



WOOD FORUM

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

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January 2015

New Bottle, Old Wine

by Art Hofmann

Ken Napior, a retired structural engineer, has been building antique reproductions in his home workshop for the past 33 years. He will discuss the planning, design and detailing used to build them, taking us from simple projects for new woodworkers to advanced techniques for the serious and professional. Along the way, Ken intends to discuss the quality of projects, going from “good” to “best,” and differences in national tastes, periods, styles and regions, interesting cabinetmakers as figures, as well as how politics and history have shaped the antiques we see today.

We will learn about problems and mistakes to avoid in antiques as well, while he leads us through building reproductions from pediment (top) down to the feet and all the matter in between. Finally, Ken will provide tips and techniques on adding curved, carved and routed elements that make projects special, one of which is how to make S-curved (ogee) bracket feet, a la the Chippendale style developed in the 17th Century that so many of the most desirable antique furniture pieces feature.



Ken says, “I am not an expert; I consider myself an intermediate wood worker, learning something new with each project. My wife and I enjoy antiques, and so I began trying to reproduce them. During the last 33 years of doing this, I’ve furnished our home with beautiful furniture pieces. My presentation to the SCWA is to share the enjoyment of this journey and hopefully inspire others to take on projects they can enjoy building and owning.”

When: 7 pm, Tuesday night, January 13th, 2015

*Where: Scott Borski's shop in Petaluma
Directions are on page 3*

It Was a Dogg Day Afternoon

by Art Hofmann



The Holiday Party was a fine event - the weather was fairly good after all that rain. It was mild, which permitted roving in and out of David Marks' shop, the center portion of which was devoted to food tables. There were two main tables for hors d'oeuvre and such, olives, hummus and cheese, plus the entrées, which consisted of turkey, dressing, cranberries, and at least four salads of various kinds. There was an entire table devoted to desserts, cakes, homemade and purchased; a cheese cake was in evidence, plus chocolates and on and on and on. Lots of good food. Chef Walt Doll was busy at a side-board counter cutting up the carcass of the turkey. As the guests arrived and added their dishes to the table, they filled their glasses with some of the fine wines, local brews or sodas courtesy of the SCWA and mingled with the rather festive assembly of members and significant others. By 3:00 PM most were

seated around the tables, lifting their forks and chatting away. It seemed to this observer that a good portion of the membership was present and accounted for, and that they enjoyed the fine repast set out for them.

After about an hour or two of eating, it was time for the Bench Doggs to take hold, which they did in good style. These guys are good to listen to. They have a solid repertoire of rock and roll, and it was fun to hear their renditions of their favorites, tunes that had meaning to them while they were growing up. They played and sang these with great passion and intensity, songs about growing up a working class stiff, and about love, and about places and cities. There were songs by Tom Petty, Randy Newman, Electric Flag, Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, etc. Many thanks to the Bench Doggs for a fabulous performance. Great job by Connick and Ribbecke on the vocals.

It was indeed a pleasure to see David and Victoria, and thanks to them for the use of their space. It was very gracious of them to have invited us. They seemed to be having as much fun as their guests. The guests, by the way, included spouses and significant others and old members, and brand new members, too, who heard about our meeting through the article in the PD on Jim Heimbach and his Viking Cradle, and then went to our website.

And speaking of the website, as our fearless leader, Bob Moyer, said - before everything went to Doggs - the site was a really a fine and necessary thing that happened in 2014.

See you next year!



Directions:

The January meeting is being held at Scott Borski's shop, south of the Petaluma theater district. If you are coming from the north, aim for downtown Petaluma and continue south on Petaluma Boulevard to H Street. Hang a left turn there, and travel a block to 2nd Street, then turn right.

Coming from the south, take the Petaluma Boulevard South exit from Highway 101 and continue on it as it goes under the freeway until you reach H Street, where you will take a right, then another right on 2nd Street. The phone number, should you need it, is 778-8481.

Parking shouldn't be a problem at this hour, but who knows? Scott's shop is unheated, by the way, so put on a sweater, and bring a chair if you want to sit.

If you care to eat first, there is a fine little café on the corner of H and 2nd Street called Aqus. They have a decent menu that you can peruse on their website:

<http://tinyurl.com/Aqus-Cafe>

2015 Membership Renewal

You will notice some differences in the SCWA membership renewal process next year. These changes come about because we are using the membership management system of our new website. This system automatically sends out email Renewal Reminders to each member starting 60 days before the member's Renewal Date.

