

TideWater Wood Workers Guild

23 January 2006

Minutes

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the TideWater Wood Workers Guild was held in the classroom of the *Woodcraft* store in the JANAF Shopping Center in Norfolk, Virginia. The Meeting was called to order at 8:05 EST by Andy Steinberg, President, whose opening comments were those of thanks to Pat Taylor, newly retired President. His comments were enthusiastically approved by loud and spontaneous applause from the membership.

Members of the 2006 Board of Directors were then introduced by the President: Bret Lancaster, Vice President; Bill Hoffman, Secretary; Gene George, Treasurer; and Pat Taylor, Immediate Past President. Committee Chairmen and Members were also introduced by name; and the Membership Committee Chairman requested that each member of the guild make a serious effort to bring one new member into the guild in the coming year.

Sponsor of the Guild, Bill Caillet, Operator of the *Woodcraft* store in which we meet, announced that at the upcoming meeting of the Tidewater Turners to be held on Monday, 30 January 2006 at 7:00 PM EST in the same classroom used by the TWWWG, the program would be presented by an eminent craftsman and all woodworkers are invited; there will be no charge.

Andy then called for the highlights of the last meeting; and the Secretary confessed that he had failed to bring them and was therefore unable to do so.

V.P. Bret then introduced Mr. Tyrone MacDonald, An Officer of the Artistic American Veterans, who described the mission of his organization and the 2nd Annual Gala/Award Ceremony at the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel on March 18. The Mission of the AAV is to “. . . Promote, encourage and foster the artistic talent of veterans in and out of the military, which includes Vietnam era Veterans, the disadvantaged veterans and non-veterans (spouses, children, etc.)” In this context Art means all forms of esthetic activity, *e.g.*, music, painting, woodworking, writing, puppetry, etc. A program of mentoring is being developed, volunteers are welcome, and an invitation was extended to any of our members who might wish to offer their services. Mr. MacDonald thanked the membership for the opportunity to speak to them, and he received genuine applause at the conclusion of his presentation.

The Program for the evening was presented by Paul D. Garrity, Operator of **Garrity Custom Sawing**, a business who “Converts logs to lumber” because “Wood is Too Good To Burn;” and who does so at the sight of downed tree(s) and for persons desiring to salvage such trees. Paul’s credentials include a degree in Wood Technology (“One step beyond forestry,” and requiring a thorough understanding of how a tree grows.) and being the present generation in a family boasting several generations of sawmill operators. One modern power tool, the **Wood Mizer**, makes it possible for this to be a “one man business” and enables the operator to convert trees to lumber in small quantities. Paul wears a jacket bearing that logo.

Paul commented that TWWWG members are experts in the use of wood while he is merely a sawmill operator; however, he showed an end table he had made from the stump of a walnut tree. The stump had a hole in its center and he had cut a “slice” from its vertical aspect, then made a book match, placing the contour of the hole at the perimeter of the finished top, thus providing an interesting, irregular outer edge and a book-matched joint in the middle; much sanding and polishing was required but the finished piece was most attractive.

Although Paul was highly skilful in presenting the botanical information with outstanding clarity, to summarize here would involve much space; suffice it to say that trees grow from a small inner core to large saw timber by adding an outer ring of growth each year, thus producing what one writer (Hoadly, R. Bruce, *Understanding Wood: A Craftsman's Guide to Wood Technology*, qv) has called, "a series of straws." As the tree grows from the center outward, and from the root to the branches, the core or heart becomes the most decay resistant while the outer portion (sapwood) is less so; and, as the tree matures and increases in height, branches grow from the heart and form knots in the lumber. This results in the butt (the trunk from the ground upwards) being the most desirable for fine work. Additionally, each species (*e.g.*, pine, oak, maple) has its own growth characteristics resulting in widely variant lumber characteristics. He also noted that holly is a hardwood. And quoting one of his teachers, he pointed out that, "If you understand how trees grow you will understand how wood acts."

Major points of his presentation were:

1. The butt log has the best grade of lumber.
2. Pine grows straight, saws straight, is good for boards.
3. When cutting logs, paint the ends of logs/trees so moisture will be retained; otherwise sawing will be difficult. Trees should not be cut when the trunk is less than 10-inches in diameter.

