

WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern
Woodworkers
Association

April 2005, Vol. 14, Number 4

April Meeting *Turning for Dummies, I Mean Woodworkers, errr ...I Mean Flatboarders!*

Thursday, April 21st, 7 pm.
Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House
Albany-Shaker Road, Albany

- Ken Evans

Kurt Hertzog of Rochester will present a program of "Turning for Non-turners" in a fashion suitable for the woodworker who wants to turn an occasional table leg or four table legs (that look the same, of course). Kurt is an accomplished turner with lots of interests including woodturning and photography. Kurt is very active in three woodworking and woodturning clubs in the Rochester area and is an officer in all three. Kurt will be a presenter at the Totally Turning 2005 symposium in Albany in October.

This is a program that woodworkers and woodturners alike will enjoy and find educational and entertaining. We will have an Instant Gallery of turnings (oh, what the heck) and woodworking projects for everyone to see and admire. Please plan to bring something with you to show in the Gallery. There will be a raffle, and who knows maybe even a truckload of wood to purchase.

See you there.

Marquetry Course at Sears On May 14, 2005

- Ken Evans

Don't forget to register for the course in double bevel marquetry that will be conducted by Clark Pell at Sears on May 14, 2005. This course is for woodworkers who have little or no experience with marquetry, but the two 3-hour sessions will allow for plenty of hands-on work with a scroll saw and a look at more advanced techniques. The fee for the course is \$25. Sessions will run from 9 am to 12 noon and 1 to 4 pm. Lunch is on your own. Checks should be made payable to NWA and sent to me at 2062 NY 67, Valley Falls, NY 12185.

Finkbeiner SLE Workbench Won by East Berne Woodworker

- Charlie Goddard

Lois Douville, an NWA member from East Berne, won a solid oak workbench with side and tail vises and a full set of drawers. Herm Finkbeiner made this bench as part of his in-shop program for making classic workbenches. Previously he had made benches of black locust and elm that were raffled off at Showcase and won by non-members. This time he wanted our members to have a better chance to win it, so tickets were sold only at NWA meetings and at the Woodworking Weekend in January.

Due to Herm's generosity and workbench-making skills, the Fiske Fund is \$1,115 richer. Thank you, Herm.

We hope that Lois will enjoy her new bench and that it will inspire her to continue working with wood (don't put it in the living room for furniture). We look forward to some display pieces at Showcase made on her new bench.



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UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, PHONE
NUMBERS ARE IN AREA CODE 518

From the President

- Pat McCord

April Board Meeting

The next meeting of the NWA Board of Directors will be held at 7:00 PM on Thursday, April 28th, at the Hillcrest Firehouse, 95 Pruyn Hill Road, Mechanicville. All NWA members are welcome. If you would like to have a specific topic on the agenda, please contact Charlie Goddard at 370-0388 or Cgodd@aol.com. Please feel free to discuss any ideas, concerns or questions you might have with any of the Board members (officers and chairs listed in the newsletter) at any time.

New Publicity Chairs

We are pleased to welcome Peg and Chuck Kowalski as our new Publicity Chairpersons. They have been hard at work on Showcase and doing a great job. We are delighted that they have agreed to handle our publicity and look forward to having them on board.

If you have any thoughts about publicity for NWA, please don't hesitate to give Peg and Chuck a call (518) 439-5177 or email at ckowal1@nycap.rr.com.

Help Wanted – Kitchen Cabinet Doors

Bob Tozzi, who is starting a kitchen remodeling business, is looking for someone to make and/or finish cabinet doors. If you're interested please give Bob a call at (518) 373-0788. 🐶

We Need Shops to Tour – How About Yours?

- John Michne

With April's agenda pretty full with Showcase 2005 and the "Turning" presentation at our regular meeting on the 21st, the annual NWA shop tours will be held this year in May. The where and when will be announced at the April meeting and detailed in the May Woodworkers News. The who is what we need help with. We are looking for some members to open their shops for tours by the membership. This is a great opportunity for a spring cleanup (the cleanest my shop has ever been was when it was on the tour!) before showing it off. Do you have a slick new power tool? Are you in the middle of a great work of woodworking art? Do you have an innovative set-up? Why not show them off... get lots of comments, meet other interesting and interested members. The next best thing to creating something from wood is talking about it.

So, how about signing up to show off your shop at the annual NWA shop tour? If you are interested, let me know. Call me at (518) 371-6690 or email me at jmichne1@nycap.rr.com.

Thanks!! 🐶

Knowledge comes but wisdom lingers.

Lord Tennyson

Giles Gilson Project

- Steve Sherman

"Starting in the early 70's, the exuberance and innovation of a few individuals – Mark Linquist, Giles Gilson, Stephen Hogbin and William Hunter – working in the context of cultural influences of the time, revolutionized wood turning and brought national attention to the art form. During the 1980's, wood turning became an organized movement" (Roots of woodturning – American Style Magazine, fall 2002).

Giles Gilson's wood art is well represented in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Smithsonian Institute, the Detroit Institute, The Mint Museum in Charlotte and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The prestigious Lipton and Lewis Collections have his wood art pieces.

