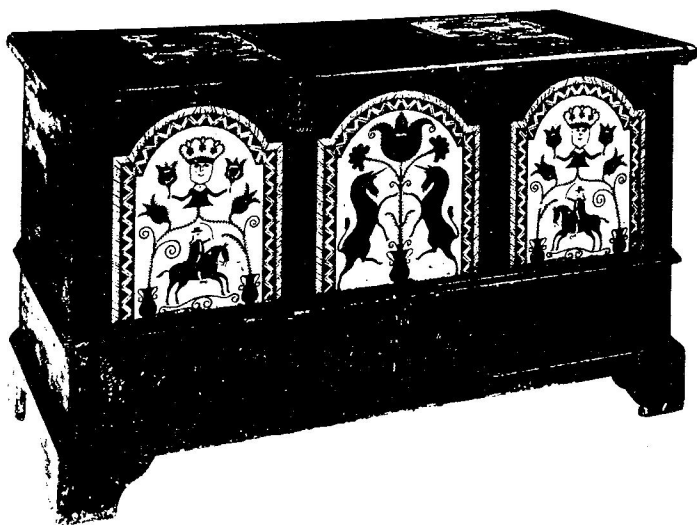


BAY AREA WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

Issue No. 8, Volume 2

August 1983

P. O. Box 421195
San Francisco, CA 94142



"Typical Berks County finesse and detailed joinery methods are demonstrated in this traditional painted chest of 1803." (Philadelphia Museum of Art)

THIRD THURSDAY PREVIEW

Thursday, August 18, 1983, 7:30 p.m.

Our HOSTS this month are **CAROLYN AND JOHN GREW-SHERIDAN**. Their shop is located at 500 Treat Avenue, San Francisco, 94110 (824-6161). Treat is a small street between Harrison and Folsom in the Mission District. They are at the corner of 18th and Treat and there is plenty of parking. If you are coming from the East Bay take the 9th Street exit and continue on Harrison. From the South Bay, Army Street and a right on Harrison or Folsom is easiest. From the North take Van Ness to South Van Ness to 18th and take a left.

The **FEATURED GUEST SPEAKER** will be **Bonnie James** from the Docent/Outreach Program of the DeYoung Museum. She will have a slide lecture on the furniture of the current show, "The Pennsylvania Germans, A Celebration of Their Arts, 1683-1850." The woodworking in the show is complex and fascinating and most of the items are rarely seen on the West Coast.

The **SPOTLIGHT** is on the carvings of **Anton Fuetsch** from Berkeley. He apprenticed in Tyrol, Austria, to a master wood sculptor and attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. He has been a carver for 20 years.

And, as usual, there will be some limited time devoted to the business of BAWA. In particular the spending limits of the officers will be discussed and decided by vote. We will try to schedule an earlier ending so that there is more time for a social gathering.

JULY MEETING REVIEW

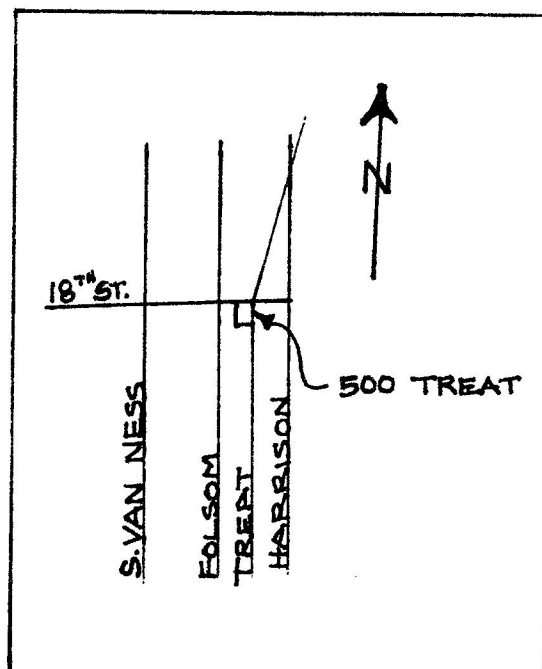
For the last meeting 60 members enjoyed the hospitality of Bob Winebarger and Jan Zaitlin at their spacious, shared shop in Berkeley.

