



WOOD FORUM

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

Volume 42, Issue 3

October 2022

Carrying On

Artistry in Wood Update

The Museum of Sonoma County will be undergoing some extensive exhibit preparations for their permanent "Sonoma County Stories Exhibit" which will open in early 2023. Because of this scheduled renovation, our usual *Artistry in Wood* Exhibition time slot (November-January) has been postponed until November 2023.

I realize that this is disappointing for some members, but the bright side of it is that we will have more time to create those wonderful works that are submitted for this exhibition!

- Don Jereb, Acting Chairman



Club Happenings

by Joe Scannell

Photos pages 2&3 by Jose Cuervo

Photos pages 4&5 courtesy Tindley/Zall

First off, let me start with an apology for not producing a newsletter after our April 12 meeting at the future home of **Two Rock School of Woodworking**, a joint venture by Greg Zall and Mark Tindley in Petaluma. The meeting was well-attended, and it was wonderful to see all the old faces again, as well as some new ones, enjoying each others' company. As there was no formal presentation that evening, it became something of a show-and-tell, with several members sharing projects they've been working on.



Matty Mookerjee showed us a travisher he made recently, and seen in the photo above.

Dominique Charmot gave us a look at a chair he has been working on, with some very interesting legs, as illustrated in the photo at right.



Ron Teplitz, who plays cello for the Sonoma County Philharmonic, discussed a violin he has been working on. It follows the Stradivarius design technique, and this is his fourth build - he considers the first three "practice." This one is not quite finished, but it's getting there



John McFarland showed us a guitar he made - his first. I'm sorry, but I don't recall all the woods he used, save one. He told a story about a large Monterey cypress falling over in a storm in Pacific Grove, taking with it a toyon tree. Apparently this toyon was exceptionally large (10" diameter) and old for a toyon, and he was fortunate to be able to obtain some of the wood, which he described as "hard as ebony." Because the log was only 16" long, he had to do some splicing to obtain the longer pieces he needed.

As an aside, he mentioned that local Native Americans used toyon wood to make their arrows. The wood was so hard, the front end only needed to be tapered to form a very serviceable and deadly point.



Joe Scannell described building a small shelf for a 10 lb. bronze statue his wife wanted to display. It was to go in a corner formed by two walls meeting at a 100° angle. He wanted to employ a molding design he had used elsewhere in the home.

He elected to use a French cleat of sorts, that would be screwed to the corner wall studs. He fabricated the cleat from aluminum. The parts are hidden inside the shelf structure, and the whole thing is easily removed for painting.

The madrone shelf itself was made on the lathe in four parts. Each disk was turned to finished size before having a 100° pie slice taken out of it. The four slices were then stacked and glued, with a hollowed interior left for the cleat hardware.



Alan Brickman, a member of Wine Country Woodturners as well as SCWA, spoke to the room, asking how many present owned a lathe (not many). When Chuck Root replied that he had one he wanted to get rid of, Alan said, “No, no, don’t do that.” He went on to encourage others to take up lathe work, and attend Wine Country Woodturner meetings and perhaps join their group, which meets on the third Tuesday of the month. Due to COVID, their meetings have been curtailed for some time, but they are expecting to resume meeting this month, at their new venue, Credo High School in Rohnert Park.

Alan explained his conversion to lathe work as being the result of having already filled his home with furniture he made over the years. With no more need, and no more room, the switch was easy. At first he began by turning the same type of objects everyone else seemed to be making, but then he discovered segmented turning, and now he works exclusively in that domain..



Olive Ebony Bowl by Alan Brickman, 2021 AiW

For the unfamiliar, segmented turners begin by gluing many small pieces of wood (usually of various species and colors) together into a rough form, such as a bowl. Then this rough form is mounted on the lathe and turned to its final shape. Of course, I have greatly simplified the process in my description. Alan spends many hours preparing the rough form before it ever gets near the lathe. Several other members of Wine Country have occasionally done segmented work, but For Alan it's the only way he works.

Our hosts for the evening, **Greg Zall** and **Mark Tindley**, discussed a very large marquetry wall project they worked on this past year for an installation in a San Francisco bedroom. They worked 4½ months on it.



The project comprised an enormous quantity of vertical grain teak veneer, 1/16" thick and 9' long, that they bought from Certainly Wood for \$15 per square foot, over \$5,000 total. The sheets were edge joined to form panels, each about 30" wide, ultimately covering a wall 20' wide by 9' high. The panels were hung individually from three French cleat rails, with 1/8" space between them.

The partners divided the tasks. Mark produced the more than 100 flowers needed, as well as the butterflies. Greg cranked out birds on his 30" deep throat scroll saw. They tried to avoid inlay work, because it's so time-consuming, but sometimes it became simply unavoidable. This became Mark's area of expertise. But most of the work was done using the double-bevel marquetry technique.

They used 1/16" veneer throughout, much of it



made in the shop. They used no dyed veneer. The wide variety of veneers seen here are the result of years of collecting wood and looking for each piece's special beauty. The carob used for the cardinal (on the following page) is a great example.

