

St. Louis Woodworkers Guild



September 2009
Issue 295

Our Next Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM
September 17, 2009

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

September 2009

Speaker:

**The Making of a
Windsor Chair, Part 1**

by Cecil Robertson

Cecil Robertson will present the first part of a series on making a Windsor chair. In the first installment, he will walk us through and demonstrate the carving of the seat. He promised to show and discuss some of the unusual tools we'll see him put to use during this phase of the project.

International Wood Collectors Society

with Gerry Zipprich and Garry Roux

August 20th, 2009

Are you a wood collector? If you're reading this newsletter, own any woodworking tools, or have a special board just sitting around waiting for the right project, then the chances are good the answer is yes! Gerry Zipprich, former Archivist for the International Wood Collectors Society, and Garry Roux, the current President, were the guest speakers at last month's guild meeting. They spent the better part of the evening talking to the SLWG members about their favorite pastime – collecting wood!

The International Wood Collectors Society (IWCS) is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1947. While their main goal is to promote information on wood, it is also a society that focuses on collecting wood and correctly identifying and naming wood specimens. They publish a bi-monthly magazine called the World of Wood, hold meetings at the local, national, and international levels, and currently have over 1000 members.

In an effort to increase interest in learning about the different wood species of the world, the society has helped finance several books on wood collecting, including *A Guide for Developing A Wood Collection* and *Australian Trees and Shrubs – common, local and scientific names*. They also participate in such philanthropic practices as making financial donations to the

*(continued on
page 4)*



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*Meeting Room, Mailing Address
Courtesy of Woodcraft*

President's Letter, September 2009

To Clean or Not to Clean

Every time my dad comes in to my shop, I can see the disappointment in his face and, more specifically, I hear it in his voice when he tells me that I need to clean my shop. You see, he works at Boeing, where you apparently can't breathe without cleaning first. I work in my own shop and cleaning is not mandated by anyone but me. I have to decide after every operation if it is time to clean the shop or just keep open a well-defined path to the tools, or maybe somewhere in between. I reason that if I am cleaning, I am not producing anything. My dad would argue that I may be producing, but slower than I would in a clean, neatly organized shop.

I agree with my dad (to a point). There are plenty of times that I can't find a tool. There is often a solid layer of sawdust on the floor. And, I even broke my pinky finger once trying to catch stack of lumber that was piled too high on the planer. These things slow me down as much as cleaning does. So, I know I can't just totally avoid cleaning. It is a necessary thing and it does need to be done at some point. But the question still remains—when to clean and when not to clean.

So, I started thinking about the obvious times to clean. Where do you see clean shops? I see them a lot in photos. So, one of the answers is to clean before a photo shoot—I get that. Seems simple enough. But what if you haven't done anything photo-worthy? What if no one ever comes to visit, you have no friends and no reason to show off your shop? You still need to clean sometime. Or do you? I saw an interview on "This Old House" where they visited an operation that makes pegs that are used for holding timber-frame mortise and tenon joinery together. Norm just mentioned in passing that he was walking through the barn on a layer of sawdust. Those jokers didn't even clean for their appearance on "This Old House". This wasn't only a photo shoot. This was the biggie. They were on "This Old House". If they didn't clean for this, you know they weren't going to clean anytime soon.

That got me thinking about a video that was recommended to me a while back called "Ben's mill". It was on PBS and probably from the 1970's. Ben had a mill that was powered by water and he made many different things in the shop. They were tricky things to make, like water troughs and horse sleds for winter. He definitely had no dust collection and he also walked around on a solid layer of sawdust. It wasn't well lit, clean and modern. But, to me, it just looked comfortable. It felt right—as much as I could feel through a VHS tape.

Now, right away, I thought of those two examples of shops that rarely, if ever received a deep cleaning and very little regular cleaning. Then I started thinking maybe I don't have to feel bad about not cleaning as much as my dad. After all, it makes me feel like I have done some work when there is sawdust everywhere, especially when there are nice long shavings from the hand plane sprinkled throughout. I am pretty sure that I am not lazy as much as I really like it when I feel surrounded by sawdust. I have even had plenty of times when I was working on my old sawmill, laying on my back in the sawdust and thought, "You know, I could easily just take a nap here."