Larry Borsian, our Treasurer, led off with a financial report that showed BAWA to be a vital but far from wealthy organization that is for the moment in a tight cash squeeze. Membership renewals were vigorously sought to make sure that for the rest of the year we are in a sound condition.

Next, the logo proposal from Perrine Kelly was presented and the Executive Committee decided to incorporate it into the newsletter masthead.

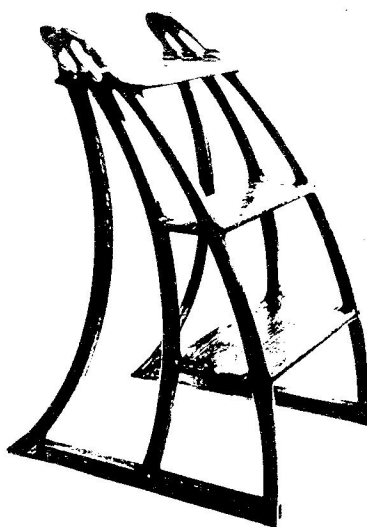
The need for the members to vote on major expenditures was recognized by everyone and this issue will be on the agenda this month. A financial limit ceiling of \$75.00 or \$100.00 for routine matters and excluding the newsletter has been suggested

Continued on Page 7





29 (Photo: Smithsonian Institution)



30 (Photo: Smithsonian Institution)

"A chair should be comfortable, strong, and look good."

Wharton Esherick, as told by Joseph Esherick.

WHARTON ESHERICK

"I started as a painter and had exhibitions in Alabama, Washington D.C., and Chicago. Then I found I wasn't painting like Wharton Esherick ought to paint, so I started with sculpture, then with furniture," Wharton Esherick describes finding his best medium of expression — building interiors and furniture of wood. The change from two-dimensional painting and printmaking to sculpture in three-dimensions for him led naturally to building furniture; and people bought his furniture.

Esherick was born in Philadelphia in 1887 and studied at that city's School of Industrial Art and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Esherick's work in wood, beginning in the mid-1920's, reflected the time he lived through. His style evolved through carved surfaces and complex line with angular planes until he developed the sensitive shaping of curved form imbued with energetic life that became his own way with wood. For as he said, "Some of my sculpture went into the making of furniture."

He took a particular joy in the interaction of idea and material, the play of blending a furniture form he had in mind with the natural variations he found in the wood. A crack might be sanded to emphasize its shape, a knot might be left higher than the surrounding surface to become a point of tactile interest, the very conception of his design could be directed by the flow of grain in a piece of wood.

At first he worked by himself, but a demand for his special kind of design grew, so did his workshop which in time became fully mechanized, for Esherick welcomed the help of useful tools. Perhaps because he was first of all an artist, and because he considered the hand as another tool, he believed handcraft was secondary to design, though craftsman he was. He put into his work "a little of the hand, but the main thing is the heart and the head." In his own mind Wharton Esherick was simply a man who made furniture "under personal supervision and with personal concern." He worked with a varying number of helpers and left to them much of the joinery and finishing, keeping for himself only the special wood problems requiring his own hand and judgment. In 1969, a year before his death, he was "still shaping the seats of the stools. The boys just don't get the hang of it."

Continued on Page 3

We, at MacMurray Pacific wish the Bay Area Woodworkers Association and its members continued success.

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During his enormously productive life as a woodworker, Esherick completed many interiors. Some, like his rooms for the Curtis Bok house in Gulph Mills near Philadelphia, are counted among the most important interiors of the 1930s; but his masterwork is the house he built for himself near Paoli, Pennsylvania. There on a wooded hillside he laid the stone foundations for his home and studio in 1926 and spent the rest of his life working on it, seldom even wanting to go away for a visit. He liked best to use the wood native to his own land, believing that "if I can't make something beautiful out of what I find in my back yard, I had better not make anything."