Because the panels were so large and thin, they were fragile and had to be moved carefully. Greg uses packing tape, applied to the entire face side of the veneer, to provide strength. He says to use the cheapest kind you can get, because it will be easier to remove when the time comes.

They bonded the completed veneer panels to a core of 3/4" maple plywood, and veneered the back with poplar. The difference in species used front and back did not create



any discernible problem, and the panels remained flat. They used plywood instead of MDF because it is lighter and easier to handle. The glue-up was made with Unibond, in a 10' vacuum bag with a zipper seal that Greg bought for \$1200 from Vacuum Pressing Systems. He said it greatly simplified the process.

The evening was concluded with a wood giveaway raffle. It seems our friend **Michael Cullen** has pulled up stakes and headed to the Connecticut area, and so he left us with some nice timber, as well a generous stack of woodworking books, one of which I just enjoyed reading while on vacation. Thanks, Michael.



But Wait, There's More

by Joe Scannell

Photos by Jose Cuervo

One of the attendees at the April 12 meeting was Art Hofmann's son-in-law, Zack Moran. He was there to invite us to a sale of Art's wood and tool collection, to be held on the April 23 weekend. For those of you too young to remember Art, he was a stalwart member of the SCWA Board for 16 years, including 5 years as Secretary, five more as Show Chair, and the last six as Program Chair, where he constantly amazed us all with his keen sense for interesting presentations. Read more about Art in the July 2019 *Wood Forum*.

Zack and Art's daughter Nina put together the event at Art's home on Utah Street, and there was a good turnout of enthusiastic buyers. No one went home disappointed.

Things were quiet for awhile, but then on July 16 Don Jereb hosted a steam bending demonstration in his driveway in Santa Rosa. It turned out to be a very popular event, and a new learning experience for many.

Harvey Newman led off the show with a serious-looking jig that he used to bend a substantial piece of ash to his will. The wood appeared to be a 1x4 (3/4" thick), and the bend was a complete



180 degrees, which is no easy feat. He built the form on a sheet of plywood. The inside form determined the shape and dimensions of the finished bend, and the wood was encouraged to take this shape by application of a steel strap around its outside face. The strap was made to

wrap around the ash and pulled into place by the use of two come-alongs which Harvey cranked, while his able assistants **Don Jereb** and **Mark Tindley** applied heavy clamps to hold everything in place. Once the final shape is achieved, the wood must be left in the form to cool.



Mark described the real function of the metal strap: in addition to providing a way to actually handle the hot wood, it keeps the wood fibers on the *outside* of the bend in compression. Hot or cold, when a piece of wood is bent the fibers on the inside of the curve are in compression and are less likely to fail. But the outside fibers are being stretched (they are in tension) and are very likely to fail on anything more than a minor bend. By reinforcing those outside fibers with a metal strap and forcing all the fibers into compression, the chances of a successful bend are greatly improved. The metal strap can be seen in the photo below. Harvey used a piece of spring steel. The problem, as he discovered, was that the steel would stain the moist wood. So he covered the metal with the red duct tape seen here.



Harvey and Don used a long piece of ABS plastic pipe for their steam box, which is visible in the background, above. They supplied it with steam from a wallpaper steamer, which seemed to produce enough. Don mentioned that he built his first steam box using PVC pipe, and it warped and sagged quite a bit. The ABS holds up better in the heat.

Mark showed us another steam box that he built, using exterior plywood. This also holds up well, at least for a few uses, and has the advantage of being able to be custom made to fit the piece(s) of wood you're planning on bending. The less wasted space inside the box, the less steam you need and the more efficiently the box performs.



Mark also gave a brief demo of hot pipe bending, such as used by musical instrument makers. Basically, the wood is manually coaxed into bending around a hot pipe, using the natural moisture in the wood to facilitate things. Again, he uses a metal backing strip to keep the wood in compression.



Mike Center showed his technique for bending the sides of the guitars he makes. He uses several different shapes in his instruments, and each shape has its own form. He built this apparatus to hold the chosen form, and it is then used to heat-bend the side material.

He makes a sandwich of sheet metal, the wood being bent, more sheet metal, and an electric heating pad made for the purpose. Once everything is in place, the heat is turned on, pressure is applied using numerous clamps, and everything is left that way for a long time. He showed an example of a heat-bent side that he left in the form for a month.



On the other hand, the form can be used by itself to make the parts he needs using bent lamination techniques. This entails gluing up at least three layers of thin wood, putting it in a small vacuum bag, and arranging the whole package on the form and clamping it in place, then pulling a vacuum. This method produces results a lot quicker: the glue laminated side was ready the next day.

Don gave us a glimpse into how he makes his möbius mobiles, at least the small ones. He prepares the strips to thickness, then immerses them in boiling water for about a minute. He does this by slowly winding the piece into a coil inside his wife's canning pot.



After a minute or so he pulls it out and quickly begins twisting and bending until he has achieved something he likes. He then tapes the overlapping ends together, and adds more tape where needed to maintain the shape until the wood cools.

