

Northwest Woodworkers Association

THE SAWDUST NEWS



May 2019

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

The Next Meeting

Date: August 29, 2019 at 6:30 PM

**Location: Rockler Woodworking – Northgate
832 NE Northgate Way
Seattle, WA 98125**

Program Highlight: Mega Show’N’Tell

May 2019 Meeting Highlights

Meeting Photos by Scott Wilson

Meeting Notes by Tim Newsome

The **May 2019** meeting of the **Northwest Woodworkers Association** was held on **Thursday, May 30, 2019** at **Woodcraft of Seattle**. We want to express our appreciation to **Ron and Michelle Hall** and the **Woodcraft** staff for providing a wonderful venue for this meeting. We really appreciate your long-standing support of the **Association**.



Eighteen members and guests attended this interesting and informative meeting.

Steering Committee Member, Tim Newsome, conducted the meeting.

Show 'N' Tell



Charley Culler showed some fretwork plaques he has been busy making on his scroll saw. Not having used this technique before, he was soliciting some suggestions from the membership regarding potential ways to frame and mount his plaques to enhance the fine fretwork cuts.



He noted that he was considering a light background such as would be produced using a piece of thin MDF, using shadow box frames, and standoffs to provide a silhouette image of the deer.

We hope that **Charlie** will bring the fretwork projects back to our next meeting so that we can admire the finished products.



Dan Cordwell, right, noted that he had recently built a replacement drill press table for his shop and was looking for a home for his old one. **John Gonder**, left, solved his problem and welcomed the new addition to his shop! This is a great example of our membership being resources for one another. Many of us make improvements to our shops or update our equipment from time to time and frequently don't have a handy way to recycle our old equipment into the hands of another woodworker who could use it. We need to remember that we have newer members who are in the process of equipping/upgrading their shops, many times with limited budgets, who would love to have our recycled equipment.



New member, **Jeff Marsden**, who is employed by our meeting's sponsor, **Woodcraft Supply**, gifted each of our members, courtesy of **Woodcraft**, with a very useful **Inkra Marking Rule**. This precision marking tool will come in handy for our future projects. Thanks from of our members to **Ron and Michelle Hall** for this gracious gift.

David Ord, one of our newer members, shared with us that he likes to collect scrap wood for future projects.

Welcome – ya fit right in, **David!**

That said, he showed us a lovely serving tray he had made from solid **Bubinga**, which he noted had very straight grain. He said he used a router jig to form the curved ends which enhanced the appearance of the project. (The light area on the right side of the tray was produced by a slide projector image.)



After much sanding, **David** said that he applied **Danish Oil** to the tray, producing a smooth, satin finish. However, he noted that his wife inadvertently set a cold glass on the tray, producing a water stain ☹️! So, he was soliciting some advice from the membership regarding possible ways to remove the stain and restore the finish. One of the members suggested that he make a search on the internet, as he had seen several discussions on some of the woodworking forums regarding a similar problem. Although it produces a lovely finish appearance, **Danish Oil** is not a very durable finish and frequently requires periodic maintenance. Let us know at a future meeting how you solved this problem, **David**, so that we can all learn something we can use should we encounter a similar circumstance on one our future projects.

Jeff Marsden showed us a kumiko panel he had made, along with several of the jigs required to use this technique. He said this panel was made from **Alaskan Yellow Cedar**, chosen for its light, uniform color and grain pattern, and easy workability. He noted that the panel was carefully crafted with hand tools in such a way that no glue is required to fabricate the panel. Half lap joints and precise angle cutting allow the panel to be assembled with just a friction fit of the individual pieces. Well done, **Jeff**!



Tim Newsome gave us a mini-review of the book, **Understanding Wood, A Craftsman's Guide to Wood Technology** by **R. Bruce Hoadley**. He noted that this updated version is a great, easy to understand woodworking resource that covers a wide variety of subjects. **Tim** expressed his opinion that this volume compares favorably with such common woodworking reference sources as the **Encyclopedia of Wood**, and others. He noted that there is a lot of useful information about the identification of wood species, wood properties, adhesives, finishes, and woodworking technology, including wood composites.

