



Northwest Corner Woodworkers Association

December, 2002

Next Meeting: Larry Tomovick's Shop

December 3, 2002 7:00 pm

3815 "N" Ave. Anacortes (360)243-4580

When you come into Anacortes on Highway 20 and come to the T intersection turn left on Commercial Avenue. Go two blocks (on the right) and turn left onto Longview Avenue. Go two blocks (on your right) until you hit "N" Ave. That's where I live, on the corner of N Avenue and Longview.

A Report on Arts Alive 2002

Arts Alive 2002 did not disappoint buyers, sellers, or lookers. The end-of-year, heralded event in LaConner again sparked the holiday shopping season for local merchants and gave several organizations like our own a venue to showcase the artistic creations and craftsmanship of its members. We enjoyed mingling with the appreciative men and women who trudged up the hill to the Garden Club for another visit with the woodworkers and woodturners of northern Washington.

It proved to be a chilly weekend for all, made more so by the fact that the building was unheated. Half a dozen electric heaters went unused because they dimmed the lights. But the energy was with the people and no one suffered. Only a few of our members made pocket money, I'm sure, but overall it was a fine experience. Craftsmanship was high; exhibits were rich in talent from turners and woodworkers alike, but furniture pieces dominated, using half of the available showroom to become the mother-lode of this year's exhibition.

Member Displays.

End tables, coffee tables, stands, cabinets, benches, a rocking chair and a kitchen chopping block were on display, but not all were offered for sale. Dave Johnson and Gary Holloman created a pair of attractive upholstered benches just for this event; Bob Bates offered a couple well-crafted tables and a heavy-duty chopping block for sale; Val Mathews brought two lovely cherry pieces, a cabinet and an end table; Larry Tomovick displayed his latest creations, a coffee table and an oval end table in handsome birdseye maple accented by walnut striping; and I added my just-finished large oval coffee table in bubinga and birdseye maple, which adhered to Larry's inspired design of using contrasting color woods inset in the legs and aprons.

Judy Hemmenway set up shop in one corner of the large room with her beautiful duck boxes commanding the attention of all.

Her Christmas tree was draped with other objects fashioned for the season, and those clever mini-reindeer forms were created by husband Bob. On the next table Larry White displayed his attractive group of cribbage boards in multi-colored woods while on the other side of the room the Northwest Woodturners manned tables loaded with segmented bowls, ornate hollow vessels, tree ornaments, stocking-stuffing bottle toppers and other turned objects. Nearby, Vern Tator had set up four of his fabulous collection of exotic wood doors carried by ferry all the way from his Friday Harbor workshop. Phil Choquette held the greeter's position by the front door, busy as always demonstrating cutting techniques on his Hegner scroll saw, encouraging some of the less timid to try their hand. Phil sold most of his colorful hardwood cutting boards, mini-pallets, and scroll-sawn animals.

On other tables scattered throughout the hall were top-quality chessboards from Bob Doop; a treasure chest by John Gruenewald; handcrafted boxes, jewelry cases, fly nets and lure boxes from talented Lyle Hand; cutting boards and boxes crafted by Bob Bates; an all-cedar garden arbor (a towering Garden Club centerpiece) from the outdoor collection created by Rick Anderson; and my small table of inexpensive wood tools, kitty butter spreaders, and turned objects.

Outside, under one of the two tents near the entrance to the Garden Club, Rocky MacArthur was constantly hard at work demonstrating his expertise with the chainsaw, delighting the visitors with his bear carvings. In the adjoining tent, Al Tucker was on hand again with his very large collection of carved birdhouses, feeders, and other cedar products. Conspicuous by their absence this year were Fred Holder turning tops on a mini lathe, Jim Hume working at his carver's bench, and Tony Lowe's exhibit of historic hand woodworking tools in brass, iron and steel that first graced the woodshops of early America. An open can of red paint that spilled across the top of Val Mathews cherry cabinet proved to be the laugh of the day. The innovative creation, all in wood, was credited to Gerrit van Ness, a member of the woodturning club. A structure by Jim Fox brought a

smile from everyone. His huge surveyor's transit topped by a flashing laser projector almost touched the Garden Club ceiling.

