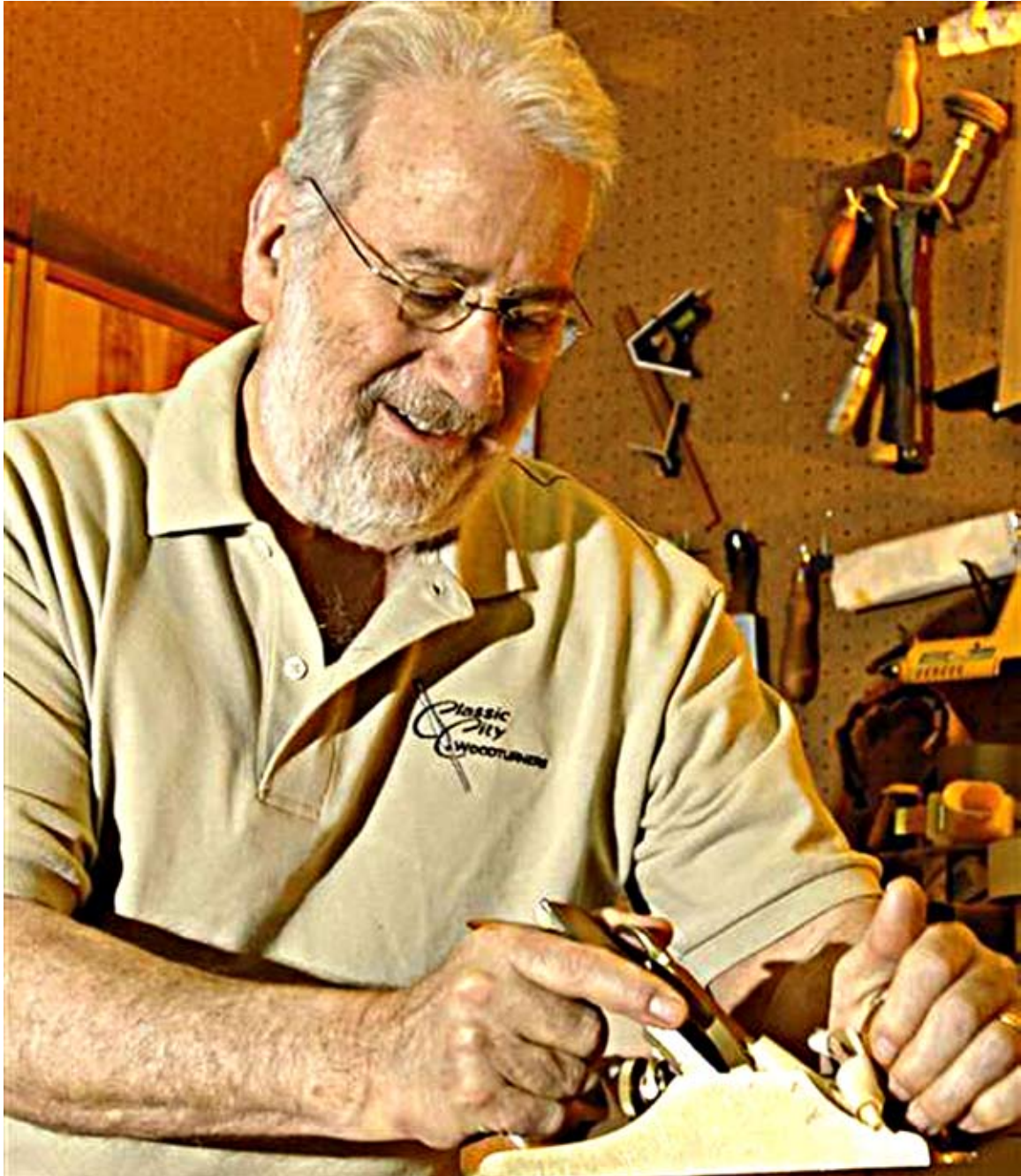


# ShopTalk

Greenville Woodworkers Guild July 2017



Our July meeting will feature Abraham Tesser who has 35 years experience designing and building furniture

Designing and building. For me, designing and building furniture is largely solitary and very personal. Advice and comments from others are welcome but in the end I am the final arbiter. I struggle with every detail of a design. Is this curve right? Is that part too thick? Will this kind of wood work with that in this context? Do I even have the “right” concept? And then I start again. Finally, when things look like they might work (I am never quite sure) I go from the drawing board to the shop.

