your thumb when spreading the oil, repeat step 5 above, even adding a small amount of oil again to re-suspend the contaminants.

7 You should always keep your stones covered when not in use, and occasionally move from side to side and also the front side to the back side to keep them wearing evenly. I made wooden cases for my stones with wood species in color similar to the grade of the stone. This way, I keep them always covered, and it is easy to reach for the correct stone. In the lead photo, you can see my wooden cases: Walnut = Coarse, Padauk = Medium, Mahogany = Fine, Birds Eye Maple = Extra Fine. Dark to light.

Step #2 – Conditioning a chisel or plane blade that is in poor shape.

1 It’s all about the edge – a sharp tool is defined by the intersection of two planes (blade edge face and blade back) which is a single straight line. Anything other than a straight line is a dull cutting edge.

2 Flatten the back of the blade on the Coarse or Medium stone. Depending on the level of pitting or twist in the blade, this could take some effort. Aim for a minimum of 1” from the blade edge back of the perfectly flattened back. You must be sure that all of the blade edge end is perfectly flat all the way across, or you will need to grind the edge back to this point to insure you have a perfectly flat back out to the full edge of the blade. See photo #3.

3 Once flattened, bring to the fine stone. You are finished when ever the scratch patterns from the previous stone have all disappeared. You can see this quite easily by eye.

4 Bring the blade to the grinder at 90° to “joint” the edge – you should aim for a perfect 90° edge (it will now be very dull!).

5 Take your jointed blade edge to the fine stone vertically, taking several light passes to further refine the jointed edge. See photo #4.

6 Set the grinder table to achieve an angle grind of 27°. There are many schools of thought on edge angles depending on several factors. For my purposes, I use a general purpose 27° angle that is “close enough”. This angle works equally well for my chisel and plane blades. See photo #5.

7 A very important note on the grinder. You want to be very careful not to overheat the tool edge on your blade. Depending on how thin your blade is, and the quality and speed of your grinding wheels, this can happen very quickly if you aren’t careful! You can quench the blade in water or oil, but I prefer to just hold the blade back to a larger metal surface to dissipate the heat. If you discolor your blade at all, even at the edges, and even at the first straw color level, you have made the tool edge too soft to hold
an edge. Go back to step 3 above and repeat.
8 Hollow grind the new blade face being very careful not to grind down to the jointed edge. Use the spark flow as a visual aid to progress. Sparks bounce off of the jointed edge until just before you reach the edge, and then the flow down the flattened back just before the edge is met. If you overshoot it, you will lose your jointed edge, and must go back to point 3 in this step.

Step #3 – The real meat of sharpening.

1 Now that you’ve finished the blade face and edge conditioning, take your blade back to the stones, and bring the back of the blade back up to your fine stone. You may have scratched the back of your blade slightly during grinding.
2 At this point, depending on how close to the jointed edge you got on the grinding machine, you may feel that you’ve raised a burr on the face side of the blade by rubbing your finger perpendicular to the blade edge (not parallel to – ouch!). Either way, time to start working on the face of the blade, probably starting on your medium or fine stone depending on how close to the edge you are.
3 Let the sensitive feel in your fingers be your honing guide. Place the blade face down on the stone on the heel of the hollow ground. Raise the blade up just until your fingers detect that you’ve brought the toe of the blade down onto the stone. Steady, full and consistent strokes back and forth on your stone are important, with your fingers telling you at all times that your blade face is properly registered on the stone. See photo #6 and the illustration above.
4 Now, feel for a burr that should be raised at the blade edge. Flip to the back of the blade on the stone, and remove this burr with sharpening strokes. Depending on the fineness of your edge and the resultant thickness of the burr, you may need to flip back and forth between the front and the back of the blade a couple of times to remove the burr. That is the sign that you are refining the blade edge.
5 Repeat steps 3 & 4 above as necessary and work up through the finer progressions of the stones you have available.
6 Finally, test your edge. Some of you like the idea of shaving hair off of your arm as a test, but I prefer the safer and more meaningful test. Try paring across the end grain of a piece of scrap wood mounted in your bench vise. This gives you a much better sense of sharpness than the arm hair test, a well sharpened blade will leave a perfectly burnished face on the end grain. Any scores or chattering left behind indicates you aren’t quite there yet. See photo #7.
7 Leather strop and compound for polish honing. OK – this is for the purists at heart, but it is actually quite easy, and is worth going the extra step. If you come to the strop off of an extra fine Arkansas stone, very little work is needed to create a highly polished surface which refines the edge line even further. Strop the back of the blade, and then the face of the blade edge. As always, be very careful to keep your blade in plane so that you don’t round your nearly perfect edge. Always use a pull stroke on the leather strop! In the case of a brand new strop, I have learned to condition the new piece of leather with a small amount of Crisco or other hard fat applied with your finger. Apply compound very sparingly – a little bit goes a long way!

It is true – practice makes perfect. Why not practice with that old plane that you bought at a flea market or one of those old chisels that is laying around. This reminds me of another valuable lesson I learned at the North Bennett Street School. They refer to it as something like the “Three P” rule: Perfectionism leads to Procrastination, Procrastination leads to Paralysis! That was another “ah-ha” moment for me. Just keep those three Ps in mind, and head out to your shop and you’ll get right to sharpening.

There are many books about sharpening, and all of them are full of valuable advice and techniques. In particular, I recommend a book called The Fundamentals of Fine Woodworking by Robert Ferencsik with Will Neptune. It was published by Sterling Press in 1996. Written by North Bennett Street School furniture making program graduates, they explore many of the key principles to fine woodworking including traditional oil stone sharpening. Unfortunately, this is an out of print book. If you happen to find a copy on eBay or a used book store, it would make a wonderful addition to your collection of woodworking books.
From a design point of view, I wanted a simple form that would fit in any home. There is space for two to four blankets depending on size. It is made of some really fine curly maple. Here is how I made it.

The sides have a slight outward curve – about \( \frac{1}{4}'' \) in 17” or an estimated radius of 12 feet. I laminated two \( \frac{3}{8}'' \) and one \( \frac{1}{16}'' \) layer using a form in my vacuum press with Unibond 800.

