

SOUTH BAY WOODWORKERS' NEWS

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President's Column

By Jay Perrine



It took Hurricane Maria in 2017 to expose the nearly non-existent lumber harvesting, milling and marketing timber from trees to usable wood on this island.

Spain was in charge for over 400 years and they cleared many trees and used lumber for such things as building ships. Then, it became a US Territory following the Spanish-American War in 1898. Cutting the forests continued - don't know details but I saw photos from CCC days of workers carrying off wood slabs from huge trees. Puerto Rico was used early in the US domination period for extensive monoculture farming mostly sugarcane, coffee and tobacco all of which called for clearing the land of trees. The decline of monoculture agriculture happened about the same time pharmaceutical and chemical production increased and any lumber production capacity completely disappeared.

Puerto Rico's tree coverage diminished less than 10% around 1920. The Forest Service began intensive planting for years until the forest coverage reached 60% by the turn of the century. Interestingly, the Forest Service decided on planting hardwood trees - particularly some species considered of value in the timber market. Little or no conifers which might have grown faster and could get to market faster, although perhaps less valuable. Only now, 80 years later, those hardwoods are reaching market size. However, there is no capacity to cut, harvest, dry the wood and market it locally. Hurricane Maria caused many, many trees to be downed but few have been turned into lumber, most chipped for burning.

As part of this EcoTour for craftsmen, we heard from two local woodworkers. The carver and a luthier who both acquire wood via informal arrangements partly through a network where phone calls are made to each other when a tree is coming down. So, 99% of all wood has been coming to the island for years, including a pallet manufacturer who gets rough lumber from the mainland.

Perhaps one of the most obstructive issues for craftsman is that laws here forbid tree cutting without obtaining a permit. Apparently, craftsman can obtain a 'license' or certificate of some sort that qualifies them to obtain wood being cut with a permit - at times actually cutting or pruning it themselves. They both had pickups and chain saws.

The non-profit called Greenwood Global sponsoring this EcoTour for Craftsman is working on helping build local capacity to kiln dry lumber harvested with portable bandsaw mills. There are no sawmills still in existence here.

Bottom line is that we woodworkers in California indeed might have some informal communication methods alerting us when wood is being made available on an informal market system essentially functioning with little issue of tree removal. Often the reverse, where cities or public entities contract with arborists to cut trees down that are either diseased or reached the end of their lives. It is not clear if Puerto Rico folks will be able to recreate small artisan oriented lumber processing even if informal, but meanwhile we can be happy things are better in California.

Meeting Location

May meeting will be the last held at Cupertino High School's wood shop, hosted by Tracie. Tracie is retiring!

Address is:

Cupertino High School
10100 Finch Ave.
Cupertino

Map and directions were provided in the September 2021 newsletter and associated emails.

Everyone should be vaccinated. Masks are required on school grounds, unless eating or drinking.

Editor's Note;

I subscribe to the FDMC magazine – don't ask what FDMC stands for – not a clue. It covers the commercial woodworking industry.

Gary Knox Bennett was a well-known bay area furniture maker. Best known for his "Nail Cabinet" – a beautiful display case that he put a 16-penny bent nail in. He got his start making roach clips for Haight-Ashbury. Interesting obituary.

<https://www.woodworkingnetwork.com/news/woodworking-industry-news/remembering-garry-knox-bennett>



On a personnel note, after much consideration, I'm retiring from SBWW as of 1 July, after 20+ years. June's newsletter and meeting will be my last efforts on behalf of the club.

Some member will need to assume newsletter and web master duties.

Program for May;



Bill Henzel presentation is titled "Designing and Building Tables and Chairs."

April's Program



Ron Gerard told the tale of two tables constructed for the front bedroom after it was vacated by his grandson.

Construction started with the tapering of the two inside faces of the legs by use of a jig used on the table saw. Mortises were next cut in the legs to receive the tenoned sides and back. The two front legs have mortises cut for connecting the lower front stretcher with half dovetailed cavities cut in the top of the legs for connecting the top stretcher.

Upper and lower dividers were constructed with bridal joints and a saw kerf was cut around the outside perimeter edge to contain splines. Four holes were drilled in the top divider for attaching the top to the assembled table with the front and back holes elongated to allow for expansion and contraction. Four larger holes were drilled in the bottom stretcher for access by a screwdriver to the screws that secure the top.

The walnut fronted drawer has maple sides and back with half blind dovetail joints joining the front with the sides. The ebony drawer pull is dovetailed into the top surface of the drawer with a small circle of abalone shell for accent.

The tables are finished with two coats of Watco dark walnut oil stain with a dark walnut Breewax top coat.

Show & Tell Note:

Normal Show & Tell at the May meeting, Ron will take pictures. If you have photos beforehand, please send them to me, takenyon1@gmail.com to save Ron or me from taking pictures.

Thank You – Tom Kenyon

Show & Tell:





Bill Turner made a serving tray with cherry handles and side pieces. The bottom piece was created by cutting and recutting plywood so as to form a herringbone pattern. The tray is finished with wipe-on polyurethane.



Jay Perrine described and showed us Baltic birch panels he made for his church. The half inch thick panels have rhythmic elongated holes done on club member Bill Turner's CNC machine.



Dennis Yamamoto created a nightstand from solid walnut and walnut veneers. The body of the nightstand contains a double bevel marquetry design. The drawer sides are made from maple and contain half dovetail joints at the front and through dovetails at the back. The top has a book matched veneered center piece surrounded by a solid border.



Tracie Johnson, anticipating retirement, bought a Casita trailer and gave us a tour of the projects the previous owner had performed on the interior. There is a lacewood medallion depicting two trees set in the entry screen door. Other projects include the dining table, lighting and various cabinets.

2022 Program Responsibilities

If there are conflicts or need for changes,
please contact Richard Winslow.

May	Bill Henzel Mateo McCullough
June	Bill Turner
July	Tom Gaston TBD
August	Eugene Gulko Steve Kelem
September	Richard Winslow Tom Kenyon
October	Allen Glessner Mark Flanagan
November	TBD Jay Perrine
December	Holiday Party – officers
Unassigned	

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