Much of the building process is pleasure. It is hard to beat the feeling produced by guiding the transformation of a piece of rough lumber into an elegant, smooth part. And that feeling is dwarfed by seeing the parts come together, nicely and strongly. A bit of oil often makes the piece jump to life! With luck, the piece will be one that captures the eye and invites the hand to touch.

The construction process is not nearly as linear as this description implies. I am constantly redesigning as I am building. The finished piece is unlikely to be what I originally envisioned but a more or less different piece. One resulting from the dialectic involving the original vision and the feedback from eye, hand, brain, and heart associated with the construction process. Murphy’s Law is as applicable in the shop as anywhere else. When things go poorly, yet another design opportunity emerges. And when things go well, when a hand plane produces the perfect shaving, when a beautiful shape emerges on the lathe, when a piece of wood that has just been surfaced shows a figure or character that is better than expected, it is indeed thrilling.

There is also a social aspect of designing and building furniture. Others are a source of inspiration and motivation. Interacting with a patron with particular needs and preferences often results in designs that might never otherwise have come to mind. When that works it is a joy. Many others have a very good eye, whether they be design professionals or not, and their

suggestions are often invaluable.

Almost nothing pleases me more than learning that others appreciate my work. I want my furniture to be engaging. I’m elated when someone sits in one of my chairs and can’t help smiling because the chair is more comfortable than expected; or, when someone reaches down and touches a surface and then reaches down again or asks their partner to touch because it felt good. Wow. Sam Maloof, one of the world’s great furniture makers, claims that his favorite piece is always the one he is currently working on. And, so it is for me. Each piece is, for a time, my baby and it is difficult for me to let it go. But it is also gratifying to know that someone likes it enough to have it in their home or office.

On esthetics. If you have seen my work you have a pretty good idea about my esthetic. I build furniture that I hope is beautiful. Perhaps it is interesting enough and built so cleverly that some might consider it art. Indeed, I am particularly concerned that the piece be esthetically pleasing. However the goal is to produce functional furniture, not what Art Espenet Carpenter calls “artiture”.

Over the years I have developed a set of preferences that almost always find their way into my furniture. The beauty and sensuality of wood drives much of the enterprise. Often wood is so beautiful that it is a pleasure to look at and touch with only a minimum of chemical surface treatment. When I find a piece of wood with a particularly nice character or sensational figure it makes my day or even week to bring it home (even if it jeopardizes the budget.) Much of my work revolves around showing such wood to advantage; the craft is always there, I hope, but the wood takes the starring role. If I am successful the craft goes unnoticed. It is the beauty in wood surfaces that invites me to appreciate and incorporate unusual and exotic veneers into my work.

The surface of the wood always plays a leading role but sometimes its shape plays the starring role. When we think of objects made of wood the