Membership has been changed from a calendar year period to a period of one year starting on a member's Renewal Date. Most members currently have a 2014 membership with a Renewal Date of February 28, 2015. These members will receive the first email Renewal Reminder and an email Invoice for 2015 membership dues on December 30th. If your membership is not renewed by February 28, 2015, you will receive a grace period notice, letting you know that your membership will lapse in 30 days if you do not renew it.

Some members, new members and members that renewed their memberships after the new website was launched, will have a membership Renewal Date that is one year after their initial or renewal date. These members will receive an email Renewal Notice and Invoice 60 days prior to their Renewal Date.

The Membership Renewal Invoice has instructions for payment of your dues. You will still have to pay by check, which can be mailed or given to the SCWA Treasurer. If you can, please include a copy of the Invoice with your check. The Invoice will state your new Renewal Date.

This is the first time that we will be using this renewal process. We hope that it makes the renewal process better for our members. You may check your membership status on the SCWA website at any time. Just log in and click on your name to go to My Profile. You may also contact the SCWA Treasurer by using the website if you have any questions or problems.

NOTICE

Because we did not have a quorum of members at our November meeting, we were unable to conduct the election activities planned for that date. As a result, the January meeting will be a Special Meeting which will serve as our Annual Meeting. We will be voting for 2015's officers and changes to the bylaws. We must have a quorum of members to hold the election, so PLEASE ATTEND.

Bob Moyer, Chairman



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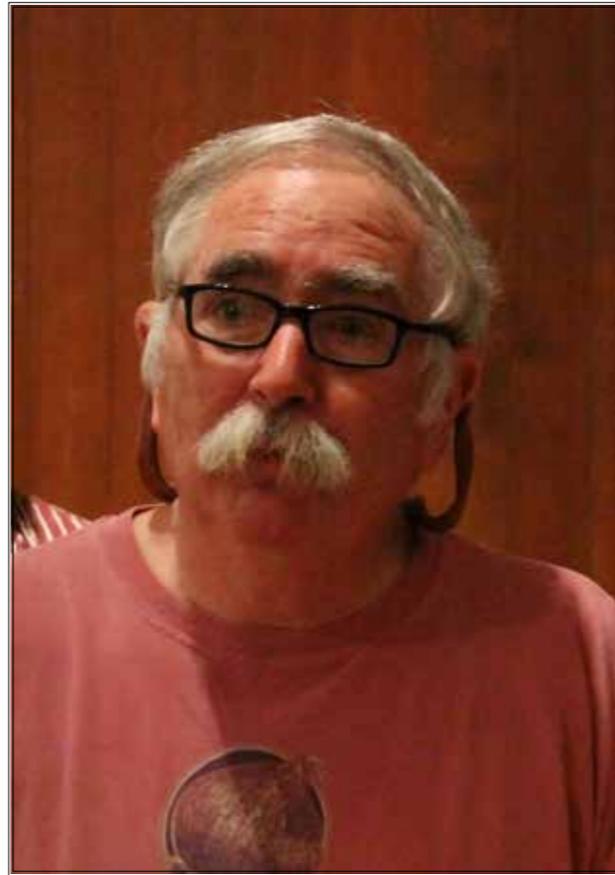
St. Remy Side Table by Scott Borski Photo by Tyler Chartier

Guild News

Two members of the SCWA have been elected to Guild status this year, Bill Taft and Hugh Buttrum. Bill and Hugh were nominated in October and voted into the Guild unanimously by current Guild members.



William Taft



Hugh Buttrum



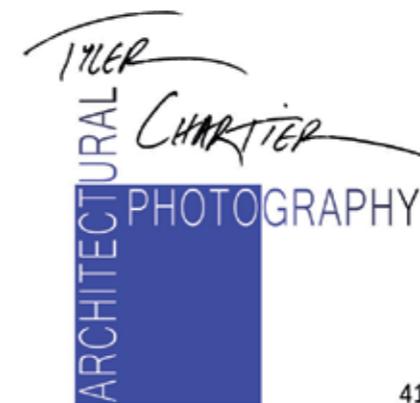
Sofa by Ben Cooper



Untitled by Vincent Van Dyke



Time for Music by Richard Babbitt



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Christmas Presents

by Bill Taft

For many years I have been making Christmas presents for our grandchildren. Some years it is difficult to figure out what to make. This year I had an idea about what I wanted to make by early October. In prior years I had made them boxes or carved animals. So this year why not make a carved animal that is also a box? Picking the animal to carve was easy. Our granddaughter Hannah's favorite animal is a wolf.