Long hours went into improving and finishing his house until in time the house seemed to *become* Esherick. Of it he said, "I am only Esherick the man, but all of this is really Esherick." The house exemplifies his sculptural concepts, it is filled with patient and thoughtful and often humorous detailing of walls, doors, ceiling, floors, and built-in seating and beds. He furnished it with his own sculpture and furniture prototypes, for he kept "number one" of any design himself.

Esherick did not accept apprentices, declaring, "I make, I don't teach," but his work is a recognized influence on the course of wood craftsmanship in America. Sam Maloof and Wendell Castle each acknowledge Esherick as the man whose work proved to them wood-working could be important and expressive.

Because he was self-taught as a sculptor and furniture craftsman, he directed any person interested in following his path just to begin, and to learn by making mistakes — "Then you have to work twice as hard to correct the mistakes and the thing begins to take shape." He summed up: "Listen, if you go into this thing that I'm doing, you'll have a hell of a struggle — but you'll have fun."

From: Woodenworks,
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C., 1972.



Joseph Esherick, Philo Bemis, Michael Pearce and Bruce Sherman at July meeting.

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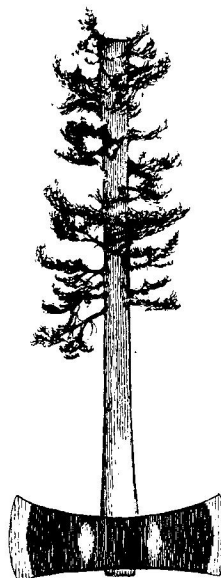
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Architect Daryl Andreades donated her graphic design skills to contribute the elegant BAWA logo gracing last month's newsletter.

* * * * *

Spacial Changes: Exhibit

At Pro-Arts Gallery through September 2nd will be BAWA member **Sally Nelson's** site-specific installation on exhibit. "For those who want a breather from finely crafted woodworking . . ." as Sally Nelson says. Pro-Arts Gallery, 1214 Webster, Oakland. Gallery Hours: 9-5, M-F.

* * * * *

Dovetail Router Jig

Last fall, amateur woodworker **Jim Robson** demonstrated the clever dovetail router jig he developed and made in his home workshop. We're please to tell you that *Fine Woodworking* will have an article about Jim and his jig in an upcoming issue. Plans for building the jig are still available: Just write to Jim and enclose a long, stamped, self-addressed envelope — James G. Robson, 260 Mapache Drive, Portola Valley, CA 94025.

* * * * *

What They Want . . .

"Thanks for sending your manuscript, which I'm sorry I can not use . . . My files are full of profiles of interesting craftsmen who do marvelous woodworking, more than I could ever hope to publish. What I need are articles telling how to learn woodwork — down in the shop with the amateur craftsman. What have you got that might fit?"

Excerpt of rejection letter to Nancy Krompotich from John Kelsey of Fine Woodworking.

* * * * *

Architecture Lecture Series

The SF Museum of Modern Art is sponsoring its architectural lecture series again this fall. Seven architects talk about winning — and losing — design competitions. This is the 5th year these lectures have been sponsored to much local acclaim. The series costs \$42 for nonmembers, or \$8 at the door. Lectures are on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. For further information or purchase of tickets for the series, call the museum 863-8800.

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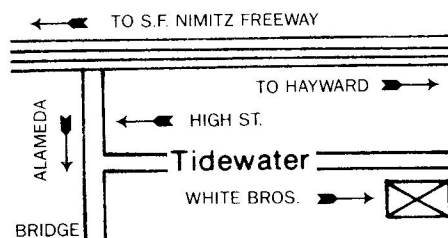


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O A K L A N D**



In furniture, their wood is their bond

By Grace Madley

There is a small end table named "Atlas" by its maker, Richard Feldstein, because of its gracefully sculpted figures holding up the top at four corners. Ray Kelso of Collegeville carved large butterflies and crescents on the doors of a tall secretary. Mitchell Landy's cigarette table is Z-shaped, and Bob Ingram's dictionary stand is shaped like an open book.

