

St. Louis

Woodworkers Guild



June 2009
Issue 292

Our Next Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM
June 18, 2009

Woodcraft Supply Store
2077 Congressional Dr.
Maryland, Heights, MO

June 2009 Speaker: Walnut Table by Kent Adkins

Kent will be taking us through the construction of a solid walnut, double-pedestal dining table he is presently making. It is 56" x 42" with two 14" leaves, and it features 1" banding around the top edge with string inlay on both sides of the banding.

At Our Last Meeting

Shop Aids and Jigs with Jim Hoeller, Ethan Sincox, Bill Hobson and Don Snyder

May 21st, 2009

The main presentation at the May 2009 Saint Louis Woodworkers Guild meeting was a collaboration of efforts by several guild members to discuss and demonstrate some of the shop aids and jigs they have built to assist them with woodworking projects.

Bill Hobson started off the night discussing the aids he uses for adding string inlay to a drawer front. Ever since Bill saw string inlay and cock beading on his grandmother's chest of drawers he has been interested in this process. He liked it enough that he decided to try inlaying drawer fronts on a project.

All of the routing for the string inlay is done with a Dremel. His Dremel has a home-made base which allows him to attach it to his jigs and add an edge guide. If you can afford it, a router base from Stewart-McDonald (www.stewmac.com) is a great store-bought option. The bits he uses are from Drill Technology (www.drilltechnology.com) and are 1/32" in diameter.

(continued on page 4)



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Woodcraft
314.993.0413

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*Meeting Room, Mailing Address
Courtesy of Woodcraft*

President's Article, June 2009

The Slippery Truth

When you are working in your shop it is important to have control of your work. It is not instinctual to focus on making your work area slick. But, in the right place, slick is exactly what you need.

Work surfaces, especially tables, should support your lumber and provide as little resistance as possible. This makes your job safer, more accurate, causes less fatigue, and just makes it more enjoyable.

For making surfaces slick there are two excellent options—one temporary and one permanent. The temporary solution is to apply something to the surface like wax. There are also sprays available made with different compounds, but I recommend good old Johnson's Paste Wax.

You can use wax for all of your tools with metal or wood parts as well as your finished woodworking project. I use it on all of my fixtures and jigs where I want less friction, especially my crosscut sled. You should wax every stationary power tool table in your shop. The obvious ones are the table saw, jointer, router table and planer. I also use it on my hand power tools, including the jig saw and router. If you want it to glide along nicely, wax it.

The permanent solution is to use UHMW (Ultra-high molecular weight) plastic. The place that I have found this most useful is on the planer. I use a sheet of 3/8" thick UHMW plastic clamped to the bed of the planer, with the bed rollers adjusted all of the way down. The bed rollers are a terrible solution to the problem of boards getting stuck in the planer. The UHMW plastic is slippery. The boards never get stuck and having a flat bed with no bed rollers reduces snipe.

The UHMW is available in sheets and adhesive-backed strips. The strips can be applied to fences and jigs where friction can be a problem. The strips and smaller pieces are available at Woodcraft and the larger pieces I purchased from Regal plastics.

Before you start your next project, wax your work surface or add a piece of UHMW plastic. You will wonder why you hadn't done it sooner.

Scott

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Green Woodworking

In an effort to reduce expenses and save trees (for a more worthy cause, like lumber!), the Saint Louis Woodworkers Guild would like to reduce the number of printed newsletters we circulate. Beginning with the August 2009 newsletter, any guild member with a valid email address will only receive a digital copy of the newsletter. A membership roster will be passed around at the

June and July meetings so you can confirm or add your email address information before this change. Any guild members without an email address will continue receiving the printed newsletter as per usual. If you have a valid email address but would like to continue receiving the printed newsletter as well, then please contact Scott Wunder (314-731-2484 or wunderwoods@sbcglobal.net) before the mailing of the August 2009 newsletter.

Of late, members have eased my decision-making for this article a bit. Rather than research topics on my own, all I need do is listen to our monthly presenters and my task is complete! We've been on a roll at our Thursday meetings, and I can't help but try to chime in with additional reading as a follow-up. Since the last presentation was apportioned to string inlay, jigs, and fixtures, I wanted to mention several books I know about that offer some interesting information related to these topics.

