

Northwest Woodworkers Association

THE SAWDUST NEWS



September 2019

An association for woodworkers of all skill levels to share their common interest

The Next Meeting

Date: **October 24, 2019 at 6:30 PM**

Location: **Pratt Fine Arts Center**

1902 S. Main St.

Seattle, WA 98144

Program_Highlight: **Pratt Fine Art Center Facility Tour**

Host: **Dan Morgan**

September 2019 Meeting Highlights

Meeting Photos by Scott Wilson

Meeting Notes by Tim Newsome

The **September 2019** meeting of the **Northwest Woodworkers Association** was held on **Thursday, September 26, 2019** at **Woodcraft Supply**. We want to express our appreciation to the **Woodcraft** staff for providing a wonderful venue and setup arrangements for this meeting. We really appreciate your long-standing support of the **Association**.



Show 'N' Tell



David Ord showed us a piece of the “mystery” wood he brought back from his recent trip to Georgia, as well as a piece of wood milled from the small log. So far none of our members have been able to identify this wood species.



He also showed us photos of some of his recent projects, including a wooden toy car made from Sapele and Canary Wood, some Maple and Walnut dominoes and storage box, and a beautifully crafted classic wooden work bench with a Douglas Fir top.



In addition, he mentioned that while in Georgia, he visited the Highland Hardware and Osborne Wood Products stores, noting that if anyone visits that part of the world, to be sure to visit those places! Should we leave our check books and credit cards home??

Program Highlight Japanese Boat Building



Association Member **Cory Cross** gave us an entertaining and informative presentation about the art of **Japanese Boat Building**. He noted that he had recently attended a workshop at the **Northwest Maritime Center** in Port Townsend, WA, taught by **Douglas Brooks**, to learn some of the classical methods and techniques that have been used by Japanese river boat builders for centuries. Information regarding these workshops may be found at <http://blog.douglasbrooksboatbuilding.com> .

Cory noted that historically, the boat building knowledge has been passed down through successive generations, but that tradition is waning, what with a diminishing demand for hand-made boats. He also noted that there are serious religious rites and traditions observed during the build, including a blessing of the tools before starting construction, a keel laying ceremony, and an on-the-way ceremony prior to launching. Traditional songs are also sung during some of the operations. Each boat incorporates a little shrine, which is sealed and never opened.

The intent of the workshop was to learn these classical Japanese boat building techniques by building a typical wooden Japanese river boat, using only hand tools. The characteristics

of these 200 lb. boats include solid cypress planked sides and bottoms, 1.5 inches thick, with no internal framing except for a dovetailed transverse beam across the center of the boat. The dovetails and bow tie joint reinforcements can be seen in the photo.



Unlike Western boat building techniques, no caulking or sealants are used in the construction, requiring the careful preparation of tight-fitting joints. This is accomplished by a technique called **Suriawase** (saw fitting), in which the adjacent faces of the assembled joints are sawn together using pull saws, providing matching, gap-free joints. Keel and the side-to-keel joints are prepared this way.



One of the methods employed to ensure tight joints is **Kigoroshi** (killing wood), in which the joint member surface is hammered to compress the wood fibers to make the joints fit better, knowing that the wood will swell back to its original dimensions once it gets wet, further tightening the joint fitup.

Another common technique is the use of weights and props to hold and bend the planks into the desired shape. Some of the props extend clear to the building ceiling to provide the downward forces. The keel and transoms are joined with full-width transverse splines to reinforce the joints.





As shown in the photo, the planking which comprises the sides of the boat is attached to the keel and transoms with hand forged steel nails. The wooden components are left unfinished.

Other classical methods and techniques, such as fire bending, and mortising with a ***Tsubanomi*** (sword-hilt chisel) are also employed.

So, the \$64 question now is.....did these methods really work.....and did it leak..... ??



Yup!..... And Nope.....nary a drop.....!! 😊

Thanks, **Cory**, for the fascinating presentation! It is truly amazing what can be accomplished with the right knowledge, skills, and abundant patience, without the use of machine tools! Thanks for taking us along on this adventure.

Notes from the Editor



Such an interesting and entertaining meeting with an encouraging turnout of members and guests! We sincerely appreciate all of you who attended and especially those of you who enriched our meeting with your **Show’N’Tell** project presentations.

With Thanksgiving soon to be upon us bringing cooler weather, it will be great to get back out in our shops to work on those “secret” projects for our upcoming Christmas holiday season. We hope to see them at our December meeting. Gee, does that mean that I won’t have to write a December Newsletter so I won’t spill the beans.....??

As usual, due to these busy holidays, **there will be no meeting in November**. And our December meeting will be moved up to **Thursday, December 5**. Mark your calendars!

Happy and Safe Woodworking,

Paul

Northwest Woodworkers Association Sponsors

We appreciate the generous support provided by our NWWA sponsors, from providing member discounts on purchased items to providing state of the art venues for us to conduct our monthly meetings. Thank you, Sponsors!

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If you have a woodworking-related problem, question, comment, or item that may be of interest to the membership, we encourage you to contact any of the above individuals. We will endeavor to connect you with someone who can help.

In addition, please visit our website: <https://www.nwwoodworkers.org>