



NORTHWEST CORNER WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

June, 2009

Next Meeting: June 2, Hillcrest Park Lodge

7:00PM General Meeting

1717 South 13th Street, Mount Vernon

Phone: 360-770-7203 or 360-387-4174

I-5 exit 226 (Kincaid Street Exit). Go East up the hill. This is Broadway Street. Continue on Broadway to S 13th Street (which is about 5 to 6 blocks from the freeway). Turn right (south) onto South 13th and go about 6 blocks. The park is on the right. Turn into the park, the parking lot is in front of the lodge.

May Meeting Reflects Membership Growth to 95 Woodworking Enthusiasts

A large turnout for the **Jim Taylor** boat building presentation gave significant meaning to the May meeting that marks the advent of Spring and a cessation of NCWA educational classes for the season. Remaining class projects are **Cec Braden's** popular "Build a Workbench" and two finishing classes by **Phil Choquette** to be given at **Mike New's** shop in June.

Another shop tour in June will send members into lower Skagit and Island Counties to visit four of our member's shops in the Stanwood and Camano Island areas. The



Jim Taylor Builds a Dream

always popular picnic with **Laura and Val Matthews** has been moved to July instead of August and will be hosted this year by the Woodturners. As in the past, there will be no NCWA general meeting in August.

Gene Benson plans to hold a series of wood raffles at the next several meetings. He is offering white oak lumber, boards that measure 3-1/2 to 4 inches thick, 3 to 4 inches in width, and averaging 8 feet in length. The wood will be offered several boards at a time starting with the next general meeting. So bring your dollar bills and join the fun!

The joint woodworkers and woodturners picnic, Saturday afternoon, July 25th, on the Matthews' beautiful lawn and garden

setting will feature a cook-out sponsored by the Turners. Chief cook and bottle-washer **Bob Doop** will again take charge of the food preparation duties and the Turners will set up some of their lathes to demonstrate how they make spinning tops.

Meanwhile, another silent auction will be held along the driveway where members can bid on woodworking tools and materials that others wish to be rid of. So all you beginners can find something of value at a decent price.

The Woodturners will have a booth at the Anacortes art festival on August 7, 8, and 9, where they will demonstrate woodturning techniques and offer their turnings for sale. We have been invited to join them if we have small items to sell. Consult with **Bob Doop** if you have plans to do so.

Two tables were at the forefront of **Bring 'n Brag** projects exhibited at the May meeting. **Jim Sickler's** tall table, or stand, featured a thick, square top in cherry, finished in tung oil and polished to a mirror likeness with wax. The thin, square legs were joined with excellent mortise and tenon work.

Another table from new member **Bill Rawls** got our attention due to the thick natural maple slab that topped a three-legged support. The top, almost three inches thick has a natural configuration and was clear finished to reveal its beauty. **Gary Weyers** was at it again with his scroll expertise. This time Gary had a framed piece of work, a woodworking montage that exhibited his clever saw skills. – Jay Geisel

Exquisite Classic Catboat is Built by Anacortes Woodworker Jim Taylor

President **Jeff O'Donnell** turned the meeting over to **Jim Bucknell** who introduced our speaker for the evening. It was a real treat to meet **Jim Taylor** and hear his tale about the building of a dream.

It was truly a “Dream Boat.” The urge to build this particularly classic Herreshoff design nipped at Jim Taylor’s thoughts for years. He literally couldn’t blank it from his mind. He had to build it! And after two years of work and thousands of hours in construction, his extraordinary “Dream Boat” sailed the waters off Anacortes on September 21, 2008. It is an incredible accomplishment.



The Dream in Motion.

We had an opportunity last month to meet Jim and hear his once-in-a-lifetime adventure into the boat building world. This was a massive effort in craftsmanship, time, and money. It required motivation and dedication to undertake the building of an 1889 Nat Herreshoff “Coquina” catboat/yawl and make it to the original plan. Jim’s talk was illustrated with a series of slides that documented the work.

The “Coquina” was Herreshoff’s favorite boat and an unusual one at that. It is two-masted with a regular catboat mainmast stepped at the bow, but with a mizzenmast at the stern. The mainsail and long boom at the bow are balanced by a mizzen sail and boom set ahead of the lazarette. At midships are three thwarts (crosspieces used to hold the gunwals apart, as a seat in a rowboat) with tholepins (a holder attached to the gunwale of a boat that holds an oar in place and acts as a fulcrum for rowing) and a pair of long sweeps (long oars) for auxiliary power. The hull is lapstraked with an overall length just under 16 feet.



