

# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XIII NUMBER 5

MAY 1995

## OFFICERS

Mike Key . . . . . President  
Wallace Williams . . . . Vice President  
John Parker . . . . Secretary-Treasurer

## DIRECTORS

Charles Ard  
Dan Browning  
Frank Jones  
Dale Lewis  
Ben Neighbors  
Harold Phillips

## PAST PRESIDENTS

Spruce McRee 1983 - 1986  
Leonard Sanders 1987  
Nelson Brooks 1988 - 1989  
Jim Caldwell 1990 - 1991  
Fred Baker 1992 - 1993  
Ed Sheriff 1994

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Our April meeting was another good one. Rusty Emmons did a fantastic job demonstrating how to use the scroll saw. Thanks again to Wallace and to Rusty for a great program. The May program will be equally as informative. Ivan Kronberg will tell us everything he knows about wood, so plan to stay a long time and take notes!

On April 7th the first planning meeting for the Kudzu Festival was held. Attending for the Woodworkers Guild were Wallace Williams, Harold Phillips and myself. Also attending were representatives from the Post Herald, Camp Smile-A-Mile, and the Antique Car Club. We will still have the large tent for demonstrations like last year. Ron Bates of Sloss Furnace said the annual cost of operating the Kudzu Festival for the Sloss Furnace is about \$5000. They are looking for ways to cut this cost, so if you have any ideas, they would welcome them. Don't forget to start on your show piece. There are prizes for beginning woodwork as well as intermediate and advanced so everyone should consider entering something. Let's make this year's show the best ever!

The John Jordan woodturning seminar is Saturday, May 13th starting at 8:00. That is the Saturday after the May meeting, so you can pay your \$25.00 at the May meeting or at the door. To date, 35 people have signed up. There is still plenty of room for anyone who is interested. John Jordan is an excellent woodturner and is very entertaining, so if

you have any interest in woodturning, you can't afford to miss this one.

A letter has been sent to Mr. Bonaventure Iwuanyanwu. For those who don't know, he lives in Nigeria and sent Fred Baker a letter expressing an interest in the Woodworkers Guild. We have made him an honorary member in our Guild, so now we have members all over the world. We're really branching out!

I received a phone call from Mrs. Kay Peters. She is looking for someone to build a blanket chest out of some walnut and cedar that her father left her. If you are interested, let me know and I will give you her phone number.

For those of you who have a home computer, American Woodworker magazine has started a forum on woodworking on America Online. You can read back issues of the magazine, talk with fellow woodworkers, get help with a woodworking problem, get advice from technical experts at companies like Porter Cable, Delta, and DeWalt, buy and sell on a classified message board, or join online discussions on topics like turning, carving, finishing, and furniture making. All you need is a computer, a modem, and a membership in America Online. For information on joining America Online, call 1-800-764-4400.

Last but not least, the wooden benches we used for our meetings before we got our nice, new chairs are up for grabs. If you would like to have one of these treasures, all you have to do is take it home after our May

meeting. Any benches that are left after that night will be thrown away, so get yours now!

See you at the meeting

Mike

## NEXT PROGRAM MAY 11, 1995 • 7:00 PM

It will be well worth your time and effort to make our next meeting. Long-time member and woodworker extraordinaire, Ivan Kronberg, with his enormous knowledge of woods will bring our program. Ivan is a native of Michigan, a graduate of Michigan Tech, and spent most of his life with U.S. Steel from whom he retired as Manager of Timber Properties. He has spent the last eleven years as Assistant to the President of Seaman Timber Company and is certainly qualified to share wood knowledge with us. He will speak on wood characteristics and identification of woods as well as some other topics on this subject.

## LAST PROGRAM • APRIL 1995

Rusty Emmons, Guild member and talented intarsia expert presented quite a program. After showing us some of his completed work, he demonstrated his techniques on the scroll saw. We who have scroll saws were "pleased" to see that even experts like Rusty broke blades as he proceeded with the work, and the sound of a broken blade sounds the same no matter

where it is. He recommends the use of the coarsest blade possible for the job being done, stating that you will break fewer blades that way. As for getting the pattern on the wood he suggests pasting the pattern on rather than tracing with carbon paper. Reproducing the pattern by Xerox, or whatever method is available to you, preserves the original pattern and gives you a much better line to follow. He recommends good lighting and if possible a light on the machine for better results. There are blades with teeth on both sides that prevent tear-out and he recommends their use. We appreciate Rusty bringing several patterns for us to take home, and we just hope we can do them the justice he does. Thanks, Rusty, and for a fellow who has to do his work on the porch, you do it mighty well.

