

SPLINTERS

Tennessee Valley Woodworkers

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Editor: Tom Gillard

Meeting Notice:

The next meeting of the TN Valley Woodworkers
Will be held, September 21, 1999 at 7:00 p.m. in the
Duck River Electric Building, Dechard, TN
All interested woodworkers are invited!

TVWW MINUTES 8 - 1999
August 17, 1999

The meeting was called to order by president Loyd Ackerman. Welcome guests were Larry Rhea and Buzz Prather.

Announcements - The Arrowmont paver has been installed.

The Tennessee Association of Woodturners will have their annual symposium at Arrowmont on August 26, 27 and 28th. The Georgia Woodworkers Guild will have a symposium in Helen, Ga., on September 17, 18 and 19th.

*Jim Roy, chairman of EXPO 2000, is looking for a name for the display. The date of the Expo will be May and June of 2000. Forms are available to list the items that you will be displaying. The fall seminar will be held October 30, 1999. The presenter will be Ted Baldwin from College Park, Ga.

*Jim Van Cleave is going to present a workshop on making cabriol legs in late September or early October.

*Doyle McConnell reported that the Coffee County Fair will be held the week of September 20, 1999. The club will have an area reserved. Members are encouraged to demonstrate at any time during the week, but especially on Friday and Saturday, September 24th and 25th.

*Bob Reese has extend an open invitation to anyone needing instruction or help with sharpening. All that is required is an appointment.

*Doyle McConnell will present a workshop on turning a bowl from green wood. Doyle wants all interested

members to sign up.

Old business - none.
New business - none.

Show and Tell -

DOYLE McCONNELL - a piece of oak stump that he turned into a bowl for a friend.

JIM ROY - three picture frames, two walnut and one cherry.

STEVE GRAHAM - a piece of African mahogany and three relief carvings.

KEN BURGESS - two basswood carvings - a CSA soldier and a Santa. The soldier was painted.

HENRY DAVIS - a book on hand planes and an assortment of six boxes made at various times.

BOB REESE - violin #8 made from curly maple with a spruce top. Rheta played a medley on this fine instrument.

TOM GILLARD - a model that he constructed for use in a wind tunnel, a cantilevered clock and a redwood burl that will grow into a bush.

MANUEL BROWN - two bowls and a saucer that started out as a bowl.

JIM VAN CLEAVE - a set of carved bookends and a sample of linen fold carving.

After a short break Ross Roepke presented a program on the art of constructing decorative boxes.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM. There were a total of 42 members and guests present.

Respectfully submitted, John Green, secretary

The presentation next week will be on methods of drying bowls to prevent cracking. We will discuss types of wood and their characteristics, methods of preparation of the blank, preserving and drying.

It matters not if you try and fail, and fail, and try again. But it matters much if you try and fail and fail to try again.

Stick to it!

Rulan B. Stanfield

FALL SEMINAR

Ted Baldwin of College Park, GA. will be the presenter at the TENNESSEE VALLEY WOODWORKERS fall seminar. The program will be presented on October 30, 1999, at 611 West Lincoln, Tullahoma. This is Tom Gillard's shop, BRANCHING OUT.

The program will include cutting, constructing and lining a small box as well as Ted's methods of inlay and designing. Ted will also demonstrate planing and joinery of extremely thin pieces.

The cost of \$25.00 will include juice, coffee and rolls in the morning. People will be responsible for their lunch. Cold drinks will be provided.

Additional details will be announced at the meeting. For those who want to make their reservations early we will be accepting money at the September meeting.

SASSAFRASS

Native Americans turned the bounty of the land into the essentials of life. The tree that the Narragansett Indians called sasauaka-pamuch was no exception. Long before European explorers landed on the continent, the tree yielded its roots, bark, and leaves for a medicinal brew believed to cure everything from sore eyes to diarrhea.

Colonists coined the word sassafras from the Indian's language. And from the tree's healing properties, they coined profits from exports. Sassafras tea was touted across the ocean as a tonic to "thin the blood and purify the system."

To those pioneers who used the wood, sassafras became well know as long lasting. Because it resists rot in contact with ground, farmers sunk it for fence posts and split it for rails. Since it was light and

absorbed little water, sassafras also was ideally suited for canoes and cooperage.

In the woodshop, sassafras often becomes a substitute for chestnut. It also resembles ash, and mixes well with it in furniture manufacturing.

Wood identification

Ancestors of sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), a truly American species, grew across the continent during early geologic periods. Now, it's found from southern Maine south to central Florida and west to the Mississippi River Valley and eastern Texas.

In its northern range, sassafras rarely grows larger than shrub-size. But in favorable conditions in North Carolina and Tennessee, sassafras trees may reach 5' in diameter, 100' tall and live 1000 years.