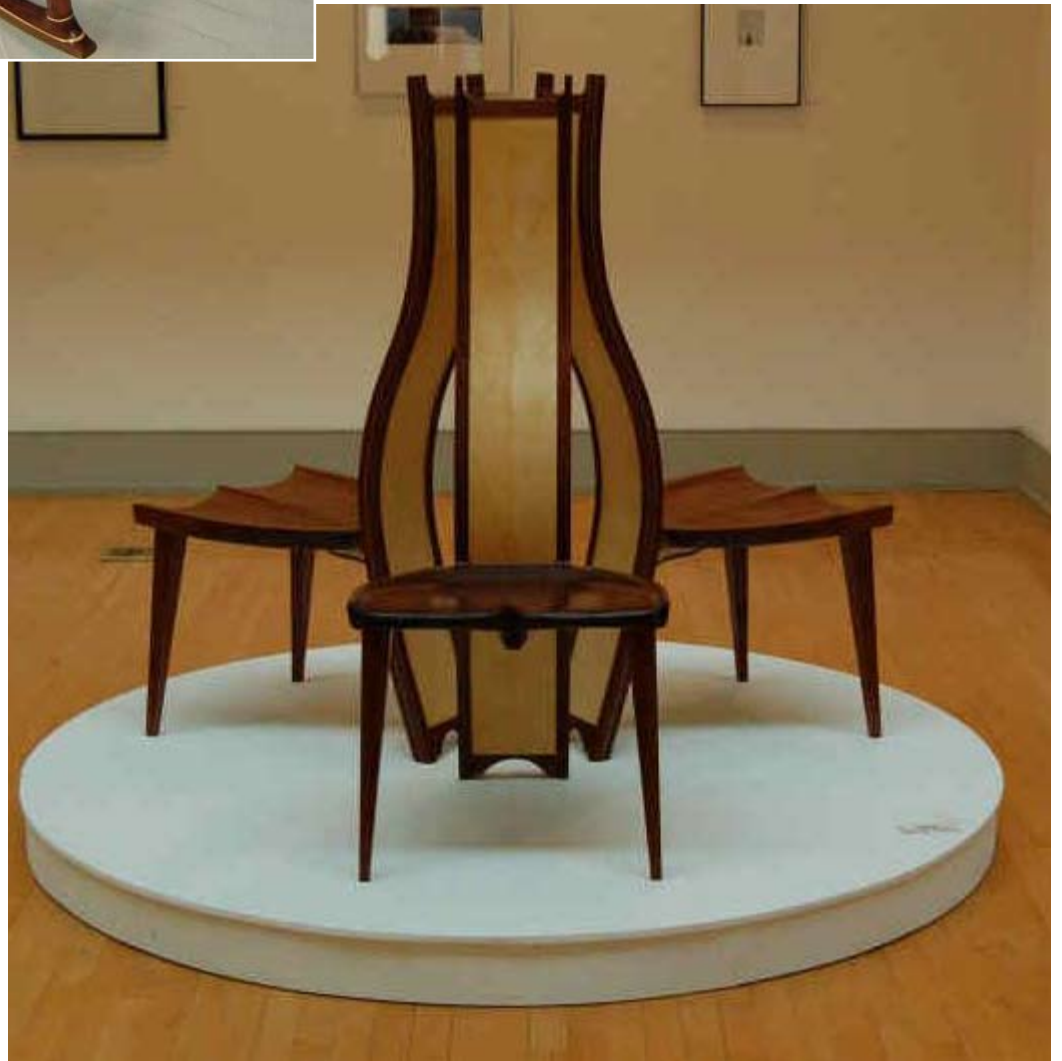
default is a rectilinear image: Straight lines and right angles. But that need not always be the case. Wood can be sculpted. Sculpting might be responsible for a seat bottom that creates interest and provides comfort. One might sculpt a draw pull that feels good to the touch and is also unique. Sculpting allows joints to maintain their strength and flow smoothly into one another; for example, allowing table legs to flow into aprons in a single, continuous smooth line. Sculpted parts can often be found in my work.

Bending wood is another way to shape it. Curved pieces of wood can be produced through steam bending or bent lamination. These techniques facilitate the use of curved furniture parts such as legs, stretchers and supports. I have a distinct preference for curved rather than straight parts and curved members are integral to much of my furniture.

Furniture is built on many scales. Medieval European furniture is usually associated with massive parts such as table legs or turned posts. My own preference is for a light look; more like a ballerina on the tips of her toes than a sumo wrestler stomping across the ring. While I do not find a model in the esthetic of the sumo wrestler I am very much influenced by the delicate lines and curves of Japanese (and Chinese) furnishings.