Finally, Don went back to the canning pot and wrapped a strip of wood around a piece of copper pipe just to show what was possible. He also showed us some he had done previously - the tightly wound ones in the bottom photo actually bounced like real springs when dropped to the floor! Cool stuff.



More from *Artistry in Wood* 2021



Thanksgiving Bowl by Robert Brent

Photo by Debbie Wilson



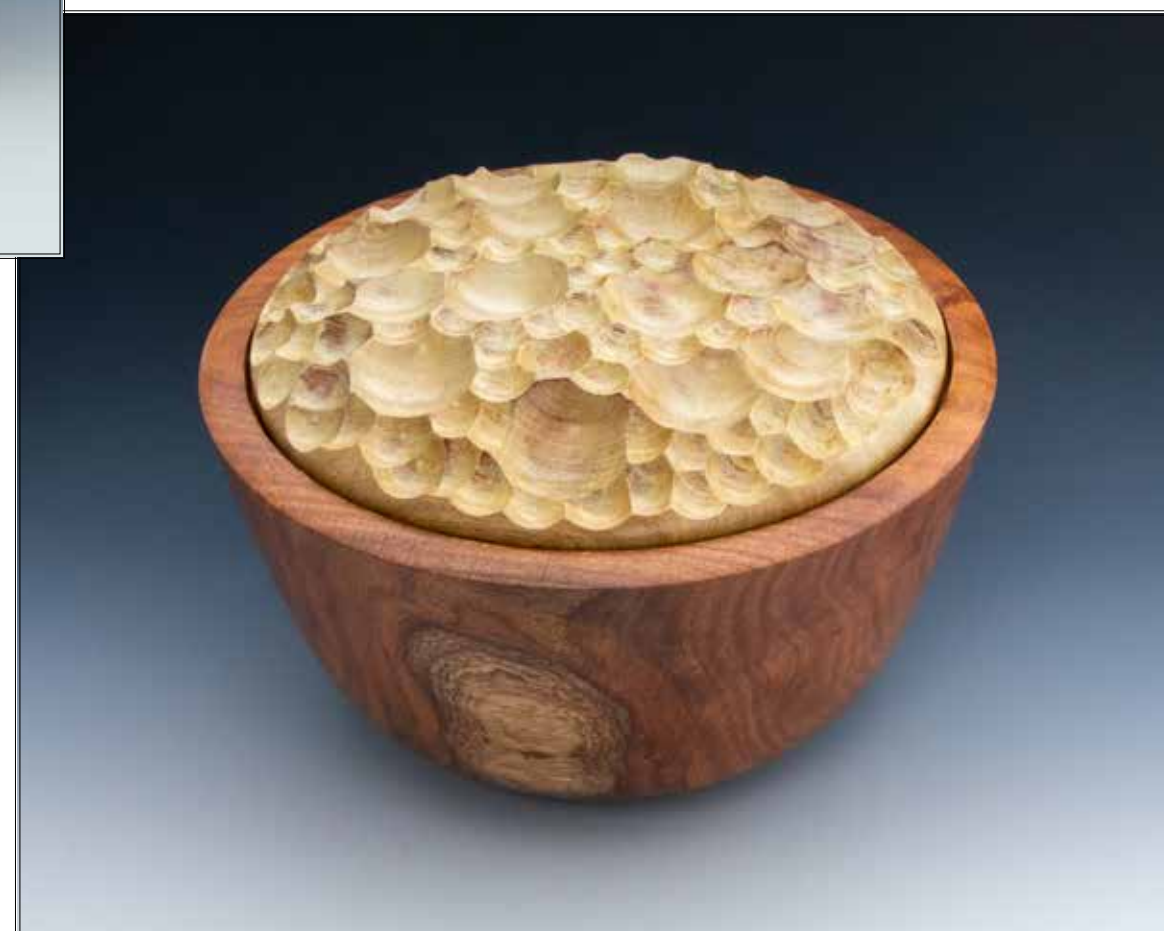
Madrone Bowl with Carved Ginkgo Leaves by Hugh Buttrum

Photo by Jose Cuervo



Hand Carved Nestled Bowl by Patrick McDonnell

Photos by Jose Cuervo



Bowl of Bubbles by Mark Knize



Minimalist Desk by John Rinehart

Photos by Debbie Wilson



Ghost Leg Table by Michael Palace



High Seas in the Bathtub #9 by Dave Stohl

Photo by Debbie Wilson



Sinker Box by Kerry Marshall



Photos by Jose Cuervo

Officers of the Association

Chairman

Secretary

Lars Andersen

Program Chair

Dave Weber

Guild Chair

Mark Tindley

Treasurer

Judith Garland

Show Chair

Don Jereb

Editor

Joe Scannell



Web Master

Rod Fraser

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 nominal cost for paid members.

Membership Application

I would like to join the SCWA to meet other people interested in the craft, the art and the business of fine wood-working. 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.

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____ Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

What can you do to help further the organizational goals of our volunteer-run association? Please tell us how you would like to help:

Please send check and completed application to:

Sonoma County Woodworkers Association, PO Box 4176, Santa Rosa, CA 95402