### ACTON'S CHECK

For the benefit of some of our new members, our benefactor and spiritual leader, Ron Acton, who provides us with a marvelous place to hold our meetings, who sets out coffee and cookies at each meeting, and who is responsible for our use of the church for our Christmas party, not only does all those things, he keeps track by computer of Guild members' purchases (which we get at a discount) and the portion of revenue received that represents a profit he returns to the Guild in cash. During March such profits amounted to \$46, and we appreciate it, Ron.

### JOHN JORDAN

As a special treat John Jordan, a nationally recognized turner has accepted our invitation to spend Saturday, May 13, 1995 demonstrating his skills at the lathe.

Alabama Woodworkers Guild Newsletter is published monthly for its members and other interested parties. Guild meetings are held monthly on the second Thursday at 7:00 P.M. at Acton Moulding & Supply Co. Information concerning the Guild may be secured by writing P.O. Box 506, Helena, Al 35080 or calling the Editor, Leonard Sanders, at 822-6876.

This is no amateur folks, this is a professional woodturner who makes his living turning. Don't we wish we could do that? We had the pleasure of his being with us a few years ago and the response was outstanding. We are expecting an equally large turnout this year, too. John will bring his own lathe which he has modified so he can cut the lathe on or off with a switch activated by a board running down the side of the machine. There are times when your hands are too full to stop and reach for a switch. Mr. Jordan also will bring his own wood. The wood will be chunks of tree trunks and cut so recently it is still green and wet. He doesn't turn dry wood. He explains that, not only does green wood turn more easily it also permits more latitude in design. We must understand that John is not volunteering his time and energy. First off, he is from Tennessee and has to get here and spend the night somewhere. Then if he is demonstrating for us he can't be demonstrating somewhere else for an audience who would gladly pay for this information. All this has been said to lead up to the fact we must charge a fee of \$25 to attend the seminar. At this price you must come early to get a good seat. The program will begin at 9:00 and end around 3:00 or 4:00. We will break for lunch and go wherever we want to get it. This will be an outstanding day in the life of the Guild so please plan on being there.

### BIRCH PLYWOOD

As a guest, Mr. John Hoffman with Lakeside Lumber in Scottsdale, Arizona spoke briefly about his plywood. As we all know most of our woodworking magazines recommend we use birch for our bench and counter tops and certainly for our jigs. The principal difference between birch and other kinds is there are no voids within the sheets and also there are more and thinner plies included. He hopes his plywood will become available to us in the near future. There are some of us who have never been treated to the use of birch because it is not generally available at retail. Let's hope this comes to pass.

NOTE: Riverchase Print & Copy would like to apologize to Spruce McRee for the misprint in the new Directories. Mr. McRee is Past President of the Guild from 1983 to 1986. Our Apologies Spruce!

### SHOW AND TELL

We appreciate our members bringing their works to the meetings so the rest of us can see and appreciate them. As woodworkers, we aren't just sitting on our hands, we are busily making something all the time. Why not share whatever it is with the rest of us? At the April meeting the following members did share with us:

Jim Caldwell	Olive wood from Italy — if interested call him.
Claude Holland	A bread slicing box which can be set for desired thickness.
Nelson Brooks	Segmented Maple/Walnut vase
Dale Lewis	Maple coffee table named "Vespirado"
Rusty Emmons	Large intarsia of swan and her chick

### DOOR PRIZE

As is our custom, we sign our attendance sheet and at the appropriate time the President calls for the drawing and if you have signed in you may win a gift certificate from Actons. Dale Lewis won in April.

