

JUNE 2021

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello Carvers,

Our July and August monthly programs will be a little different.

July will be a **Show-and-Tell**, where some members will show photos and talk about their carving, and answer questions. We have many examples already, but more are welcome, so please consider what you would like to show, take good photos and email them to me.

August will be our first in-person, post-lockdown event - an **outdoor potluck with demos**. Plan to attend if you are vaccinated; and bring spouse or partner if they are. See the description below for more information and please register so we can plan. The club will provide BBQ food to grill, but the rest will be potluck based on your last name. It should be fun!

I want to acknowledge and thank Jerry Boone for completing his service and support on the Board during our year of re-start. He was the first one to hold up his hand when the previous club was about to fold, served as treasurer, helped plan and coordinate several of our monthly programs, wrote articles, helped design the logo and name the club, and provided wit and wisdom along the way.

We are a club, not a public service agency, and we need your help - become a member, write an article or book review, attend or teach a class, or volunteer in some way that is easy and fun for you. For example, if you have graphic arts skills, we need help photographing and documenting the large body of work left behind by Mack Sutter. Think about how you can make a difference, even a little one.

I want to acknowledge that Mack Sutter's family, through local son John Sutter, have donated his large collection of tools to our club, almost a thousand, of various qualities, shapes and sizes. These are intended to continue Mack's legacy of promoting carving to beginners and all others. It will take a while to create a detailed inventory and even more time to re-sharpen. Want to help? We think many of these tools will form the "Mack Sutter Tool Library".



[Larry Wade](#), 503-312-7745 President

On behalf of the Board

[Roger Crooks](#), Vice President

[Diana Groseclose-Larabee](#), Treasurer

[Terry Burnside](#), Secretary

[Marty Lawrence](#), Membership Development

Mission: Encourage carvers at all levels in the pursuit of this art through education, fellowship and mentoring

Upcoming Programs

➔ **Show-and Tell (free)**— **JULY 13th, 7:00 PM** [Click here](#) to register

JULY

Our monthly Zoom program will feature photos of member's work, past and present. All examples welcome - simple or elegant, in process or finished. Jim Hall for one has created a large body of work featuring eye-popping examples of carvings on turnings. To be effective we need good photos sent in ahead of time (by July 10th please), which you can describe as the photos are displayed.



Photo - Jim Hall



Photo - Jim Hall, carvings on turnings

➔ **Potluck and Demos (free)** — **AUGUST 14th, 10:00 - 2:00 PM** [Click here](#) to register

AUG

This will be our first in-person gathering since the pandemic.

We expect this to be both social and informative. We'll have a potluck with a BBQ at a westside location (Larry's backyard), and some demos. Diana Larabee loves working with green wood and will show some examples and demonstrate how she uses axes, Mora knives and spoon gouges to create spoons and other useful things. Terry Burnside will demonstrate some of his wood spirit and Santa carvings, partly as an introduction to his upcoming classes. In addition Masa Nitani will show one of his texturing techniques for Japanese carving.

We trust that everyone will make responsible choices for masking and distancing, depending on their personal health situation. Spouses and partners welcome. The weather should be good, and there is enough space to be safe.

The club will provide hamburgers, hotdogs and veggie burgers, with buns and the fixings, plus a variety of cold drinks, including beer and wine. For the rest of the potluck please plan to bring something to contribute - last names A-K bring an appetizer, I-Q a salad and R-Z a dessert.

Please don't come if you are not vaccinated. Guests are welcome.

If the weather is not suitable for an outdoor gathering, we will postpone or cancel.



Backyard potluck and demos

FALL MONTHLY PROGRAMS

➔ **FREE Carving Holiday Gifts - Ideas & Examples (Terry Burnside & friends)**— **SEPT 14th, 7:00 PM** [Click here](#) to register

SEPT

➔ **FREE Texturing Carvings with Pyrography (Janice Levi, expert presenter)**— **OCT 12th, 7:00 PM** [Click here](#) to register

OCT

➔ **FREE Finishing with Oil Paints (tentative, Jeff Harness)**— **NOV 9th, 7:00 PM** [Click here](#) to register

NOV

Upcoming Classes

(New) Relief Carving Class (free) — in-person and/or online Thursday evenings 9/16 to 10/21 7:00-9:30 PM

Taught by Larry Wade, [click here](#) to register

This will be the sixth time held. The workshop carves three projects of progressive difficulty. The designs were created and originally taught by Mack Sutter for forty years and are the first of 12 patterns in what was a three-course series. Tuition is free, as are loaner tools (until we run out). Your cost will be \$16 for four prepared Basswood blanks and perhaps a \$15.50 shipping charge if you don't want to or can't pick them up near Beaverton. You will also need a strop, available for \$20 if you don't have one, plus honing compound or paste (\$12). Beginners and above are welcome; a little Zoom experience required. These are the three projects, all 7" x 8 1/2" carved in Basswood. To see all the patterns created by Mack Sutter and the three original articles he wrote for Chip Chats, [click here](#).

