

March 15, 2006 Meeting Highlights:

The main event was a presentation on table saw jigs by Steve Latta, a nationally prominent woodworking author and teacher. Steve began by modifying a throat insert for the school's table saw, to accommodate his shop made stub splitter. Although he is no fan of the familiar and cumbersome blade guard Steve strongly favors stub splitters, which improve precision and reduce kickback risk. Steve showed us their advantages, and described how easy it is to make and use one (See Note on Stub Splitters, below).

He then explained and demonstrated his shop made hinged stop block, which sits more reliably square than the usual casually chosen scrap block because it has a guide strip that rides atop the 3" fence that Steve attached to the miter gauge, and leaves a little space below for sawdust. He next demonstrated various push sticks, both familiar ones and specialized types, including long shallow ones for precision veneer work and slanted ones that straddle the blade.

Steve demonstrated cutting rabbeted dovetails on the table saw, which involves both a jig and a dovetail saw blade with its teeth set to one side only. He explained and demonstrated pattern sawing, a jig and method for making multiple irregularly shaped pieces to match a template (for instance, making several identical shelves for a corner cupboard) – on the table saw. Steve next demonstrated an unusual and surprisingly simple tenoning jig; before our eyes he made a double tusk mortise and tenon joint to secure a table's leg to its apron. Finally, he demonstrated an accurate way to cut mitered corners, involving tilting the blade 45 degrees toward the fence that is used to guide the cut – a configuration generally to be avoided, due to the risk of kickback. It can be done safely (but with caution) by cutting a shallow rabbet on the lower edge of the sacrificial fence, giving the otherwise trapped piece some room. Our hearty thanks to special guest Steve Latta for an outstanding presentation.

This meeting saw the return of Joe Tomeo, who had missed some meetings after a heart attack sidelined him in November. Joe has now graduated from cardiac rehab and is regaining health and strength. Welcome back Joe, and congratulations on your recovery.

The show and tell was abundant and impressive. Charlie Givens presented a handsome cherry shaker style table with hand cut dovetails and mortise & tenon joints, finished in Minwax Antique oil. By coincidence Hans Francke presented another shaker side table of similar dimensions, but with several points of difference. Hans built his table of walnut with mitered mortise

joints, and finished it in Watco Danish oil. Tim Sabo presented a striking turned segmented bell with a French polish finish, and Ron Hasse presented distinctive turned maple bowls. Joe Tomeo presented two scrollwork plaques; one in birch with a bird and floral pattern and the other in cherry depicting a deer. Special thanks to them all, for sharing their craftsmanship. Thanks also to Judy Hodgson, who brought and shared a supply of glue injectors, and again to Joe Tomeo, who provided doughnuts for the meeting.

Bill Walters won the raffle prize, a Lee Valley apron plane.

April 19 Meeting At The Kalmar Nyckel Shipyard:

We now step into the time machine and travel back to a shipyard of the early 1600's, where woodworking tools and equipment are old, large and different, and some work is done in ways that a shipbuilder of ancient times would recognize, and a modern hobbyist might not. We will meet at the shipyard at 7:00 pm and tour the shipyard, museum, blacksmith shop and carpenter's shop. The Kalmar Nyckel has two carpentry groups, the Senior Sawyers and the Ship Carpenters; members of both groups will help with our tours and answer our questions. Ed Minch and others will give presentations on the history of the ship, its design and construction, the woods and tools used in the 1600's and now, and some of the carvings. The blacksmith shop will be open, with a demonstration by Dave Lawrence. It turns out that the ship itself will be elsewhere, but we hope to come back to tour it at another time. Rumor has it that refreshments will be provided. Many thanks to Pell Sherman for making these arrangements.

Although there will be no show and tell and no monthly raffle, raffle tickets on Jim Stevens' Windsor chair will be sold. Jim has donated to the Guild the hand crafted Windsor chair that we watched him build, to be raffled off for charity at \$20 per ticket. That is quite an opportunity, since Jim customarily sells these chairs for \$750 or more apiece. The raffle will close and the winner will be announced at the May meeting.

Directions to the Kalmar Nyckel Shipyard:

From North and East of Wilmington:

Take I-95 south to Exit 6 (Martin Luther King Boulevard & Fourth St.). At the first light turn left onto Fourth Street. Proceed about a mile eastward on Fourth Street to a railroad overpass. Pass beneath the tracks and make an immediate left onto Swede's Landing Road (If you cross the Christina River bridge you've missed the turn). At the end of the road turn right onto East Seventh Street, and look for the Kalmar Nyckel Shipyard on your right. Pass the first entrance (an office with limited parking) and turn into the main entrance, where there is ample parking and we are expected. We meet at the Sail Loft (the large red building with a blue top).

From South and West of Wilmington:

Take I-95 north to Exit 6 (Martin Luther King Boulevard & Fourth St.). At the base of the exit ramp continue straight to the third light, which is at Fourth Street. Turn Right (eastward) on Fourth Street and proceed as stated above.