Photo 1 shows one of the curved side panels exiting the vacuum bag. A note on this outward curve. There is a cant out of vertical and a slight outward curve – see photos 2 & 3.

I am limited by what my table saw can cut at 45 degrees. The saw carriage for this cut has two \( \frac{3}{4}'' \) ribs to boost one edge up - see photo 2.

One of the curved side panels exiting the vacuum bag
Panel shimmed up to reflect angle on shop drawing
After the sides are cut to 45 degrees, they need a spline slot which is curved to echo the curve at the outer point of the 45 (this is different from the outward curve of the panels). For the router fence to work well, the curve at the edge of the 45 degrees should be very close to the curve of a circle - see photo 5 running the router using a delrin fence. See also photos 6 & 7 which shows the jig to hold panels at 45 degrees making joint area level or parallel to the floor. I used a ¼” spline stopped at the top edge and through on the bottom edge.

The next steps are to profile the four sides. I did this on my shaper using a 50mm x 85mm straight cutter with matching ball bearing. You could also use a router table setup with a straight ball bearing bit. See photos 8 & 9 on the next page.
There are two jigs for the front and back panels. One for a slight (1/8") downward curve and a second to put in the mitered leg joint – see photo 10. Because of the tight radius I used a 1/2" ball bearing straight router bit for this joint. It is also mortised for the leg tenons.

The bottom is a 3/4" unfinished panel of cedar of lebanon. It is rabbeted with a 3/8" tongue set in a 3/8" groove.

For a gluing jig you need panels of 3/8" wiggle board to conform easily to the curve of the maple panels. See photo 17.

The view looking down shows the 3/4" carcass side, the 3/8" wiggle board. The 45 degree clamping ridges give gluing pressure parallel to the glue line. They need to be carefully made. They are curved in two planes matching the lines of the carcass.

You need to make clamping panels for all four sides and 12-16 clamps. Do a dry clamp so that all is rehearsed and use a glue such as Unibond 800 or an epoxy that gives you time to get it all together. Remember to prefinish the inside (two light coats of lacquer or shellac) prior to glueup leaving the bottom panel unfinished.

After glueup, setup for the dovetail splines. You will need a specially made router jig - see photo 13. The spline is made tight and carefully sanded to just push in.

The feet are made and
fitted individually and have slots for the loose tenons - see photo labeled mortise. There is a cross rail underneath tenoned into the feet. It does not have to allow for seasonal expansion.

The final step is to make the top. It is two 3/8” panels, each of three 1/8” layers that are glued in the vacuum press on a curving form. The 3/8” panels are then glued up using graduated spacers - see photo 14

Photo 15 shows the loose splines for attaching the end batten. The end batten is carefully made to match the curves of the center panel using a shaper jig. The mortises on the center panel and the batten need to match exactly. This is done with a simple jig that will hold either the center panel or the batten on the horizontal mortiser (Langhulsborrmaskine). Scrape or delicately hand plane the batten so that there is a slight hollow at the glue face. Clamp and glue only the center area.

I used a 1” wide leather strap the top on opening.

Finally, I finished the blanket chest with several coats of clear lacquer.
Working wood is so pleasurable and satisfying it is a rare woodworker who does not dream of quitting the day job and hanging a sign in front of the shop. We are constantly involved in helping people making this dream a reality. About 20% of the people who study with us are already deriving at least some income from their woodworking. Another 10% are in the planning stage. We spend a lot of time talking with these people and advising them. We are pretty well qualified. Mike has been making and selling Windsor chairs for 35 years. He has always been able to sell everything he makes. Before our son was born, I worked in public relations/marketing and political consulting. I also had her own television political talk show. I left that work to help in our business and to raise our son without resorting to day care. Besides making our school grow like a mushroom, I still help woodworkers who want to take the big step, or who are struggling.

Making a living working wood is tough. You have to go pro with the right attitude. We recently had a student from a rural mid-western state express a desire to go home and make chairs for sale. He wondered aloud who would buy chairs in the $700 price range in the hard scrabble area where he lived. We advised that he find a place to sell his chairs in a more wealthy area. “You mean, like a gallery?”

“Yes.”

“I don’t want to get wrapped up in all those hassles,” he said.

“Then move to a place where the inhabitants have more money.”

“I don’t want to leave where I am.”

“Then you really don’t want to make and sell chairs,” we concluded.

Go pro with this commitment. “I am going to make a living by working wood.” Be prepared to do what is necessary to accomplish that goal. If any other consideration is more important, keep your day job and save yourself a lot of grief.

The world is full of good woodworkers who cannot sell their products. These people, struggling until the inevitable end, giving rise to the old joke, “What does a woodworker do when he wins the Powerball lottery? He keeps working wood until the money is all gone.” You will not make a living working wood until you learn to sell – until people give you checks for your work and enough of them to makes ends meet. You cannot afford an attitude that considers this distasteful unless you are willing to pay some else – such as a gallery owner – 40-60% to do it for you. You make a lot more money if you can do the selling yourself. Remember, your commitment in going pro is to make a living, not be a starving artist.

Sue advises our students to devote a bare minimum of one day a week to marketing. Marketing is a skill and you need to develop it the same way you did your woodworking skills – through learning and practice.

There are lots of woodworkers out there who are as good as you are. So, your biggest obstacles are to inform people you are in business and to convince them they want to buy from you. That means you must develop an image in the customer’s mind about you and your work. You need to sell yourself before you can sell your woodwork. For this reason, selling high end woodworking is very similar to a political campaign, but (happily) without the mud slinging. We know these techniques work because we used them to build our business. Use the next election cycle as a marketing primer. You will get a free education if you watch closely and you will observe a lot of the advice in this article being used.

A politician has to know the public. He then seizes the initiative by defining both himself and his opponent. He begins by knowing what the public wants, frequently through polling. Next, he seeks to control his image and shape it in the voters’ minds. He then focuses the voters on the things that distinguish him from his opponent. He wants to emphasize his virtues and his opponent’s short comings.

