

BAY AREA WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

November, 1983 Issue 11, Volume 2

P.O. Box 421195 San Francisco, CA 94142

NOVEMBER PREVIEW

Thursday

November 17, 1983

7:30 p.m.

The University of California Forest Products Laboratory will host the November meeting of the Bay Area Woodworkers' Association.

Don Arganbright, their Director and Professor Berry Gammon have organized a series of demonstrations and talks on Kiln Drying, Structural Testing of Woods, Wood Identification, Insect and Fungus Problems and the Development of Particle Board.

This should be a good introduction to the Forest Products Laboratory which could become a valuable resource for us. They offer a resource library, technical problem solving and other specialized services.

Directions: From Highway 80 take the "Hoffman Blvd., San Rafael Bridge" Exit. Stay on Hoffman for two miles to the first light. Turn left on 47th and then Right into the gates of "The Richmond Field Station". We will meet in the entry of the first building on the left as you enter the compound. You may park in front or behind the Forest Product Laboratory Building.

Bob Newhall

OCTOBER MEETING REVIEW

Before a good-sized crowd at Marty Freedman's shop in Oakland Mike Laine led off with a brief show report. The Throsch/Woodline production in San Mateo has been cancelled. NCWA had been negotiating to be in this event.

The April *National Working With Wood Show* is being developed by Exhibitor's Showcase and information about it is elsewhere in the newsletter. Mike told the meeting that at this time BAWA has no show committee and has made no commitment as an association to this show.

The members were reminded by Philo Bemis that volunteers to help run BAWA are very welcome. The elections for new officers will be held in December and most or all of the positions will be open.

In the first presentation curator *Deborah Cooper* reviewed the Wooton Patent Desk exhibit now at the Oakland Museum. The show holds seventeen desks and provides an overview of the changes in business life in the middle to late 1800's.

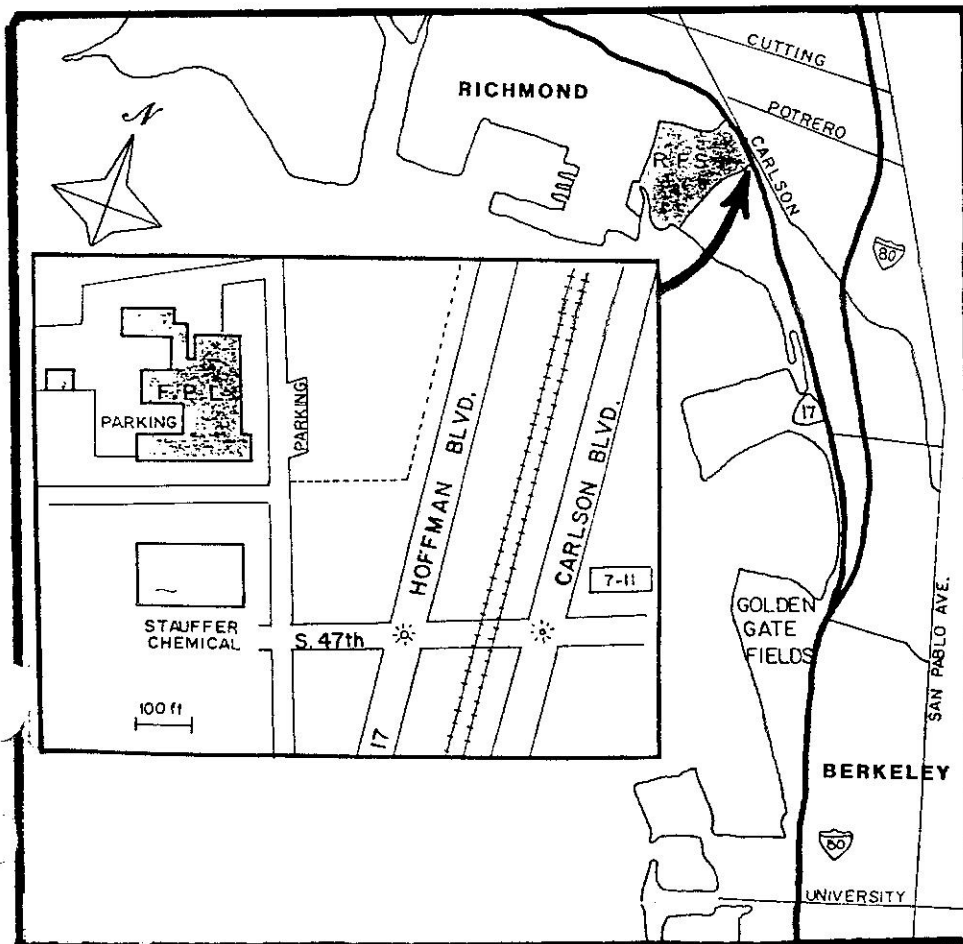
The desks were designed to provide a way to deal with the first wave of paper-work in the expanding commercial and industrial world at a time when the manila file folder had not yet been invented.