In a featured profile of Giles Gilson (Woodturning, Sept. 95), David Elsworth wrote "Giles Gilson is one of the world's foremost woodturning artists, up there with James Prestini, Bob Stockdale, Ed Moulthrop and the like, as men whose ideas influenced a whole generation of turners. You could not help but appreciate his work's virtuosity, and you would surely never forget it".

The Gilson Project 2 Day Seminars

You will discover a new, easier system to achieve the high quality, "optical" finishes Giles Gilson pioneered. You will see his step-by-step "user-friendly" system of preparation, coloring and finishing with layered painting techniques. The special effects such as pearlescent and semi-transparent will change colors and dance on the surface of your artwork.

This new system is very suitable for home and small workshops because it uses low VOC (less toxic) waterborne products to achieve very high quality finishes and colors. This system works well for turnings, sculptures, boxes and small furniture... its applications are open to one's own imagination.

You will see how Giles applies environmentally friendly products using air brush and air gun techniques for multi-layered coloring and special effects. The final polished finishes essential for "optical" quality will also be explored. You will learn what to look for and what to avoid in the surface preparation of your pieces from an instructor with many years of experience in creating award-winning artwork.

The seminars will be 2 day, in depth demonstrations and the workshop will be a comprehensive 2 day, hands on class at Giles' studio (limited to 5-6 people).

Any and all interested in the events can get in touch with us and we'll provide the itinerary and other information.

Steve Sherman (845) 246-9182

Steve Cowan (518) 281-3921



Nothing great is ever achieved
without enthusiasm.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

WOODWORKERS NEWS is published by the Northeastern Woodworkers Association for its members. The Association's aim is to provide a common meeting ground for lovers of woodworking who want to know more about wood and the techniques for forming it. The newsletter is published monthly. It is assembled in QuarkXPress 5.0 on a Macintosh G4, duplicated by Shipmates, and mailed to more than 850 addresses.



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NWA maintains two websites,
the first noted here
operates continuously.
We also offer selected
links to other sites of interest
to our membership.
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The second site operates from
January 1 to May 30
and carries specific
information about SHOWCASE.



**NORTHEASTERN
WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION**
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Icarus in *Architectural Digest*

- *Fran Finkbeiner*

Owner Jim Lewis is very pleased to report that Icarus is featured in the April issue of

Architectural

Digest (page 173).

Noted New York City interior decorator Naomi Leff was so happy with some pieces that were designed for her that she recommended Icarus to the magazine. The chairs that

were built for Naomi were for a 13,000 sq ft beachfront penthouse in Naples, Florida.

Congratulations Jim! 🐦



Woodcraft Classes – April, 2005

Fundamentals Of Furniture Making : Walnut Box

Instructor, Eric Marczak

Thursdays, April 7, 14, 21 & 28, 6pm - 9pm

All About Routers

Instructor, Gene Bigaouette

Sunday, April 10, 11am - 4:30pm

Introduction To Faux Finishes

Instructor, Terry Teeling

Saturday, April 16, 9:30am - 5:30pm

Pyrography Workshop

Instructor, Delores Kamkowski

Sunday, April 17, 11am - 5pm

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Grading Lumber

- *Herm Finkbeiner*

After timber has been cut into boards, grading is the next area of interest to woodworkers. Here, as in the sawing, there are terms specific to the lumber business, and in order to know what you're buying it's important to know the meaning of the terms.

There are three grading categories: (1) finished market products, (2) dimension parts, and (3) factory grades. Finished products are items like flooring and moldings. Dimension parts are graded according to the overall clarity of the wood, and factory grades are based on the usable fraction of a board. For many woodworkers it is likely that only factory grades will be of interest.

The grades posted at the lumber yard will probably be: a) First & Seconds (F&S), b) Selects (Se1), and c) Number 1 Common, Number 2 Common, Number 3A Common and Number 3B Common.

This really *tells* you very little. Lumber grading criteria are set by the National Hardwood Lumber Association. Those criteria are described as complex...but arcane seems to be a better description to me. For example, the defects that are taken into consideration during the grading process are knots, checks, wane, bark rot, insect damage...but not sapwood. So, rather than try to describe the process, the criteria are shown in Table One on the following page.

Good luck! 🐦



Tom Osborne demonstrates the proper application of 'GoofProof' (see page 8) on drawer dovetails to an eager crowd at the regular assembly of the 'Saturday morning bunch' at Jim Kennedy's workshop.