Be like that politician. Begin by knowing your customer. The people who want to buy Windsors break into several categories. The first is antique people. Old Windsors are so expensive (record price for a single chair is over $125,000!) that only the wealthy can now afford them. A $600 accurate hand-made copy is a bargain in an antique collector’s mind.

Another group of potential customers is people who like quality. They buy paintings, rather than prints – a Mercedes rather than a Ford. Based
on this knowledge, make a list of those things that for these people, set your work apart. Here is an example. Stress quality – point out joints and engineering that resulted in old Windsors staying tight for 200 years while today’s factory chairs are usually at the end of the driveway with the rubbish after 15 years.

In order to complete this list do your homework. It is not sufficient to make a good chair. You have to tell people why it is good, and why it is better than the alternatives. We tell students to boast that their chairs will be passed on to their customers’ descendants.

Once you have determined what distinguishes you and your work, practice your presentation until it is flawless. Enlist someone you trust to act as a customer and critique you, just as a politician does with trusted advisers before a debate or public appearance.

A politician cannot survive without the media and neither can you. While you may still need to advertise, this type of exposure is expensive. Since few publications directly target your potential customers, advertising is frequently inefficient. Furthermore, most people have a healthy suspicion of advertising.

**Media coverage is free,** and in the mind of a potential customer a disinterested third party is talking about how good your work is. A good politician knows the media. He knows who is writing and what they write. He gets to know editors and reporters personally. You should do the same. Target the outlets that are read, watched, or listened to by your potential customers. This often means the local newspapers and radio and television stations – above all cable. However, for high end work, it could be architectural and decorator magazines or television programs with a similar focus. Clip or record the reports about other craftspeople for future reference.

Do not be afraid to approach the media. Remember, editors and reporters have to turn out a newspaper, magazine, or show on a regular basis and are always looking for material. It is a lot easier to write about someone who comes through the door than go out and find these people. Do not be afraid to propose yourself as a story or to enlist a friend who knows someone. That is how we ended up on the front page of the Wall Street Journal, in the New York Times, on New Yankee Workshop, Martha Stewart Living, etc.

**The easiest way to attract media attention** is to use the tricks politicians use – the press release and phone calls. If you do anything interesting – open your business, get a major contract, or are recognized in any way – prepare a press release and send it off to your targeted media. Including a photo always helps. If you see a story that relates to what you do, call and inform an editor or a reporter. You may be included in a follow-up story. Also, you become a source. The next time the reporter is writing about something similar, you may be called for a quote or for assistance. Being helpful in these ways frequently leads on to articles about you.

When an article finally appears, clip it and send copies to all your other targeted outlets. My good friend Garry Knox Bennett once told me, “The more media you get, the more media you get.” It sounds like Yogi Berra, but he meant this stuff snowballs.

When talking with the media, a politician is prepared. He knows that he cannot stammer, or look nervous and unsure. On television he knows to look at the camera, and that blinking and shifting his eyes looks like he is lying. He knows what clothes to wear, etc. If you have no experience in this area, a couple of lessons from a media consultant would be a good investment.

A politician always stays on message. He knows what people want to hear, he knows what defines him and he knows how he wants to define his opponent. No matter what is asked, he keeps weaving that message into his answers. Do the same. You know who your customers are and what they want to buy. You know what they need to hear about you and your work to become interested. A person selling Windsors and are being interviewed by an antique publication, should talk about how accurately he or she copies the originals. I always claim, that except for the new wood, our chairs would fool a curator. When talking to a reporter from a high end decorator magazine, focus on quality.

A good politician gets out and presses the flesh. He speaks to groups. Do the same. Join your local woodworking club. Do a presentation for them. Contact service groups like the Rotary. Mike has spoken to countless historical societies. Every time you speak you meet potential customers, tap into a network, polish your presentation, and of course – create a press release.

**High end craft shows are always trying to sell booth space** and would be happy to take your money. However, many of them want live presentations and demonstrations, and will trade booth space for this service. People are drawn to activity. You will get a lot more attention from the public if you are making a table than if you are standing next to a finished one. A photograph or video of someone working is more interesting than someone tending a booth. Once again, be sure to inform the media with a press release.

A politician knows he can get more done if he has good relations with his colleagues. Do the same. We have a network of past students who have gone pro and all make chairs to our patterns. We and they, can quickly fill a large order with a couple of phone calls. Even though we work by hand and have a limited production, this puts all of us in a position to go after corporate work. Team up formally or informally with other woodworkers. Chairs go around tables, so we have a network of guys who make tables. We sell a lot more of them by being able to steer a customer to a suitable table. It also works the other way. Our friends sometimes sell a table by sending a customer our way.
Once a customer contacts you, provide him or her with promotional material. These items are so important we strongly advise getting professional help in developing them. Poorly done, these reflect badly on you and can undo a lot of the image you have tried so carefully to develop. Once again, stay on message. Focus on the image of you and your work you want to create and the customers you wish to attract.

A lot of variation is possible here. Your materials can reflect your personality, or be tailored to your line of work. If you do interiors or custom work, you will want to have photos of a representative sample. Promotional materials are costly. If you do very expensive woodwork for a few select customers each year, have an expensive portfolio produced. If you make a line of products and sell lots of the same thing to lots of different people, have a three or four fold brochure developed. If your line is even more limited and your product less expensive, you can have post cards with a photo of your work printed. We have a friend who makes adirondack chairs and has good luck with just a post card.

Business cards are essential. Keep some in your wallet and never be without them. Pass them out freely. Have a stationary and envelope printed. Computers are so inexpensive you should have one if for no other purpose than answering mail. Do not respond on lined paper folded many times to fit into a 6ivating envelope (small, personal size).

You will not be taken seriously if you do not have a web site. If you cannot make your own, hire someone to do it for you. Check your email daily and respond immediately.

One of our most effective promotional devices is a Windsor chair line of jewelry I developed. I wear a gold pendant of our sack back chair and it never fails to elicit questions. Women stop me in the supermarket to ask about my chair pendant. It starts a conversation about what we do for a living. Everyone who knows about you is a potential source.