### FOR SALE - SWAP - WANTED

Bandsaw - an INCA #710, 20" bandsaw complete with stand is for sale for \$500 (when new, \$1,700) by Ivan Kronberg at 988-8278. PLANER AND JOINTER - A 10" RYOBI PLANER on stand and a 6" RYOBI JOINTER on stand (there are extra blades, too) are for sale for \$600 (both machines) by Harold Skalka at 672-7686.

### CHINA CABINET

Some friends of Charlie Brown, Sara and Jerry Oxford are in the midst of moving and hope that some member of our guild would be interested in modifying a 35 year old China Cabinet to make it capable of serving as an entertainment center or to accommodate a television set. The Cabinet has 4 doors, is 5' 9" wide, 6' 4" high and 20" deep. Call either of them at 383-3471.

What our forefathers had available to them and what it cost them is usually of interest to us today. The following is a reprint of an article from AMERICAN WOODTURNER MAGAZINE, March 1995 issue, dealing with balusters: →

**PLEASE RETURN IT**

We have written this little piece here, rather than include it in the write-up of last month's program, so as to place special emphasis on the reason for writing it at all. Rusty Emmons was generous enough to put together a program for us last month. He had to have spent considerable time and effort to gather patterns for our benefit, loading and bringing his scroll saw to the meeting, and time to formulate the program in his mind. The reason for this explanation is to make a plea to those of you who thought the Twelve Days of Christmas disks were for our taking. Some seven of the twelve were missing after the meeting. Rusty borrowed them from their owner to bring and show us what can be done with a scroll saw. We hope we haven't reached the point in our Guild where the speaker/demonstrator can't feel free to bring his tools and produce to the meetings. PLEASE RETURN the seven disks and place them on the workbench that serves as a podium. Rusty will greatly appreciate it.

# BALUSTERS OF YESTERYEAR

*Treasures of a hundred-year-old catalog*

WILLIAM L. STEPHENSON

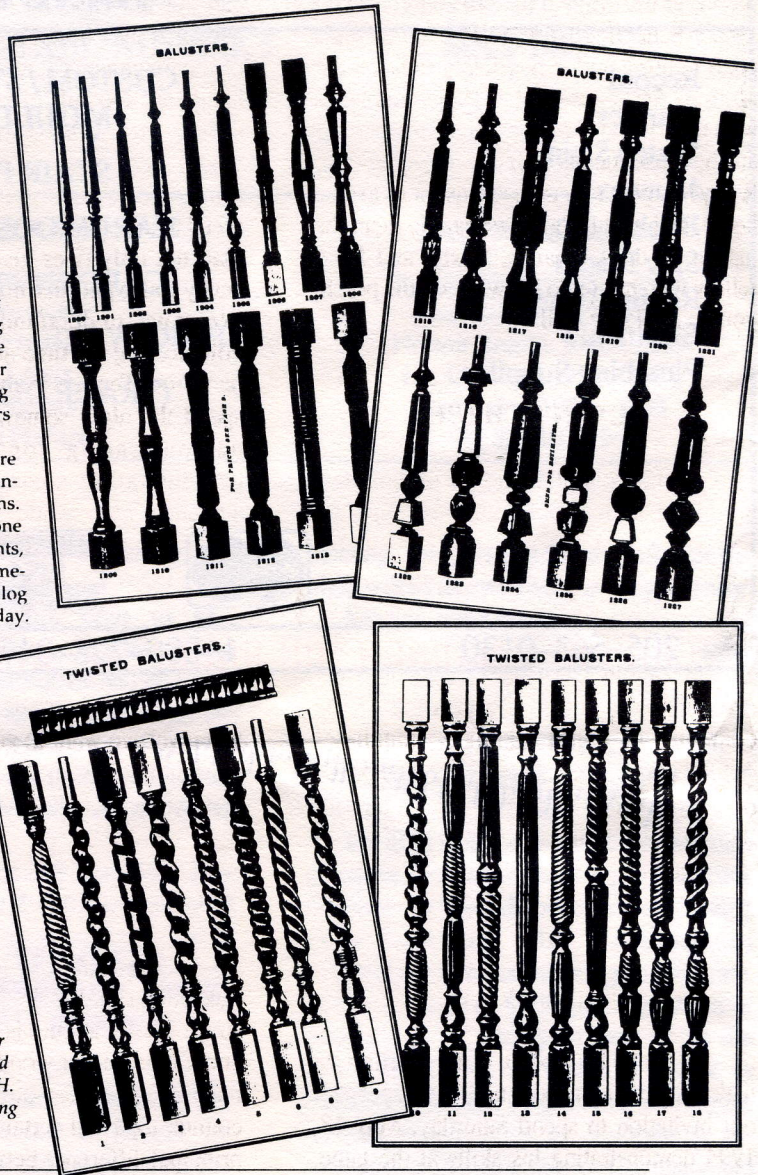
IN 1893, THE BLUMER & KUHN STAIR Co. of St. Louis, Mo., had recently completed an expansion of their facilities, installing the latest and "most approved" machinery and employing "only the best" competent and skilled workmen. With "great pleasure" they presented to the trade a copy of their new catalog together with designs for their work. At least one copy of their catalog has survived, having retrieved it myself from an attic that was being cleared out prior to the sale of the property. Reproduced here are four pages from the catalog, illustrating these elegant and eloquent balusters of yesteryear.