A labor of love. I love building furniture. I enjoy the solitude of the design and construction process as well as the critical and motivational influences of others. My esthetic is driven by function and a deep appreciation of wood. I like fabricating and consuming carved and curved parts. I prefer a delicate scale to a massive scale and find great beauty and inspiration in Japanese and Chinese furnishings





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## David Aman President



### T H E P R E S I D E N T S C O R N E R

I have been a patron and donor to the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage Center at Harker's Island, NC, for many years. Their latest newsletter had a statement that perfectly fits our Guild: "This institution's history and its role in the community today is an amazing example of what hard work, local investment and community vision can accomplish. The (museum or Guild) is the tangible outcome of thousands of talented, generous people giving, working, believing in the value of (our) heritage – this place, our people, and our way of life." This is a powerful message that I hope all of our members will hear and understand. Our Guild is much more than a building where you can go to do a bit of personal work. It is truly an institution built on the talent, investment and vision of many members, both past and present. Now the mission of our present and future members is to sustain and grow all that we have, in our facilities and heritage as a premier woodworking organization. One thing I am committed to accomplish over the next two months is to update our long-term capital plan. This will give us a "guide book" of what is needed to sustain our facilities over the next twenty years, and allow us to make firm plans and commitments to ensure that this Guild is still strong and active for years to come.

Several of you have signed-up to submit some of your work for the "Wood Works" gallery exhibit at the Metropolitan Arts Council coming up in late July. If you haven't done so already, go to <http://www.gwgmembers.com/> and register. This is a rare opportunity for us to show the entire Upstate what our Guild is all about, and to showcase the talent of our membership. If you have a "prized piece" that you are especially proud of, please consider submitting it for entry in this show. Under the leadership of Dick Best, a number of members have been constructing display units for this show which will then be permanently placed in our lobby. A special thanks to everyone for your dedicated involvement on this project.

Please be safe during the summer months. Take extra precautions if working outside to stay hydrated, avoid overexposure to the sun or heat, and beware of insects, snakes, and other varmints. If you are working inside, heat can also be a danger. And remember that reflexes generally slow down this time of year, so drink lots of water, take frequent breaks, and be cautious of your surroundings.



## Beads of Courage

Our members have really stepped up to the challenge and produced some VERY NICE

Treasure Boxes for Jim and I to deliver to the AAW Symposium in Kansas City later this month.

As anyone will see, the supply of boxes has dwindled greatly in the last few days. Jim delivered a dozen to the Children's hospital, and we have packed up 20 more to take to KC.

We also set aside a few of them to be displayed at the Metropolitan Arts Council in July and August. We feel these are a cross section of our work, and hope to garner some additional community support when our constituents learn more about the Beads of Courage program.

We had a great showing by

our youthful turners, under the tutelage of Wells and Mike, some flatware boxes and assorted entries from various members. THANKS TO ALL who gave their time and talents to provide these examples of your work. The children happily choose a treasure box to store their hard earned treasures, and those of you who participate have a special place in their hearts for your efforts, even though we never meet each other.

Now, it has been brought to my attention that there are those among us who have become discouraged at the fact that we had collected so many bowls this time around. I feel this is an anomaly, in that we have been collecting for the Symposium, and our local hospital. We have had a few members who produced the bowls and boxes in great numbers, in answer to our request to build our supply, and

the demand from the Children's Hospital has diminished, for the moment (they've not called for a delivery until just a day or so ago). This is great news for the kids who are afflicted, but I fear it's only a momentary lull.

PLEASE!!!, don't stop creating the treasure boxes as there are other things in the works. We all know this disease is not licked yet.

We are opening a dialog with other facilities and turning groups, in a somewhat expanded area, to also supply bowls and boxes to children in a broader area.

So, once again, keep up the good fight and please keep turning.

Thanks on behalf of Jim Kilton, David Aman and myself, Ken Fissel

## Calling All Woodturners

Are you a recent graduate of the Jim Kilton School of Woodturning?

- An intermediate turner?
- An advanced turner looking for more in depth instruction?

If so, would you be interested in joining a few, fellow guild turners, in a focus group, with woodturning as the main area of interest. I think we have enough turners that we can spend some time discussing our common interests, sharing ideas and techniques, and demonstrating our craft, in order to raise our skill levels.

We are considering meeting 1 or 2 times a month (maybe during the day and/or in the evening) .

We can have presenters (from our ranks and from outside).

We can have project work sessions where we turn Beads of Courage treasure boxes, Christmas ornaments, bird houses, bowls for the community. The possibilities are endless.

There are opportunities on the horizon to serve our community, enhance our skill levels, and just get to know one another better.

