

St. Louis Woodworkers Guild



February 2010
Issue 299

Our Next Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM
February 18, 2010

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

February 2010

Speaker:

Part 2 of Making
Windsor Chairs by
Cecil Robertson.

Fellow SLWG member, Cecil Robertson, will give Part Two of his presentation on Windsor chairs. In the first presentation, Cecil discussed carving out the seat, boring the holes, and turning the spindles. Join us on February 18th as he covers the rest of the chair construction process!

Steve Parisi – Carved Duck Decoys

January 21st, 2010

With a degree in graphic design and a talent for all things artistic, Steve Parisi is right at home turning blocks of wood into some of the best looking antique duck decoy replicas you will ever see. Even though he doesn't carve them full-time, his talent for working wood is top notch. There is more than one way to pluck a duck, but Steve took an hour or so to show us how he goes about with his duck carving and what methods work best for him.

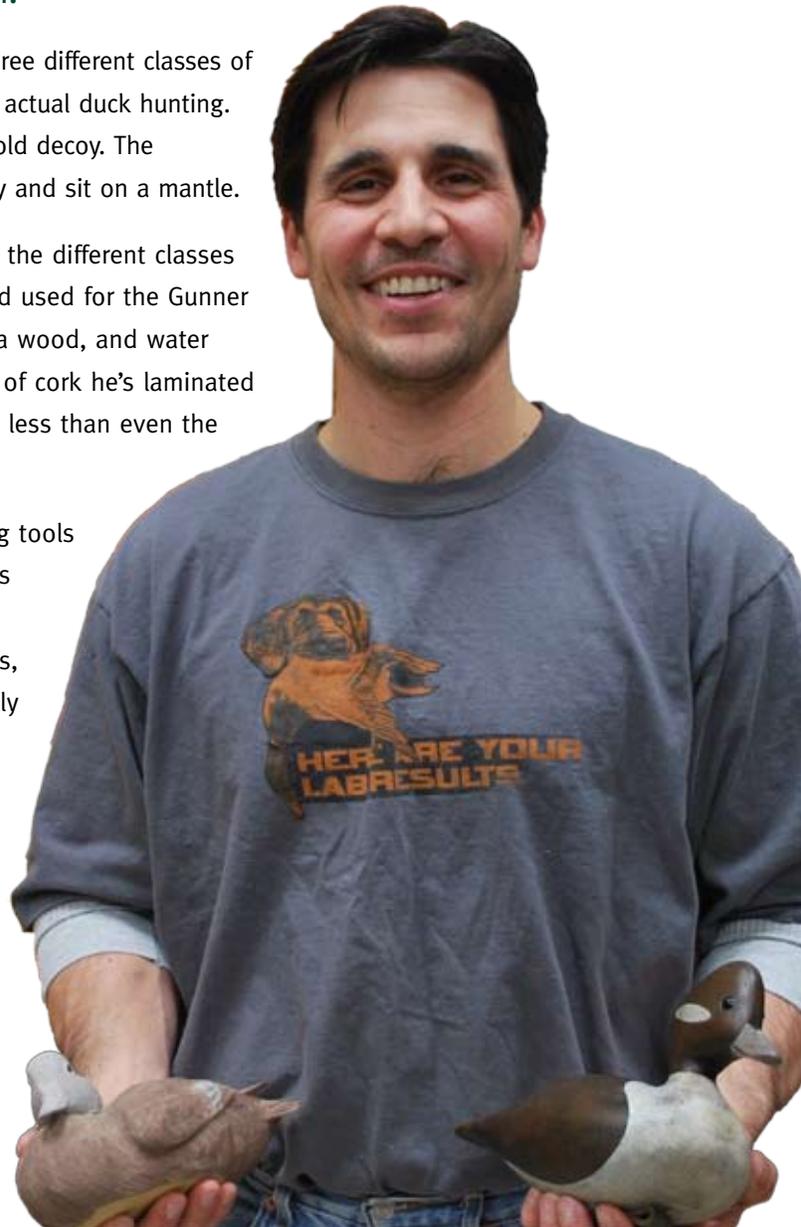
Steve started off by discussing the three different classes of decoys. The Gunner is often used for actual duck hunting. The Antique is made to look like an old decoy. The Decorative is just made to look pretty and sit on a mantle.

Different types of wood are used for the different classes of decoy. Common examples of wood used for the Gunner class include pine, white cedar, balsa wood, and water tupelo. Steve also uses large blocks of cork he's laminated together. It carves easily and weighs less than even the lightest wood.

It doesn't take a lot of woodworking tools to carve duck decoys. The main tools that see use in his shop include the band saw, the drill press, some rasps, sandpaper, and files, and occasionally a power carver.

The first step to creating a decoy is to get a pattern with both top and side views. A good starter book, the one Steve first used, is called Duck Decoys by Tom Matus. This book contains proven patterns that beginner carvers might find useful.

(continued on page 4)



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*Meeting Room, Mailing Address
Courtesy of Woodcraft*

Scott's Thoughts

January 2010

Plumb / Level / Flat / Straight / Square. I've got these five words written on my wall in my shop right above my pencil sharpener. I originally wrote them up there for my brothers, who were helping me and new to woodworking. We were assembling doors and drawers and I needed a way to remind them to check everything they did – before the glue set up.