April 26 Board Meeting:

The Board will meet at 7:00 pm Wednesday April 26 at Richard Libera's house, 402 Apple Road in Newark.

Note on Stub Splitters:

Your editor has now tried Steve Latta's advice and made stub splitters, with good results. The moving wood is well controlled at the outfeed end, much like the control a fingerboard provides at the infeed end. The temptation to bring the hand near the blade is reduced, and blade marks are pretty much eliminated. Steve made his splitter from steel bar stock; available at Home Depot and elsewhere. From the same source your editor chose 1/8" by 1" aluminum bar stock, which is easier to shape and does the job well. This comes in 36" lengths. Having used only about 3" for his own splitter your editor will bring the rest to the May meeting. Anyone who cares to is welcome to cut off 3" or 4" pieces to do the same.

As Steve mentioned, these 1/8" thick splitters work well with regular blades that cut a 1/8" kerf, but not with the newer thin kerf blades. For those, and for shifting among blades of different thickness, try making a set of three thin splitters from 12 gauge galvanized steel strap connectors such as Simpson's Strong-Tie LSTA12, also available at Home Depot. These are 1 and 1/4" wide and cost 55 cents each. From three straps you can make a set of three thin splitters, with material for more left over to allow for trial and error. Since each splitter is about 1/3 of the usual 1/8" thickness you can use one, two or all three to match whichever thickness the blade in use requires. The three splitters are not identical; you clamp all three together and shape their leading edge on the grinding wheel as you would a single 1/8" splitter. This gives you a right, a left and a center splitter, with different leading edges that make it visually obvious which is which. To use one you use the one for the side toward the fence. For two you use both the left and the right. For three you add the center splitter, giving you the full 1/8" for a normal kerf.

This set of three 12 gauge splitters works nicely for all three thicknesses of blades your editor happens to have. You can make these thin splitters using other flat 12 gauge metal, and can also use other thicknesses appropriate to other blades.

Member Ailing:

We lately learned that Judy Hodgson is battling leukemia, and is currently at University of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, Room 3011. Judy is in good spirits, and plans to attend our April meeting at the shipyard.

Special June 14 Meeting with DeWalt Product Developers:

Rich Libera reports that DeWalt product development representatives will meet with our Guild 7:00 pm Wednesday June 14, at our usual Hodgson School meeting place. They will bring new DeWalt products that are still in development, for us to use and comment on. Afterwards they will give the Guild various tools and products, which we will then and there distribute by lot to those who attend. In past years they have been pretty generous with these goodies; some have received power tools worth about \$200.00, and lesser items such as saw blades have been distributed in healthy numbers. There will be more on this in the May newsletter. Special thanks to Richard Libera for making these arrangements.

Board Service Opportunities:

The Guild will elect its 2006-07 Board at the May 17 meeting. Please consider volunteering. The tasks are satisfying and not overly demanding, and by serving on the Board you can help to improve our Guild. Contact John Dunbar or Richard Libera.

Benefactors of the Guild:

Several merchants, suppliers and restaurants have been generous in supporting the Guild; please keep these friends in mind when you make purchases: Woodcraft, Lee Valley and Veritas, Café Gelato, Fair Hill Inn, Eagle Diner, Giordano's of Kennett Square and Hearne Hardwoods of Oxford, PA.

Treasurer's Report:

Balance forward at 2/28/2006	2537.31
Dues Income	70.00+
March Raffle Earnings	51.00+
Windsor Chair Raffle Income:	200.00+
Cap Sale	15.00+
March Newsletter Expense	116.55-
A Raffle Prize Item	39.97-
Ending Balance at 4/4/2006	2716.69

By: Richard Libera, Treasurer

2005–06 Meeting Schedule:

Dates: Guild meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month of the school year, September through May; this year's remaining dates are April 19 and May 17. The Guild often has a June meeting, and normally does not meet in July and August.

Place & Time: During the school year we normally meet in the Carpenter Shop at Hodgson Vo-Tech High School in Glasgow, DE; June meetings are

elsewhere. At Hodgson we meet from 7:00 pm to about 9:00 pm. Some arrive earlier, which is fine -- the shop is open to us around 6:00 pm. The school entrance is on **business** 896 (Glasgow Avenue, old 896) south of Rte. 40, and the shop is in the rear by the dust collection system. Park in the side lot near the shop; **violators of parking rules may be towed.** Whenever the school is closed due to weather, that evening's meeting is cancelled. Closings are broadcast by local radio stations and WDEL reports them online at www.wdel.com, News Center, SnoWatch.

Historical Note:

Those interested in early twentieth century methods may appreciate this drawing from a 1952 collection of Punch cartoons:

Woodwords on the Brandywine
January, 2006

Woodworkers Guild of Delaware
402 Apple Road
Newark, DE 19711

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