There was no need to do much research for images of wolves. One of my prize possessions is a statue called Six Paws, which is a mother wolf with her two pups. A few photos of her, some sketching and I was ready to get to work. Scott Borski gave me some blocks of walnut that were milled from the same tree that he used for the lumber for his "Highland Landscape Table" displayed at this year's Show. This walnut was the perfect color for a wolf.



I started with a block that was about a five inch cube. My plan was to carve the head and forward part of the body, then hollow out the body part making it into a box. By the time that I got the head roughed out, I



could see that it wasn't going to make a very good box. It wasn't going to make a very good carved wolf, either. Wolves just have far more color variation than the walnut offered. It was time for Plan B.

I had been doing some experimenting with a carved horse in an intarsia wall art piece. This project helped me develop the techniques I needed to make thick double-bevel marquetry objects. Marquetry allows me to use additional wood colors to make the wolf look like a wolf. By using thick veneers - I ended up using 1/4 inch thick 'veneers' - there is enough material to carve the wolf, avoiding that flat look of normal marquetry.

The Plan B gift evolved into a small box where the cover has an inlaid carved wolf's head. A bit more sketching of Six Paws and I had the design for the box. My wife, Anne, has a small rectangular china box from Royal Crown Derby sitting on her night stand, that is just the size and shape that I wanted to use. The contoured top is about four by five inches and is about 3/8 inch thick. That was to be the size of the tops of the boxes.

Using the best profile sketch, I made the marquetry patterns to create double bevel marquetry 'constructs' of the wolf profile. I cut enough 1/4 inch thick veneer from the walnut blocks Scott gave me and from the other woods that I wanted to use. A 'construct' is a preliminary marquetry assembly that is cut into a piece of throw-away background, which can be cut into the final background as a single unit.

I found a beautiful piece of figured cherry at Mount Storm to use for the boxes. I cut out six tops, leaving them 1/2 inch oversize so that they could be trimmed to size later. I cut these tops to 1/2 inch thick, saving the 1/8 inch thick remnants for the bottoms of the boxes. At the same time I cut six pieces of 1/4 inch thick plywood the exact same size as the tops, to use as the throw-away backgrounds to make the wolf profile constructs.

The wolf profile constructs were made using double bevel marquetry, cutting the pieces into the plywood. The periphery of the wolf profile is made about an eighth inch oversize all around, to provide stock so that the final wolf profile shape can be cut into the top. Using a router I cut a pocket that was slightly larger than the wolf profile into the underside of the top, leaving the tops 1/4 inch thick in the pocket area. I cut each wolf profile construct into a top, using the double bevel technique, leaving the surface of the wolf profile about 1/16 inch proud of the surface of the top. Before gluing the wolf profiles into the tops, I trimmed the tops to size and then trimmed some of the edge material away to minimize the amount of carving need to produce the contour shape.

The wolf profile and its plug, the piece of the top cut out made when cutting in the profile, were glued into the top with the profile surface proud on the outside and the plug surface extending well into the pocket.



Then, using a router I trimmed the pocket, removing the plug material that extended into the pocket, leaving a thin cherry veneered surface on the bottom of the pocket. That finished the work on the inside surface, the tops were now ready to be carved.

I carved one top initially, and when I was satisfied with it repeated the process on the other five tops. I use a Dremel

rotary tool with high speed cutters and rotary files for carving small objects. The carving on the wolf profile and the box top is more than just surface relief carving. The thick veneers allowed me to give the face and ears some shape and to aggressively texture the fur. Once the wolf profile was rough carved, I carved the contour

of the top, carefully blending it at the edges of the profile. Then I finish carved the whole top using numerous different shaped engraving cutters, followed by finishing using tungsten carbide polishing cutters.



Once the carving was completed, the tops were sanded smooth and the features were cleaned up using fine riffler files, polishing cutters and sandpaper. The boxes are finished with two coats of Watco Butcher Block Oil & Finish, which is advertised to be 'food safe' when dry. I like this finish as it is easy to use (wipe it on and wipe it dry). It does not require any additional work to get a good finish.

Making these boxes was a real treat for me. I learned a new technique for adding carved three dimensional features to marquetry art. I'm already planning another project to use it.



(Photos used in this article are courtesy of Bill Taft).

A New Look at the Wooden-Bodied Plane

by Joe Scannell

I know that numerous SCWA members are users of wooden bodied planes, many of which they have themselves made. There are many reasons for this, probably starting with the enticement of the challenge. Then there is the spiritual blast you get from making something that actually *works*, from a living material. And being able to make it from materials of your choosing, shaped to fit your hands and your precise needs. For some, it is perhaps the ability to make something you need that is simply unavailable, or prohibitively expensive. For all of these reasons and more, wooden hand planes have moved back into the toolbox of many modern woodworkers.