Considerable time was devoted to a discussion of moisture in wood because its presence or absence has a major effect on the behavior of wood throughout its useful life. Hardness, stability, expansion/contraction, joinery are all affected by moisture content, and by its change.

When lumber is sawed and stacked for drying, surrounding air should be free to circulate, rough lumber should be "sticked" at intervals such as to prevent sagging and enable levels to be separated by $\frac{3}{4}$ inches; drying time should be 1 calendar year for each 1-inche of lumber thickness. If stacked indoors the moisture in the wood will saturate the air in the closed space and cause mold. However, mold on the lumber can be killed with a solution of bleach and water and the wood processed as any other. Further, checks, cracks and splitting are results of moisture handling. It is often thought that, for the sake of quality, lumber should be kiln dried, but this is not always so; indeed, kiln drying can be counter-productive. Rapid drying discourages bug infestation.

In our area, air drying will bring lumber to a moisture content of approximately 11%; lower moisture content requires heat. It needs to be noted that moisture content is higher in the middle portions of a board than at outside surfaces. Adding heat can be helpful to intricate joinery, *e.g.*, dovetailing.

Paul also provided us with valuable information regarding methods and relative quality of cutting methods, *i.e.*, quarter sawn, rip sawn, and the reasons for those methods as well as the effects in appearance and strength. Drawings made by Paul to illustrate his points were very helpful, but cannot be reproduced here.

Wood can be termed a "Value added" product, *i.e.*, a tree in the field is valuable; the same tree felled and rough cut has greater value; dressed and cut to length is of greater value; crafted into furniture is of even greater value.

Paul's usual fee for cutting trees is (at present) \$55.00 per hour, with a minimum 3-hour engagement. He is located in Chesapeake, VA, phone 757-488-9324; e-mail <<www.sawyersite.org>>

Paul's presentation was responded to with a number of questions and a round of enthusiastic applause.

President Andy then returned to the bench, calling for unfinished business. A .thickness sander was offered for sale – used and the seller had used his lathe for a power source.

Two new members were introduced, one of whom was a sawmill operator.

The TWWWG Website was up for renewal and on motion, duly seconded, the Treasurer was instructed to disburse the appropriate funds.

Pat Taylor reminded the membership that some investigation had been made into the possibility and cost of converting some of our video tapes to CDs; and it was decided that this would be further investigated and possible action would be taken in the future.

Show and Tell: Andy showed us a flashlight that resembled an audio headphone in design but containing a small light providing ample illumination for working under adverse circumstances.

Two tips were offered: 1 – a comment on the value of hearing protection in the shop by a member whose hearing was sufficiently impaired that a hearing aid was necessary; and 2 – attention called to an article appearing in *American Wood worker* magazine (January 2006) for making a jig enabling the sawing of a circle at a band saw.

A carved wooden figure was shown by the brother of the carver who stated that the wood was a simple 2 x 6 and a chop saw and chainsaw were the only tools used.

Pat Taylor announced that there is a need for Toys for Tots and that he had a portfolio of plans for such items, should we have members interested in making them.

The next regular meeting will be at 7:00 PM EST on 27 February 2006 at the *Woodcraft* Store, JANAF, Norfolk, VA.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM EST.

Respectfully submitted,

William C. Hoffman, Recording Secretary.

Summary of Minutes Above

The Regular Meeting of the TideWater Wood Workers Guild was on 23 January 2006 at the *Woodcraft* store in the JANAF Shopping Center, Norfolk, VA at 7:00 PM EST. Andy Steinberg, incoming president brought the meeting to order, introduced the 2006 officers, the Committee Chair Persons and members.

Mr. Tyrone MacDonald, of the *Artistic American Veterans*, made a brief presentation of the mission and method of his organization and of an upcoming awards banquet.

Paul Garrity a sawmill operator, presented a most informative program on the process of transforming trees from standing in the field to selection of boards for use in construction of furniture.

Show and Tell included, aids to work, an unusual carving, and items for sale. Routine business was dealt with and possible projects for individuals (Toys for Tots, transferring VCR tapes to CDs). The Treasurer was authorized to disburse funds for renewal of our Website.

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