Standard Hardwood Cutting Grades¹

Grade and lengths allowed (feet)	Widths allowed	Surface measure of pieces	Amount of each piece that must work into clear-face cuttings	Maximum cuttings allowed	Minimum size of cuttings required
	In.	Sq. ft.	%	Number	
Firsts: ² 8 to 16 (will admit 30 per- cent of 8- to 11-foot, ½ of which may be 8- and 9-foot.)	6+	<div> <div>4 to 9</div> <div>10 to 14</div> <div>15+</div> </div>	<div> <div>91⅔</div> <div>91⅔</div> <div>91⅔</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>	4 inches by 5 feet, or 3 inches by 7 feet
Seconds: ² 8 to 16 (will admit 30 per- cent of 8- to 11-foot, ½ of which may be 8- and 9-foot.)	6+	<div> <div>4 and 5</div> <div>6 and 7</div> <div>6 and 7</div> <div>8 to 11</div> <div>8 to 11</div> <div>12 to 15</div> <div>12 to 15</div> <div>16+</div> </div>	<div> <div>83⅓</div> <div>83⅓</div> <div>91⅔</div> <div>83⅓</div> <div>91⅔</div> <div>83⅓</div> <div>91⅔</div> <div>83⅓</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>4</div> </div>	Do.
Selects: 6 to 16 (will admit 30 per- cent of 6- to 11-foot, 1/6 of which may be 6- and 7-foot.)	4+	<div> <div>2 and 3</div> <div>4+</div> </div>	<div> <div>91⅔</div> <div>see³</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> </div>	Do.
No. 1 Common: 4 to 16 (will admit 10 per- cent of 4- to 7-foot, ½ of which may be 4- and 5-foot).	3+	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3 and 4</div> <div>3 and 4</div> <div>5 to 7</div> <div>5 to 7</div> <div>8 to 10</div> <div>11 to 13</div> <div>14+</div> </div>	<div> <div>100</div> <div>75</div> <div>66⅔</div> <div>75</div> <div>66⅔</div> <div>75</div> <div>66⅔</div> <div>66⅔</div> <div>66⅔</div> </div>	<div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div>	4 inches by 2 feet, or 3 inches by 3 feet
No. 2 Common: 4 to 16 (will admit 30 per- cent of 4- to 7-foot, ½ of which may be 4- and 5-foot).	3+	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2 and 3</div> <div>2 and 3</div> <div>4 and 5</div> <div>4 and 5</div> <div>6 and 7</div> <div>6 and 7</div> <div>8 and 9</div> <div>10 and 11</div> <div>12 and 13</div> <div>14+</div> </div>	<div> <div>66⅔</div> <div>50</div> <div>66⅔</div> <div>50</div> <div>66⅔</div> <div>50</div> <div>66⅔</div> <div>50</div> <div>50</div> <div>50</div> <div>50</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>6</div> <div>7</div> </div>	3 inches by 2 feet
No. 3A Common: 4 to 16 (will admit 50 per- cent of 4- to 7-foot, ½ of which may be 4- and 5-foot).	3+	1+	*33⅓	see ⁵	Do.
No. 3B Common: 4 to 16 (will admit 50 per- cent of 4- to 7-foot, ½ of which may be 4- and 5-foot).	3+	1	*25	see ⁵	1½ inches by 2 feet

¹Inspection to be made on the poorer side of the piece, except in Selects.

²Firsts and Seconds are combined as 1 grade (FAS). The percentage of Firsts required in the combined grade varies from 20 to 40 percent, depending on the species.

³Same as Seconds with reverse side of board not below

No. 1 Common or reverse side of cuttings sound.

⁴This grade also admits pieces that grade not below No. 2 Common on the good face and have the reverse face sound.

⁵Unlimited.

⁶The cuttings must be sound; clear face not required.

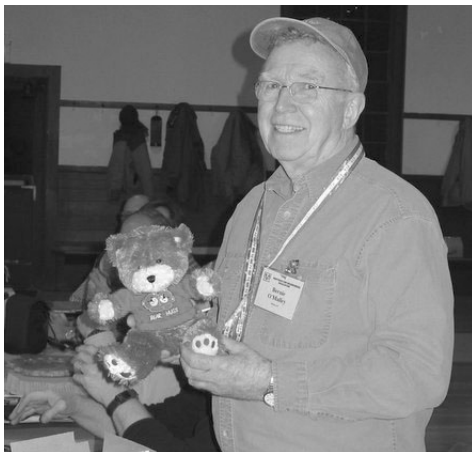
CHAPTER NEWS

Mid Hudson Woodworkers Conduct Regular NWA Meeting

- Clark Pell

Forty members of the Mid Hudson Chapter of NWA traveled to Albany on February 24th to show how they hold meetings. The original date of February 10 had to be re-scheduled due to inclement weather.

Chapter President Joe Mikesh explained that meetings are conducted 'in the round' in order to create a more interactive atmosphere. In addition to regular business, the meetings include a show and tell session where each person can discuss and demonstrate a current project, a new tool or jig, or show off a completed piece. Plans for Chapter activities are reviewed with the entire group. Fun and participation are keys to the success of the Chapter.



Dap Cole presented a teddy bear to Bernie O'Malley so he would have some company during his afternoon 'power nap'.



Joe Mikesh, President of the Mid Hudson Chapter of NWA, presided over the regular February meeting.



Joe Boek shows off a miniature version of a great gray owl that he completed in a special course on bird carving.

Sacandaga Chapter News

- Gary Spencer

Our February meeting was held at the A & P Cabinet shop in Johnstown. The program was on designing and construction of kitchen or other cabinets. This was a fine program from an upscale shop. There was a good turnout and the visit was amazing. Thanks to A & P Cabinets for an excellent evening.

In March we returned to our usual meeting place at Mayfield High School. Our Chapter again had a good turnout and over 100 birdhouse kits were prepared, bagged and boxed up for Showcase.

Our April 13th meeting will be a session on sanding and finishing by Bill Bush. This presentation is a follow up to a previous session given by Bill to our chapter last year. Last years meeting was excellent, so this one also should be one to remember. Come on out!

