

BAY AREA WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

SERVING BAY AREA WOODWORKERS SINCE 1982

Newsletter

July

2001

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

July 19th 3rd Thursday
Starts 7:00 pm Sharp!

Jay Perrine has another blockbuster for us. Our July 2001 BAWA meeting will be held at the Oakland Museum.

Since the Museum is closed and this will be a private tour, we will be let in and escorted by Suzanne Baizerman, the Curator for Crafts and Decorative Arts. We will not have to pay for the Security people so make sure and thank her for her generous time. Please be at the 10th Street & Fallon Street entrance at or before 7:00 pm.

The place we will meet is at the statue of the bears near the Koi fish pond.

We will have a very short business meeting outside and then be let in about 7:10 pm. So, unfortunately Show and Tell will have to be again postponed until the August meeting. This will be a short meeting.

The exhibit we will see is called Made in Oakland: The furniture of Garry Knox Bennett featuring 30 years of work by this Oakland craftsman. We will get to tour the exhibit with the Curator for Crafts and Decorative Arts, Suzanne Baizerman AND Garry Knox Bennett himself. Seldom can we have someone speak to us and show us their work spanning many years all in one location. This exhibit covers 12,000 square feet and includes 80 large pieces and 60 smaller ones. Get ready for size, Garry, now 67 years old and 6 feet 9 inches tall often wears cowboy boots which makes him even taller. Garry is outspoken and is very quick with his comments and doesn't need a microphone to

See **MEETING NOTES**, page 3

Directions:

From the Bay Bridge: Follow the signs to 580 East. Take 980 west to downtown Oakland exit at the Jackson Street ramp, and proceed straight on the exit road to the third light (Oak). Turn left and go five blocks to Oak and 10th St. Turn right on 10th, go one block to Fallon.

From the South: Take 880 north to the Oak St. exit. Turn right on Oak and go four blocks to Oak and 10th. Turn right on 10th, go one block to Fallon.

From the East: Take Highway 24 or 580 to 980 West. Take 980 West to downtown Oakland at the Jackson Street ramp, and proceed straight on the exit road to the third light (Oak). Turn left and go five blocks to Oak and 10th. Turn right on 10th, go one block on Fallon.

From Marin County: Take the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, following signs to Oakland. You will be travelling on Highway 17/880. At Golden Gate Fields the highway merges with Highway 80. Continue past Berkeley exits to the 580 East fork (Hayward/Stockton). Exit at 980 West (downtown Oakland). Take 980 to Jackson Street exit. Go straight on the ramp to the third light (Oak). Turn left on Oak. Go five blocks to Oak and 10th. Turn right on 10th, go one block to Fallon.

Parking: The museum garage will be closed. There is parking on 10th St. behind the Kaiser Convention Center. Or on-street parking if available.

BART: Go to Lake Merritt station. Exit at 9th St. and walk down 9th St, with the one-way flow of traffic, one block to Fallon. Turn left one block to 10th St.

See **MAP**, page 3

From Our President: **Linda Salter**

"That was some meeting last month-and as close as most of us will ever get to the "rich and famous". Well worth the drive through a very interesting neighborhood. We didn't have time for show and tell and I feel bad for those of you who brought things to share. We will not have Show and Tell at the July meeting (See the **THIS MONTH'S MEETING** column) but I hope you bring them next month. I love seeing what you're making. Speaking of making things, I hope some of you have started to give some thought to making toys for our toy contest this fall. I've had so many ideas that I just have to narrow them down. I hope this gets as many entries as our box contest which seems to be doing well. Well, I've gotta go. The weather is warm and my shop, being at the bottom of a three-story house, is cool and calling to me. "

Last Month's Meeting

As compiled from notes from
Craig Mineweaser, Secretary
Mike Bray, Editor (Retired)
and unidentified others

There was no Business Meeting, Announcements or Show and Tell at this meeting.

We would like to welcome Greg Rice of San Francisco who is a professional. He can volunteer some time.

Main Program

Our meeting took place at Joinery Structures in Oakland. It was such a large place that after hearing the main speaker give us a brief overview, we broke up into groups to tour the facility. As a result we essentially dispensed with our regular business meeting. The tour was well worth it - Joinery Structures is a very special place.