The Wooton desks were mass-produced items made in sections and composed of upwards of 100 compartments for paper storage. The internal components were inserted into frames that had veneered panels. Dovetails for drawers were hand cut because a machine to make them hadn't been invented.

The four grades of desk ranged from Ordinary (\$100) to Superior (\$750). For comparison \$2.00 was a day's wage for a woodworker and \$55.00 would buy a seven piece suite of parlor furniture. The desks were produced at a rate of 100 to 150 per month from 1824 to 1895 or 1897.

Ms. Cooper pointed out that eventually competitors with other and better ideas appeared and the needs of business changed. The Wooton Patent Desk Company Closed. Its product had gone from being a practical necessity to an obsolete novelty for the antiques trade.

(Continued on Page 3)



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Some October Meeting Comments

As usual, or more than usual, the October BAWA meeting was informative and inspiring. But something happened which disturbed me, and I'd like to respond to it: Philo's presentation about the L.A. trade show.

We all know that manufacturers are inclined to use "beautiful" women in their promotions, as objectified sex symbols to glamorize their equipment. Sure, their presence at the show would be impossible to ignore, even appropriate to document. But there's a trap we fall into. It's not the slides that disturbed me, it's the attitude with which they were shown and received: the undertone, hidden in the joking, which in fact does abuse these women (and then, by habit, all women). The assumptions made, for example, that they know nothing (about the product), and that they must be as pricey as the equipment. And that there were no objections to this from our audience.

I'm all for humor and levity (and tools, and lots of other things), but the irony lies elsewhere. As I recall, the only person at the trade show who Philo commented was knowledgeable, was a woman. And of course, two women had just made impressive presentations to BAWA.

It's time we acknowledged that there are many women (like Gail Fredell Smith) who are excellent artists/designers/technicians—a greater percentage of Bay Area woodworkers, I think, than is represented at BAWA meetings. Well, I can't imagine they feel welcomed when such stereotypes are taken for granted.

Don't get me wrong: this is a comment about all of us, not an attack on Philo. His leadership of BAWA and the meetings has been wonderful, and I'm glad he's there. We just need to be, as they say in California, more conscious of our process, more watchful of sexism, and more supportive of our peers.

Other important issues also threaded through the presentations: just how pricey is our work as hand(?) crafters (especially art-furniture), and just who are the folk who can buy it? (Doesn't the same pride in design/technical solution come from pieces engineered to be efficient to produce? Isn't there art and virtuosity in that as well?) It was certainly interesting to have Debbie Cooper bring a historical perspective to these questions. It's not just that the rich (don't) change, or that tastes (do) change, or that social/commercial needs change; it's that art is symbiotic with change, and that is political. But that's another story.

Saul Rosenfield

Larry Borsian and Ed Gottesman provided the Spotlight event: the debut of their first chair. The Chilean cedar piece was a prototype for a small run for a client.

Ed talked about how the design had developed out of a few Greene and Greene inspirations. The measurements, especially critical in a chair design, evolved from studying the chairs owned by friends. The numbers were then refined by using the adjustable "Measuring Chair" that the Grew-Sheridans built.

Larry explained that the latter part of the process was one of preparing full-scale drawings, making a particle board model, shaping templates and jigs, and cutting and sanding wood. The prototype took 50 hours of shop time. Larry thanked Lewis Buchner for allowing him to use the specialty sanders in Lew's shop.

Gail Fredell Smith, our second guest lecturer, provided a slide show and talk on her designs and work. She didn't want to say much about Italian furniture because while she was in Milan the salons, or showrooms, were closed and the exposition was a gigantic mixture of the good and the terrible. However, she did comment that the Italian lighting that she saw was a "knock-out."

Gail reviewed the modern, minimalist, and "slick" influences on her architectural and furniture work. She prefers constructivist and geometric elements.

In addition to her architectural studies at Cal she took an MFA in the late '70s at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). The RIT program allowed her to fill gaps in her technical training and to do so with a great deal of freedom. The instructors, for one thing, were busy with 30-35 other students and their own work.