Remember we have door prizes at every meeting but you do have to be present to win!

Our regular monthly meetings are the second Wednesday of each month and begin at 7:00 pm at the Mayfield High School woodshop. They are open to all, and light refreshments are served.

For additional information or directions contact:

Bob Beyer-(518) 883- 3617, Dick Edel-(518) 762-4851 or Gary Spencer-(518) 863-6433

C L A S S I F I E D S

For sale: Delta 6" jointer model 37-195, 5 years old but not heavily used, enclosed factory steel stand with dust chute, 3 knife cutter head, 47" bed, \$350 - Bob Scardamalia, (518) 797-3163, or roberts355@aol.com



SPECIAL APRIL SUPPLEMENT

NWA Purchases Old Monkey Ward Building for Headquarters

In a surprise move last week, the NWA Board of Directors voted in favor of purchasing the former Montgomery Ward building in Menands for its new headquarters. The purchase price, though undisclosed, was thought to be in the neighborhood of 55 million dollars.

"We've needed this space for a long time", said NWA President Pat McCord. "The price was a little more than we wanted to pay, but we have any number of strategies that we will employ to make short work of the mortgage that we assumed. For example, we will probably have a modest increase in annual membership dues of about 2,000%."

In addition to space for lavish executive offices and board room, there will be a full-size convention center; over 66 classrooms equipped with state of the art wood-working, audio/visual and communications capabilities; a hotel, restaurant/ bar, shopping mall, art gallery, gym and pool/sauna; and a working sawmill.

"The proximity of this building to the Hudson River is perfect for rafting logs down from the Adirondack Forest Preserve," said McCord. "This idle land is chock-full of prime timber that will keep the sawmill humming 24/7. We will have to blow the dams at Hudson Falls and Troy but who cares."

The sawmill will be run by NWA volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering to work 60 or more hours/week for a six-month shift please contact Wayne Distin, Volunteers Chairman.



New NWA Headquarters building. Although it has only 350,000 sq ft of space, an addition is already being planned that will double this figure.

"It's the hard work and dedication of our members that make projects like this feasible," said Wayne. "If we all pitch in together I'm sure we can produce enough lumber, veneer and plywood to blow the Canadians right out of the water."

Chinese Tools to Use "Made in USA" Label

American political representatives met recently with a group of Chinese diplomats in efforts to further improve US-China trade relationships. As part of last week's negotiations, American Trade Council negotiators conceded the issue of correctly labeling products with the country of origin. Tool manufacturing firms generally recognize that many consumers seek the "Made in USA" label as a sign of quality workmanship and materials. Polls also indicate that consumers search for USA-made products because they understand the goods to be made in an environmentally friendly manner by people in good working conditions making decent wages. Others added that they supported the USA's policy on patents

and copyright laws and were not happy with the knockoffs and intellectual capital violations associated with some Chinese-made goods. American Trade Council negotiators acknowledged all this was important, but global trade is a key strategy of the current administration and they were not going to let something silly like a country-of-origin label get in the way. ATC negotiators were pleased when the Chinese agreed to remove the American flag from the background of their "Made in USA" labels. The President commented "I mentioned early on that I recognize there are hurdles, but we're gonna achieve those hurdles. This seems like small-pea potatoes to me".

Kaatskill Woodturners Cross Dresser Gets Concussion

Pad Olec, a diminutive turner known for wearing a skirt and heels while working in his shop, recently was rushed to the local hospital in Poughkeepsie where it was determined that he had suffered a severe concussion. While working in his shop, Pad tripped on the hem of his skirt and fell headfirst into a pile of scrap lumber. He was treated for lacerations and released. Emergency room doctors suggested that in the future he wear flats and mini-skirts when turning.

Retired GE Engineers Develop Turbo Supercharged Lathe

Elmer "Wiz Kid" Bosktigorwizski and Tom "Bucktooth" Rogers, both retired engineers from GE's Aircraft Engine Division, have recently developed a new turbo supercharged lathe that should satisfy the 'need for speed' of even the most whacked-out woodturner.

"We are attempting to respond to the insatiable desire of wood turners for power and speed" said Elmer. "This baby has already hit 45,700 rpm at 8,260 hp and I think we can push it even further".

Working in conjunction with members of the Adirondack Woodturners Association, who have volunteered to test all versions of the lathe, Elmer and Tom traveled to Russia in search of old WWII prototype engines being developed for long-range bombers. Through a complicated series of gears and belts, the engineers have successfully attached one of these brutes to an old porch post lathe with a nine-foot bed.

"I left the Motherland at the end of the war, but I remembered seeing entire fields of these old engines just lying there for the taking," said Elmer. "If this prototype is successful, we can import these old engines to power the lathes by swapping them for blue jeans and candy bars."

AWA members have already received several eye-opening and painful lessons from the operation of the prototype machine. For example, they now recommend that it be set into a bed of concrete at least 16' into the ground. The propellers are **not** necessary and should be removed. The exhaust should definitely be vented outside the shop. Furthermore, unless you have a jet blast deflector in your back yard, nothing should be located within 100 yards of the exhaust outlet.