Our main program began at 7pm. We omitted our usual Show and Tell and most of our business meeting so that everyone would have time to tour the operation at Joinery Structure. Ed Russzel gave a short introduction to the company. He then introduced Jay, who learned woodworking on the job and has slowly taken over other tasks such as marketing and sales. Drew is the facility manager. Ed then introduced the owner of the company, Paul Discoe who gave a short talk on Joinery Structures. He said they are "general contractors specializing in Japanese timber frame buildings." They have designed and built many commercial and residential structures in the Bay Area including the residence of a well known CEO who lives on the S. F. Peninsula. Paul said compared to the European style of timber framing, the Japanese style uses dimensionally stable, dry, square, soft woods. "Each wood has it's own characteristics: White Cedar is good for posts, Red Cedar for planks, while Fir is used for lintels."

Between the shop crew and the field crew, about 50 people are employed at Joinery Structures including the field crew, the shops and the design studio. They have a shop foreman, sub-foreman, and milling foreman as well as individual workers, some of whom do "bench work" to prepare the timber for the building. Jobs are assigned to individuals to carry through. We saw some full size drawings at some of the benches as well as a full size mock up of a special window construction for one house. They hire those "with a love of wood and a sensitivity (for working it) and the more experienced staff teaches them. They even occasionally hold Saturday classes at the shop to teach the newer employees. Upstairs the design department draws, details and models the building and its pieces. They create a cutting list. Each piece of wood is then specifically chosen, cut, milled, oiled, wrapped and sent to the job site for installation. Paul said that although similar designs in Japan are seldom oiled, in this country we can't resist touching the wood, so they use an oil finish to protect the wood from hands and feet.

At some sites they have worked for years building multiple structures. For example, their main client has had them on one project for six years with no end in sight. They are not only handling the Japanese style buildings but the Civil Engineering stuff as well, such as the man-made lake and the bridge that spans it. They are even supposed to do the furniture for this huge project. Maybe BAWA can help in that endeavor. They only use very high quality lumber products, often starting with round logs, and mill it to produce beautiful lumber and eventually beautiful structures. They usually cut the material a year or more before they intend to use it, so that it can dry slowly. A few blocks away we also toured their sawing operation at their other shop. This is the area Ed runs, so he gave us the tour here. Several different species of logs were piled high all around a large portable band saw mill. They are just completing the set up of the conveyor lines, saws, etc. in one of the warehouses here for a permanent sawmill operation. Since they are milling logs, they will soon start selling some of their milled materials to the public, both slab cuts and specialty chunks. They also mill for other customers. Mike Bray had two Redwood trees milled there last year. Craig Mineweaser had a Walnut log milled there. Mike had plenty of wood to replace his fence but Craig was frustrated by metal spikes in his log. He had to give up on milling it.

Paul says, "Machines are good for heavy work only." People are good for finish (milling) the lumber and making right angles. They generally cut to within 1/8" of the line and then finish the rest by hand. They do not use sandpaper. Everything is either hand-planed or machine-planed on something called a Super Surfacer. Most of the stationary power machines have been set up to do a specific job. What few machines they have are very expensive, high quality ones that do precise work. We watched a planer for example that zipped a 1x8 board through at a pretty high rate of feed and took off a wide shaving so thin you could clearly see your hand through it. Some specialty machines they've made themselves as they don't exist. For example, to plane large timbers, they set up a track on the floor and suspended a portable planer over it on a rolling carriage. The lumber to be planed is laid between these tracks and the plane is wheeled over the top. At other times, these same tracks are also used to roll carriages loaded with lumber into the adjacent drying kiln. They also have one very large room devoted just to warehousing drying stacks of stickered lumber awaiting final drying and milling. For example for one project, they are using 110,000 board feet of Port Orford Cedar for posts and 6,000 square feet of Sitka Spruce for ceiling paneling, and it came from one tree. The list of astounding facts is long. Can you imagine the miles of Kraft paper used to wrap each piece? We think you get the idea.

This was an impressive demonstration from start to finish of how logs become finely detailed structural works of art for Japanese-style buildings. The planning and the operation may not be of the Normandy invasion caliber but it probably surpasses Desert Storm! What a challenge to preserve 16th century style while serving 21st century demands. Thanks very much to Paul, Ed and the other employees of Joinery Structures for a very informative evening! What a place!