All of the stair balusters were turned 2 ft. 4 in. and 2 ft. 8 in. long, unless custom-ordered in other lengths. Most designs could be ordered in one of five sizes in quarter-inch increments, typically from 1½- to 2½-inch diameters. The prices listed in the catalog would not buy the basic materials today.

Prices ranged from 9 cents for a small oak or ash baluster, No. 1200 or 1201 (11 cents in walnut or cherry), to 35 cents for a large oak or ash octagon baluster, No. 1205 (48 cents in walnut or cherry). Design Nos. 1215 to 1227 required a quotation. Customers were also encouraged to write for prices for the twisted balusters, Nos. 1 through 18.

The forms and the craftsmanship are inspiring; recreating these turnings would be a consummate challenge. Is there really anything new under the woodturning sun?

*Bill Stephenson is a professional forester and woodturner who turns, teaches, and writes from his studio in Loveland, OH. He is exploring the possibility of reprinting the Blume and Kuhn catalog.*



**THE SHOW**

It has been the practice in years past to keep reminding our members that we have a SHOW each year somewhere. This will be around the fourth year that we have held it at SLOSS FURNACE to coincide with the KUDZU FESTIVAL that is held there each year. For the benefit of some of our newer members we have been holding our SHOW each year since the inception of the Guild, beginning in 1983. The stated purpose is to

encourage more and better woodworking by our members, and to promote the idea we place our produce in competition with each other. It is a friendly competition but serious enough the members try very hard to produce the very best there is within them. We have always invited a qualified judge to make the judgments necessary to award First, Second and Third place ribbons in each of the several categories designated by the Officers and Directors. There are two classes of craftsmen, i.e., Advanced and

Intermediate. Everyone fits into one of those categories. There are also various types of products, and we want to know if the product is an original or if it was made from a pattern or copied from a picture. There just isn't any excuse for not entering the SHOW since there isn't a member among us who doesn't do class work worthy of entering the contest. Please give serious consideration to placing ANYTHING you have made and see how well it will be judged.

# ACTON **SERVISTAR**®

## HARDWARE

Record  
Marples  
Watco Stain  
Minwax  
Books  
Saw Blades  
Router Blades  
Electrical /  
Plumbing Supplies

CUSTOM / STANDARD  
MOULDINGS  
STAIR PARTS  
HARDWOOD LUMBER  
CABINET PLYWOOD  
HARDWARE — HANDTOOLS  
(TRADE DISCOUNTS)

POWER TOOLS:  
Makita  
Porter Cable  
Black & Decker  
Bosch  
Skil

### Guild Nite Special!!

10% off all items in store,  
except Sale items.



205-663-0130

1-800-228-0474

8 TO 6 M-F — 7 to 12 Sat.

The Alabama Woodworkers Guild  
P. O. Box 506  
Helena, AL 35080



# JOS. THUSTON AND SONS SAW WORKS

928 North 28th Street Birmingham, AL 35203

P. O. Box 12264

Local (205) 328-4300

Call us Toll Free 1-800-289-SAWS

B'ham, AL 35201

10% Off to all Guild Members.

MAY-7-95

U.S. POSTAGE  
00.32  
H METER 437624