Throughout her talk Gail proved to us her proficiency with a camera. Her slides were terrific and the work shown demonstrated effectively her affection for the imagery of technology and her careful balancing of virtuosity and aesthetics.

Gail raised a lot of thoughtful issues and handled well a number of pointed questions from BAWA members. We were privileged to see her strong, dynamic presentation.

Philo Bemis ended the evening with a fast slide review of the biennial Los Angeles woodworking machinery show. When one sees all that fancy equipment one wonders why the arbor bearings on one's new Rockwell Unisaw are already wearing out!

John Grew-Sheridan

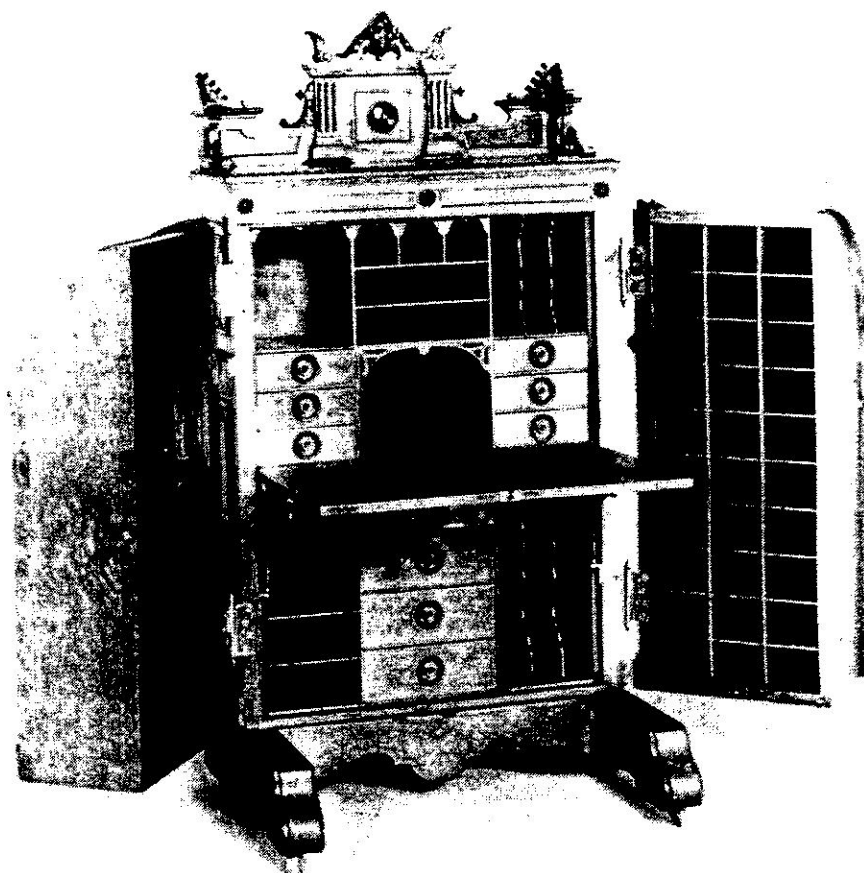


Photo by Terry Ward.

Wooton Extra-Garde Cabinet Secretary. ca. 1874 - 84.

SAVE THE NEWSLETTER

The BAWA Newsletter needs more advertisers to help cover the costs of our fine journal. If you know a supplier who might be interested in supporting us while reaching an ever growing group of woodworkers, please call Tim Kennedy, 952-6034, or John Grew-Sheridan, 824-6161, for information about costs and other details.

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FUTURE BAWA MEETINGS

If you have any ideas for topics, presentations or demonstrations at future meetings pass those thoughts along to the Executive Committee or join the Committee yourself!

Magazine Shelved

Dear Friends,
We have decided to suspend publication of *The Goodfellow Review of Crafts*. While there are several reasons, central is the realization that our energy would be better spent on our four exciting new catalogs we are compiling for Chilton Books, as well as several other craft projects in the works. The Catalogs, scheduled to be released this coming Spring, are broken down into the following categories: The Goodfellow Catalog of Wonderful Things for the home & Office, Gifts Under \$50, Wonderful Wearables, and Wonderful Things for Kids of All Ages.

By refocusing our resources, we plan to maintain our standing and involvement in the crafts world. Please do continue to keep in touch with us.

Christopher Weills
Publisher

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOTES

John and Carolyn-Sheridan hosted the October executive committee meeting attended by John, Philo Bemis, Tim Kennedy, Russ Fulk, Gary Carter, and Don Dupont. Progress in discussing future directions of BAWA and its newsletter was hampered by the absence of a treasurer's report. It was decided that a financial statement is of key importance at any executive committee meeting. Officers need to take their responsibilities more seriously.