There is more, much more, at the public exhibition, *Furniture by Philadelphia Woodworkers 1983*, opening today and running through July 3 in the Port of History Museum at Penn's Landing.

The show contains 54 pieces of furniture by 37 area craftsmen. All the work was selected by a jury of specialists. Prizes of \$500, awarded before the show opened, went to Tony Chickillo and Peter Korn, both of Philadelphia. Chickillo won Best of Show for one-of-a-kind with his "Loch Ness" wall-hung mirror. Korn's dictionary stand was chosen Best of Show for furniture designed as a multiple (intended to be reproduced).

Korn and Chickillo are not household names. Except for the late Wharton Sherick, George Nakashima of Bucks County and a handful of others, makers of handcrafted furniture are not well-known to the general public.

Hoping to change that and to let everyone know that the handmade-furniture industry is alive and well locally is the Society of Philadelphia Woodworkers, a nonprofit

organization that has grown from eight to 69 members in 14 months. The society, with the Port of History Museum, is co-sponsoring the furniture exhibition.

You have heard of the old boys' network and even of an old girls' network. Well, the society, with its meetings and seminars, has begun a local network for workers in wood. It has brought together professional furniture-makers, such as its president, John Basinski, teachers of woodworking and design and men and women who work with wood simply as an avocation.

"The cross-fertilization of ideas and the opportunity to have others critique your work has been a terrific shot in the arm for all of us," says self-taught woodworker Josh Markel.

Also self-taught is Jack Larimore, who has a degree in landscape architecture but who turned to woodworking because of "the desire to make things." Larimore finds himself committed to wood "because of the fulfillment derived from starting with a pile of rough boards and ending up with something of quality craftsmanship. . . .

"It's not for the money, although one can make a living at it, but rather it has to do with the satisfaction of working with the material, its enormous variety, the challenge of its personality. . . .

"There's also a bad part; wood has a mind of its own, moving and changing color and emitting odors. You have to understand the character of each [piece]."

Basinski, like Larimore and Markel, is self-taught. He studied American civilization in college and was primarily interested in architecture. He has taught at the graduate school of fine arts at the University of Pennsylvania.

Continued on Page 6



THE CUTTING EDGE

The Cutting Edge now has the Lignometer H 30 Moisture Meter on display.

This has a choice of 3

Hammer probes for fast

moisture measurement. Dial

in the wood type, tap the

pins into the wood, press

the ON button, and read

the moisture content from

4-30%. If you've ever

had a problem with kiln-

dried lumber that wasn't

or wondered what the mois-

ture content is on air-

dried lumber, this is the

tool for you. Bring in

a sample of wood for a

demonstration to see how

this tool can work for you.

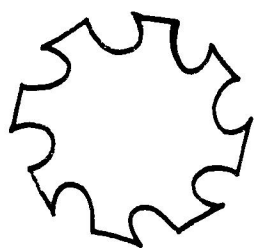


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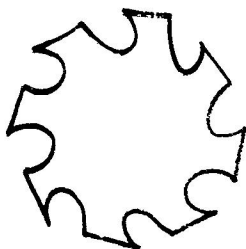
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TURNING SEMINAR

Phil Nereo will run an all-day seminar on all aspects of spindle and bowl turning at his shop in Sonoma in September or October. The fee will be \$10 for members of the Sonoma County Woodworkers' Association and \$25 for others. Call him at (707) 838-4424 for the date.

Phil reminds turners that frequent sharpening is needed to keep lathe tools, both cutting and scraping, cutting quickly and cleanly. Most of the sharpening involves restoring the edge with a slip stone lubricated with WD40, a kerosene/oil mixture, or liquid detergent.

It is *not* necessary to grind lathe tools each time they lose their edge. Phil rubs the slip stone against the tool, rather than tool to stone. When sharpening scraping tools he leaves the burr on; on cutting tools he removes the burr. Scraping tools require a very sharp edge and frequent sharpening.

