

# Knot Knews

Monthly Newsletter of the Collins Woodworkers

November 1996

Vol. 2, No. 3

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 19th 5:00 p.m. at Main Plant Cafeteria*

## November Program

Our November 19 meeting will be back in the Main Plant cafeteria. We will present a video by cabinetmaker Frank Klausz in which he demonstrates how he makes hand-dovetailed drawer carcasses in 20 minutes time. The video is nearly an hour long and we plan a hands-on demonstration of Frank's dovetail technique at the meeting. Plan to come and bring a friend. The presentation will begin right at 5:00 and the meeting will last until 6:30.

We will be set up so members can try the techniques themselves; this may include both western and Japanese saw methods.

If you have a Black&Decker Workmate you'd be willing to bring to the meeting, please call Mark Clark at extension 53872.

## December Meeting

Our December 17 meeting will feature a short presentation by Emil Krepcik on router tables and a discussion of building bird houses and feeders by Jim Parent. If you've been thinking of attracting wild birds to your house, this could be the nudge you're looking for.

## Future Meetings

Plans for future meetings will include: display and demonstration of a wide variety of portable tools (Jan. 21); field trip to Puckett Tools & Fasteners for a professional demonstration of Bessey clamps (Feb. 18); and a program on finishing techniques (Mar. 18).

Many of these programs will be presented by your fellow club members. Do you have skills or equipment you'd be willing to share with the group? You don't need to be a polished public speaker, just share your knowledge in your own words. Think it over

then sign up. Program dates are open from April on through the summer.

## Your Input Requested

We want our monthly meetings to be events you won't want to miss. We hope you find the Collins Woodworkers Guild so valuable that you will want to bring friends and co-workers with you to meetings.

In order to meet our goals and serve our members, we need your input. Let your elected officers know what interests *you*. Whether your shop is full of hand tools, stationary power tools, or is somewhere in between, our aim is to plan programs that are immediately useful to the majority of members.

Do you need to make that special molding to repair an antique hutch? Perhaps you are interested in musical instruments or jewelry boxes or maybe you just need to make new kitchen cupboards. Let us know what projects you're planning and which techniques you'd like to acquire.

If you'd be willing to share something you've learned with the other members, we would like to know about that as well.

To provide input, contact any of the following folks or just come to a meeting and make your feelings known. The Collins Woodworkers Guild will give back only what you put into it.

### Contacts:

Wayne Hanson	55893	138-150
Emil Krepcik	52999	106-181
Jim Parent	53012	124-317
Roger Thompson	52211	124-100

## Wreck Dot Woodworking

(Great thoughts from the Net)

### General Woodworking Tips

by Gary Straub

1. Lay out your lumber and figure which board will be used for what part, taking care to observe grain and color. Try to make each part compliment other related parts. Example: don't laminate a straight grained piece to a wildly figured piece, unless intentionally.
2. Don't cut any wood until you are sure of where you want to cut. Think and re-think this point, as it only takes a second to screw up a lot of planning.
3. Whenever possible make the piece a little larger than needed. There are many things which can screw up a cut. Such as: internal stress can cause a perfectly straight board to move, planers can snipe, jointing and sanding/planing can take more wood than expected. It is far easier to remove a little wood than to replace it.
4. Mark all pieces as to where they go as soon as you determine this, unless you enjoy jigsaw puzzles.:-)
5. Always test any machine setup on a scrap piece, preferably from the same lumber as the piece. Be careful that the scrap isn't off the end. This will make it thinner.
6. When hand planing a surface, do the backside first. This will prepare you for any surprises. The same applies to sanding, so the face side doesn't get damaged while sanding the back.
7. Always dust everything off. Many mysterious dings, and poor fits are the result of a small chip or two. A small chip against a fence can cause mis-alignment. Chips under a board going through the surface planer can cause uneven planing. A small chip on the shoulder of a tenon can keep it from snugging up. etc.
8. Try to split the line when sawing. Sawing on either side of the line can make for an almost perfect joint, splitting it will usually be right on the mark. This depends on the thickness of the line. A thick line will be easy to split but you can still be off. Keep your pencil sharp.
9. Any lines which will ultimately be cut with a chisel should be made with a knife. A knife mark will act as a guide for the chisel. It is hard to keep a chisel straight on a pencil line. Also any cross-cuts should be scored with a knife first. This eliminates any tendency for ragged edges.
10. Always test your fits prior to gluing. It is best to clamp your pieces together as if you were gluing, first off. This will prevent any surprises with glue on the pieces, and will assure that you have all surprises with glue on the pieces, and will assure that you have all the clamps that you need and ready to use. If you find that you need to really crank on the clamp to get a good fit, you probably need to make an alteration. The quickest way to glue failure is to put unnecessary stress on the part. If you haven't done so now is the time to mark every piece as to where it goes. If you haven't done so, now is the time to mark every piece as to where it goes. If everything fits fine in that order why take a chance, even though many parts are 'identical'.
11. It is best not to wipe off the wet glue after clamping, as it will spread the glue around and make finishing difficult. However the glue should be removed before it is cured, if it is a water based glue. The moisture in the glue raises the grain a little and when it hardens the moisture is trapped. Then when it is removed later the wood shrinks and a glue line becomes perceptible. If you use a scraper or chisel when the glue skins over it will come off in nice strips. Washing the glue off with a wet cloth works but you must be careful to get all off or it will be everywhere.
12. A very sharp chisel will remove any glue from inside corners. If carefully done you can skim a little wood with the glue, making sure there is no glue left to obstruct the finish.
13. A sharp hand scraper works very well to even up mating surfaces, after gluing.
14. When finishing its VERY important to allow the finish to dry well before sanding or steel wool between coats. Bits of sand dust or steel wool in the corners are a tell sign of preceding to fast. Use a vacuum and tack rags judiciously throughout the finishing process. It is imperative to treat the finishing process with as much care as you put into

the building process. A good finish can make a mediocre piece look great and a poor finish can make a great piece look mediocre.

15. Keep your expectations high, but realistic. Fine workmanship is acquired through practice. If each piece you make is a little better than the last than you should feel good. These are merely observation and are not purported to be anything else. Part 2 Machines, part 3, Handtools, part 4, finishing. Are in the works, however if this is felt to be wasted bandwidth, let me know.

16. Enjoy!

### **Web Sites of Interest**

If you have an interest in hand planes and your home computer can access the Internet's World Wide Web you may find these sites worth visiting.

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~alf/en/en.html>

<http://www.pangea.com/~rock/oldtools/>

There are also several dealers in old tools active on the Internet. Two worth mentioning are Thomas Bruce ([trb2@cornell.edu](mailto:trb2@cornell.edu)) and Patrick Leach ([leach@bedfor.progress.com](mailto:leach@bedfor.progress.com)). We have not yet dealt with these gentlemen but others on the Net seem to say nice things about them.

If you happen to run across an interesting Web site, discussion list, or news group while ``surfing'' the net, pass it along and we'll publish it here so others can check it out.