The Art of Inlay (Larry Robinson) presents phenomenal inlay and objets d'art applied to musical instruments. Mr. Robinson is an incredible talent, having been commissioned to work for entertainers such as U2, Led Zeppelin, and even Steven Spielberg. His magnum opus is a Martin hollow-body, embellished to commemorate the company's one-millionth guitar. He mentions it was completed after 2000 hours of work and two eye-glass prescriptions! As you might imagine, several jigs aid this sort of work. A small V-block with standard vacuum attachment is ideal for hand-cutting delicate veneers from wood, ivory, mother-of-pearl, etc. This diminutive device clamps to a bench and mates perfectly with a hand-held fret or jeweler's saw. Another item in frequent use is a "Go-Deck" or "Go-Bar", which is a cage-type apparatus that has a top and bottom plate secured by threaded rod, spaced far enough apart to permit a series of dowels that are "sprung" in place that press veneer to a substrate. Looks somewhat odd, but I hear it works well. I've read of similar applications in old-timey workshops where poles are "sprung" from ceiling to bench to effect clamping pressure. This book also mentions Stewart-MacDonald, a supply house discussed at meetings before and considered to be on the high-side in terms of cost. But I have an old catalog I thumbed through and have to admit, they have awesome stuff to facilitate fine detail work - tools, parts, supplies, etc. Way cool!

Woodworker's Essential Shop Aids & Jigs (Robert Wearing) is a collection of original devices that can be fashioned in your own workshop. Nine chapters and an appendix cover many operations: Holding and Clamping, Marking, Routing, Machining Joints, Benchwork, Drilling, Lathe Work, Shopmade Tools, and Miscellaneous Techniques. There are many ingenious devices, an overwhelming number really, but I'd like to mention a few here. A "light gauge wire clamp" works by stringing thin-gauge wire through guitar tuning pegs secured in a block for tensioning (guess you could strum it while the glue dries?), a wooden cradle can be constructed to secure geometric shaped pieces for planing, and several jigs are described for routing circles, grooves, and panel cutting (virtually any size). Some neat ideas in the Appendix are an improvised screw tap for tapping threads in wood (just a simple bolt filed with a leading taper!), and a small jig for fabricating curved pieces of veneer.

Cecil gave an interesting perspective on the work of George Nakashima to round things out last month. The Late Mr. Nakashima is also a well-known author for his work entitled The Soul of a Tree. A second equally heralded book is Nature, Form, & Spirit: The Life and Legacy of George Nakashima, written as a tribute by his daughter Mira. There's much to be learned about this man and his work. You can get a glimpse by visiting his website at www.nakashimawoodworker.com. I should really devote an entire article to the Nakashima books.

None of the items listed here are in our library, so let me know if you are interested in any of these.

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Library Reminders
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The books, magazines, and tools of the library are there for the benefit of all of the guild members. Please keep that in mind as you check materials out and try to return them in a timely manner.

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Notice
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Vic Barr brought up an opportunity for members of the guild to generate some publicity, create membership opportunities, open up another location for a guild picnic, and give back to the community. A one-room school house was recently set up in Faust Park. The curator needs some assistance with the reconstruction efforts and there is also quite a bit of furniture that needs repair work. Anyone interested in helping should contact Vic at vicbarr@sbcglobal.net or seek him out at the next meeting.

Toy Report

Steve Briner gave an update from the Toy Committee. He reported 156 toys were made and delivered in May with a total of 832 toys donated so far this year. The total number of toys created and donated is now 28,189. If you would like to help the Toy Committee by making some of the suggested toys or offering your shop for a toy-creating session, please contact Steve at 636-922-1947 or John Patton at 314-843-0616.

Other Notes

There were 48 members and 1 guest in attendance at the May 2009 guild meeting. The raffle, a \$50 gift certificate to Woodcraft, was won by Chuck Herbel. Congratulations, Chuck!

Lately, people have been gathering at Woodcraft around 6:30 to socialize before the meeting. It is a great opportunity to meet some of the newer members and catch up with friends.

Shop Aids and Jigs (cont)

Routing the inlay grooves on the sides is pretty straight forward with an edge guide. The real challenge is in making the curves at the corners. To make this job easier, he uses a compass point in Plexiglas that is then attached to the Dremel base. With this jig, he can duplicate the shape at all four corners. A note of advice from Bill – when trying this for the first time, it is important to test your process on practice pieces.



Bill displays his practice board.

Bill had a hard time finding 1/32" inlay strips, so he decided to make his own. For this process, he uses another jig for his table saw. This cross-shaped jig fits in the miter slot of his table saw and is adjustable with a set screw located on the end closest to the saw blade. He uses this screw to fine-tune the distance to the blade. With the jig in place, he sets his inlay wood (Baltic birch plywood) against the screw and then brings the fence up against the other side of the wood. After removing the jig, he makes a pass with the saw blade set to just under the thickness of the wood. He later removes the strip from the wood on the band saw.

Jim Hoeller demonstrated some jigs in his shop he uses to cut miter keys, raise panels, and create triangular shelves. The first jig became necessary when Jim was making a corner cupboard and needed to make several triangle-shaped shelves that were the exact same size. It is comprised of a plywood base, a runner sized to fit the miter slot of his table saw, and two pieces of batting tacked to the plywood so that they met on the left-side of the plywood at a 90 degree angle. When a piece of wood was placed in the jig and run through the table saw, the side that was cut with the blade would create the base of the triangle.