From: *Wood Forum*, the newsletter of the Sonoma Woodworkers.

Until recently, those drawn to woodcrafting had to teach themselves, of necessity. Formal training wasn't readily available. Now, the Philadelphia College of Art and Bucks County Community College offer courses of study.

The image of furniture crafters is changing considerably, too, Basinski says, adding that woodworkers "tended to exist alone in basements." Lately, however, more and more woodworkers are working in groups. Not only is it economical to share quarters, equipment and maintenance, but by being together they can help one another solve problems and exchange points of view.

Otherwise, Basinski says, "It just plain gets lonely." He shares a shop with other woodworkers in a converted mill in Roxborough, where the society holds its meetings.

While the 1960s were a time of a revival of interest in all forms of craft, woodworking among them, fine furniture designed and made by individual craftsmen is a Philadelphia tradition with roots in the early 1700s. When industrialization struck in the 19th century, machines took over the production

of furniture. But Basinski and others believe the time is ripe to "present the work of contemporary furniture craft people who have inherited and continue the legacy of their [18th-century] predecessors. . . ."

Beside the originality of design and variety of woods used in the exhibition, the loving care is obvious.

Contrasted with the eye-catching drama of Kelso's butterflies and crescents are the pure contemporary lines of a Basinski double dresser, combining figured oak fronts with walnut top and sides.

The usual categories of furniture represented in the show — chairs, tables, chests, dictionary stands, consoles and mirrors — appear in unusual ways. Dining tables and game tables are given new personalities with sculptured legs, marquetry stripes, the blending of different woods and distinctive finishes. Show visitors will recognize familiar forms with new interpretations, such as Richard Kagan's walnut bombe chest with ribbon like carving at front and sides, and a side chair by Peter Kenney with carved splat back and Queen Anne overtones.

Many of the pieces may be purchased.

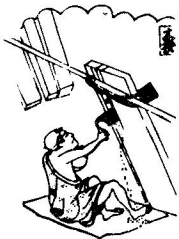
The City of Philadelphia has underwritten the cost of mounting the exhibition. Contributions of \$2,500 were received from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and \$2,000 from Best Products Foundation. Another \$9,000 was raised from other sources, and Carpenter's Hall provided library space for jurying the show pieces.

From the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 22, 1983.

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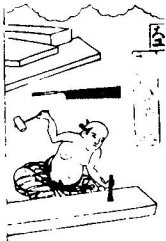
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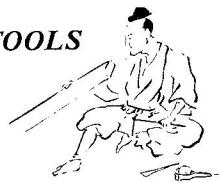


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The Hardwood Institute is the consumer awareness and information program of NHLA. The Daphne Awards are presented in recognition of excellence in furniture design featuring the use of hardwood solids and veneers with full consideration of consumer value.

This is an annual competition and presentations are made to designers and manufacturers at High Point, North Carolina, in connection with the Spring furniture market. The purpose of the program is to encourage the use of hardwood as a furniture materials.

For information write to:

National Hardwood Lumber Association

P.O. Box 34518

Memphis Tennessee 38184-0518

Continued from Page 1

The newsletter committee announced that they will be trying to sell more advertisements for our paper and try again to control the costs. Various potential advertisers were provided by the members and will be approached by the committee.

The first slide show was given by architect, Joseph Esherick, and was a comprehensive review of the work of his uncle, the artist, sculptor, designer, and woodworker, Wharton Esherick.

The engrossing show covered the studio that the elder Esherick designed and built for himself and the furniture that led the way for so much of what we all now do.

Wharton Esherick developed a variety of furniture forms that were major influences on Wendell Castle, Sam Maloof, and Art Carpenter. Many items were unique, like the couch with a varying seat depth for different-sized people.

His nephew worked for him at times and remembered both the exciting creativity of the pieces and the hard effort of the finishing, done without sandpaper — only scrapers and pumice and oil were used.