Among items discussed were once again the cost of producing the newsletter, billing of advertisers, and postage costs that could be saved by mailing second class. It was decided that the newsletter as such may be published every other month, alternating with a more easily and economically produced one page mailer. All agreed that under the present circumstances, ie the newsletter being published at a deficit, it was a good solution.

Member Gary Carter volunteered his and his wife's services in updating and maintaining BAWA's mailing list. It is this kind of spirit that BAWA needs. Many thanks Gary.

Some discussion was given to the topic of future slide presentations at general meetings, and it was agreed that the BAWA membership is a source that needs to be tapped. Any volunteers? Don't be bashful about showing your work.

Health Insurance was again discussed, this time centering around a plan sought out by John that offers attractive rates and good coverage specifically to BAWA members. More on this at the next general meeting.

Philo made mention of the magnificent display of wood samples in the halls of Cal's School of Forestry on the Berkeley Campus. Also discussed was the issue of a future BAWA show and its potential benefits to its participants in view of the cancellation of the NCWA show in April. It was suggested that a show will happen if enough members desire it to happen and take the initiative. Mention was made of a free space for six weeks in Ghirardelli Square which was rejected by the Baulines Craft Guild.

Future general meeting topics and themes were discussed. December's meeting will feature a panel discussion focusing on the BUSINESS of woodworking, including marketing, scheduling, bookkeeping, customer relations, etc. Members interested in participating are asked to contact an executive committee member. January's meeting will have safety as its theme, including a talk by a hand surgeon, Red Cross first aid kit recommendations, push sticks etc. Also mentioned as future

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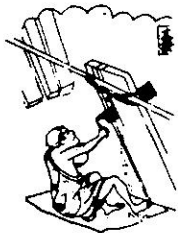
Gail Fredell Smith fielding a BAWA question.

Photo by Terry Ward.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The San Joaquin Woodworkers Association is considering bringing Dale Nash to their area to teach a wood turning seminar. The cost would be about \$60. If you are interested, contact Mark Webster, S.J.W.A., P.O. Box 789, Poterville, Ca 93258.

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Merryll Saylan has had her work chosen for the "Women in Design International 2nd. Annual Compendium". "Women in Design International" provides recognition for women in all fields of design.

★ ★ ★

The Baulines Craftsman's Guild is presenting "Contemporary Work in Wood, Clay, Fiber and Pastels" at the First Floor Gallery of the Marin County Civic Center in San Rafael. The show runs Nov. 7 through Dec. 1, Weekdays, 9 - 5 p.m.

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Tour The Elegant Office 1880-1980

Wednesday, November 16, 1983

The History Guild Tour to examples of San Francisco's outstanding office design will visit contemporary counterparts to the late 19th-century innovations shown in the *Wootton Patent Desk* exhibition at The Oakland Museum. Three designers will conduct exclusive tours of their office projects, including the executive search firm of Karr, Bartell & Adams and Crown Zellerbach, ending at the Steelcase showroom for demonstrations of new office systems. The tour is organized through the courtesy of the Institute of Business Designers.

Lunch: Downtown San Francisco

Meet: The Oakland Museum, 9:45 a.m.

Cost: \$28 - OMA Members

\$32 - Nonmembers

Limited to 25 people

All destinations are within walking distance of downtown San Francisco. Wear comfortable walking shoes. For information call 273-3842.

Continued from Page 4

meeting topics were member participation ideas such as a discussion on favorite finishing methods, and as each-member-bring-two-slides slide show.

Gary Carter's presence at the executive committee meeting was both enjoyable and beneficial to the organization. We strongly urge other members to attend as well.

Donald Dupont



Ed Gottesman showing his full-scale drawings.

Photo by Terry Ward

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Photo by Terry Ward.

Larry Borsian explaining a Shaper technique.

CHECKLIST FOR SLIDE PHOTOGRAPHY

Slides are a surrogate for your work. They should make a clear and accurate presentation of the nature and scope of your work. If for any reason, they are less than adequate, judgment of the work itself is adversely affected.

Before photographing your work or selecting slides from those you have on hand, please check through the following list of common faults in slide photography. Because slides may not always be projected but simply held to the light, a poor slide will be even more ineffective.