Please e-mail ideas and comments as to how you think this can happen and grow. Contact Ken Fissel at: [kcfissel@yahoo.com](mailto:kcfissel@yahoo.com)



### New tool available

Many thanks to Don McClure who has built a vacuum chuck system for use with the lathes in the shop. With this tool, bowls can be mounted on the lathe using vacuum pressure rather than the traditional ways of mounting. The system is mounted on a hand truck for portability, and for now will be stored in the supply room. All wood-turners who wish to use this

tool will first need instruction in its use from Jim Kilton or Bill Lancaster. Don has graciously donated the vacuum chuck system to the Guild. Thanks Don!



metropolitan**arts**council

## Wood Works, an Exhibit

Our gallery exhibit for the Metropolitan Arts Council is fast approaching. The exhibit will open on July 25 and run through September 1 at the MAC Gallery on 16 Augusta Street in Greenville. This event will showcase a variety of special and unique pieces our members have made, from very small items such as jewelry, pens, bowls and boxes, to larger items such as chairs, tables, chests, and other items. We want to include a wide variety of projects from as many members as possible. Special displays will feature “Beads of Courage” boxes and “Veteran’s Urns” to increase community awareness of these special projects. A selection committee will review all submissions for inclusion in the show. Pieces must be made by active GWG members, with wood as the primary medium. All items being submitted will need to be brought to the Education Center between July 17 and July 19. A public reception will be held on Friday evening, July 28. If you haven’t already done so, go to <http://www.gwgmembers.com> and register your participation now.

## New Charitable Projects

**Piano surround; Miracle Hill Greenville Rescue Mission.**  
Stand and enclosure for a keyboard in the Chapel.

**Doll house; Dream Center in Easley.**  
Continuation of project.

**Flag Cases; National Sojourner Inc.**  
Flags to be presented to a deserving active or retired military member.

**Fiber Arts Studio table; Greenville Fine Arts Center.**  
Continuation of project.

**Butterfly Boxes; SEUS / Japan association (South East U.S.).**  
Boxes for gifts for Japanese conference in Greenville.

## Calendar of Events - 2017

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**July 10**  
July Membership Meeting

**July 11**  
GWG Operations Meetings  
(2:00 PM)

**July 11**  
GWG Board of Directors Meeting  
(4:00PM)

**August 7**  
August Membership Meeting  
(6:30 PM)

**August 31**  
End of Fiscal Year



# Sawmill Cookout

The wet weather didn't stop the sawmill Thanks guys!



Nor did the weather effect the good food and fellowship



## CHARITABLE PROJECTS / May 5 to June 5

	Hours
Beads of Courage (Boxes).....	2
Wade Hampton High School (Display Case) .....	1.5
Santa's Workshop (Toys).....	329
SC Veterans (Urns) .....	5.5
Metropolitan Arts Council (Display Shelves) .....	39
Butterfly Boxes.....	6.5
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>383.5</b>

## MENTORING CLASSES / May 5 to June 5

	Hours
Combined total hours for adult classes.....	80
Youth Classes .....	290
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>370</b>

It was a pretty nice month with Charity as we had 115 sessions totaling 382 hours led by Santa's toy makers!

On the mentoring side there were 97 sessions totaling 370 hours led by the Youth mentors who gave 292 hours of their time over 62 sessions, as they passed on their expertise to Beginning and Teen woodworkers for 114 sessions over 479 hours!

Ed Center staffers gave 708 hours over 205 sessions to maintain our shop and keep everyone safe!

– Jack McKay

## SHOW & TELL



Lidded boxes  
by Clyde Jenkins



Turnings  
by Jim Kilton



Horse and Wagon  
by

## SHOW & TELL

Turnings  
by Steve Estabrooks



Cutting board  
by John Arnold



Cutting board and containers  
by Karen Sheldon

**NEXT GUILD MEETING - MONDAY, July 10, 2017 - 6:30 p.m.**

New member orientation begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room. / Social time begins at 6:15 p.m.

Greenville Woodworkers Guild  
Education Center  
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For more information  
[www.greenvillewoodworkers.com](http://www.greenvillewoodworkers.com)



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