Before customers start to call, think about how to sound professional and credible. Answer the phone in a professional and courteous way. When you return a call don’t have kids fighting in the background, the television playing, or the dog barking. Have an answering machine. You simply are not credible if people cannot reach you. Everyone is so busy that a potential customer may never get around to calling again. Make sure your message is professional. Don’t have one that is funny or quirky. Don’t use generic or pre-recorded messages that do not identify you.

After reading about you, hearing your message and becoming curious about your work, customers are finally at the door with a check book in their pocket. Don’t blow it now. Your shop is the final link in the chain. Spend some time thinking about the presentation your space makes. To get some additional points of view, involve friends and family in the discussion.

Some woodworkers can sell products without ever having the customer drop by. However, many people want to see where and how their purchase was made. Through your marketing you have linked yourself with your woodworking and they want to meet you. People come to our shop because we make chairs by hand and they want to see our tools and processes. These are part of our message. Furthermore, we have so closely linked Mike with Windsor chairs, they want to meet him.

Going pro often means working on a shoestring and sometimes you cannot afford a dedicated workspace when the cellar or garage is available for free. First, make sure in advance you are not violating the zoning ordinance. The city or town can cause you more grief than you can imagine. No matter what you have for workspace, have a show area. For years we used the kitchen as show room. We had one of each type of chair around the table in a restored 18th century house. It made a great presentation for the customers we attracted.

No matter what your work and show space, be sure they are neat and tidy. The grounds should be the same. When a customer arrives greet them professionally. It is usually best to schedule visits when the kids are in school. Our son was raised in our shop. We continually reinforced why it is important for him to behave well when people are around. Confine overly friendly or menacing dogs.

Practice your presentation. Sound like you know what you are talking about. If there is something about your work that is unique or interesting, have a demonstration prepared. Above all, stay on message. Talk about the things that brought these people to you. Discuss why your product is best. Mention competitors or alternatives, but do so cautiously. When made in person, such a comparison can seem more harsh than when made in print and can hurt the customer’s impression of you.

Do not step out of character. If you have been given media exposure you have been presented as an interesting person. If you are laconic or expressionless, work on projecting a more bubbly personality. Mike is painfully shy and meeting new people is very difficult for him. Working together, we have trained him to appear friendly and out going even though his guts are churning. Have a spouse or other trusted advisor present to view your performance and critique it afterwards. If you have no one available, try to step outside yourself in your mind and think about how your are being perceived. Ask whether you would buy from the person you are watching.

If a sale is not quickly forth coming, consider this. By far the most successful student we have ever had go pro is a master salesman. One of his most effective techniques is to have a customer take a chair home and use it. They always fall in love with it and buy. They always fall in love with it and buy. They always fall in love with it and buy. They always fall in love with it and buy. They always fall in love with it and buy.
This has been on my mind for months. With only one stop on the cutoff saw, doing multiple cuts of different lengths required planning so it would not be necessary to reset the stop and lose the precise results of one setup.

A workaround has been to cut off a variety of short pieces of different lengths. So if two cuts are required at 7” and 10”, cut a 3” block. Then set the stop at 10” for the long cuts and insert the 3” spacer for the 7” cut. This works fine but requires too many blocks. The obvious and simple answer is a flip-stop.

The first one made many months ago used a hinge that was too sloppy. The one pictured was inspired by Kreg’s miter gauge system. A couple of key points are:

• It must flip totally out of the way for stock taller than an inch to pass by.
• It must be as narrow as possible to set two of them close together and
• It must be as rigid as a fixed stop.

This design relies on a ¼” bolt and smooth cut hardwood blocks. The bolt can be tightened down until the friction fit is tight. It works great. The double locking nut shown will be replaced by a lock nut on the next trip to the hardware store.

So while you’re making one of something, make several. I made five stops, most of which will never get used. But it was easy to make them at the same time. The knob is 1” diameter and must be offset slightly to the right (rather than the left) so it clears the flip stop.

The blocks are 1” wide. The vertical stop is ½” clear of the table to allow for sawdust. My radial arm saw is becoming a finer machine every month.

Bob Oswald is president of the Guild of Oregon Woodworkers as well as newsletter contributor and editor. He has a wide variety of interests including teaching beginning woodworking classes at a local Rockler store.
The Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers

As a part of the business meeting at the Guild’s annual meeting September 20 at YMCA Camp Lincoln, you will be asked to vote for an increase of guild dues for the 2009-2010 membership year. Our by-laws require that we publish this request in *The Old Saw* and that all members present at the next general guild meeting vote on whether to ratify the request.

Guild dues are currently $30 and have been at that level since the 2004-2005 membership year. At this time we spend approximately $26 per member for printing and mailing *The Old Saw*, about $1.50 for meetings and general expenses, and $5 is allocated and transferred to the scholarship fund. In a nutshell, we spend $2.50 per member per year more than we take in through dues. This deficit has been funded through annual auction proceeds, a very slight profit from clothing and video sales, and through donations.

While at this time our treasury remains healthy, increased costs of everything are unlikely to allow us this luxury past this membership year. This is the last year we will be able to print *The Old Saw* at the current cost, and the postal service is almost certain to raise mailing costs again within the next two years. Others costs will also continue to rise.

The Steering Committee has unanimously asked you, the members, to vote yes to allow a dues increase to $40 for 2009-10. The officers and the Steering Committee will be available to answer your questions at the business meeting segment of the annual meeting. – Dave Anderson

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**What’s New in My Shop?**

This actually isn’t new – I’ve been using it for at least four years now, but I realized that many of you might like to know about a superior sandpaper.

For those of you who were at the finishing symposium in the spring, you saw this red sandpaper being used by Bill Bush and sold by Woodcraft. It is an aluminum oxide paper made in Canada by Carborundum Abrasives www.carborundumbabrasives.com. It is a dry lube, B weight, resin paper and is by far the best paper I’ve ever used. Most importantly, it seems to last nearly forever.

Because of the dry lube coating, it doesn’t load up either with wood or with finishes. The paper can be used wet or dry and the superior grit makes for very efficient sanding – no deep scratch marks!

