

St. Louis

Woodworkers Guild



October 2010
Issue 307

Our Next Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM
October 21, 2010

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

Christmas Gift Ideas.

Join us in October for a special presentation of woodworking holiday gift ideas. Several members will be sharing with the guild projects that would be great to give to others. Most of the projects are fairly simple and can be completed within a weekend. If you have a holiday gift idea feel free to bring it to the meeting, even if you do not want to officially present it to the guild.

Automatons by Gerald Riley

September 16th, 2010

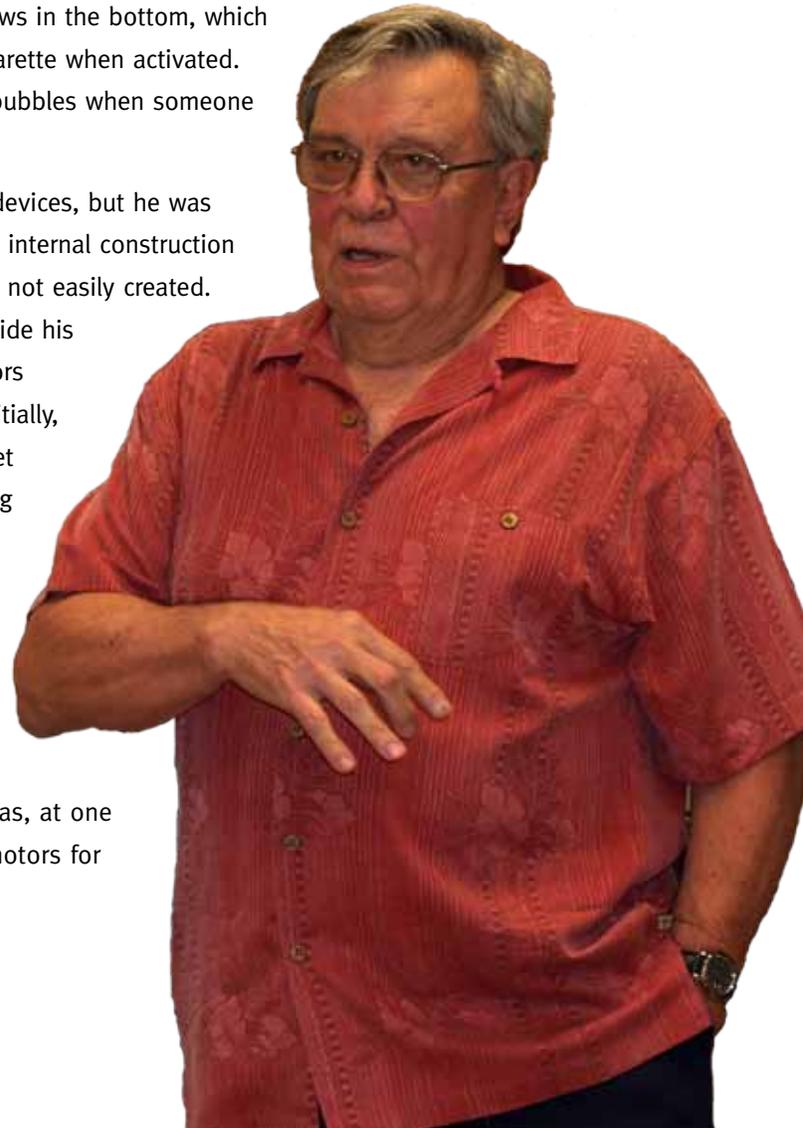
Gerald considers himself a product of St. Louis, having lived and worked in this area for most of his life. He attended Hadley Technical School in his youth and was taught how to work in a factory environment. When he got out, he worked in a factory that made tables and chairs.

He got into automatons when he and his wife were looking for carousel horses at estate sales and auctions. They often had opportunities to buy antique toys and dolls for very little, so they bought them. Occasionally, they would come across automatons in these bunches of toys. Some of the automatons they acquired during this time were from the early 1900's and included one with a bellows in the bottom, which made the toy appear to smoke a cigarette when activated. A similar automaton of a bear blew bubbles when someone would wind it up.

Gerald wanted to get into key wind devices, but he was never able to successfully do so. The internal construction of these devices is very complex and not easily created. He then focused on using motors inside his automatons. He started buying motors from Grangers because they were (initially, anyway) inexpensive and he could get them with different RPMs. His dancing Uncle Sam automaton is made with one of these motors.

Trying to avoid using power cords, Gerald then looked into 12-volt battery systems. Unfortunately, after a time they became just too expensive to be cost effective. He was, at one point, able to find D-sized battery motors for not too much money.