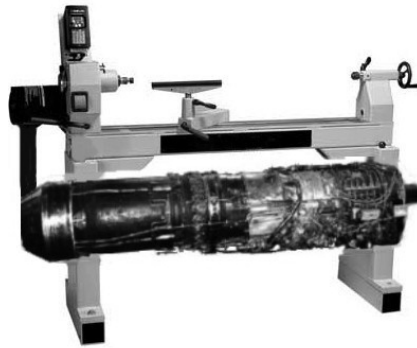
"We're pushing the envelope with this machine every day," said Elmer. "For example, we recently discovered that at speeds above 40,000 rpm, the wood plasticizes and becomes so soft that you can turn it with your fingernails. And just to make the point, 'ole Bucky' here turned an 8-foot porch post yesterday with his bare teeth in 3 seconds flat."

Bosktigorwizski and Rogers emphasized the invaluable assistance provided by the north-country turners. "We are so pleased with their help that we plan to offer



AWA woodturner emeritus Ken Evans has been instrumental in testing the prototype

deep discounts on our initial production models to any surviving AWA members", said Bosktigorwizski.



New turbo supercharged lathe will soon be available.

Work Like A Pro

Finally, a cure-all for woodworkers! An innovative new product, developed specifically for the wayward craftsman, has just been introduced to the wood-working world. **GoofProof**, when properly applied to your project, is guaranteed to eliminate undercuts, overcuts and crooked cuts, drying checks, unsightly finishing splotches and adhesive smears. It will also fix out-of-round, out-of-square, out-of-position, out-of-flat and in almost every instance, out-of-patience conditions.

The way it works is a highly guarded secret. It is reported by usually reliable sources that it functions at the sub-molecular level using new nano displacement technology. **GoofProof** is undetectable after application (so no one knows).

GoofProof reportedly was created by a small group of retirees from a local R&D lab, desperate to improve the quality of their projects but frustrated by their inability to improve their woodworking skills.

Now stocked in the better woodworker's supply stores everywhere, **GoofProof** is available in aerosol cans, brushable quarts or gallons, or by the drum for dipping those larger projects.

Sears/Kmart changes Craftsman Brand Name

In the weeks since the announced merger of Sears and Kmart, many have wondered what changes these two aging retail giants would need to make to battle the Home Depots, WalMarts and Targets of the world. Between the two stores, Sears certainly has many flagship brands that are probably due to receive the Kmart touch.

"Many home decorating and remodeling activities have been targeted toward women in recent years because women are taking on an increasingly large share of these projects", said a spokesperson for Sears, "and that is why we need to have brands women can embrace. We need something that ties the venerable old tool brand name to today's society. We are proud to announce that **Craftsman Tools** will now be known as **Craftsperson Tools**".

NWA Mid Hudson Woodworkers

It is difficult to get a clear perspective on the last Mid-Hudson Woodworkers monthly meeting. President Joe Mikesch later said "This was one of the strangest meetings we've ever had. Frankly, I just don't know what to say."

The excitement started during committee reports, when Joe Kennedy and Ron Mower provided the latest update on preparations for the Jigs and Fixtures booth at Showcase 2005. Ron took exception to Joe's overwhelming allocation of booth space to Jigs at the expense of Fixtures.

Joe Kennedy, obviously reaching a saturation point with the discussion, finally stated that he didn't really understand the difference between a jig and fixture -- and neither did anyone else. Therefore, if Ron wanted to display fixtures -- well, he would have to have a separate booth!

President Mikesch asked Ron and Joe to meet independently to resolve this difference of opinion, while the group prepared for Show-n-Tell.

Dap Cole announced that he had built an innovative, practical design for a birdhouse and needed some help to bring it into the meeting room. The birdhouse was really spectacular, but it wasn't understood until later in Dap's discussion that he actually intended to live in this unit. He said that the birdhouse design is eminently practical, affordable, and easy to clean. It is clear that Dap's interest in birdhouses has reached a level of attention that few have attained.

Chuck "Bubbles" Walker followed with a demonstration of the porosity of red oak. Due to its composition, this wood will channel air or water through its end grain over the length of the board. This is why red oak is often used in construction of submarines. To prove the point, Chuck applied a soapy solution to the one end of a red oak board, while blowing through the other end. The membership was unprepared for the bubble production that Chuck achieved. We all watched in awe.



Chuck Walker's bubble mania



Mid Hudson group is stunned by Chuck's bubbles.



Joe Kennedy expresses his feeling about Fixtures at the booth.



Dap's habitat for humanity.

Tool Crib Has New Offering

For those purists who want to control their wood source from the very beginning and make use of those unsightly shade trees, the Tool Crib has acquired a 360 hp skidder to help with dragging logs from the backyard to the curb where they can be picked up for delivery to the sawmill. This baby can handle the biggest willow, shinny maple or blockhead bast you can grow, and the oversize 10 ft tires are guaranteed to sink no more than 1 foot into the ground. For those who cannot drive it home, a list of several rigger/hauler companies is supplied so that you can arrange transport. Just ask for the NWA discount to receive \$2,500 off the regular price.



New Tool Crib skidder can help members control unsightly shade trees.

Wood of the Month © 2005

- Ron DeWitt

Blockhead Bast (*Bloksculle esquarre*) The Pseudoaceae Family

The blockheads are presently represented by a single species found only in a limited range of hills and dales surrounding the campus of the famous Forestry School at Xylo U. in western Useless.

