



WOOD FORUM

Newsletter of the Sonoma County Woodworkers Association

Volume 39, Issue 2

February 2019

All Hands on Deck

Robert Darr has been teaching traditional wooden boatbuilding for over forty years. In 1981, Darr founded and directed the Center for Wood Arts in Sausalito. Fifteen years later, in 1996, he established the Arques School of Traditional Boatbuilding where he continues to serve as Executive Director and head instructor. For four decades, Darr has pioneered the use of local woods in boatbuilding, and offered a comprehensive approach to teaching the history of traditional wooden boatbuilding as an art as much as a woodcraft. The curriculum includes an in-depth study of classical wooden boatbuilding, handtool use, traditional boat design, the milling



of local timber, bronze casting, and rigging.

Robert Darr will be our featured speaker at the next membership meeting, and it promises to be an interesting look into boat building from the keel up.

**February 19, 2019; 7pm
180 Studios in Santa Rosa**



Artistry in Wood 2018

Show Director's Report

I'm happy to report that the 2018 *Artistry in Wood* show had a very successful seven-week run, closing on Sunday, January 6. Attendance for the show was impressive. In excess of 200 people were present for opening night, and the total attendance was over 2,500. There were also five well-attended lecture- and demonstration-presentations, including show tours by Larry Stroud, Mark Tindley and myself, a Craftsman/Greene & Greene lecture by Michael Wallace, and a bowl turning demonstration by Hugh Buttrum.

Show entries were notable for a wide variety of art sculpture pieces, turned vessels, boxes, and furniture. Entries came mainly from local artisans, but there were also entries from the greater Bay Area, Sacramento, the Sierra foothills, and from current and past students from the College of the Redwoods' woodworking program. With the show's ending, the **People's Choice Award** ballots were counted, and *Clown Car* by Michael Cooper garnered the most votes. Congratulations Michael!

Financially, the show did very well in that we originally had projected an approximate \$250 deficit in the total budget. In the end, we had a \$150 deficit. This improvement was due to an increase in the number of expected entries as well as our share of the profits from member made items that were sold in the museum gift shop. A special thank you to those who made the delicate and beautiful wood items for us to sell.

I would like to track sales or further commissions that are a direct result of the show, and request that exhibitors notify me if they have a resulting sale.

I have been pleased by the response and support for the show by the Museum Associate Director, Eric Stanley, and the Museum Executive Director, Jeff Nathanson.

Both were not only helpful and available for the overall

planning, but also instrumental in the setup and daily management of the show.

Within the next three months, I will be meeting with them to start the planning for *Artistry in Wood* 2019, the 31st annual show. My goal is to have the same time slot for the show. I will immediately update the association membership once I have a firm commitment by the museum for show dates.

And finally, I sincerely appreciate all of the volunteer help and support from association members who contributed countless hours to all facets of the show. This is truly a member run show, and is only possible because of our collective efforts. Set-up volunteers included Bill Taft, Bob Roudman, Walt Doll, Chuck Root, Paul Marini, Harvey Newman, Rod Fraser, Joe Scannell, Carol Salvin, Rick White, Rick Abbott, Patrick McDonnell, Larry Stroud, Kevin Grant, and Steve Thomas. Individuals who produced items for the Museum Gift Shop include Tom Vogel, Bob Roudman, and Walt Doll. My apologies if I inadvertently left anyone's name off this list.

I want to encourage everyone to start dreaming up ideas of creations for the *Artistry in Wood* 2019 show.

This year, we had numerous first-time exhibitors, and I'm sure they enjoyed the experience of having their creations exhibited in the beautiful and inviting museum setting. I want to strongly encourage other association members who have not entered pieces in the show to enter a creation in the next show. I look forward to *Artistry in Wood* 2019.

Don Jereb

2018 People's Choice Award



Clown Car by Michael Cooper

Photo by Debbie Wilson

Sawmill on a Rainy Afternoon

January 19, 2019

by Joe Scannell

In spite of the threat of rain, a very respectable number of members and guests turned out for our January meeting and tour of Berry's Saw Mill in Cazadero. The meeting was convened in the usual way, albeit outdoors. Chairman Tom Vogel welcomed everyone, and Show Chair Don Jereb gave an effusive report on the success of the recent *Artistry in Wood* show. Over 2,500 people visitors viewed the show, an all-time high. He strongly encouraged members who have never entered a piece in the show to do so. He also reported that the **People's Choice Award** was captured by Michael Cooper and his *Clown Car*.

Program Chair Chuck Root then introduced our host for the afternoon, Bruce Berry. Mr. Berry's father and grandfather began the business in 1941, in downtown Cazadero. Eventually they outgrew that location (when they started up the saw it was not uncommon for all the lights in town to dim), and in 1979 they moved to the present location, a 32 acre spread outside of town, where they had plenty of room to operate, and a good



Photo by Jose Cuervo

pipeline to the power plant. Bruce has been running the show for the last 35 years.

It has not been an easy time, with more and more government agencies impressing their regulations on the industry. Their last harvest plan took thirteen years to receive approval, and just when they were ready to begin harvesting, they were stalled again because an owl moved from one tree to another that wasn't protected. Three months later, when they finally got the go-ahead, the market price for the logs had dropped by 40% and in addition they were required to build a 1000 foot fence to protect an endangered frog species.

There are three distinct businesses in operation here: the sawmill, a retail building supply yard and warehouse, and an RV storage yard. Bruce is trying to sell all three, and to facilitate that he has split the property into three parcels. He is currently negotiating with several buyers who each want one business but not the others.