The Original “Coquina” at anchor
in New England

Jim wanted to make his “Coquina” in the traditional manner. Instead of gluing the strakes together as some of today’s builders choose to do, he riveted them with bronze fastenings as specified in the original plan. Steam bending and complex building methods were required throughout construction. The masts are carved and tapered and stepped into secure holders that make stays and other rigging unnecessary. Materials included eastern cedar and white oak. The split rig design gives balance to the boat in various weather conditions

and, with the mizzen set, allows the boat to head into the wind for setting or lowering the mainsail. He sought help from another Anacortes craftsman boatbuilder, Jay Powell, and it was in Jay’s shop where “Coquina” took shape.

Members of a few years ago will remember a visit we made to Jay Powell’s shop when he and a few friends were under contract to build a reproduction of an ancient Norwegian vessel using the traditional tools and materials of those times for an upcoming TV historical series.

The sheer enjoyment that comes from building something so worthwhile with your own hands is what woodworking, and boat building, is all about. Jim Taylor’s successful challenge sets a wide gulf between the dreamers and the doers. This is a true reproduction of a very fine boat. – Jay Geisel

Tots for Tots- June 2009

The Toys for Tots program is moving along real well this year. **Val Matthew’s** group has around 70 pull – grasshoppers well underway. Next we hope to get a number of pull – crocodiles made. Lastly we hope to make a few bags of small cars to take to shopping centers, stores, Costco, etc., just to handout to little kids. Can’t wait for December.

John Gruenewald, Jim Zielinski and I have 20 cradles in progress with **Kathy and Don Gatza** coming aboard. I am amazed at the gains being made as the result of the new people’s input questions and suggestions. I’m learning more than the students are. It proves the value of teaming up with other woodworkers no matter the skill level. Plus for me it is great fun to help others become better woodworkers and end up a far better woodworker myself.

Nick Van and Dwain Colby are working on, can you believe this, float plane rockers. They have to get a picture of this into the newsletter ASAP. The

wood was donated from Cascade Lumber located in Stanwood/Camano Island. I can't wait to see the end result.

Glenn Koontz and **Ken LaMarche** are into the teaching/ learning easels. This is a real big winner with the kids. I would hope others working on or planning to work on toys would let me know of their game plans and progress.

Lastly, I know many of you cannot attend the meetings or work on toys, but want to be an active participant in the Toys for Tots program. By far, the major source of toys for the program comes from the financial donations made by many, many individuals. Last year the Detachment spent about \$24,000 on toys.

By adding your donation to Toys for Tots through the club, we can help more kids. Send your donation to **Doug Duehning**, our treasurer and the money will go into the Toys for Tots fund to be given to the Marine group at the December meeting. All funds donated (100 %) stay in our region and are used to buy toys. No money is diverted for other purposes.

So, get aboard. Share the fun. Get involved with Toys for Tots. – Gene Benson

Shop Tour - Saturday, June 6

The club's next shop tour is scheduled for Saturday June 6. We will be touring the Stanwood/Camano Island area and have 4 interesting shops to visit. We'll see 2 larger shops, one with a central dust collection system and the other with a cyclone system about to be installed.

Another shop is a converted garage that makes great use of limited space by putting many of the woodworking machines on casters. The last shop we visit will include tours of the owner's 8-sided home built from the ground up (you don't want to miss this).

The tour will begin at 9:00 and we'll be done by early afternoon. Complete shop descriptions and directions will be e-mailed before the tour and also be available at the June 2 general meeting. Plan to be there and support your fellow woodworkers.
– Gary Danilson

Library Report

Our club library continues to get good use and a number of the new members have commented on how much they appreciate this valuable resource. We can all help out by keeping books for a maximum of 2 months and videos/DVDs for 1 month at a time. If you see a book or DVD listed on the club web page that you would like to reserve, let us know and we can try to have it for you at the next meeting.

Our woodworking magazine recycling box was filled and emptied again at the last meeting. Let's keep it up. If you have old magazines, and you have finished absorbing their content, bring them to share with other club members. If you have woodworking books that you no longer use, bring those along too. This is a great way to make space for all those new publications you get every month.

We are planning to purchase some new DVDs soon. If you have a DVD, or have viewed one that you think is especially good, let us know. If there is a particular book or DVD that you would be interested in and would like to see added to the library, let us know that too. – Gary Danilson

Education Report

This is your last chance to take a class until Fall! There are only two classes left. Both of these will help you decide what type of finish to put on your latest or next project. On **Saturday, May 30**, Phil Choquette will teach an introductory class on finishing. Then, on Saturday, June 13, he will give a more advanced class. Both of these classes will

run from 10:00 AM until noon at Mike New's shop.