The blockhead bast (*Bloksculle esquarre*), also known as square butt, boxwood, wonderwood or cant tree favors rich, well-drained, shallow organic soils, slightly tart in nature and usually unfavorable to other species. Maximum development is seen at the upper elevations of the hills and the lower elevations of the dales in those areas where it has stabilized and become naturalized. It adapts to a wide variety of climatic and environmental conditions.

The tree is a rapid grower, achieving the typical height of 100 feet with a section of 40" x 40" skh (section at knee high) in 20 years. Undisturbed, the trees are expected to live several hundred years. The current record holder is a 120' monster with a 62" x 62" skh, growing on the campus of Xylo U. near the women's dorm. Speculation as to the reason(s) for the size of the tree at that location is, of course, unlimited. The university estimates the tree contains 35,000 bf of perfect lumber.

The blockheads grow very straight and very square with no taper or buttressing. After an abrupt transition a small dense tuft-like crown tops the tree. Branches are short, square and quite flexible. The overall form provides the tree with great resistance to wind damage. The tree is also quite foolhardy.

Blockhead bast is very slow to leaf out; first leaves occur only after 16 or 17 years of growth. Leaves are quite small and cubic in shape to maximize surface area exposed to the sun. Flowers are nondescript, not easily seen or recognized. After becoming well established the tree's reproductive mechanism is a self-pollinating half-inch seed cube with well-developed samaroid wings. The single seed may be seen gliding as far as 50 miles from the parent tree soon after release.

Bark is thin, loose and variably smooth to very smooth. Bast cords growing along each corner of the stem are easily pulled, zipper-like, to release the bark in full sheets. Contractors in the area are now using bark panels for roofing material, expected to last 70 years or more. The pith is removed in similar fashion from the fourth corner.

Wood of the blockhead bast is a sawyer's delight. Logs in natural cant form are easily sawn with less than one percent anticipated waste. The sawyer has only to set kerf angle to obtain perfect flat, quarter or rift sawn boards of book-matched quality. Lumber air dries to about 8.27% MC in three days with no shrink in any direction. The wood is uniformly colored, clear, straight grained and finely textured exhibiting a blend of hardwood and softwood characteristics. Lumber has no taste but bears a pleasant

"wood" scent.

Mechanical properties are uniformly consistent and reliable: high strength, light weight, excellent bending and extreme wear resistance but soft to the touch. It works easily with hand or low-powered tools to produce true surfaces and precise joinery. The wood is insect, fire and rot resistant, and durable in any environment.

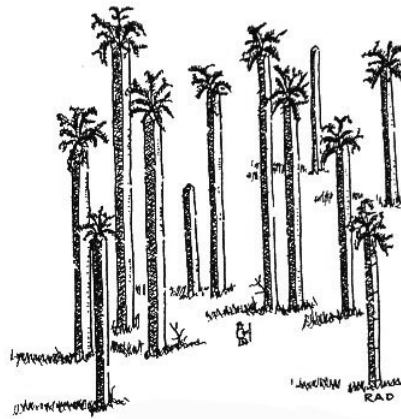
There are no reported health hazards from working this wood except for an occasional tendency to overextend oneself--the wood is that enjoyable to use.

Tops, sawdust, shavings and bark waste are ground unaltered for livestock as a high-potency food source, said to produce excellent quality chunky beef. Early experiments with bark tea and wood flour suggest exciting possibilities in overcoming/avoiding osteoporosis, straightening bent body limbs, spine curvatures and crooked teeth.

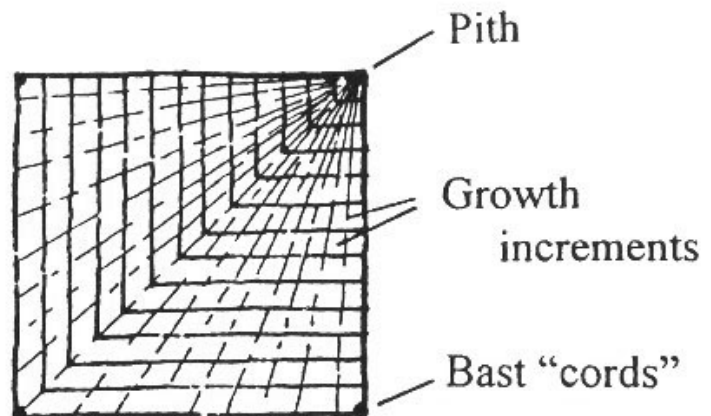
The blockhead bast is truly a "new age tree," the result of synergy between man and nature. First concepts surfaced in the early 60's, during heated discussions in the Xylo U. coffee shack--usually after nights of strenuous rioting. While comparing hand-cuffs it was noted that body parts quickly took

the shape of their metal constraints. Forestry school grad students tried square clamps on small saplings of various species. Few clamps were needed to get the impressionable saplings squared away, producing rapid upward or terminal growth with only small top-branching.

Continued on Page 12



Developing stand of Blockhead Bast. Experimental perforated blockhead shown in right foreground.