So, I decided that I don't need to clean as much as my dad would like, but I didn't really have a good reason. Then I thought back to the owner of the peg mill and what he said about his situation. He said they liked all of the sawdust on the floor because it was softer to walk on—better for the knees. I wish I would have thought of that.

Scott



It doesn't take much to thrill me. A great bargain at a flea market, a discounted tool in a home center clearance aisle, or in the case of this month's selection, a brand-new book at the public library yet to be checked out. I'm the first entry on the due-date chart!

Storage & Shelving the Shaker Way defines and illustrates original furniture and reproductions based on pieces found in well-known Shaker communities such as Pleasant Hill (Kentucky), Sabbathday Lake (Maine), and Lebanon (Ohio), home of the Warren County Museum. I travelled through parts of Ohio recently and wish I could have read about it's villages and museums before I left. I probably would have altered my route to take in some of those attractions.

The book begins with a brief two-page Introduction that explains how Shaker furniture had to comport order in their lives. Aside from describing Shaker philosophies of cleanliness and orderliness, it also clears confusion that often-times results from discussions centered around Shaker lifestyle. People often confuse Shakers with the Amish, thinking both cultures were austere societies that shunned technology. But Shaker beliefs stand in stark contrast to Amish ideals - they were innovative and willing to introduce or improve machinery and technology as they saw fit. The book offers some good examples of this; e.g., the circular saw is reputed to be a product of a forward-thinking Shaker "Sister".

The book is separated into five parts, with one or more projects defined in each part. Part One contains a single project called Centre Family Dwelling Built-Ins. This first part sets the tone for the book, describing large, permanent room-sized appurtenances that practically consume a space. These held everything a large family would need, but more importantly served as useful storage for multiple generations of families. With Shakers, emphasis is on longevity.

Part Two defines the Shaker Peg and Rail System, accomplished by five distinct projects; Peg and Rail Storage System, Hanging Cupboard, Curly Maple Hanging Shelf, Poplar Hanging Shelf, and Key Board (think pre-Information Age!). It's interesting to note that wall units sold in so many home and hardware stores today have roots over 200 years old, with DNA to match storage systems in this section! Part Three describes their Oval Box System, with one project devoted to Oval Boxes. This was the project that prompted me to borrow the book. I love to see how thin strips of wood can be coaxed by heat and water vapor into ovals that, when stood on end, are strong enough to support a full-grown man! Part Four reverts to a multi-project format that encompasses Freestanding Pieces, supported by the following projects; Eight-Drawer Jewelry Case: Sewing Chest Conversion, Canterbury Blanket Chest, Yellow Wood Box from Sabbathday Lake (I wrote an article in February '04 that mentions Norm Abram and his visit to this locale), and Small Chest. The book ends with Part Five on Large Stand-Alone Furniture and offers two projects, a Hamlin Cupboard (Charles Hamlin of Pleasant Hill) and Union Village Blanket Chest.

As stated previously, I found this at the St. Louis Public Library. It holds a wealth of information about Shaker furniture: text that provides insight and explanation about Shaker pieces, color photography that clearly identifies methods of work, and some great illustrations that show joinery and exploded component views rendered in a "pencil sketch" format. We don't have this book in our library, but we do have several others that reference Shaker furniture. I encourage you to browse these as time permits. It's a great furniture style, one that withstands the passage of time.

Library Reminders

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.

Announcements

The Society of American Period Furniture Makers (SAPFM) is looking to establish a regional chapter in the St. Louis area. A first meeting is being planned for Saturday, September 19th, 2009. This meeting is being headed by Gerald Yungling. For more information on the SAPFM and what it might be able to offer you, visit their website at <http://sapfm.org> or contact Gerald at sapfmgateway@sbcglobal.net.

The SLWG board members are looking for ideas. Are there any community projects in your area where guild members could offer their assistance? Do you know of any ways in which the guild could do something to better your community? Think about it! And if something comes to mind, please contact Scott Wunder, President, at 314-731-2484.