After first buying and enjoying using a Japanese kanna back in the '70s, I began to wonder if I could make such a plane myself. Lured on by the writing of James Krenov, I did make one. Then Ron Hock came along with his very superior blades, and I made a couple more, one a special purpose, round bottom plane, built in the Krenov style.

Although they do the job, they have not replaced my cast iron planes for several reasons. The first is that the Krenov shape is wrong. Especially in my aging hands, the *klompen*-shaped body is difficult and tiring to grip. I like the traditional Stanley tote and knob. My second gripe about the Krenov-style plane is the adjustment. The Japanese planes use the same technique of adjustment by hammer taps, but on the Japanese planes it seems to work better. I have never mastered the precise adjustment of my shop-made planes, and often spend an inordinate amount of time setting up to get a really fine shaving.

And while I'm grouching I might as well mention the difficulty during plane construction of getting the mouth opening just right. It starts out too tight, so you file it a little, and the blade begins to edge into

position. A little more filing, and a little more, that's better, then oops! the mouth is a gaping wound in the plane sole. I know I'm not the only one who has had that experience; I have seen plenty of shop-made planes with dental inlays in front of the mouth.

All of which leads me to my story. I was immediately captivated by an advertisement from Lee Valley & Veritas describing a wooden plane hardware kit that included not only the blade, but also a complete Norris-style adjustment mechanism just like the ones on my treasured cast iron planes. And the price was great too.



The package includes an 1/8" thick, 1-5/8" wide blade, the Norris adjuster, and a couple of other parts needed to make it all work. You provide the wood.

The design as presented in the kit is essentially the *klompen* style, but doesn't have to be. When this realization finally hit me, it was the proverbial light bulb. I sent for one.

I set about designing my new plane with a Lie-Nielsen No. 62 jack plane as a model. The 62 is a low-angle, bevel-up plane, but it was the grip and profile I was after. The Veritas parts kit is for a bevel-down plane with a 45 degree bed angle, and that's how I built it. It is designed in the same manner as the Krenov-style planes, with two core pieces slightly wider than the blade and profiled to create the bed and mouth, sandwiched between two 5/16" thick side rails. However, I shaped the core pieces to also provide the grip I was after. This shaping should be completed before glue-up.



As shown, the main block comprises the 45 degree blade bed and the tote. The forward block forms the mouth and chip chute, and was originally, in my vision, going to feature an integral front knob. This was not to be. After carefully mounting the block in the lathe to round the knob, I began turning it, when a catch and the short grain of the knob conspired to rip it from the block. So, I went to Plan B, a separate knob tenoned into the block, which I think is a better solution anyway, because it eliminates the short grain.

But here's the really cool feature of this plane. Remember the BIG MOUTH problem? Well, I borrowed a concept from Lie-Nielsen's No. 62, the



moveable shoe, which creates an adjustable mouth. The side rails are grooved, as are both the core blocks, and thin splines are used to align everything. During glue-up, the rear splines are glued in place, and serve to keep everything positioned. The front splines are glued only to the shoe, so when everything comes together, the front shoe can slide fore and aft, opening or closing the mouth. I found a 1/4" furniture bolt at Ace Hardware that makes a perfect lock for the mechanism. The hole through the shoe is an elongated slot, allowing adequate movement. The bolt is tightened with two Allen wrenches.



The rest of the build (shaping/flattening the sole, refining the profile, etc.) is just as it would be if this were a standard wooden bodied plane. If you want a round bottom on your plane, as I did, you will need to grind the radius into the blade yourself, because Veritas sells only a straight blade. This is really not a big problem, once you realize that the radius of the blade edge is not the same as the radius of the sole. I created the sole first, then inserted the blade and scribed the blade. Careful, slow grinding with one of those new cool-running blue wheels is the secret.

So, if you're still looking for a way to spend that \$40 your grandmother gave you for Christmas, how about a plane?



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<u>Editor</u>	Joe Scannell		

Wood Forum is the monthly newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association. Please feel free to submit articles and photographs for inclusion in the publication. You can send your submissions to the Wood Forum Editor at SCWAEditor@gmail.com. Advertisements are also accepted with a per-entry cost of \$5 per column inch.

Membership Application

I would like to join the SCWA to meet other people interested in the craft, the art and the business of fine woodworking. Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$35 for the annual dues. I understand that this fee entitles me to attend monthly meetings and to receive the Wood Forum newsletter by email or via the SCWA's website.

I am enclosing an additional \$15 to receive the Forum by regular mail.

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____ Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Please send check and completed application to:

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