The tour began at the log deck. The logs are delivered by log trucks, where they are scaled individually and the information entered in a computer so that everyone gets properly paid, and the logs are stamped with the name of the land owner. This ensures that, should an embedded piece of hardware damage a saw blade for example, the land owner is charged for the damage. Since a blade costs \$2000, this is an important step.



Photo by Jose Cuervo

Moving on to the debarking area, Bruce described the operation. Oversized logs are cut to 32' length by a remote-controlled chain saw, then positioned by the hourglass rollers and fed over the gear-like rollers seen here, which chew the bark away and prepare the log for the saw. The bark is delivered to a grinder which grinds it into four different by-products.

From there, the logs enter the bandsaw, where they are mounted on a carriage that travels on tracks, held in place by dogs, and sawn into timbers as determined by the sawyer, who must make his cutting decisions quickly and enter them into the computer that controls the operation. The sawyer's skill determines the profitability of the whole operation.



Photo by Alan Brickman

The next step is the edger (*seen below*), a four blade circular saw that creates the straight edges of a board. The leftover pieces not big enough to make into useful lumber are sent to a chipper, where they also become by-products.



Photos by Jose Cuervo



Photo by Alan Brickman



From there, the planks are sent through a gang saw where they are quickly cut into shorter lengths according to what is currently needed.

There is another machine called the recovery saw, where boards that contain defects are sent to be sawn into something else that eliminates the defect. Sometimes the board will make several trips through the recovery saw. This will usually result in a higher grade and thus a higher profit. The offcuts are sent on to the chipper.



Photo by Alan Brickman

At this point we took a detour through the saw sharpening room, where the blades are all kept in top condition. When



Photo by Jose Cuervo

a bandsaw is dulled by a foreign object, it takes only two minutes for the electric brake to stop the motor, get the protective shroud off, and begin changing the blade. If everything goes as it should, it only takes six to seven minutes to change a blade and get back to sawing. A sharpening is good for 2-4 hours.

While in the sharpening room we got a closeup view of the band saw blade, which has an unexpected second set of teeth on the trailing edge of the plate. These are the splinter teeth, which clear out the splinters and debris that tend to collect between the blade and the guides. When this debris is allowed

to collect, it can force the blade to track off to one side or the other, causing the dimensions of the sawn timbers to be out of spec.

The bandsaw blades are high carbon steel, and they are sharpened and swaged each time they are sharpened. Asked whether they used carbide blades, Bruce replied that they did not, because carbide is very labor-intensive. When they do use tipped blades, they use stellite, which is nearly as hard and very durable. It is applied in a welding process, then ground to shape.

When a blade crashes into something in the log, there are many avenues to a repair. If it's not too bad, a simple sharpening may do the trick, but if a tooth or teeth are broken, it may require welding in a new section taken from an old blade. A new bandsaw blade is 14" wide, and costs \$2000. Depending on how many collisions it has, it can last for 2-3 years. Most of the blades we saw were around 6" wide, indicating they had been resharpended many times.



Photo by Jose Cuervo

The circular saw blades are also sharpened here. Bruce showed us a typical circular blade of a configuration he called a Marathon blade. The secondary bump behind each tooth is akin to the raker teeth on a chain saw. They control how deep a bite the blade can take with each tooth, reducing kickback and making the operation safer.

The tour continued on through the retail yard where grading and sorting are done, and units are readied for the buyers' trucks. We also got a look into the retail warehouse, which contained all the usual things one would expect in such a business. There was a nice stack of large slabs that caught some eyes. And by the time the tour concluded and Bruce was given a nice round of applause, the rain had arrived in earnest, something no one complains about anymore.



Photo by Jose Cuervo



Lidded Container by Chuck Fell

Photos by Debbie Wilson





Photo by Debbie Wilson

More on *Artistry in Wood* 2018

The membership deserves to give itself a huge pat on the back. This year we have exceeded all the previous numbers since I began editing this publication in 2013. With 70 entries by 45 artists, plus a “guest” entry by Garrett Hack, this was truly a year to remember. The variety of the works of art (for that is what they are) was a delight. The large opening night turnout was a forecast of the overall attendance for the 2018 show, which by the museum’s count was over 2,500 viewers. Wow!

I have listed below the names of the makers who participated in this year’s show. Congratulations to all, and thank you for making *Artistry in Wood* 2018 the show it was. And thanks as well to all the volunteers who made it possible, and of course to the apparently tireless Show Chair Don Jereb.

Don Ajello	Stephen Hamner	Karl Shumaker
Joe Amaral	Bruce Hart	James Stadig
Alan Brickman	Don Jereb	David Stohl
Tony Bryhan	Victor Larsen	Larry Stroud
Hugh Buttrum	Kerry Marshall	Bill Taft
Andrew Carruthers	Patrick McDonnell	Ric Taylor
Les Cizek	Robert Nelson	Steve Thomas
John Cobb	Michael Palace	Mark Tindley
Michael Cooper	Kent Parker	Vincent Van Dyke
Lucinda Daly	Ryan Pedrotti	Richard Vierra
Darryl Dieckman	John Rinehart	Tom Vogel
Paul Feinstein	Robert Roudman	Joe Von Arx
Chuck Fell	Carol Salvin	Alex Wilson
David Fleisig	Joe Scannell	Randall Wilson
Steve Forrest	Ray Schultze	Robin Wilson

Final Approach by Vincent Van Dyke



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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.

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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:

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