MEETING NOTES

Continued from Page 1

be heard. From the introduction in his book: "Garry has evolved from a rebellious self-taught woodworker to become one of the country's most important and influential furniture makers." Originally a sculptur, Bennett continues to use organic forms. A wavy line, cut with a band saw, is characteristic of his many pieces. He pioneered the use of aluminum, brass, steel and Formica in furniture. Bennett was educated at the California College of Arts and Crafts and considers himself a craftsman. His work is mainly sold through galleries on the east coast and many museums have one or more pieces of his work in their collections.

ADDED NOTES

Garry and Sylvia Bennett are willing to offer us (that night only) the Made In Oakland book at 25% off. He will also personally sign the copy. We will be buying them from the Bennetts and not from the Museum Shop. The regular price is \$64.50 so bring cash or a check if you want to buy the book. The club will buy several to be raffled off at later meetings.

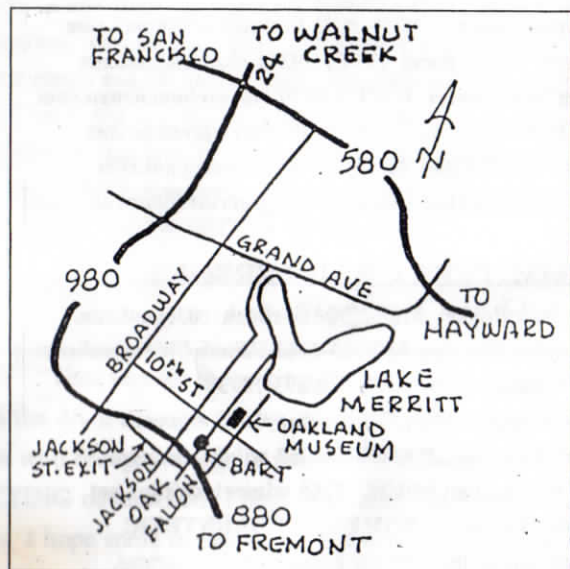
You can find more information by going to www.museumca.org. Choose the Exhibitions option.

From David Brannam who received it from a friend at his retirement. It is loosely based on Chuang-Tzu's words.

"The Woodworker

Ch'ing, the woodworker belonging to the court, carved a bell stand out of wood. When it was finished it was a wonderful work of art, and the viewers thought it to be something supernatural. The Duke of Lu saw it and asked Ch'ing, "What technique could it be to produce such?"

Ch'ing replied: I am a mere mechanic and do not know of any special



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art. But I have one thing to say. When I am about to work on a bell stand, I try not to waste my spirit (ch'i). I fast in order to preserve serenity of mind. After three days I cease to cherish any desire for prize, emolument, or official glory. After five days the ideas of praise or no praise and the question of workmanship depart therefrom. After seven days I attain to a state of absolute serenity, forgetting that I have a body and four limbs. At that moment, I forget that I am working for the court. My sole concern is about my work and nothing of extenal interest disturbs me. I now enter the woods and select the most suitable trees whose natural frame harmonizes with my inner nature. I know then that I can work out my bell stand, I then apply my hands to the work. When all these conditions are not fulfilled I do not work. For I perceive that it is heaven [in Nature] that unites with heaven [in Man]. It is probably due to this fact that my finished product is suspected to be supernatural."



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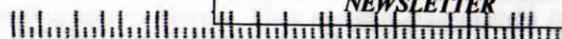
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NEWSLETTER

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Important Dates

August

16th - BAWA meeting in Foster City.
Main Program Dr. John R. Shelly of the UC Wood Lab
At Last -Show and Tell. Bring everything!

September

Jay is working to bring us another great program.

October

Jigs & Fixtures - Bring your handy helpers. Make a scale model if you have to or bring the real thing.

December

13th - Annual Christmas party and gift exchange
The Mist Room- Foster City

Submission Deadline:

First Friday of every month

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BAWA Newsletter - July 2001 Edition

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Librarian: PLEASE! SOMEONE VOLUNTEER!

For questions or information about BAWA programs,
please contact Jay Perrine