We may have a special class on box making in July. Read the next newsletter and check your email for the time and location.

We still need good ideas for classes for next year. **PLEASE, PLEASE, please** send your ideas to me at cerjor@hotmail.com. – Chuck Robertson

Sam Maloof Dies at Age 93

By Janet Eastman - former Los Angeles Times staff writer May 23, 2009

Sam Maloof, a famed California designer and woodworker, has died. He was 93. His work was initially prized for practicality by Southern Californian homeowners in the 1950s. Later collectors and museum curators valued its elegance and timelessness.

Maloof, whose career began six decades ago just as the American modernism movement was becoming popular, put usefulness before artistry and turned down multimillion-dollar offers to mass-produce his original designs. He worked out of his home workshop, shaping hardwood, one part at a time, into rocking chairs, cradles and hutches that were shorn of unnecessary adornments. His hi-fi cabinets, cork-top coffee tables and other modern pieces were instantly praised by home magazine editors and trend-setting interior designers.

Even after Maloof was recognized as an influential pioneer of contemporary California decor, and even as his furniture was reselling for 100 times its original price, Maloof referred to himself simply as a "woodworker." "He was trying to make other people appreciate what it was like to live with a handcrafted object in which there was a kind of union between maker, object and owner," said Jeremy Adamson, who wrote "The Furniture

of Sam Maloof," published in 2001 to coincide with a retrospective exhibition of Maloof's work at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C.

President Carter, a woodwork hobbyist and friend who visited Maloof's home, signed a photograph "to my woodworking hero." Carter and subsequent presidents used Maloof's signature rocking chairs in the White House. Elongated rockers on the chairs look sculptural, like an archer's bow, but they were made for a very practical reason: to keep the chairs from tipping over.

The seventh of nine children born to Lebanese immigrants, Maloof in 1985 became the first craftsman to receive a MacArthur Foundation grant. His designs could not be categorized as Arts and Crafts, modern, Scandinavian or Italian.

The self-taught designer would select a piece of wood — walnut was his favorite because of its texture and durability — and cut out parts freehand on a band saw. Instead of following plans, he matched an image in his head. He refined the shape with hand tools to make the finished piece of furniture comfortable, functional and beautiful. He carefully considered the appearance of every angle of the piece, even chair backs and cabinet interiors, as well as grain pattern and his innovative joinery.

Pieces were assembled without nails or metal hardware. Even hinges and underbracing were wood. Once, to test the strength of the joints for a set of chairs, he made a prototype and dropped it from the roof of his garage onto his driveway. The joints survived.

"Taut and muscular and yet most elegant" is how Jonathan Leo Fairbanks, curator emeritus of American decorative sculpture for Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, described Maloof's furniture in 2002. Later, Fairbanks told a Times reporter: "He is mighty generous with his time and talent in

many ways. Sam is drenched with more humanity or love of humanity and out-flowing generosity than can be found in a dozen other people. Don't you sense this 'soul' in his works?"

Singer Ray Charles also felt Maloof's presence in his work. "Ray Charles couldn't see my furniture," Maloof told a reporter. "But he said he could feel that it had soul. When he asked about my rocker [at a friend's house], his host told him, 'That's a chair made by Sam Maloof.' Ray ran his hands over the wood shouting, 'I know this man! I know this man!' On his next visit, the first thing Ray Charles said was, 'I'd like to touch that furniture again that Sam Maloof made.'

He turned his 1983 autobiography, "Sam Maloof: Woodworker," into a how-to book with more than 300 photographs. It was followed by a popular instructional video, "Sam Maloof: Woodworking Profile," by Taunton Press, which also publishes *Fine Woodworking* magazine.

When admirers made pilgrimages to Maloof's home workshop, he would interrupt progress on orders that were backlogged for years and take them on an energetic tour of his six-acre property. Inside two large buildings, he stored a half-million board feet of rare lumber and timber from trees that were hundreds of years old, including Macassar ebony, Brazilian rosewood, tiger-stripe maple and Claro walnut.

There are two houses on the property. Until his death, he shared one with his second wife, Beverly Wingate Maloof, whom he married in 2001, three years after Freda Maloof died. Beverly Maloof acted as a gracious hostess at fundraisers and art receptions on the Maloof property and also improved the gardens there.

The other home, which he lived in with Freda and their two children from 1953 until her death, is "a living monument to the creative impulse," biographer Adamson wrote. Working on

Saturdays for four decades, Maloof transformed a "dingbat" bungalow in a lemon grove into a timbered 22-room house with a hand-carved spiral staircase, door latches shaped like miniature golf clubs and a treehouse loft.