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Steve Briner 636.922.1947

Sponsors

Woodcraft
314.993.0413

The Wood & Shop
2650 Metro Blvd.
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314.644.6677

Hibdon Hardwood Inc.
314.621.7711

*Meeting Room, Mailing Address
Courtesy of Woodcraft*

Scott's Thoughts – Check it Twice

October 2010

Recently I had a friend of mine help me by making some cabinet face frames. He is more of a carpenter by trade, but does good work and wants to do things right. I only need to tell or show him things once and he gladly corrects his mistakes and doesn't make the same one again. Unfortunately though, he doesn't yet look for a lot of things that I take for granted.

This became especially clear when he delivered some face frames that had a few issues. The main problem was that the stiles were not the same length within the same face frame. Without the lengths being dead-on it is impossible to make the frames square and to check for that same square. The square rule of checking your diagonals to make sure that they are the same only works if all of the other lengths are the same on opposing sides. Otherwise, the best you can do is to make two corners square – and that won't cut it.

After the pieces were cut they should have been inspected for length and quality and squareness of the cuts. The easiest way to check that the pieces are the same length is to simply put them directly next to each other and feel the ends with your fingertips. Your fingers will tell you what a tape measure won't. Even if they look good, reading the lengths by tape measure can easily lead to pieces that are off by 1/32" to 1/16", which is what I found in my face frames. Your fingers will be accurate in the thousands of an inch and any differences will be negligible.

Putting the pieces together and checking with your fingers will also let you know if any of the parts are out of square. This comes in handy on the ends of the face frame parts that may not have been squared before cutting them to length. Keeping track of which ends are squared up can be a job in itself and it is easy to miss one or two. This method also works especially well on plywood cabinet parts. Take two sides (which should be the same size and square) and put them together. Now, close your eyes. If they are not a perfect match you can easily feel it and repair it before assembly. Having more than two parts that are supposed to be the same size is even more helpful, because it is quickly evident which piece has been cut wrong as it stands out from the crowd.

This method is so accurate that it can be used in place of a stop block to cut out the parts before inspection. I saw a great example of this in the video "Ben's Mill". Ben ran an old water-powered mill and had a sled set up on the table saw with finger notches cut in the fence at commonly used lengths. The stop block was simply his finger indexed against the fence at the right notch. He would slide the piece down to his finger and after he determined that it was in the right spot he would push it through the saw. This method is fast and accurate and you don't have to worry about sawdust building up between the piece you are cutting and your stop block which will make your piece shorter by a chunk of sawdust.

I double-check parts often with the fingertip method and recommend that you do the same. It will tell you a lot that a tape measure won't, except of course the actual measurement. Remember, check everything twice!

Scott



Recently a resurgence of hand tool woodworking has sprung up across the woodworking community nationwide. This has caused an increase in the

production of quality hand tools but it has also caused an increased demand for older quality woodworking tools, as well.

Over the last ten years, I've developed an affinity for beading tools. Several years ago, I came across a tool dealer who has since sold me several of the beading tools in my collection. He is also a great source of information, especially as it relates to Stanley hand planes. His name is Patrick Leach and if you've done any research on Stanley hand planes and come across Patrick's Blood and Gore, the definitive study of Stanley planes, from #1 to #608A, then you've stumbled upon his website, www.supertool.com.

On the first Tuesday of every month, Patrick sends out a list of tools he has for sale. This list goes out to approximately 10,000 people in the US and abroad. It is always chock full of quality useable tools, lead off by a picture of his son holding the Tool of the Month. You can sign up to receive his newsletter on his website. Sorry, but this list is via e-mail only; he does not send this list through regular postal services.

I just recently met Patrick in person at the 2010 Woodworking In America conference a few weeks ago. Even with just a few tool purchases over the years, he saw my name tag, recognized me, and knew exactly what interested me. He immediately reached for a rare Preston beading tool he knew I didn't have, complete with both fences and an original blade. It didn't take much convincing for me to walk away with it in hand.

If you are looking for other places to find old tools, then you should consider joining the Mid-West Tool Collectors Association. The M-WTCA is an international organization for those interested in antique and traditional woodworking tools. They have swap meets throughout the year in different regions nationwide. More information can be found at www.mwtca.org.

At some point in the next few months I'll do a quick write-up of one of my beading tools for you and include some pictures of it, as well as blade sharpening tips and some samples of the work it can produce. If you've never used a beading tool and want to hear more, then I'd suggest you show up at the January 2011 guild meeting, where Mike Sistek will be giving a presentation on scraping and beading tools!

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

November 2010 Meeting

In November, Bob Colegate will be doing a presentation on some of the boxes he makes. Discussed will be construction techniques as well as his finishing methods.