Bill sells adhesive paper (PSA) in rolls and sanding blocks for that paper, and I have used the paper that way and like it. However, you don’t need to go that route – any old block that suits the job will do and the paper without the adhesive is just fine. Coming by the paper is a bit of a challenge since Woodcraft does not carry it in their catalog. They sell it in the Newington and Woburn, MA stores and you can also buy it directly from Bill by emailing him at bushproducts@verizon.net or phoning him at 518-843-3773 or writing him at Bush Products, PO Box 769, Amsterdam, NY 12010.

I wish I could say that I never need sandpaper, but I do, and boy, is this paper great. In particular, the 400 grit between coats of finish does a fantastic job since it does not readily load up. Next time you need paper, buy some of this and see if you don’t agree with me that it is the best you have ever used!!

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**Dues Increase Request for 2009-2010 Membership Year**

*membership vote scheduled for annual meeting – Sept 20, 2008*
Another quiet year financially for the Guild. The exciting news is that the raffle ticket sales at Sunapee broke last year’s record by $311 for a total of $6,237. The members of the Steering Committee had concerns that with the economy down and gas prices up, fair attendance would be off and also that people would be reluctant to spend money on the raffle. The outstanding efforts by all that were involved from the donors to the ticket sellers paid off. Thank you!

Money market income is down, year to date, from last year by $250. This is due to reduced interest rates. I expect that the lower rates will be in place for some time to come. Dues receipts to date are off by $5,910. I hope that this does not mean that membership will drop by the almost 200 members that represents and that people just have not gotten around to paying next year’s dues. Remember that you can not vote at the annual meeting if you dues are not current. Please pay your dues before the end of August.

Next year’s General Fund Operating Budget is a deficit budget. The cost of The Old Saw and the $5 to the Scholarship Fund will be more than $30 per member. We have a cushion from previous years and along with the auction income the deficit will be covered.

This report is through August 13 and a final report will be presented at the annual meeting. Again it has been my pleasure to be your treasurer for this my fourth year. — C. Peter James

**Cash Flow Report - 9/1/07 to 8/13/08**

**General Operating Fund**

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**Equipment Capital Reserve Fund**

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<tr>
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Restarting Wood Days at Old Ways Traditions worked well. Old Ways hasn’t quite the spacious campus of Shaker Village, but it provides an intimate setting for the gathering of old and new friends only 1¼ miles north of the Village. We wish there were space to thank everyone who made the event a success, but special thanks must go to Al and Kyle Spitzer whose work, and others, made the parking no problem, and to the generous support of the Guild and our sponsors Woodcraft of Newington, and Brentwood Machinery and Tools.

Thanks to all for coming and bringing such a great variety of demonstrations. We had turning, basketmaking, coopering, canoe and kayak building, carving, guitarmaking, dovetailing, finishing, oval box making and gorgeous new and antique tools for sale. Our blacksmith Mike Cook got many of us on the anvil. And Chuck Mower had even the little kids trying the spring pole lathe, shaving horse and drills.

The food was super – fantastic pulled pork! They’ll be back. We had a good variety of lively bands – old time, bluesy, and blue grass.

It was a thrill to fire up the boiler and for the first time at Wood Days, be turning bowls under steam power.

We hope more of you can join us next year – the first weekend in June – no race traffic! – better weather? Bring your demos and help. Parking help is critical as are ticket and raffle sales. We especially hope to have enough help to get more of the kids stuff out.

Now we’re working on Old Ways Days, the third weekend in October, when we will have the kid’s stuff out, more old machinery, antiques, steam, windmill pumping(?) and the same fine food and music.

We hope you can come, help, participate. Call 603-783-4403 evenings or efurnitr@comcast.net or www.oldwaystraditions.net – Dave and Anne Emerson.

Woodturning Tools & Sandpaper...
Alan Mitchell is selling Andy Motter’s tools for his wife — Robert Larson turning tools, Andre Martel’s hook tools, diamond sharpening tools, Veritas adjustable grinder tool stands, misc. accessories, and lots of sanding disk holders and sandpaper. Everything is discounted.
Alan Mitchell: 603-659-2345

Wanted...
Copy of “Through Much Tribulation: Stewart Spiers and the Planemakers of Ayr” by Nigel Lampert. It’s out-of-print and unavailable anywhere. Would a fellow GNHW member be willing to loan me their copy for a week? I’ll pay all shipping costs.
Lou Yelgin: 603-424-4888 or louye@juno.com

Antique Lathe Parts...
Lathe pieces – Boice Crane, Delta, Dunlap & other antique parts & motors. Enough to build 3-4 lathes – $150. Call for details
Tom Zimmerman: 603-476-2242

Shopsmith & Mahogany...
3 Pieces Mahogany Stock, 12/4, 13” wide, 40” long, Rough Cut Finish each – $85 or Make an offer
George Tournas: 617-803-5954 or george.tournas@verizon.net

WALNUTS...
Every year I have lots of Black Walnuts falling on our lawn in Plainfield. You may have some, Free, if you’ll pay the postage. October is when they’ll be falling.
Jerry Burt: 603-675-6141 or jerryaburt@yahoo.com
What is the BIG? – Who is a beginner? What’s an intermediate skill level? When I first considered going to the BIG meetings I asked myself these questions. After several meetings I wondered, who are these guys? Many were certainly not beginners, and many had years of experience that made me doubt they were just intermediates. And, you’d think people would graduate to another group. People come and go, but many are regulars who have attended for some years. So, who is this group?

The answer is that there are only guild members who want to develop their skills as woodworkers and furnituremakers. At any given Saturday morning meeting, the group may include contractors, carpenters, cabinetmakers, retirees, and hobbyists among others. They go to learn, to visit, and to talk woodworking with someone other than their spouses.

The emphasis is on topics and experiences the group thinks are of interest from basics to those requiring more craftsmanship. By making a project, topics and techniques come up for discussion and demonstration. Other than that, there is no formal agenda. Questions and ad hoc discussions on anything in woodworking may take the group in unexpected directions. No Roberts Rules of Order at these meetings.