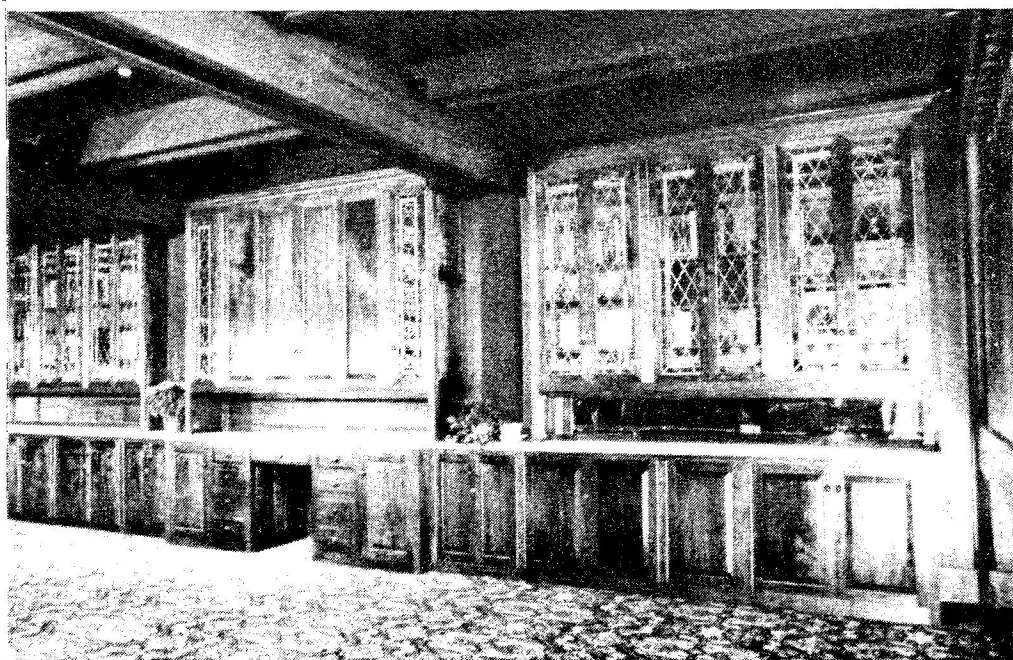
A brief report about the Northern California Woodworkers' Association (NCWA) gave the meeting a limited idea of what the coordinating group is doing. It appears that at the moment BAWA has no strict affiliation with NCWA. NCWA is for the most part looking for new marketing ideas and hoping to soon end the debt left over from the Spring Fort Mason show. BAWA's share of these extra expenses have nearly been paid by our show participants.

The brilliant "crystal" windows of Bruce Sherman were the stars of the latter half of the meeting. In addition to his slides he brought samples of his work and drawings.

The three-dimensional windows are constructed with a silicon-locking groove that produces tremendous strength in what otherwise looks like a light, delicate frame. No distortion or warping occurs with the proven Sherman technique.

However, Bruce wanted us to know that, "When the silicon fails, Sherman sails!"

John Grew-Sheridan



English library at Solomon Grundy's in Berkeley designed and built by Bob Winebarger, our July host.

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2-1/2" x 5"	18.00
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Copy must be camera-ready and black & white.

For additional information call: **Tim Kennedy, 952-6034.**

CO-OP WOOD PURCHASING

As a wood sculptor, I am interested in fine imported woods, consequently I have made contact with an importer who can supply us with Rosewood, Ebony, Teak, several other exotics, as well as domestic species.

Prices will depend on the number of people involved!

If you would be interested in receiving a newsletter, drop me a post card or leave a message on my answering machine, giving me your mailing address and phone number. Hope to hear from you as soon as possible. Take care.

*Tom D'Onofrio
Box 362
Bollinas, Calif. 94924
415-868-1070*

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION: WE NEED YOUR HELP

Two hundred seventy-eight July newsletters were mailed as follows:

- 149 issues to individual member subscribers
- 9 mailings (of 10 copies each) to current advertisers (total of 90)
- 2 mailings to past advertisers (2 copies each)
- 6 issues to potential members
- 29 complimentary issues (and subscriptions initiated)

We would like to expand our mailing list in all categories.