January 2011 Meeting

Looking for a way to add a little extra detail to your next project? At the November meeting, guild member Mike Sistek will show us some useful techniques when he does his presentation on scrapers and beaders. Mike's previous presentations have been great crowd pleasers, and this one promises to live up to our high expectations! (No pressure, Mike!)

Toy Report

We delivered 220 items to the hospitals in September. Our grand total of toys distributed since 1994 is 31,546. In 2010, we have delivered 1825 toys.

Last year's top contributors were as follows:

Total number of toys by contributor:

Wayne Watson 410
James McKenna 378
Bob Colegate 327

Bob Colegate awarded Wayne Watson with the Woody Award for 2009 for having made the most number of toys.

We are still in need of craft items. Patterns such as coyotes, cats, flowers, heart medallions, hockey cutouts, bear kits, and flag kits always go over well. We can start assembling more race cars if you have the blanks.

Upcoming holidays include Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas, so start working on toys that fall under one of those themes! If you need patterns, see our web site to select and print a pattern or call John (314-843-0616) or Steve (636-922-1947) for assistance. You can also contact John or Steve to arrange pick-up or delivery of toys.

Automatons by Gerald Riley (cont)

Gerald then took a few minutes to provide us with details on some of the automatons he had displaying in front of the room. An elephant with a chimp on a unicycle sitting on top of the elephant's head was made from carved wood. Another one, Humpty Dumpty sitting on his wall, rocked around when turned on. The third one was Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dumb carrying a pig.

When Gerald first started making automatons, he used solid wood. This proved to be difficult because precise holes had to be drilled with great accuracy or else the rods connecting the moving parts wouldn't work properly. Then he realized the old ones he was trying to duplicate were not made of wood, but of hollowed papier-mâché. He decided to copy this idea. So now he carves a wooden body in the desired shape and uses this as a mold model. He wraps papier-mâché around the mold and allows it to dry. Then he cuts it off and glues it back up together after assembling his automatron.

As much as he can be considered a woodworker, Gerald should also be considered an artist. All of his finished automatrons come with many to-scale and in-color drawings in pen and colored pencil.

We hope all who attended the September meeting enjoyed the presentation as much as it seemed like Gerald enjoyed giving it!

Tool Recall

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with Ryobi Technologies Inc., today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

Product Name: Ryobi Model HP 1802M Cordless Power Drill

Sold at: Home Depot from January 2001 to July 2003

Incidents/Injuries: Ryobi has received 47 reports of the drills overheating, smoking, melting or catching fire, including 12 reports of property damage to homes or vehicles. Two of the incidents involved minor burns from touching an overheated switch.

Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled drill, remove the rechargeable battery and contact Ryobi to receive a free replacement drill.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact Ryobi Customer Service at (800) 597-9624 or go to www.ryobitools.com.

Show and Tell

Bob Colegate passed around a wood cutting knife with a handle made from walnut and maple that he'd made by hand.

Steve Palmer brought several pictures of two chests of drawers he'd made – one made from spalted maple and soft maple and the other made from spalted maple and cherry.

Glen Phillips brought in an heirloom trunk he made from cherry that had hand-cut dovetails.

Rich Sanders made a collapsible heart basket out of mahogany and brought it in for everyone to see.

Phil Haskins brought in some figured woods, including burlled walnut. He said he has about 6,000 board feet of quarter sawn white oak shorts he is willing to sell or trade for.

Bob Colgate (l) and Wayne Watson (r) with the Woody Award for most toys made.



Annual Guild Picnic at the Museum of Transportation

Other Notes

Candle Lanterns for Faust Park

Wayne Watson announced that 30 candle lanterns were to be delivered to Faust Park on 9/23/2010 and wanted to thank all who participated in making them.

Raffle Winner

Congratulations to Steve Palmer, winner of the \$50 raffle!

Annual Guild picnic at the Museum of Transportation

This years picnic was held at the Museum of Transportation on a beautiful September day. The group had a guided tour of the workshop area where several guild volunteers spend their time refurbishing train cars throughout the year. We walked through a car that is close to completion and through a set of cars, which included the Pullman sleeper, dining cars and kitchen cars. After the guided portion, we returned to a nice shady spot by the front gate for hamburgers and hot dogs, as well as some excellent side dishes provided by members.

Many thanks go out to Wayne Watson for setting up the event and to the Museum of Transportation for hosting the event at no charge. The museum is always looking for volunteers. If you would like to help out contact Wayne Watson, John Wetter or Jerry Lammers, all of which volunteer regularly.

Meeting location change.

Next month's meeting will be held at the Creve Coeur Community Center, located at 300 North New Ballas Road, St. Louis, MO 63141.

We will no longer be meeting at Woodcraft following the October meeting.

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.*