- ☐ Overexposure: resulting in too light a slide.
- ☐ Underexposure: resulting in too dark a slide.
- ☐ Hot spots: a light-saturated point in the picture.
- ☐ Dead areas: surface of the object not receiving sufficient light and appearing dark in color.
- ☐ Incorrect or distorted color: from use of the wrong film type.
- ☐ Background too sloppy: wrinkled cloth, for example.
- ☐ Background too textured in relation to the work: fine jewelry on burlap, for example.
- ☐ Distance between camera and object too small: resulting in the cutting off of parts of the object.
- ☐ Too many objects in one slide.
- ☐ Too dramatic: resulting in a distortion of the object.
- ☐ Absence of detail shots necessary to give a clear understanding of the work, especially when large-scale.

NOTE:

PHOTOGRAPHING CRAFTS by John Barsness is a helpful 66-page manual describing effective photographic techniques for craft objects. It is available from the American Craft Council Publications Department, 22 West 55th Street, New York, NY 10019. Price: \$5.20 members; \$7.20 non-members prepaid.

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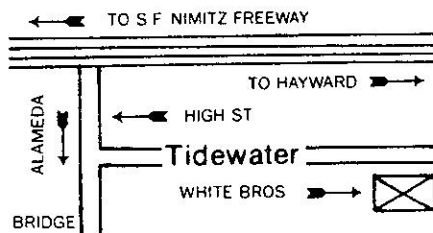


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SHOW BUSINESS

Members of BAWA are being offered a group space in the *National Working With Wood Show* which will be held at the San Francisco Trade Show Center on April 6-8, 1984.

According to Mitch Chinn, a show coordinator for Exhibitor's Showcase, the producer, up to 3,500 square feet of undivided space can be provided for 20 members at a cost of \$1.25 per square foot. Carpeting and lighting are included.

In addition individual 10'x10' curtained booths at substantially higher prices are available. The deadline for the discounted offer is November 15th and it may or may not be extended.

For additional detailed information contact the National Working With Wood Show, P.O. Box 2518, Redwood City, CA 94064, (415) 366-5033.

BAWA members will recall that Exhibitor's Showcase was the promoter of the April, 1983, Fort Mason *Working With Wood Show*. The Woodworkers' Foundation, created by Fred Damsen of Wood-

/The Japan Woodworker was the producer of that event and, according to a July, 1982, Agreement, responsible for all show expenses.

Large bills from that show remain unpaid and the question of who is responsible for them, be it Exhibitor's Showcase or The Woodworkers' Foundation/Woodline/The Japan Woodworker, has not yet been decided by any court. This uncertainty has reflected on the reputations of both parties.

A survey at the beginning of November of some of the creditors revealed that Fort Mason is suing Exhibitor's Showcase for \$17,000. Greyhound Exhibition Services is still owed \$16,000 by either Exhibitor's Showcase or The Woodworkers' Foundation or both. Sarah Satterlee, a graphic artist, hopes to collect \$1,200 from Exhibitor's Showcase, and *Fine Woodworking* would like to be paid for show ads run early in the year.

That there are still unresolved debts from the Fort Mason Show does not mean that the scheduled Trade Show Center show in 1984 may not be a success. Pam Hazelton of Exhibitor's Showcase said that it is 90% sold out. But BAWA members should be cautious.

The leadership of the Northern California Woodworkers' Association decided to not affiliate with the National Working With Wood Show and BAWA at this time does not have a show committee or exhibition plan.

A further restraint is, of course, the question whether hectic weekend events are the best way to sell woodworking and furniture design. The Fort Mason Show gave us for a few days crowded conditions and a fair measure of frayed nerves and interpersonal conflict.

But some woodworkers were delighted to have been there, made great contacts and would eagerly do such a show again. Others thought it a waste of time. If nothing else we can agree that it is hard for artisans to sell furniture.

John Grew-Sheridan



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

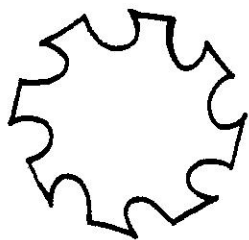
4-30%. If you've ever had a problem with kiln-dried lumber that wasn't or wondered what the moisture content is on air-dried lumber, this is the tool for you. Bring in a sample of wood for a demonstration to see how this tool can work for you.



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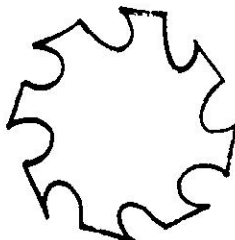
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Byron Montague, Asian Neighborhood Design, 575½ Vallejo, SF.

Shop space will be available in December in the Grew-Sheridan Studio. Call 824-6161 for information.

Membership Application

Bay Area Woodworkers' Association

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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

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