Toy Report

152 toys were delivered in July, bringing our number of toys donated this year to 1240. Over 28,600 toys have been donated by the guild since 1994. If you need patterns, wheels, or axles or if you have suggestions for projects, please make your needs known by calling John Patton at 314-843-0616 or Steve Briner at 636-922-1947.

Other Notes

There were 48 guild members, one guest, and two speakers present at the August 2009 guild meeting. The raffle for the \$50 gift certificate to Woodcraft was won by Gerry Zipprich, one of the guest speakers! The raffle continued for almost 10 more minutes, however, as the IWCS presenters brought lots of wood samples for the guild to raffle.

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.

International Wood Collectors Society (cont)

American Chestnut Foundation, an organization dedicated to repopulating the forests of America with the American chestnut tree, which was adversely affected by a blight in the 1920's.

Gerry and Garry brought in some examples of wood in their collection as well as several dozen standard-sized wood samples to raffle off. Garry started off the show-and-tell session with a bearing shaft made from lignum vitae and larger slabs of monkey puzzle, zircote, pistachio, avocado, and acacia. Gerry brought some Cuban mahogany, Hercules club tree, black ash, and an example of the only native N. American rosewood.

After the sample raffle, they talked a bit about specimen kits that were available through IWCS and the standardized collections sizes and methods. Gerry was quick to point out that they try to promote the use of scientific names for all of the trees they study. This is done in part to avoid confusion when discussing a specific tree (there are reportedly over 100,000 different species of trees in the world, only 50,000 of which have been scientifically identified) but also to foster the idea that wood collecting can be a great learning process.

Wood identification is generally done botanically by studying the leaf, berry, and bark of the tree more so than by examining cut wood. Gerry said one good way to identify an unknown wood is to send a sample of it to the Forest Products Laboratory, which works out of the University of Wisconsin, Madison. For no charge, they will micro-identify up to two wood samples per year. Another good method is through books. Ernie Ives, an English wood collector, recently published *A Guide to Wood Microtomy*, a 112 page booklet covering the procedures he has developed for micro-identification.

How many different kinds of wood can you properly identify? The average person only thinks they know about three or four – “walnut” (or any dark-colored wood), “oak” (or any medium-colored wood), and “pine” or “maple” (or any light-colored wood). Most woodworkers can really properly identify just a few more than that – between five and ten. If you are interested in increasing such an important aspect of woodworking as wood identification, you should consider becoming a member of IWCS.

There are several membership levels available, from Student (\$15/year) to corporate (\$125/year). Benefits of membership include a subscription to the World of Wood magazine, an annual directory of members, and access to wood and wood information. They are very active locally, meeting six times a year in the St. Louis area. For the die-hard wood collector, several hundred people from all around the world attend the annual week-long retreat in Florida every February. For more information about joining the IWCS, visit www.woodcollectors.org.



The Show...

Cecil Robertson brought in a Windsor chair he'd made and talked about what his plans were for the next meeting, where he would be doing Part One of his presentations on making a Windsor chair.

Keith Lissant made a helicopter by modifying one of the airplanes used for the children's toy drive.

Vic Barr passed around a jewelry box made from mahogany and lacewood and a "leftover" box made with scrap pieces that is used to hold chess pieces.

... and the Tell

Gerald Yungling will be heading the first meeting of the Society of American Period Furniture Makers (SAPFM) on Saturday, September 19th, 2009 at the Saint Louis Art Museum. This all day event will include a lecture by Boris Khechoyan, a guided tour of the SLAM's period furniture collection, and some "show and sell" by Robert Crouse, an antique tool collector. For more information on the SAPFM and what it might be able to offer you, visit their website at www.sapfm.org or contact Gerald at sapfmgateway@sbcglobal.net.

Al Hayden has information on a restoration project that needs some help. The Fairfax house was built in 1841 using slave labor. Assistance is needed with some of the furniture restoration. More information can be found at www.fairfaxhouse.org/Volunteer.html or by contacting Al at jamespring@att.net.