Sassafras rarely grows in stands. Instead, it mixes with white oak, persimmon, and sweet gum. You can pick it out by its normally flat-topped crown or twisted branches sticking straight out from the trunk. Old trees have deeply furrowed, reddish-brown bark with fattened ridges, and appear as if they had been washed with light gray. The bark of young trees looks reddish, but has cracks instead of furrows.

Sassafras leaves are a dead giveaway-they have three long lobes, often misshapen, and varying in size, even on the same branch. If you gave any doubt, sniff. All parts of the tree have a pleasant, medicinal odor.

Although its course grain mimics ash or chestnut, sassafras wood weighs less. Dry, it weighs only about 30 lbs. per cubic foot. Wood from older trees has a red-brown color; from younger ones, a yellow-tan. There's little color difference between heartwood and sapwood.

Working properties

A soft hardwood, sassafras works easily with only hand tools. Planing, however, requires care so you don't lift the grain. And, you'll find the wood brittle and not very strong, characteristics that demand glue when joining. Fasteners alone won't hold in the wood. Sanding sassafras poses no problem. It takes a fine finish.

Uses in woodworking

When not required to bear weight, sassafras blends undetectable with ash in furniture and cabinetry. And due to its likeness to chestnut, the wood often imitates the long-lost classic in antique reproductions. Woodturners and carvers with sharp tools easily work sassafras' unusual grain patterns into eye-catching pieces.

Cost and availability

The occasional sassafras sold by hardwood lumber outlets costs about \$1.75 per board foot. It rarely will be more than 1" thick and wider than 8". When mixed and sold with ash, it carries a higher price. To be sure what you're buying, scrape or abrade a fresh surface to release the unmistakable odor of sassafras in the wood. Very seldom will you find sassafras sold as plywood or veneer.

Collapsible Merchant's Chest

This plan is designed to help you make the Collapsible Merchant's Chest. Enjoy your work! Read, understand and follow all product use instructions. Follow all tool and product guidelines and safety directions. Work safely!

Recommended Tools & Materials:

Standard Shop Tools:

Safety glasses & all safety gear, as required by the instruction manuals for the tools and materials you use.

Table saw with plywood or combination carbide tipped blade

Scroll saw with standard accessories

Sander with 100, 150, 220 grit abrasive

Drill with 3/8" bit

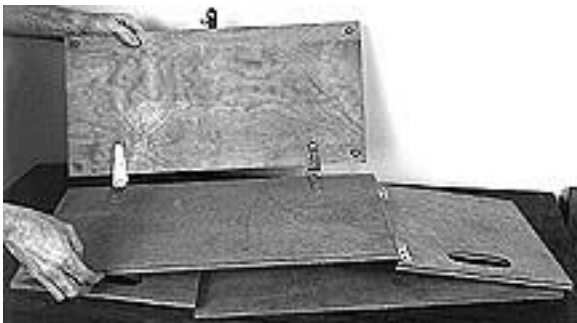
Standard hand tools

Router with 1/4" round over bit

Wood burning iron (40 Watt)

Materials:

All workpieces are made of 1/2" thick (A) grade plywood. Use plywood that is void free. Inspect the edges for open spaces in the core of the plywood. The highest hardwood grades of plywood are expensive so be certain to inspect the material before purchasing. Baltic birch plywood from Europe is readily available and usually high quality. I used plywood that was surfaced on both sides with



Douglas fir. It is beautiful, strong, renewable and

affordable. Tips for Optional Embellishment Wood Burning Pattern for optional decorative chest front. Temporary bonding spray adhesive can be used to adhere this fish pattern onto a smooth wood surface. Next a wood burner can be used to follow the lines to burn in the silhouette as a decoration. Once detailed, remove the pattern.

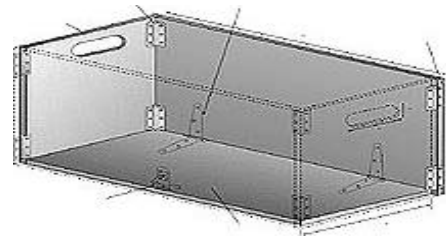
Wood List:

Two end workpieces 11 1/2' by 11 1/2'.

Two side workpieces 11 1/2' by 23 1/2'

One bottom workpiece 11' by 23'.

Hardware: four pairs 2"x 3/4" butt hinges, two 3' long strap hinges, one 2' hasp, four screws on rubber pads or feet.



History:

This folding chest was used by traveling salesmen from 1920 to roughly 1930 to carry blanket samples to prospective customers. The Orr Felt Blanket and Felt Company in Ohio originally used the chest that inspired this newer hinged version. Solid Douglas fir was used to construct the original merchant's chest. Douglas fir is said to be the world's most versatile wood because it is used to make over two thousand different products. Through wise timber management, in the forests of the Pacific Northwest, supplies are readily available but becoming more expensive. Due in part to world demand for this valuable wood. The export market might stretch future supplies thin.