Program Highlight **Making a Wooden Block Plane**

Our speaker for the meeting program presentation was long time member and woodworker, **Herb Stoops**. **Herb** has provided us with many interesting and informative programs over the years covering a wide variety of woodworking subjects and projects. He has also filled the role of the **NWWA Santa Claus** for many years, making and gifting the membership with unique and practical woodworking related tools and accessories at Christmas time. Thanks, **Herb**, for blessing us with your generous spirit, woodworking skills and knowledge, and your adventuresome spirit to try something new.



In that light, **Herb** provided an interesting presentation (and sort of a mini-teaching class) about making your own wooden block plane. Following the basic plan and information published in the article, **"Shop-made Hand Plane"**, **Wood Magazine, Issue 206, September 2011**, coupled

with his own experience and woodworking techniques, he took us on a step-by-step journey of building this useful and practical tool.

Although most of us might think that making a working plane would seem to be a rather daunting task, **Herb** reported that the actual project was quite easy, using basic woodworking tools that most of us have in our shops, and ended up really being a lot of fun!

(Ed. Note: Since the wooden plane fabrication and assembly procedure is well documented in the **Wood** article, I elected to focus on the interesting lessons learned, tips and techniques, and unique features of **Herb's** planes, rather than repeat this information.)

Hardwoods are recommended materials for making the plane bodies/wedges. Hard, dense, woods, such as maple, walnut, IPE, yellow heart, purple heart, zebra wood, and similar species are good choices. This is a great way to use up small pieces of exotic woods which may be lurking in your scrap bin – or more likely hidden away for some future project because of the cost! As can be seen in the photos of **Herb's** planes, lamination of various wood species provides some striking, beautiful results. If you wanted to be even more creative, it would be possible to use some of the colorful artistic veneer laminating techniques so aptly demonstrated for us by **Martha Collins** at our **March 2019** meeting.



For laminating the bodies/wedges, he used an innovative glue product: **Titebond II Fluorescent Wood Glue**. (<https://tooldepot247.com/titebond-ii-fluorescent-wood-glue-16oz-02314>) This glue has similar properties to the conventional **Titebond II** glue except that it has a fluorescent compound added to it which is visible under fluorescent lighting (i.e. “black light”). This property is useful for ensuring that no residual glue remains on the surface of a joint prior to application of the finish.

Herb discovered that enlarging the mouth of the plane by using his jointer to lightly surface the sole of the assembled plane body after lamination gave better results than using the table saw.

He explained that adjustment of the plane blade in a wooden plane is much different than using a conventional commercially made metal plane. Typically, the metal plane designs use some sort of screw mechanism to advance and retract the blade. Blade adjustment on this wooden plane is accomplished by tapping the **body** of the plane from one end or the other with a small hammer. The inertia of the hammer blows causes the blade to slightly move up or down the throat of the plane, advancing or retracting the blade. However, it is important to remember that the plane body is made of wood, which can be damaged by the blows from even a small metal hammer. Consequently, **Herb** recommends the use of a small plastic soft face or dead blow hammer.



Herb was able to purchase the plane blades from several different sources, such as **Ebay**, **Woodcraft**, and others. The 1/4” brass rod was purchased from **McMaster Carr**.

For finishes, **Herb** recommends the use of sprayed (“rattle can”) shellac. It is easy to use, dries fast, and promotes easy re-coating for finish build up or future maintenance. He said he tried water borne finish, but it tended to corrode and discolor the brass rod.

As with all of us, he discovered that things don’t always go the way they are supposed to.....! Early on, while drilling a plane body for the brass rod, he discovered that he had mislocated the hole (**Ed. Note:** Makes me feel better that I am not the only one.....!) **Herb** figured that he could just put a larger diameter plug in the errant hole and re-drill in the correct location. However, after making the repair, he found that the plugged hole, having a different grain pattern and color than the body, ended up looking awful..... like..... a..... plugged hole! Imagine that!!