My brothers aren't in the shop anymore, but those five words are, and I am the one that is reminded by them. Subconsciously, every time I install something, I check for plumb and level and make sure it is straight. And, every time I assemble something, I check for square and double-check to make sure it is flat and straight.

Notice that straight is the variable that I check on everything I do. If you are thinking that there might be a story here, you would be right.

I was working on my first big concrete job, which was a slab for my new sawmill, and had several helpers lined up and waiting. I had spent a lot of time preparing the ground and forms and it was getting close to time for the concrete truck to show up.

I knew that I would need a piece of lumber for a screed board, but hadn't given it much thought, since I had plenty of lumber. As I was gathering my last supplies, I ran out in the shop and grabbed a piece of sycamore lumber. It was jointed flat and planed smooth, but had two rough edges, and a long sweeping hook to it. I spend many hours straightening lumber, so everything in the shop was set up to give me a perfect edge. I ran one edge on the jointer and threw it in my truck, reminding myself to keep the straight edge down.

I am pretty sure that I would have remembered to keep that straight edge down, but I didn't end up being the screed man. I was busy running around making sure everybody had something to do, the whole time worrying that the concrete would set before we got it perfect. We poured the first section and were finishing up the second of three sections when I took over the screeding operations.

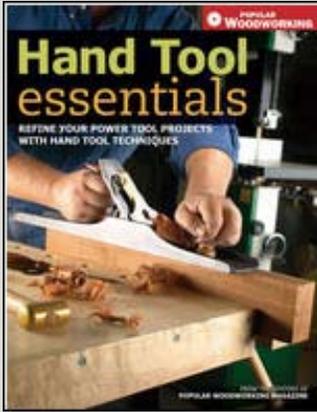
Turns out that you can't tell your concrete has a big hump in the middle when you are running around, not paying attention. You can, however, see that same big hump when you are low to the ground using the screed board to level the concrete. And you can really tell when the rain and snow build up in the valley created between two humps.

Luckily, this concrete was for me and I really just wanted a smooth surface for shoveling sawdust, so it was really not so detrimental – but it was quite permanent. Now, I make sure to not leave a way for me to screw it up. If I did the job now, I would make myself rip the second edge just to be safe, but I always, always, always check for straight.

Scott

Hand Tool Essentials – Refine your power tool projects with hand tool techniques from the Editors of Popular Woodworking Magazine

Library Corner by Ethan Sincos



If you are a power tool woodworker interested in taking your woodworking to a new level, then this collection of articles, pulled from the covers of Popular Woodworking Magazine, is a great place to start. Chris Schwarz sets the pace for the rest of the collection in the first of seven chapters, with three introductory articles discussing the reasons for, providing the motivations to, and outlining the fiscal ease in which you can incorporate hand tools into a power tool shop.

Since most hand tools do not work well when dull, the second chapter is comprised of nine articles dedicated to helping you make your tools sharp. These articles focus on sharpening plane irons, chisels, scrapers, and draw knives and also cover some of the different sharpening techniques, like using the ruler trick or adding a camber to your plane blades.

Chapter 3 covers hand planes and is the subject with the most articles dedicated to it. There, you will find information on what different kinds of planes there are and when to use each one, how to restore a flea market find and how to tune a new one, using wooden planes, smoothing planes, and jack planes. The last article is a bit of eye candy, with some great photos and information on infill planes.

The next two chapters discuss the use of hand saws and chisels. In the chapter on saws, Frank Klausz gives us the final word on dovetails and Chris Schwarz discusses East vs. West. Another article goes into detail on the usefulness of the bench hook and how to make one. The chapter on chisels covers basic and advanced chisel techniques, restoring an old chisel, and modifying stock chisels to work better.

Do you know how to properly use an awl? Or what the difference is between a striking knife and a marking knife? Or how to put together a table without using clamps (I'll give you a hint – it involves drawboring)? These answers and more can be found in Chapter 6, which contains several articles on the other hand tools you might want in your shop.

The final chapter provides you with the perfect excuse for buying some hand tools – projects! Start off your bench obsession with the Roubo-style workbench. Then follow it up with a cabinet to store your planes, a sawbench for sawing boards using the proper form, and some miter shooting boards for making tight, precise joinery.

The articles are all well-written with crisp clean photos and clearly-written captions. They are both concise and detailed and easily read one at a time or all in one sitting. Had I not won this book for planing the flattest board at a Chris Schwarz hand plane class earlier this year, I wouldn't hesitate to spend the retail price of \$24.99 to add it to my permanent collection.

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. 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

180 items were delivered to the hospitals in January. That brought our grand total of toys distributed since 1994 to 29,900.

Kurt Herrmann has lots of board blanks for cars that were donated by Eddie at St. Charles Hardwoods (thanks, Eddie!). See Kurt if you are interested in obtaining some of these boards. Also, please look ahead in the calendar to see what upcoming holidays we will need toys for. St. Patrick's Day (shamrocks) and Easter (rabbits and ducks) items are needed by the February meeting. Patterns can be found at www.stlwoodworkersguild.org. If you need wheels, axles, or suggestions, please contact John Patton (314-843-0616) or Steve Briner (636-922-1947).