Great Demonstration

But the hit of this year's show was inside the building and next to the kitchen door. It was billed as "Tool Sharpening 401" and was certainly one of the Club's grandest demonstrations for woodworkers, by woodworkers. John Gruenewald, Dave Blair, and Ed Pysher put steel to stone every minute of the two-day event. They showed, to large crowds gathered in front of the Club's collaborative workbench, the proper way to sharpen chisels, plane irons, knives, skewers and other tools using all the methods available today. The trio often demonstrated at the same time using ceramic stones, waterstones, oilstones, diamond stones, and sandpaper on plate glass. They used various devices to obtain the correct angles and honed their sharpened edges on leather strops. One of the interesting determinations stemming from two-day's work was that oil stones and sandpaper on glass were slow means to a keen edge. The clear winner was the 600/1200 two-faced diamond stone. It was an informative, crowd-pleasing attraction for Arts Alive 2002. The Club raffle of a spare 9/11 donation U. S. Flag display case added \$100 to our treasury while our congratulations went to winner Vera Gruenewald.

Conclusions.

So, was this year's Arts Alive a success? In the larger sense, it certainly was. Business-wise, maybe not. But that's not the reason our members come back year after year to face long commutes, poor parking, crowds, lots of standing and talking with strangers and sometimes indifferent buyers. What makes the show inviting and brings us together is that unique sharing of creativeness in our fellow craftsmen. The enthusiasm and high spirits were pure enjoyment whether or not we made a sale. It is the culmination of month's of effort to complete a project in time for the show and without that spur many projects would be set aside to be finished later, maybe. To those few that make a living at craftwork, we share your concerns. This wasn't a block-buster year. The crowds weren't there as in seasons past and the economy wasn't good enough to steer buyers to the big-ticket items. But less expensive things did sell. Phil, Judy, John, Lyle, and I managed a few bucks. My items averaged about \$3, except for the woodturnings. I sold 26 items for just under a C-note, which I promptly spent on a couple items that I favored. I don't have information on how well others did.

Acknowledgements.

Thanks go to Judy Hemmenway for her excellent direction and organizational help. It couldn't have been better. Phil Choquette and Nick Van also worked many hours to put the show together. And all of us who made forays into the kitchen for sus-

tenance owe a debt of gratitude to Emily, Rocky's partner, for her hospitality and kindness. The food was abundant and tasty and the coffee was always fresh and hot. Applause, too, for the sponsorship we always receive from Wood Merchant owner Stuart Hutt. Without his generosity there would be no Garden Club exhibition.

Submitted by Jay Geisel, Secretary

Tour d'Elegance

Elegance describes the craftsmanship we found at the *Northwest Gallery of Fine Woodworking* in downtown Seattle. The visit was the high-point of our special tour of woodworking resources on a mild October Saturday. The beauty, scope and variety of the woodcraft was overwhelming. Everywhere you could hear someone say, "Hey, look at this!" as they delighted in finding another treasure. "Humbling," said some while others retorted, "Inspiring!"

We enjoyed seeing the work of two of our fellow north county woodturners on display. Vern Liebrant's large bowls graced the tops of several display cases while near the gallery entrance three of Geritt van Ness' charred, textured, and iridescently dyed bowls were on view under glass. It was a grand exhibition. One stunning walnut dining table was inset with rivulets of small veneer that dripped over the table's edges and ran down the graceful arced legs to the floor. (Price \$11,700.) "No cameras, please!" It was noon and we took lunch in the heart of Pioneer Square where there were many deli's and cafes to serve us, all within a few blocks of the Gallery.

The scheduled tour was not without a hitch or two. A raffle was held on the Southbound leg to raise a shortage to pay the bus company and provide a tip for the driver. Seven prizes, gift certificates and merchandise donated by *Woodcraft*, *Rockler*, and *Hardwicke*, were awarded to the winners.