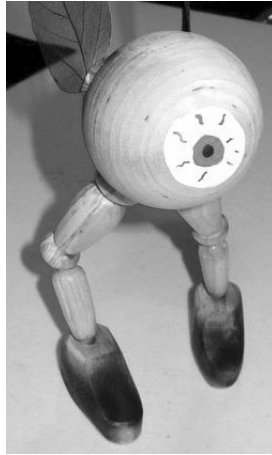
Cross-section of
Blockhead Bast

GE Research Laboratory Receives Major Funding To Eradicate Pest

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) exploratory research arm of the Department of Defense announced today that it has awarded \$10 million to the GE Research Laboratory to develop a high-speed method of converting elongated circular cross section objects into comparable objects of rectilinear character.

This program is based on the discovery in recent years that large areas of the United States have become infested with an apparently dangerous organism, perhaps of extra-terrestrial origin. The first outbreak and identification was immediately after the space probe, Aristotle, returned to earth with a captured asteroid.

At this time it not clear whether the infestation is confined to the United States but the Defense Department feels that the danger is



Could this be the pest that is destroying our forests?

severe enough to warrant independent action by the US.

In infested areas large numbers of woody plants have been almost completely destroyed. The infection appears to reduce even full grown trees into small objects usually circular in cross section with the vast majority of the tree bole being reduced to unrecognizable cellulosic residue.

The GE Laboratory research is aimed at developing a high-speed device that would convert the circular material that results from the infestation into pieces that have a square or rectangular cross section. There is some data that strongly suggests that once the wood has 90° corners the "bug" or whatever it might be, will no longer be able to thrive in what is apparently a hostile environment and may well be unable to sustain itself..

NWA Carver Makes Startling Discovery

"I was just using it to finish my latest project, and I must have gotten some on my hands," said NWA carver Bill McCormack. "I wiped some sweat off my brow and several minutes later this strange tingling began on and around my forehead."

Thus began the startling story that has all the wire services and television networks beating a path to Bill's door. "I finally went and looked in the mirror and discovered multiple sprouts of thick, wiry hair springing from my noggin. I ran back down into the basement and doused my whole head with a gallon of Bush Oil, and you can see the results for yourself."

Contacted at his shop in Amsterdam, New York, Bush Oil inventor Bill Bush said he wasn't surprised at the news. "I've known for some time that Bush Oil had therapeutic qualities. I'm around it all the time, and I'm as strong as 10 bull elephants. If you don't need more hair, try it for warts, wheezing and the creeping crud."



One application of Bush Oil was all it took.

Lathe Vibrations Can Significantly Reduce Potency

A Clifton Park neurologist recently made an interesting discovery at the intersection of his profession and his obsession, wood turning. Turning always gave him pleasure that he often equated with endorphins released by exercise or other physical activities. So much so that sometimes he would rather just turn than do anything else!

To find out more, he wired his lathe with accelerometers to measure the vibrations of the machine. To his astonishment, hidden within the typical signature vibrations of the woodworking machine were vibrations known to, well, positively stimulate male reproductive organs. Upon further investigation, he found these vibrations or 'skew pulses' were reaching the brain, but because they are interspersed with other vibrations and happening in such short, frequent bursts, the body never can react fast enough for them to manifest themselves physically. Potency in males requires the balance of the brain and other parts of the body, and this balance is being thrown out of sync because the brain basically experiences hundreds of skew pulses for every hour of turning. Therefore, as it "turns" out, potency in males operating wood lathes can be dismally low. Further studies have revealed these vibrations to be most prevalent when turning hollow vessels 3"- 4" in diameter with slightly dull tools.

Darwin Awards Released

Yes, the Darwin Awards are out, and one of our very own was honored this year!

As you may know, the Darwin Awards are presented annually to individuals that remove their genes from the human gene pool through an act of incredible stupidity that is difficult to fathom.

Former NWA and AWA member and polychromatic turner Richard Dufuss, wishing to exceed the highest number of pieces ever placed in a segmented vessel, glued together 2.78 million exceedingly small pieces of wood, a large portion of which were cocobolo, to make a 22" diameter closed form using hyde glue as the bonding agent. When attempting to turn the item outboard on his electronically-controlled Oneway lathe at 3,200 rpm using a one-inch skew, the glue joints failed sending pieces of polychromation everywhere. The force of the flying pieces shattered the lights in Richard's shop and the thick suspension of wood dust made it difficult to see. Unfortunately, the insertion of this number of very fine particles of oily cocobolo into the air also produced a highly explosive mist, and when Dickie flicked his BIC to shed some light on the matter, the resulting spontaneous ignition ended his woodturning career, blew out all the windows in the shop, seriously damaged the electronics of the Oneway, and sent the one-inch skew with the initials RD etched in the handle three blocks to be stuck dead center in the trunk of a 150 year old walnut tree.

The walnut was sacrificed to produce a fitting Darwin Award Plaque that was presented posthumously to Richard's widow.

It is reported in woodturning circles that she is taking up the hobby on a newly repaired Oneway.

The Wereturner

It is a sad thing to watch an otherwise studious and learned chap, a serious and upstanding gentleman dedicated to woodworking on the planar, become caught by the turning virus. In December, this fellow from Rexford was seen looking covetously at some very fancy and unique turnings at the open house of the new quarters of the Kaatskill Woodturners at Bob and Vi Opdahl's farm. You could sense the struggle going on within. Here is the lathe capable of spinning wood at great speeds, and with clever application of sharp tools, chips fly and projects happen in the twinkling of an eye.

