



# Old Saw *Articles*

The Newsletter of the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers

by Al Saffron

## Subgroups & the Guild

**T**wenty five years ago the Guild was started by a small group of woodworkers demonstrating skills, primarily in furniture making. Most importantly, the group established a philosophy in sharing knowledge, skills, and experience for the benefit of the others. The Guild's growth in members has allowed woodworkers with like interests to form groups within the Guild to study and explore other specialties and topics within woodworking. Even as the Guild grew into a larger organization, the philosophy of sharing and support has remained a guiding principle.

At first these special interest or subgroups as they became to be called, included woodturners who later formed the Granite State Wood Turners (GSWT), traditional furniture makers formed the Period Furniture Group (PFG), and to cover basic woodworking and furniture making, the Guild organized the Beginners & Intermediates Group (BIG). As interests grew, subgroups formed in wood carving, creative thought, handtools, boatbuilding, guitar making, woodworking as a business, and Windsor chair making. The subgroup structure has been popular as members are able to participate in aspects of woodworking that interests them. And, the groups have succeeded due to the time and commitment of their volunteer leaders and coordinators.

The role of the Guild at large, managed by the Steering Committee (SC) has also grown.

Events notices and meeting reviews have been published in *The Old Saw*, and now publicized in the weekly TouchUps email and on the website as is contact and general Guild information. Email list management, meeting scheduling tools, individual webpages and blogs are also available to the groups. Video equipment is also available. The Guild's reputation and standing supports the subgroups with its network and relationships with professionals, related organizations, suppliers, and meeting locations.

The SC can be like an anxious parent when it comes to the subgroups. As group coordinators, demonstrators, and hosts find their limits, with a certain sense of urgency, the SC brainstorms possible replacements. Several years ago, the boatbuilding group received a loan to finance their group project, a boat which they later raffled off. Early last year the SC thought there once again may be interest in carving, and so chose carving as the topic for a spring symposium. The symposium proved there was, and so the SC has been on the look out for a coordinator and possible demonstrators and hosts.

Often a core membership attend their meetings regularly, which was certainly true with BIG, the beginners and intermediates group. Through regular attendance members learned and the group sought new skills. Past president Bob LaCivita recognized that BIG was evolving and felt more attention was needed for new

beginners. With a nod from the SC, Bob started the Woodworking Techniques subgroup.

The SC's role generally extends to more business than actual woodworking issues. Insurance was a concern. Demonstrations take place as usual, as the SC confirmed that all participants at Guild sponsored events are covered by the Guild's liability insurance. The SC also ensures fairness and equity among the groups, members, demonstrators, presenters, other participants, as well as the public. Fund raising, project and speaker expenses, Guild sponsorship, and vendor participation are just some of the subgroups issues to come up at SC meetings.

One of the most sensitive issues for the SC is payment for demonstrators and presenters. The SC recognizes the need for compensation to get good speakers and presenters, and so the bylaws allow it, but the SC must also consider, as do many members themselves, the fairness and respect for those who demonstrate and present voluntarily. At the May meeting, the SC addressed this issue for one of the subgroups. Suggestions and ideas were discussed, and a solution that kept the meetings open to all with

### **Guild Membership**—563 members as of 7/1/15

#### **Active Subgroup Signups**

Granite State Woodturners	202
Hand Tools	173
Beginners & Intermediate Group	157
Period Furniture Group	136
Woodworking as a Business	92
Granite State Luthiers	67
Boat Building	41

absolutely no admission fees was readily agreed to.

In 2011 the SC revised the bylaws and added Article 7, covering policies regarding subgroups so group coordinators and members have guidelines in running the business aspects of their meetings. The bylaws are available to all on the website, are reasonably clear and easy to read, and I recommend you do so. Why? You're a member of a subgroup, aren't you?

You can find the latest Guild bylaws at [www.gnhw.org/guild-documents](http://www.gnhw.org/guild-documents)—AS. ●

### **Did You Know?**

In the twelve months from last July through June of this year the Guild has held 31 subgroup meetings, 4 general meetings including the annual auction, 13 small meetings, 2 symposia, 1 nine day Sunapee Fair event, 1 summer field trip, published 3 issues of the Journal, 1 online issue of The Old Saw, 1 printed issue of The Old Saw,

sent out 46 TouchUps emails, approved 3 grants and 10 scholarships, mailed 552 membership cards, posted 42 for sale classified ads, made 53 content changes to the website, placed 29 magazine subscriptions, and sold approximately \$450 of Guild apparel—AS. ●



## Guild Advertisers

See the ads — [gnhw.org/guild-advertisers](http://gnhw.org/guild-advertisers)

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