The Kansas City Woodworkers' Guild Presents Marc Adams

Marc Adams will be teaching a seminar class for the Kansas City Woodworkers' Guild from December 4th through the 6th. Sessions will include Veneering, Joinery, Routers, and Methods of Work. The cost for all three days for non-members is \$150 or \$40/session. For more information, please contact the guild at training@kcowoodworkersguild.org.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

September 17th, 2009

Thursday, September 17th – Cecil Robertson will present the first part of a series on making a Windsor chair. In the first installment, he will discuss and demonstrate carving the seat.

October 15th, 2009

Andre Strzembosz is going to spend some time discussing the process of making a guitar.

November 19th, 2009

Robert Colgate will cover some of his techniques for making boxes.

More Announcements

Shop at Rockler: Get A Discount And Help the Raffle

Use your SLWG membership card to get your 10% Discount at Rockler. Every time you do so, Rockler will put \$1 towards a gift card we can use for the raffle. They will issue the gift cards to the guild in \$20 increments.

Other Notes

Green Woodworking

In an effort to reduce expenses and save trees (for a more worthy cause, like lumber!), the Saint Louis Woodworkers Guild is now reducing 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. 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, or if you did not receive a newsletter via email or the USPS, then please contact Scott Wunder (314-731-2484 or wunderwoods@sbcglobal.net).

Frank Klausz Class Announcement

In March of 2010, join 15 fellow guild members in a hands-on class with Frank Klausz. Frank will provide the wood, but you need to provide sharp tools and an intermediate skill level in woodworking. After two full days, you will leave the class with a high-quality jewelry box made entirely with hand tools. The cost for this class will be approximately \$300/person plus \$35 in materials. Upon completion of the class, you will have made a quality jewelry box and received instruction from a world-famous teacher – each of these alone is well worth the price of admission. More details will be provided as they are available. Contact Mark Koritz (mkoritz@charter.net or 314-579-0401) if you are interested in signing up. A \$50 deposit will hold you a spot in the class. You will then have until the end of the year to pay the remaining amount. There are only 16 total spots available, so hurry up and get your deposit turned in if you are interested.

Faust Park Restoration Projects

Vic Barr has been working with the people over at Faust Park to come up with a list of restoration projects they could use assistance with. There are several buck wagons that need repairs, houses that require molding, siding and trim work, and rain barrels need help from anyone with coopering skills, just to name a few of the projects. Vic has volunteer applications available. If you are interested in helping preserve St. Louis County history, please contact Vic via email at vicbarr@sbcglobal.net or by phone at (314) 997-1181/

Safety Recall

Ridgid table saws sold by Home Depot from January 2009 through July 2009 are being recalled because of a problem with the saw's arbor shaft when using a stacked dado set. Owners of this brand of saw with a manufacturing date code between CDo829 and

CDo837 should immediately stop using their saw and contact One World Technologies to schedule a free on-site repair. They can be contacted at 866.539.1710 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET M-F or by visiting www.ridgid.com.