Other Notes

There were 66 people in attendance again at the January meeting!

Joe McGuire, a guest, won the raffle for a \$50 Woodcraft gift card – yeah, he'll be back!

Steve Parisi – Carved Duck Decoys (cont)

Once you have a pattern, you need to glue up your carving block. After tracing the pattern onto the top and sides, take the block to the band saw and cut to the top lines. Be sure to keep one small part attached on one side so you can then cut the side pattern. Once the side pattern is cut, you can then remove the rest from the top pattern. At this point, it is also a good idea to drill the eye holes in the head.



the two. It can later be removed and prepared for permanent attachment. If you are using a cork block, it can be given a smooth finish by applying drywall spackle and sanding it.

At this point, you can remove the head and add details. Steve uses study bills (available through taxidermy tool suppliers) to recreate bill shapes accurately. Once he has his bills shaped the way he wants them, he often soaks them with thinned superglue for additional strength. Use Apoxie Sculpt to set the duck's eyes. This is



The decoy is now ready for more detail. Steve creates feather texture with a slip layer and tools, then uses both acrylic and oil-based paints to add color. When the paint is dry, he seals the duck with waterproof sealer. Finally, for Gunner decoys, he adds the keel. The keel is usually white oak and needs to be set properly to ensure the decoy floats evenly.

Throughout the presentation, Steve passed around decoys in the various stages of completion as he discussed each step. This, along with his engaging personality and presence, helped make for a really creative and interactive presentation. Thank you for your time and efforts, Steve!

The next step is to shape the blank, rounding all of the edges over with shaves, rasps, or carving knives. Sometimes, this is all you need to do for a hunting duck decoy – it can be left a little rough. With a very small dot of hot glue, attach the head to the body and work the transition between



a good time to give the bird character as the eyes can add a lot of life to the decoy.

Now is the time to hollow out the decoy's body. Split the body in half (at the glue line or with a band saw). Use a forstner bit to remove wood from the inside of the top half and glue the body back together. Next, you can reattach the head.



The Show...

Denny Krupinski brought in some long-neck wooden hand screws and some clamps he made with F-clamps and wood.

Vic Barr passed around some laser-engraved wood and ivory discs he inlays into projects.

Don Snyder brought in a wooden address sign he'd carved. It will eventually receive paint and gilding.

Roger Branson showed everyone a carving he did using the knotted base of an old elm tree.

Alex Schuetz let everyone get a close look at the new Veritas dovetail and carcass saws he received for Christmas.

Dave Vitale brought in pictures of an entertainment center he'd recently built.

Paul Hanson made some jewelry boxes using cherry and walnut (his first attempt at inlay) and he passed them around for all to see.



Paul Hanson

...And the Tell

Cecil Robertson mentioned he would be presenting at the next guild meeting and briefly discussed what he would go over.

Frank Klausz Class

March 20th and 21st, 2010

The Frank Klausz Jewelry Box class is fast approaching! If you have indicated you want to attend, but have not yet put down your deposit, then you need to do so very soon. The guild is able to accept payment in the form of cash,

check, credit card, or Paypal. Once a deposit is put down, you will receive a tool list indicating what will be needed for class. The rest of the payment will be due before the class begins. If anything, this is a great excuse to pick up a new tool or two

Biannual Show and Tell

Join us at the Creve Coeur Government Center (located at 300 N. New Ballas Road, between Olive and Ladue) from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM for our biannual Show and Tell meeting. The guild will also host a silent auction. If you plan on bringing anything to sell, the doors will be open at 6:00 PM. A portion of the proceeds from the sales (sellers choice, with a 10% minimum) will go to the guild. If you have big machinery to sell, please just bring pictures and a good description of the item. Show and Tell items must be made by you or pictures of something you made. Everyone should bring a dish or snack to share; John Wetter will provide refreshments. For more information about the silent auction, contact Wayne Watson at 314-846-1172.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Thursday, March 18th

Don't miss our Biannual Show and Tell! Bring some of your projects from the last year or two, eat cookies and snacks, and visit with other guild members! Details can be found in this newsletter.

Thursday, April 15th

Mike Jones will give a presentation on historic handrails.

Thursday, May 20th

Boris Khechoyan will visit with the guild to discuss carving furniture.

Other Notes

Matt Laposa has stepped down from the position of the guild Secretary, so we are looking for a replacement. If you are interested, please see Scott Wunder.

Matt Gazella has stepped down from the position of the guild Librarian, so we are looking for someone to step into some of his roles, as well. Ethan Sincox will be handling the book reviews for the newsletter, but we need someone to help out with maintaining the library materials. If you are interested in helping out, please see Scott Wunder

St. Louis Woodworking Show

The St. Louis Woodworking Show took place in Collinsville, IL, from Friday, February 12th through Sunday, February 14th. Since it took place before the February guild meeting but after the deadline for newsletter articles, it will be discussed in the next month's newsletter.

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.*