His keyway cutting fixture is used to cut miter keys in boxes and picture frames. This jig sits on his Biesemeyer fence and holds the corner of the box or frame 45 degrees to the table saw top and cuts a kerf into the corner.

(Editor's Note: A rip blade with a flat-top tooth will leave a flat bottom kerf. Fitting the miter key into a flat-bottom kerf leaves a cleaner finished look.)

Jim's third jig is one he uses to cut raised panels on the table saw. Like his keyway cutting fixture, this jig rides on his Biesemeyer fence. Toggle clamps attached to the jig hold the board to the jig. After tilting the blade a few degrees and raising it to the desired height, he runs the board across the blade, doing the end-grain first and then the long-grain (by doing it this way, any blow-out on the end-grain is cut away with the long-grain pass).

Jim's panel raising jig is a useful addition to his shop.



Ethan Sincox presented to the group a few of the jigs he uses when making boxes. The first jig is the simplest one, consisting of a flat board and two small brass flat-head screws. He uses this jig to plane thin strips of wood, such as those used to make miter keys. The heads of the two screws stick up just a bit from the surface of the board and are used to press the strip against when planing.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

July 16, 2009

Guild Meeting:

Denny Krupinski will discuss the topic of woodworking with children.

Show and Tell

Brian Gilstrap talked about his recent attendance at the Popular Woodworking/Lie-Nielsen hand tool event held at the Popular Woodworking office in Cincinnati, Ohio. He shared his experiences with everyone and urged anyone interested in hand tools to try and attend like events in the future.

Ethan Sincx brought in a board, jointed and planed flat by hand in a hand plane class he took at the Mark Adams School of Woodworking. In the process of planning this board, he won the 2009 Flat Board Contest and received a Popular Woodworking book on hand tools signed by Chris Schwarz.

Bob Colegate brought in some pictures of a futon he made out of white oak. He also passed around some toys he recently made.



Ethan uses his bench hook on almost every project.

The second jig Ethan brought was his bench hook. The versatile bench hook can be used anywhere you have a ledge to press against. A spring clamp placed on the fence can be used as a stop for repeating cuts. For smaller pieces of wood, Ethan's favorite saw to use with his bench hook is a fine-toothed Zona saw.

The final jig he presented was one for making hinge mortises with a shallow mortising router bit by Whiteside. This simple jig consists of three pieces of MDF – one that references the edge of the wood to receive the mortise and two

that reference the side and back of the box. Because it references the sides and back, and can be flipped upside down for the top and the bottom of the box, this setup produces tight and precise mortises every time. This particular jig will place a hinge 3 1/2" from the side of the box, so it will work on larger boxes.

Our clean-up presenter was Don Snyder. He showed everyone three frustration-reducing aids for making boxes with mitered joints. His motivation for these jigs comes from The Saga Of 14 Boxes, a number of projects he tried to make in production style.

The first jig Don demonstrated was his crosscut sled. He uses this jig for making miter cuts on the table saw. His crosscut sled is made with a plywood base, T-slots for hold downs, aluminum rails that fit the miter slots of his table saw, stop clamps, and a removable fence that sits against a fixed fence. The removable fence can be squared up to the blade with the use of shims.

The next jig he discussed was his shooting sled, which is used to clean up the miters prior to assembly. His version of this sled is used with the inside of the board facing up and the mitered end projecting from the end of the sled. A Lie-Nielsen No. 9 miter plane rides along a fence, cleaning up the mitered end. The plane rides on two parts of the sled, cutting a very slight track into the jig itself.

Don's final jig is one he calls the cross-cut carrier. He uses this jig to cut the slots for miter keys in box corners. It references off the miter slot, and not the fence, so it always cuts at the same place in the jig. He uses stop blocks to adjust the location of the kerf on the box.

We are working to try and come up with Google Sketch-Up files for each of these jigs that will include dimensions and usage instructions. When they are done, they will be available on the St. Louis Woodworkers Guild website.



Don gets perfect miter joints with his mitering jig.

New Website On Its Way

In conjunction with our recently remodeled newsletter we are also updating our website with a new look. We are in need of new photos of your work or any other items of interest that you think should be included. Please don't be shy and e-mail your submissions to Michael Beaudoin at michael@ba-doyn.com or bring in prints for us to scan. The new site is almost ready for launching and will include many new features.

Membership Application

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Occupation _____

Type of woodworking you enjoy _____

E-mail address _____

Where did you obtain this application and learn about this Guild?

*If you would like to join the St. Louis Woodworkers Guild please attend our next meeting or mail this application and your check for \$25 for one years dues to:
St. Louis Woodworkers Guild, 2077 Congressional Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146.*