The home, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is open to the public, was moved three miles in 1999 to make room for the 210 Freeway extension. It attracts 3,000 visitors a year.

Maloof's business, which he started in 1949, didn't make a profit for 20 years. In the beginning, he was the designer, builder and deliveryman. Like other studio furniture makers such as Wharton Esherick and George Nakashima, Maloof had to put in long days at his workshop. Even with three longtime assistants — Larry White, Mike Johnson and David Wade — and the help of his son, Slimen, he would produce only 50 to 100 pieces a year, fewer than a small factory would make in a day.

He never wavered from his contemporary design, even when wood furniture lost favor in the plastic-and-chrome 1960s, '70s and '80s. He said the coldness of factory-made furniture could not compare in warmth and character to wood that a craftsman worked on from start to finish.

Samuel Solomon Maloof was born Jan. 24, 1916, in the farming community of Chino. Sam spoke Spanish and Arabic before learning English. His lettering was very precise, which helped him earn money as a calligrapher. While in elementary school, Maloof used kitchen knives to carve wooden toy guns, swords and trucks, and to make a breadboard for his mother. At Chino High School, he took courses in mechanical drawing and simple carpentry, and made plywood cabinets for his family's house. He graduated in 1934 and initially found work as a graphic artist.

After serving in the U.S. Army from 1941 to 1945, where he drew artillery emplacements while stationed in the Aleutian Islands, he worked as an

assistant to Millard Sheets, a well-known painter, designer and head of the art department at Scripps College in Claremont.

In 1947, outside Sheets' classroom, he met Alfreda Ward, a UCLA graduate, ex-Navy WAVE and painter who spent eight years teaching arts and crafts on Indian reservations in New Mexico and Montana. They married the next year. Freda introduced him to Native American art and together they socialized in the artists' colony nurtured by the Claremont Colleges. Today, the nonprofit Sam and Alfreda Maloof Foundation for Arts and Crafts has an impressive collection of Native American paintings, pottery and weavings as well as contemporary art.

Malooof became a furniture maker out of necessity. The newlyweds didn't have money to furnish their first small house in Ontario, so Malooof designed and built an efficient room divider with an attached table and benches. He used discarded fir plywood and oak shipping crates and borrowed tools. Soon friends asked for copies of his no-frills furniture.

When Freda, who handled the finances, complained about Malooof's meager salary from Sheets, Malooof quit in 1949 — the year his son Slimen was born — to start his business. In 1954, their daughter Marilou was adopted. Within two years of being self-employed, Better Homes and Gardens published photographs and plans of Malooof's furniture to show readers how to decorate economically. Also in 1951, Malooof got his first important client, industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss, who produced the Singer sewing

machine, Hoover vacuum cleaner and other iconic appliances. Malooof was flattered that Dreyfuss wanted him to not only make 25 pieces for Dreyfuss' new contemporary home in Pasadena but to also design them.

In 1957, the American Craft Museum (then the Museum of Contemporary Crafts) in New York displayed Malooof's work in its first exhibition of studio-craft furniture. The Museum of Arts & Design in New York owns a version of the space-saving cradle-hutch he built for his grandchild. It combines a baby's bed that swings, a pull-out changing board and storage space. His furniture is also in permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

He was described by the Smithsonian Institution as "America's most renowned contemporary furniture craftsman" and People magazine dubbed him "The Hemingway of Hardwood."

But his business card always said "woodworker." "I like the word," he once said, his eyes brightening behind large, owl-eyed glass frames. "It's an honest word."

(Sam Malooof's obituary was edited to fit the space available in this newsletter -- editor)

In deference to Sam Malooof's passing, 'Fiction and Fact' will not be published this month. Check your next newsletter to determine if the editor has run out of material.

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COMING EVENTS

June 2	7:00 PM	Membership Meeting	Hillcrest Lodge, Mount Vernon
June 6	9:30 AM	Shop Tour	See Newsletter Article
June 17	7:00 PM	Board Meeting	Farmhouse Restaurant on Hwy 20
June 20	Noon	Newsletter Deadline	Nick's Email (nvan@verizon.net)
July 7	7:00 PM	Membership Meeting	Hillcrest Lodge, Mount Vernon

The NCWA is open to all interested woodworkers, and was formed to promote high standards in woodworking, woodworking education and showcasing local woodworking. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM. Location is announced in the newsletter. Dues are \$30 per year, payable to NCWA, 150 Swinomish Dr., Laconner, WA 98257. Newsletter submissions are welcomed and are due by the 3rd Saturday of the month. Submit to NCWA Newsletter, 24 Jacks Pass Court, Camano Island, WA 98282 or Email to nvan@verizon.net or call 360-387-4174.

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