A good reason to become part of the group is to learn from Bob LaCivita, who generously hosts and leads the group. Bob’s credentials? Come to a meeting – you’ll see them. If you’re lucky, he’ll have a client’s project in his shop.

Don’t let the name fool you; the group may be meant for woodworkers that have a day job, but everyone is welcome. There are no formalities; attendance is not taken, and introductions are not mandatory. There are two things to remember when planning to attend, Bob starts at 9:30am on the dot, and bring your own chair.

The meetings will be at Bob’s studio space at the Salmon Falls Mill in Rollingsford, NH. When planning to attend, he appreciates a quick email to rlacivita@metrocast.net or a call to 603-942-1240 before 9:00pm.

June 7th, 2008 BIG Meeting – Bob LaCivita has explained the mysteries of woodworking and demonstrated many techniques, but if you want to learn time management and design discipline, you may want to go elsewhere. As reported in The Old Saw, the group was going to take the year and make (read Bob was making) a small cabinet of apple wood – start to finish.

That article was in the November, 2006 issue of The Old Saw. In the article, Bob described the project as having two doors, a drawer, and an eastern flavor. The cabinet will indeed be finished at the next meeting in October, 2008, and it will definitely have two doors. But hey, everyone will tell you it was time well spent.

Changes to the design were made early on. Originally, Bob’s design included a drawer, and some distinctive flares on the top and bottom for an oriental feel. The drawer was eliminated because six annual group meetings simply did not allow the time needed to make it. We milled less good stock from the rough apple planks than anticipated, so the oriental flares were dropped.

The emphasis of the June, 2008 meeting was to finish making the doors. To give the front of the cabinet a slight bow, the door fronts need a curve matching the arc of the top and bottom front edges.

Bob used styrene plastic to make a full size template. He used dividers to copy the arc and lay it out on the styrene. He then cut it out, smoothed it with a block plane, and traced the curve on the door edges. He planed the curve on the door fronts using a 17˝ wood plane to remove stock quickly, a 17˝ Lie-Nielson jack plane to refine it, and then a #4 Lie-Nielson smoother to finish it. As usual, Bob sharpened the plane irons, using his palm to strop the bevel edge. According to Bob, water based honing fluid does not work well on oilstones.

Bob went over options for mounting doors to cabinets – inset, partial overlay, and full overlay – citing some of the pros and cons of each. He also shared his monetary policy to set door height clearances – dimes for inset doors, nickels for Euro hinge doors, and nickels for pine.

In fitting the doors height wise, Bob planed the edge grain in one direction with a low angle Lie-Nielson block plane. Many of us were taught to plane edge grain half way from one direction, and then half way from the other. This prevents tear out, but rarely results in a crisp edge. Bob ever so lightly chamfered the edge prone to tear out, and then ending his plane stroke by rotating the plane as it approached the edge so it sliced the fibers rather then tearing them. I have to try that.
About 35 members of the Granite State Woodturners met at Proctor Academy for our annual critique meeting. Jon Siegel introduced Jere Osgood with obvious enthusiasm.

His credentials make him legendary along with other “names” in the upper levels of design and craftsmanship. “A straight line is a missed opportunity” was one of the quotes that struck me as appropriate to any woodturner and to me in particular. I have struggled with flat spots in my pieces as I “explore the infinite number of pure forms that exist in the cosmos.” Jere commented that rosewood sold for less than $1.00/BF when he was turning in the 50s and 60s. Platters were turned thin and lazy susans were thick and that’s how you decided which was which. Jere had no problem admitting that he used 50 grit sandpaper for shaping! Needless to say he found the notion of a vacuum chuck interesting and looks forward to seeing one!

Though the techniques become more sophisticated and tooling improves for today’s woodturner, nothing can replace good form and design. We’ve all seen it – really great stuff made on questionable equipment and some horrible junk turned on high end lathes with all the attachments. At our critique meetings the Granite State Woodturners adopted the format of focusing the discussion on style and form of the piece rather than the techniques used to make the piece. This is the second time that I know of that an “outsider”, i.e. not a woodturner, has been invited to moderate the discussion. Jere kept things moving along.

Donna Banfield brought a superbly finished winged vessel turned from honey locust which stands about 6” high. She too, searching for the continuous line, admits to achievement only in the last year. She played the evenly spaced growth rings into the bottom of the form perfectly and the open grain texture was evenly filled and polished. I just had to turn to her and remark how nice I thought it was. I don’t even remember what Jere said about it as I was so impressed with the piece.

Steve Fillebrown had a three-winged walnut bowl (“very tactile” Jere) and a 4” x 8” rectangular plate made of Padauk with a singular inlaid black and white stripe. “Only one stripe makes it look like it needs a friend”, Jere said. Personally, I liked the single wave as it seemed to add to the crispness of the edges of the plate.

Al Hansen brought along a leek-shaped weed vase (complete with weeds). He still shows his excitement about his newly acquired disease! He was strongly urged by all to keep at it.

Joe Watts showed two cherry-burl bowls and explained how his shapes and forms have evolved as a result of last year’s critique. Richard White offered a natural edge bowl turned from apple which prompted Jere to say “This is probably the biggest piece of apple I’ve ever seen”. Since apple wood checks and splits so readily, it is not often seen as a larger bowl.
The Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers will be the special guest speaking at the meeting. Peter will be going over some of the steps for building Windsor chairs including spindle turning and if time permits scooping out the seat. Also George will be giving us a tour of his Monitor style barn he built last year. George will also spend some time after the meeting showing the group his new bunk house that is under construction using post and beam construction. The meeting will start promptly at 9:00am and George will have coffee and doughnuts ready for the group.

If you would like to attend the meetings, please contact John Faro or Mike Noel to be added to the list.

John Faro: 603-968-9800 or Jff960@metrocast.net
Mike Noel: 603-744-3821 or mnlwoods@netzero.net

Luthiers
The Guild Luthiers is a special interest group focused on the making of stringed instruments. People of all levels of expertise are welcome to join. Ordinarily we meet on the 3rd Sunday of September, November, January, March, and June.