This workshop will be simultaneously taught online with Zoom and at the instructor's shop near Beaverton. Participants can choose one mode or the other, or mix and match. In-person attendees must be vaccinated and sign a waiver.



Eternal Knot



Diaper Pattern



Tulip

Santa Carving Class (Free) — Fall 2021 (interest list)

Taught by Terry Burnside, [click here](#) for the Interest List

Santa figures are quite popular and highly varied. Terry is planning a Fall class but well before the Christmas rush. The underlying concept is to use what are known as turned or craft Basswood eggs as the carving wood. This approach provides three benefits - learning how to carve a Santa, doing a figure in the round, and experiencing a useful material. Santa figures may not float your boat, but think of it as learning how to carve a wide variety of other objects like caricatures, creatures and comfort animals while using a material that will allow you to crank out gifts more easily.

This class is capable of being taught online or in-person but which, or both, will be decided as the pandemic recedes. The class will likely be two sessions one week apart, two hours each with a modest tool set that you supply with some possibility we'll have tool sets to rent. The cost of two eggs will be about \$10.



Photo by Terry Burnside



Photo by Terry Burnside

Carving a bit of the Statue of Liberty

By Jerry Boone

In retrospect, there was absolutely nothing straightforward or easy about this project.

My carving history, such as it is, centers on almost never doing something I've already done and generally looking for projects that will be more challenging than the one that came before.

I'm not certain why I chose the arm of the Statue of Liberty. I think it could have been a bit of patriotic fervor left over from last November's election.

I had access to a good size chunk of basswood courtesy of a friend who lives in Minnesota, and that determined the size of the project.

The first problem was, there are no patterns or references. All I had to work with were photos and drawings.

I enlarged the best profile drawing I could find and used it to create a template to lay out the outline on the wood before taking it to the band saw to get rid of the excess. Typically, when I have an outline to work from, I'll have two copies made. One I use to transfer the image and the second I hang up in the shop for reference and to use to take measurements. I draw lines an inch apart all the way up the template so I can later use a set of dividers to confirm how closely I'm following the master.

Everything was working fine until I discovered well into the project that the drawing I relied on wasn't very accurate. At that point I was committed to it and simply forged ahead, knowing that someone who was an expert on Lady Liberty would scoff at the result.

Then, after everything was carved and I began rotating the piece, it became apparent that the base, the terrace for the railing and the tube that holds the flame didn't line up in every direction. The pieces looked fine when viewed from one angle, but were skewed when seen from another. So, after struggling to make the carving from a single piece of wood, I cut it into three. Once lined up, they were glued back together using a dowel to keep it centered in every direction.

In spite of how it may look, the railing was actually the easy part. I cut two pieces of basswood, glued them together and then cut it into a circle, like a very thick basswood hockey puck. I created a pattern fashioned after what is actually on the Statue of Liberty, transferred it to the wood and then deeply relief carved it into the surface. Once that was done, I removed the center of the puck using a scroll saw, leaving it about a quarter inch thick. I used a spindle sander to gently reduce the thickness from the inside. I had no idea if the sander would work or it would grab the piece and shatter it beyond repair. Obviously, my fears were unfounded. In spite of the way it looks, because the grain goes up-and-down, the railing is actually quite strong, especially after it was glued into place.

The final color was another issue-without-end. There are about six different coats of color on the thing. It was like Red Riding Hood's porridge. One was too green. One was too light. No, this one's too dark. That one's too blue. The most accurate color made my eyes hurt. I finally got as close to accurate as I could (well, depending upon the light) and took Jeff harness' advice to go back over it, dry brushing shadow and patina.

I'm still not happy with it...but at this stage I'm less unhappy than I once was. And sometimes that's the best 'ya can ask for.



Final Carving of the Torch



1-After band sawing



2-Roughing in



3-Crown in deep relief in the hockey puck



4-Crown fitting before sanding



5-After sealing

Work Holding Series

Hanging Onto It: A Carver's Bench Hook

by Tom Willing

A life-long wood worker, I have seen numerous solutions to the problem of holding a work piece so that one's hands can be free. This Spring during the Mack Sutter workshop, I needed a bench hook and created this version.

Starting with a scrap of seven-ply cabinet grade 15" x 17 1/2" x 3/4" for the base plate, I drilled 1/2" dog holes on 2 1/2" centers with a Forstner bit on the drill press. These holes accommodate pegs for stops against a work piece (Fig. 1). Next, I scrounged a 3/4" clamping batten out of a scrap of cherry that is about 2" wide x 16" long. Fig 2 shows this batten gripped by the vise and the base plate clamped to the batten. Being a turner, I made up eight button pegs for stops, but a 1/2" diameter dowel would work nearly as well (Fig. 3). The 1/2" diameter by 5/8" deep pegs are a snug fit in the holes. The 3/4" cylindrical buttons protrude 1/2" above the base plate and have a groove for a grip when removing them.