The problem was that this chap had gone on record many times as being a flat-boarder or one given to woodworking on the square. Serious damage to his image could occur if his attraction to this machine became known. Suddenly there appeared an article in *Woodworkers*

News about turning wood and then reversing the whole thing so the outside turned shape is hidden inside where it can hardly be seen! It's a shame that what was probably a decent turning had to be hidden to preserve his image. And then he expounded at some length about 'inside out woodworking' to provide a smoke screen to hide his midnight activity.

However, it was next to impossible to keep it hidden forever. The covert operations camera caught this fellow in a moment of clandestine enjoyment with his "Wrong Way" lathe. Note the diabolical expression bordering on maniacal laughter. Although done secretly, he has been awarded the Dap Cole award of a "turning skirt" and evidently gets quite a kick out of midnight turning. This coveted award is only conferred on those who go over the line and "turn" into a balding, fanged being only to return to normal at the first rays of the morning sun. The only sign of any nefarious activity is the huge pile of hamster litter left on the workshop floor.



Wood of the Month

Continued from Page 10

Several years of successively larger clamps resulted in consistent, stable growth. Creative clamp design succeeded in moving the pith to the northeast corner of the stem resulting in 99.2% clear wood. Tissue from perfect, mature trees was used to clone new trees until they were able to seed themselves.

Supplies are rapidly expanding as small, naturalized stands begin to develop across North America. The tree is without natural enemies but timber theft continues to be a problem.

It is important to note that engineered development of this high-tech new age tree was made possible as the result of a generous grant to Xylo U. from the Fiske Fund of the Northeastern Woodworkers Association. A subsequent grant from the same group is presently being used to develop tree stem perforations at 10' 4" intervals from the tree base upward. The objective is to allow the logger to push the tree over with a small hydrotilt while pulling the bark bast cord. Upon striking the ground the tree stem will neatly separate into clean 10-foot logs. Preliminary trials are most encouraging.

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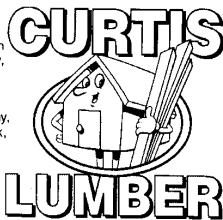
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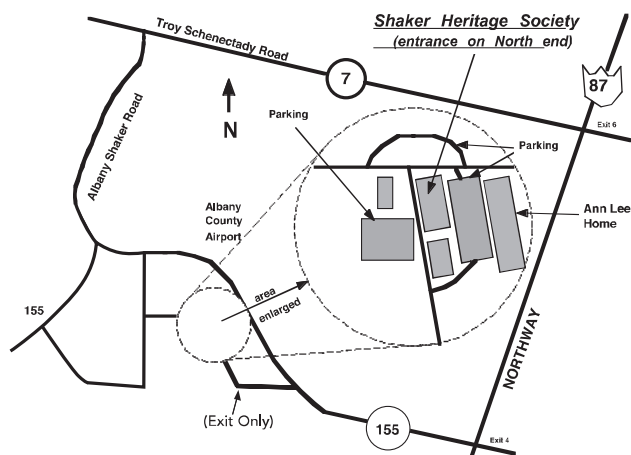
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Northeastern Woodworkers Association
P.O. Box 246
Rexford, New York 12148-0246



NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, April 21st, 7 pm.
Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House
Albany-Shaker Road, Albany
(near Albany airport)

GENERAL MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

NWA Program Schedule – 2004-2005

April 2-3, 2005	NWA Showcase 2005 Saratoga Springs City Center
April 21, 2005	“Turning” Shaker Meeting House
May, 2005	Workshop Tours Dates and Locations to be Announced
May 12, 2005	“Double Bevel Marquetry” - Clark Pell Shaker Meeting House
May 14, 2005	Marquetry Workshop – Clark Pell Sears

For meeting cancellation information,
call Pat McCord 439-1232,
John Michne 371-6690
or Charlie Goddard 370-0388

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

Adirondack Woodturners Association - The AWA is active throughout the year. Meetings are every first Wednesday of the month (except in January and July when it is the second Wednesday), and are held at the Curtis Lumber conference room on Route 67, Ballston Spa. Beginners' sessions begin at 6 pm; the main program at 6:30 pm. Saturday “Learn and Turn” sessions are also scheduled. www.adirondackwoodturners.org
Contact: Ken Evans, 753-7759 or Kevans1@nycap.rr.com

Carver's Guild - meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at the Clifton Park Senior Center from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Sessions are intended for every NWA member who is interested in carving, from beginners to those wanting to learn a new technique. No reservations are necessary, just show up! Contact Bill McCormack, 233-7260.

Scroller's Guild - Meets the third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Woodcraft, Latham. Contact Will Charbonneau, 371-3709 or wcharbol@nycap.rr.com

CHAPTERS

NWA Mid-Hudson - The chapter meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday, except July and August, at the Central Hudson Electric Company Community Center, Route 28, Kingston. Contact: Joe Mikesch, (845) 687-4285

NWA Sacandaga - The chapter meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at Mayfield High School in the woodworking shop. Park by the section of the building that protrudes further into the parking lot and enter the nearest of the (5) doors. Contact: Gary Spencer, 863-6433.