We also have started an annual table at the Sunapee Craftsman's Fair, which has been very successful. In addition, we are affiliated with the New England Luthiers, a sister organization based in Massachusetts. Several times a year our meetings are held jointly with them.

Our next meeting, one held jointly with NEL, will be Sunday, September 17 in Athol, MA. To receive meeting notifications, contact John Whiteside.

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

Hand Tools
The first organizational meeting will be Saturday, October 11 from 9:00am until noon at Dave Anderson's shop at 146 Jennifer Drive in Chester, NH. Contact Dave for directions and to register for the first meeting.

Dave Anderson: 603-887-6267 or dsachester@gsinet.net

While Jere ran his fingers as calipers about the sides of the bowl he remarked on the “…good control of the thickness” and then pointed to the pleasing transition from the bowl to the foot.

Reed Richardson brought along a huge butternut bowl and requested advice on finishing ranging from sanding to final polish. Reed’s two cherry bowls with simple carving ornamentation caused a lot of discussion and Jere pointed out that the top surface could be left wider and with a tilt to better support the design. Bob Coleman’s pencil cup from a piece of spalted maple given to him by Scott Ruesswick reminded Jere that he “has a pile of spalted maple that’s been outside for a long time”. He said it in such a way that you knew that his maple was probably as “interesting” as the material (notice that I’m not calling it wood) Bob used for his cup which, by the way, Jere also admired for its “nice simple line”. This stuff was so ‘pecky’ that the finish on the piece serves as structural support in holding it all together!

Many other pieces were looked at and talked about. Space limits me to these few paragraphs of my rambling to try to convey the incredibly stimulating experience of what we call the critique meeting. You should plan to attend next year’s meeting and bring something with you. You will definitely bring something back to your own shop. It may be a new idea, a new form to explore or just some good old fashioned encouragement to get back in the shop and turn something.

Here’s an example – Jere offered this tip just in passing. To learn about bowl and bottle shapes, put some water into a balloon and sit it on a flat surface. Watch how the line of the curve changes as the pressure increases against the walls of the balloon as contact with the flat surface increases. Jon called that a study in oblate forms. Whatever you call it, it is one of those simple ideas that could serve as the spark to something very interesting.

Several of us stayed after the close of the critique to begin discussion on plans for next year’s turning symposium. Stay tuned.
On June 14, about thirty Guild members joined the summer trip meeting in Bridgeport, VT to tour Shackleton Furniture.

Jaime Ryznicwas was our guide and took us through the factory from bottom to top. The tour started in the basement where most of the machining took place. Along with the usual saws and planers, we saw a customized tenon machine and a Williams and Hussey molding cutter set up to cut moldings on oval picture frames. We then proceeded through the first and second floors where we saw the individual benches of the apprentices and more advanced workers.

Just before lunch, Charles Shackleton talked with us about the philosophy behind the business and answered questions. (Yes, Charles is related to the explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton.)

After lunch, eaten on picnic tables by the river, we resumed our tour. We made it to the third floor where the finishing and upholstery are done. We then had questions and answers and demonstrations of some of the procedures used to make the pieces including how the hand carving is done.

Shackleton Furniture is unique in its production. All the furniture is made from start to finish by one person and hand tools are used frequently. While the main roughing out of the boards is all done my machine, the final finishing, including planing, is all done by hand. The workers there usually start as apprentices and, after four years, advance to journeyman status. After another three years, they complete the journeyman stage. The new apprentices are given a set of tools, including a block, compass and hand plane and a set of chisels, which will become theirs to keep after completion of the first year of the apprenticeship. At the transition between the apprentice and journeyman stage, each worker carves a spoon. These are on display. The only exceptions to the one worker—one piece rule is upholstery (unless you are the upholster, who also is a furnituremaker) or turnings as there is a full time turner. Workers may do their own turnings.

Most of us wandered through the display rooms, where, in addition to the furnishings, there is a display of the pottery made by Charles’ wife, Miranda Thomas. The Shackleton Furniture web site is www.shackletonthomas.com.
Discounted Woodworking Books
– Annual Sale
It’s time again to get your woodworking books for reading by the fireplace this winter. Each year we have an opportunity to purchase high quality woodworking books at group discounts averaging 40% off the list price. We work with two publishers: Taunton Press, publisher of Fine Woodworking magazine, and Fox Chapel. Fox Chapel is a publisher but also sells books from other publishers such as Sterling, Stackpole, Schiffer and Penguin/Putnam.

I will have catalogs and take orders at Guild meetings, or you can view titles on the publishers’ web sites (www.taunton.com & www.foxchapelpublishing.com) 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 Fox Chapel: The exact title, author, type of item (hard or soft cover book, video or DVD), list price and the ISBN #.

Orders will be accepted at the fall guild meetings starting with the annual meeting in September. The last chance to place an order will be at the November guild meeting. Books should be available in early December for pick up at my home in Mont Vernon, NH, or at a future guild meeting. Note that we do not mail books to members homes.

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.

Tony Immorlica • Book Coordinator
603-6763-9629 (evenings) or aajr@comcast.net

Discounted magazine subscriptions, also an annual event, takes place in the February time frame – watch the February Old Saw for details.

2008 NH Furniture Masters Auction
The 2008 NH Furniture Masters Auction will take place on Sunday, October 26 and will again be held at the beautiful Wentworth-by-the-Sea Hotel in New Castle, NH, with auctioneer Stephen Scofield of Scofield Auctions, Inc. (License #2272) presiding.

Tickets to the event are $75 per person and entitle the holder to attend the gala reception and auction and receive a 2008, four-color auction catalogue. To purchase tickets or obtain additional information, visit the Association’s website at www.furnituremasters.org or telephone 603-898-0242.

This year for the first time, the NH Furniture Masters will also be collaborating with The Warner House in Portsmouth during the auction weekend to offer those interested in fine furniture two related programs of interest. On Saturday, October 25 at 11:00am, The Warner House is offering a special tour of the house and at 2:00pm, renowned furnituremaker and connoisseur Allan Breed will present a lecture “Portsmouth Furniture” at the Tyco Visitors Center at Strawbery Banke in Portsmouth. An expert on early American furniture, Mr. Breed is a frequent consultant to collectors and dealers and lectures regularly on furniture connoisseurship at museums and at the education departments of Christie’s and Sotheby’s in New York. Both events are free and open to the public. For additional information, please contact The Warner House at 603-436-5909 – www.warnerhouse.org.