SLWG Mentoring Program

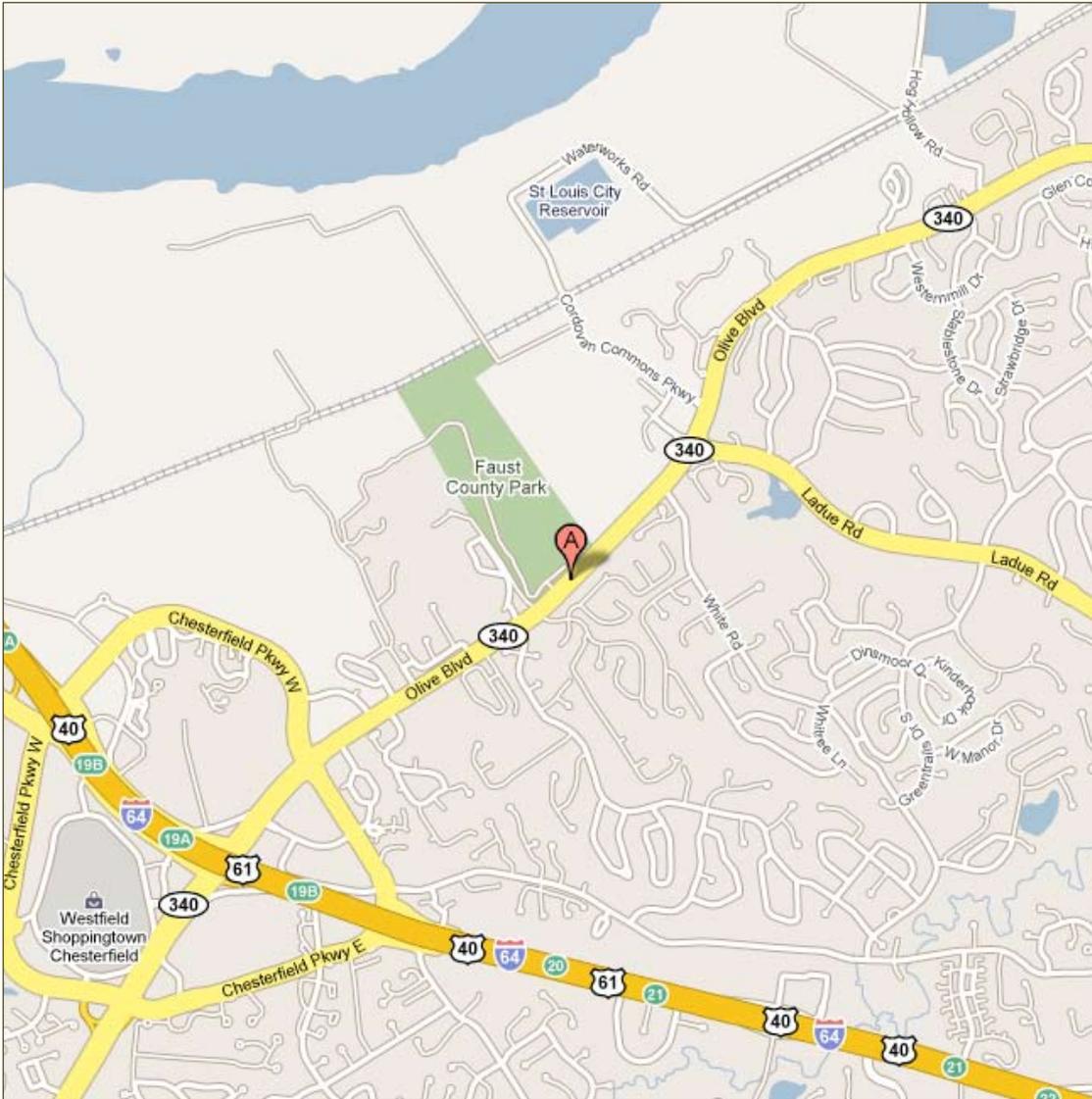
In an effort to promote the trade, the Saint Louis Woodworkers Guild is trying to organize a mentoring program. Are you looking for someone to help you advance your woodworking skills? Or do you have the knack for teaching and want to share your knowledge? If you answered yes

to either question, then contact Mark Koritz (mkoritz@charter.net or 314-579-0401) or Wayne Watson (workwood@earthlink.net or 314-846-1172) to get involved in the SLWG Mentoring Program.

SLWG Picnic

This year's annual picnic will take place at Faust Park in Chesterfield, MO, on Saturday, September 26th. The guild will provide the main dish and beverages; we ask that any members attending bring one side dish with them. For more information, or to sign up, see Vic Barr at the September meeting or contact him via email at vicbarr@sbcglobal.net or by phone at (314) 997-1181.

Directions to the park are: From Hwy 40/64, take exit 19 to Olive Blvd. Go north on Olive Blvd for one mile. Faust Park will be on your left.



More Announcements

This Labor Day weekend saw the return of the Art Fair to Queeny Park. Fellow guildmembers Vic Barr and Mark Koritz were vendors at the fair. They both placed in the three-dimensional art category; Vic came in first and Mark placed in second! Congratulations Vic and Mark!

**Frank Klausz
Class Announcement**

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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.*