Ever the innovator, he decided he would disguise the patch by boring a shallow recess with a 3/4” Forstner bit and glue in a thin disc of a matching or contrasting wood grain, centered over the repaired area. And further, he elected to spruce the disc up a bit by decorating it with an ink-stamped image of his favorite bug – a dragon fly, purchased from a selection of rubber stamps from **JoAnn’s Fabrics**.



Hence the birth of **Herb’s Maker Mark**:

This custom distinguishing feature was such a hit with his fellow woodworkers on some of the online forums, that he decided to adopt the **Maker Mark**, located in a prominent place, as an identifier for his future projects. That drilling mishap turned out to be a pretty skookum “mistake”, I’d say!

As gifts to the membership for this presentation, **Herb** built, at his own expense, a series of wooden block planes of many different wood species and combinations, which he presented to the attendees at the meeting. Members were encouraged to select one which was the most pleasing to them. Understandably some folks had trouble deciding which one they liked the best!



Prior to installation, **Herb** sharpened and honed the plane iron of each of these gifted planes. For handling safety, he covered the retracted plane iron with a piece of masking tape – but he brought along a box of Band Aids, just in case any of the members gave the blade the “thumb test”. Fortunately, none of them was required – at least not at the meeting..... !

Being the prolific woodworker that he is, **Herb** estimates that he has made more than **50** planes, which he has gifted to his many woodworking friends around the world. One of them he gifted to a friend in Australia! Rightfully so, the appreciative response to his careful, skillful, innovative woodworking, and generous spirit has been almost overwhelming. Way to go, **Herb!** Add us to your cheering section!

In addition to the block planes, he has made a variety of specialized wooden planes of various designs, demonstrating his superb craftsmanship and eye for innovation. This collection, shown below, includes some exotic and colorful wood species crafted into a variety of sizes and shapes. For some of them, he used a handsaw handle as a pattern to provide the planes with a more comfortable grip.

The narrow plane, made from yellow heart and purple heart is a shoulder plane, whose narrow blade is sharpened on the end and both sides, providing three cutting surfaces. Shoulder planes are useful for shaping the faces and shoulders of tenons for mortise and tenon joints.

The two planes at the bottom of the photo are Norris plane designs. These are classic smoothing planes for leveling surfaces. The one on the right also demonstrates **Herb's** metalworking skills, having fashioned the cheeks, sole and adjuster from steel plate. The purpleheart and zebra wood model on the left uses the wedge design for plane iron retention and adjustment.



Notes from the Editor



Wow, what an inspiring and informative presentation **Herb Stoops** gave us about making our own wooden block planes! Well done, indeed!

Don't make the mistake of thinking that the planes look too pretty to put to work in your shop. They are fully functional and a joy to use! The feel of the rounded shape of the plane really makes it seem like they are custom fit to your hand. And they are sharp, easily paring off just that little edge or corner.

Thanks, **Herb** for your generosity in making and gifting these wonderful tools to us.

Well, our **NWWA** summer break has finally arrived. Hopefully the weather will cooperate so that we can get outside and enjoy the many natural features we have available to us in this part of the world.

My little shop, on the West side of the house will probably soon be too warm to work in, but I am going to try to squeeze in a small project or two before it gets too uncomfortable.

Our next meeting will be on **August 29**, so be sure to mark the date on your calendar. As usual, a reminder email will be sent out prior to this meeting. This next meeting will be a **Mega Show'N'Tell**, with no formal program presentation. This is a great opportunity to showcase your latest project(s) and inspire us all.

It has been great to see some of our newer members sharing their projects (and mishaps) with us. We have a wonderful, supportive group of woodworkers who attend our meetings and are ready to offer encouragement, advice with problems, or just be an appreciative cheering section! Even if you have never done it before it's pretty easy to share a brief description of your project! Don't be bashful – we look forward to hearing about **yours!** 😊 We also look forward to some reports on the performance of the wooden plane **Herb** gifted you at this meeting.

Wishing you a refreshing, joyful Summer season – vacationing, barbequeing, travelling, or whatever floats your boat!

See you in August,

Paul

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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>