Beginner & Intermediate Group
BIG is held on the first Saturday of the even numbered months from October thru June. The first meeting will be held on October 4 from 9:30am until about noon. Future dates are listed on the Guild website under calendar. The location is the Salmon Falls Mill, upper mill, Studio 215 in Rollingsford, NH. Directions can be found at www.millartists.com.

I plan on finishing the apple wall cabinet in the first two meetings.

The next project will be a cabinet that has a series of drawers. Each drawer will be constructed and hung using different methods. Participants will be encouraged to build the same project at home between meetings.

I hope to see you there. Please let me know if you plan to attend.

Robert LaCivita: rlacivita@metrocast.net or 603-942-1240 please call before 9:00 pm

Granite State Woodturners
The Granite State Woodturners is both a subgroup of the Guild, and a chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. The group covers all aspects of turning, from the conventional spindle and bowl turning to segmented, ornamental, and other types of turning.

Meetings typically include a presentation or demonstration, and a short business meeting. Once a year there is a design critique, and occasionally other meeting formats are used, like field trips or open shops. GSWT also puts on the New England Turning Symposium every three years.

Meetings are the fourth Saturday of odd numbered months, typically from 9:00am to 1:00pm, and are open to the guild membership, AAW membership, and the general public. Contact DJ Delorie to be added to the e-mail notification list.

DJ Delorie: dj@delorie.com

Granite State Woodcarvers
This small group of dedicated woodcarvers meets Thursday nights at Rundlett Middle School in Concord, NH. Meetings are 6:00pm-9:00pm during the school year. For info or directions contact:

Lou Barchey: 603-753-2708 or barchey@comcast.net

Period Furniture
On September 13 the meeting will be held at George Edson’s shop in Cornish N.H. Windsor chairmaker Peter Scheffer

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What are American Hardwoods

Hardwoods are deciduous trees that have broad leaves, produce a fruit or nut and generally go dormant in the winter. Our forests grow hundreds of varieties of hardwood trees that thrive in such temperate climates.

These varieties, or species, include oak, ash, cherry, maple, and poplar. Softwoods are conifers, evergreen and cone-bearing trees. Widely available in the U.S., softwoods include cedar, fir, hemlock, pine, redwood and spruce. In a home, softwoods primarily are used as structural lumber such as 2x4 and 2x6 sizes, with limited decorative applications.

All the commercially available U.S. hardwoods are crafted into furniture, cabinetry, woodwork and built-ins. It is simply a matter of taste, preference and availability. Certain hardwood species are not recommended for flooring because they are not hard enough to withstand heavy wear and tear.

Gallery M in Half Moon Bay, CA – www.gallerym.net

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It’s August 10 about 7:00 pm as I am writing this, a very severe thunderstorm is raging outside — what a fitting end to the 75th Annual League of N.H. Craftsmen Fair.

After talking to others that have attended the fair in years past, I think I can say this was one of the wettest we have ever had. The weather coupled along with a sagging economy however, could not stop the attendees of the fair from visiting our tent. Just like the previous years the League provided us with a tent at possibly the best location on the fairgrounds. This along with the outstanding donations of 26 fabulous items from our members resulted in a new record for raffle ticket sales, roughly $6300.

John Faro and I would like to thank all of our members that took the time, energy and materials to make something special for the raffle. We would also like to thank the 57 members that volunteered to staff the tent; this is also a new record! I think what stands out in my mind most is the fact that a new member as of this past Tuesday showed up in the tent to sell raffle tickets on Thursday — now that’s dedication.

There were so many special events that occurred in the tent this year I would like to highlight a few. First of all, the Sunapee marathon winners were Peter Scheffer and John Faro. Both of these guys spent the whole nine days at the fair. Thanks to Peter, member Harvey Best now has a year’s supply of wood shavings for his ducks. Bob Katz provided children at the fair with 3-D cut outs of various animals and figurines made from his scroll saw.

It is amazing how something handmade and simple made so many children smile. Lucky for the woodturners there was no craze for any one particular item this year. Lots of baseball bats, Harry Potter wands and tops. With the addition of the Luther’s to our tent, we had some entertainment. Raymond Sanville played and sang his rendition of “Take This Job and Shove It”. This was one of those you had to be there moments, it was great! Ron Singerman from the wood carvers was making small carvings and giving them out to the kids.

This year we tried something new. We had four woodturners each of the nine days of the fair. In doing this we could maintain a large crowd in front of the tent. Ray Attwood took advantage of this by relating all those people to sitting ducks. Ray grabbed a bunch of raffle tickets and made his move. One by one you could see him sending people to the tables with all of the raffle items on them. They had no chance of escaping. We had 5-7 ticket sellers a day. This helped out greatly with someone always willing to take the customers money.

With the addition of the Luther’s to the tent we now have another exciting demonstration for people to see. John Whiteside from the Luther’s group told me that on Saturday he almost ran out of business cards and brochures. We were light on furnituremaking demonstrations this year and will be looking to add more for next year.

Next year we are looking to expand to a second tent for the purpose of doing workshops for kids and opening things up a bit. After all the children we see today are the woodworkers of tomorrow. I will keep everyone posted on future developments on this item as it will require more volunteers than we have now. Speaking of volunteers, I already have had 4-5 people commit to next year for the fair. I along with John Faro will be heading up the event again so if you would like to get in on the fun, just send an email or give us a call.

I would like to thank the behind the scenes volunteers – Jim Seroskie for providing the name badges, Alan Mitchell for the use of the equipment at the fair, Scott Rueswick for supplying wood for the woodturners, and Paul Miller for providing John and myself with a great action plan for organizing this event. And thank you again to all the tent staff and donors of items, you made this event a great success without you this event would not have been possible.

Mike Noel