Never one to hastily lock myself in with permanent solutions, I clamp the batten to the base plate, then secure the batten to my bench using the front vise. The batten could be secured to the plate with screws; however, I optionally wanted to be able to clamp the base plate directly to a bench or table without the batten in the way. I don't have holdfasts, but I would use them if I did. Likewise, I would use a tail vise and bench dogs to hold the plate on my bench if I had that equipment. My clamping arrangement offers infinite angles of orientation of the base plate to the bench top. This arrangement also buys me some knee space when sitting on my stool at my work bench.

The holes in the base plate go all the way through to make clearing them of chips quick and easy. The pegs, heavy enough to be strong, don't bottom out in the holes; the buttons protrude enough to hold 3/4" stock securely. There are no metal fasteners to nick my tools.

I learned some things during this quick exercise and my design will be modified accordingly on the next bench hook I make for woodcarving. I took little into account with the dimensions of my work piece material when I laid out my hole pattern: next time, I will lay out the holes to allow me more flexibility for orientation of my work piece. I'll use a spacing that allows for easier re-orientation of the work piece against the pegs. I did not leave enough allowance in my hole pattern for the diameter of the heads on the button pegs. I will also lay out additional rows of dog holes to give me more range of work piece dimensions. Those dimensions being infinitely variable, I've concluded that I will likely have several of these bench hooks before I'm done.

As I worked on this design, I stumbled across other ideas for holding work pieces that are percolating and might make it into the light of day in a next article.



Fig 1 Lens distortion makes it look like the plate is deeper than it is wide



Fig 2 - This view shows the plate clamped to the batten which is held in the front-vise



Fig 3 - Button pegs showing point up

Introduction to Hobo and Tramp Art

By Roman Chernikov

I saw a picture of a wooden box, and I was intrigued by the unusual carving style. The picture showed a box decorated with the hobo and tramp carving style which is famous for simple geometric cuts combined with layered design. I read the “*Hobo & Tramp Art Carving: An Authentic American Folk Tradition*” book that inspired me to learn more about the hoboes and their carvings.

The Hobo and Tramp carving style originated in the early 20th century when a large community of migrant workers and homeless vagrants were living on the road, navigating the rails, crisscrossing the country, finding an occasional job, and making a few bucks here and there. The Hobo community was quite large – up to a several hundred thousand people; they developed their own lingo, special signs, and, fortunately, a unique wood carving style. This Wikipedia page describes the differences between hoboes and tramps: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hobo>

Hoboes and tramps spent their spare time whittling with their pocket knives, and they assembled practical projects such as boxes and picture frames. Hobos sold their carvings or traded them for food. Hobos used any wood they could find to make their carvings and they often reused wood from cigar boxes found in garbage piles. The cigar boxes were commonly made from Spanish cedar, eucalyptus, yellow poplar, white oak, basswood, and some other wood. The hobo carving style is simple enough to apply to any available wood of different densities. Carving small incisions on thin boards is easy on almost any wood. Some hobos assembled very unique guitars from cigar boxes that you can see on this Wikipedia page https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cigar_box.

Hoboes carved notches on flat strips of wood and nailed those strips in layers as a decoration to create unique 3-D looking pieces of art. Please google images to see Hobo projects: <https://www.google.com/search?tbm=isch&q=hobo+and+tramp+wood+carving>

I am currently working on the picture frame shown in Fig 1. You may see some un-carved notches on the top layer of the frame. I drilled the holes in the corners to align the layers with thin dowels.

The frame is carved and assembled from three layers of basswood. The size of the frame is 3.5” x 4.5” (9 x 11.5 cm). See a ruler below the frame for the reference.

I am planning to add an easel back to the frame. I will share the finished piece in one of the future newsletters. I would invite you to find a book or two to learn more about the distinctive hobo and tramp carving style.

Please email me at learn@readntry.com about what you think about this style. Thank you and happy carving!

Roman Chernikov

P. S. Please visit my personal website where I share my wood carving projects: <https://readNtry.com>



Fig 2 - Some books



Fig 1 - photo by Roman Chernikov



Fig 3 - details

Carvings from around Oregon

By Jim Spitzer

In Astoria at the Cannery Museum on pier 39 I spotted this life-sized carving, created in 1984 by someone I don't know. The museum website link is <https://canneryworker.org/>. The museum is small, often open and not attended.



Cannery Museum, Astoria



Photo by Jim Spitzer