Edensaw's veneer operation was scrubbed three days earlier when they announced their intention of closing for inventory. *Woodcraft* was substituted, and it was a good choice because the store was showcasing a special weekend for woodworkers; they had a dozen factory demonstrators on board for the day while the store offered special pricing on many woodworking tools and accessories. When we also were granted a 10% discount, the feeding frenzy began. Shop vacuums, clamps, and diamond sharpening stones were popular buys. It took two hours to finally break free. Earlier that morning upon arriving at *Crosscut Hardwoods*, we found the showroom closed for inventory and accepted an invitation to return after one o'clock for the promised guided tour. From there it was a short trip to *Woodcraft* where we spent the rest of the morning. We finally

took the *Crosscut Hardwoods* conducted tour in the early afternoon and made our selections from the scores of exotic woods on display. Our hosts treated us with 15% discounts on all purchases.

The *Rockler* store on Stone Avenue was the first stop after the noon break. Here again we were offered discounts to go along with the already attractive prices of an advertised sale. Most popular items were the *Rockler*-developed sturdy 90-degree clamping tools. Slowed by rush-hour traffic on Walhaven streets our driver, Kathi, nevertheless got us to our last stop in good time. *Hardwicke*'s new and used tool supply house is a place you gotta see and you still won't believe it. Its narrow aisles crowded with merchandise hanging from floor to ceiling and the many twists and turns leaves one disoriented. We almost left one of our guests behind when he failed to find his way out of the maze. At each stop I sounded a train whistle, purchased from the *Washington Dinner Train* gift shop, about five minutes before we were to re-board the bus. Other than startling nearby shoppers, the whistle had the desired effect.

The trip home seemed to go quickly, perhaps aided by a couple woodworking game quizzes that helped occupy our minds. Prizes were awarded to the top three finishers of each quiz. Val Mathews won a first and Dave Johnson won third place in both contests.

We dropped off two couples (Woodturners) at the Arlington exit and arrived at the parking lot "tired but happy" only a few minutes after 5 p.m. My thanks go to Lyle Hand, Laura Mathews, and Gary Holloman for their valuable assistance and to the other 16 passengers who made this first NCWA Bus Tour so memorable.

Submitted by Jay Geisel



Inlaid coffee table by Jay Geisel.



An unusual project submitted by someone from the turners group.



Sharpening demonstrators John Gruenwald and Dave Blair chat with Gary Holloman.



Rocky MacArthur focused on his project.

Jake Strauss
 Kiln dried NW Washington hardwood lumber.
 6389 North Star Rd.
 Ferndale, WA 98248, (360)384-3948
 (Sales by appointment only)

Welcome to our new member:

John R. Thomas
 PO Box 1307
 LaConner, WA 98257
 dedange@hotmail.com

Also please make this correction to your roster:
 Lonny Heiner's Email address change to leheiner@fidalgo.net

Don't forget "Bring or Brag", We all do something unique or have something that others would enjoy seeing.

The NCWA was formed to promote high standards in woodworking, woodworking education, and showcasing local woodworking. The NCWA is open to all interested woodworkers.. Dues are \$24 per year, payable to NCWA, 7550 Ershig Rd. Bow, Wa. 98232. Newsletter submissions are welcomed and are due by the 18th of the month to NCWA Newsletter, 925 South Hills Dr. Bellingham, Wa., 98226. Or call (360) 734-9473. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. Location announced in the newsletter

2000-20001 Officers:

President	Gary Holloman	(360) 855-3376
VP	Jim Fox	(360) 647-7039
Sec.	Jay Geisel	(360) 466-3908
Treas.	Laura Matthews	(360) 757-7730
Library	Tom Chartier	(360) 734-9473
Programs	Larry Tomovick	(360) 293-4580
Editor	Tom Chartier	(360) 734-9473

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 Bellingham Wa. 98226.