Complimentary issues: If you have a friend or colleague interested in joining BAWA, give us his or her name and a complimentary issue will be sent, along with a letter explaining the basic purpose of the organization. In this way we hope to reach a wider audience and increase our membership.

Complimentary subscriptions: These are initiated and sent to marketing and potential sales outlets for our members, or to schools that have students interested in woodworking (i.e., Laney, CCAC, etc.). Individuals and groups sent complimentary subscriptions are sent an appropriate letter of introduction from the current BAWA chairman. Also included in this category are: woodshop teachers, local and national museums, *Fine Woodworking*, and other woodworking associations around the country.

Advertisers: Each 1/4 page advertiser receives 10 issues per mailing. We always need new advertisers. Potential advertisers are sent a letter, a copy of the newsletter and a current-ad-rate chart.

We need your help in expanding our mailing list. Please let us know if you have names and addresses that fall into any of the above-described categories.

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

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Secretary & Assistant
John Grew-Sheridan / Donald Dupont

Treasurer & Assistant
Larry Borsian / Brian McLachlan

Typesetter
Amanda J. Smith

Editorial Staff
Donald Dupont / Russell Fulk /
John Grew-Sheridan / Tim Kennedy /
Nancy Krompotich
Larry Borsian

NCWA REPORT

At the end of June six people from various groups in Northern California met at C. Stuart Welch's shop in Marshall to talk about the details of forming the Northern California Woodworkers' Association. One of the main topics was to identify what services the group would provide for its members.

It was determined that these services would include a newsletter which could provide a larger regional coverage for events, resources, and classifieds. Furthermore, regional shows and seminar workshops were possible.

It was felt that the NCWA would be a separate organization from the local groups, requiring separate dues, but with a reduced rate for members of local groups. The dues structure is still to be determined as a proposed budget would be needed first.

We have approached the *Pacific Woodworker* with an offer to affiliate ourselves with them in exchange for their publishing our newsletter in their magazine. At this time the magazine is open to the idea and we are pursuing the details.

The projection is that a NCWA member would get a subscription to PW with their dues. There would be a separate section for NCWA news and all the local groups would be able to include any relevant information from their membership, such as seminars, resources, and classifieds.

Mike Laine from BAWA is going to investigate the possibility of producing another regional show next Spring. There was considerable interest in doing another show. Many of the people who had shown at Fort Mason had reported some positive response, despite the fact that sales weren't overwhelming. This last show was a learning experience and we should be able to strike a better bargain next time.

Which brings up that the NCWA has started out with a financial leap backward to the tune of over \$1,000 (Now reduced, Ed.). It was decided to put out a blatant appeal for donations to help pay this off. If you have some extra bucks and believe in the potential of NCWA, send them to NCWA, c/o C. Stuart Welch, Box 776, Marshall, CA 94940.

Crispin B. Hollinshead

Reprinted from the newsletter of the Mendocino Woodworkers' Association

MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATIONS

Your membership and newsletter expire during the month and year listed on your newsletter mailing label. A \$20 membership entitles you to 12 issues of the BAWA newsletter and full participation in all member activities. However, because of initial recordkeeping problems, some members are getting an additional 3-6 months worth of newsletters. Without membership checks to support this, it becomes a costly and burdensome problem. Help us. If you joined the organization earlier than July of 1982, you are probably one of those people who need to renew your membership. We trust you to contact any member of the BAWA executive committee with your renewal check of \$20.00.

If your expiration date is clearly incorrect, please let us know.

Membership Application

Bay Area Woodworkers' Association

P.O. Box 421195, San Francisco, CA 94142.

Name _____ Home Address _____

Home Telephone () _____ Work Telephone () _____ (ZIP) _____

How did you hear about the Association? _____

_____ Check here if you do not want to have your name given to other Associations or businesses.

Enclosed is a check or money order for \$20, my membership dues for a one-year period in this Association.

Signed _____

Date _____