

Artisans Quarterly Review

H A N D C R A F T E D C U S T O M W O O D W O R K I N G

EDITORS MONOLOG

2009 Done!

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We're a little late with this newsletter since we released a special edition announcing our international television debut in September. 2009 is coming to and end and we wanted to remind everyone that we've survived the economic downturns, remaining intact and continuing to provide our services through out the year. Restorations, especially, are still coming into the shop at a steady pace, we're featuring several restoration projects in this issue.

Hopefully everyone's had a happy Thanksgiving and we wish everyone the best for the pending holidays. I'm sure we're all hoping 2010 will bring some interesting new adventures, which we'll of course be sharing with all of you through our newsletters, blog, and website. Don't forget to join our group on Facebook as well for special event invitations and other announcements of interest!

(<http://www.facebook.com/groups.php?ref=sb#/group.php?gid=92002746272>)

ARTISANS ON EBRU-TV

By now you should have received our special edition EBRU-TV newsletter announcing our feature on "Blank Canvas," reaching out to 8 million international households through a worldwide satellite, cable television, and internet audience.

If you haven't please take a moment to backtrack and read this special edition, or you can watch the video available now on our website at the following links:

EBRU-TV Special Newsletter:

http://www.artisansofthevalley.com/docs/Artisans_Quarterly_Review_EBRU_TV_Special_Edition_Sep_2009.pdf

Portable Player Friendly: http://www.artisansofthevalley.com/docs/Blank_Canvas-1-04-AOV_iPod_Lg.mp4

Full Episode Windows Media Format: http://www.artisansofthevalley.com/docs/Blank_Canvas-1-04-Liu_and_Saperstein.wmv



2010 PHILADELPHIA FINE FURNITURE SHOW



Artisans of the Valley will be attending the 2010 Philadelphia Fine Furniture Show pending in March at the Philadelphia Cruise Terminal. We'll be arriving with an array of furniture, woodcarvings, video slide shows, and presentations to provide a cross section of our portfolio and of our restoration services.

We have a unique floor plan in mind for our space, which will include one of our gothic tables, Eric's Master's Papers, "Shiloh Prairie," a Duncan Phyfe desk, and a few other treats and objects. We're working on a unique way to display our ram carvings from our EBRU-TV feature. We'll be posting more about the show in our next newsletter, as well as providing updates on our blog site. If you're interested in attending please let us know as we can obtain a limited number of discounted tickets.

Show Dates and Hours: Saturday, March 27, 11am-7pm / Sunday, March 28, 11am-5pm

Admission: \$12.00 \$2 discounts for tickets purchased in advance

Location: Philadelphia Cruise Terminal details and instructions available <http://www.pffshow.com/>

[Visit our blog for a few more details!](#)

NWCA CHIP CHATS FEATURE



If you're a member of the [National Woodcarver's Association](#) be sure to check out this Month's Chip Chats magazine for a feature on Artisans of the Valley's Bob Eigenrauch. Bob's classic, modern, and original design chainsaw carvings attract attention and add a great conversation starter to any location. For the rest of you folks that are not carvers, the article is available online in PDF format: http://www.artisansofthevalley.com/docs/Bob_The_Chainsaw_Carver.pdf



POSTS, GRAPES, AND VINES



This is a simple project that allowed a great enhancement to classic smooth round sold oak stair posts. Artisans' function was to develop a grape and leaf pattern to adorn the posts, bases, and caps.

This is a classic pattern found around the world in wine cellars, bars, kitchens, and restaurants. The pattern was customized and scaled to provide appropriate coverage wrapping around the circumference of the posts.

All carving is done in relief by hand using 18th century cast steel tools from Artisans' collection. Backgrounds are stippled to provide contrast.

Tinting is provided in acrylic, applied as a wash leaving the grain and highlights showing through. The color provides a great method of contrast and unique detail. Stain and finish is applied normally, and the finish is applied over the entire surface.

These posts will be mounted in a wine cellar entranceway. Themes can be adjusted to include nautical, wildlife, autobahn, or a variety of creative carvings to meet the requirements of your décor.



WALKING STICKS & WEDDINGS

In our last issue, we announced that Artisans of the Valley is supporting [Rory Fanning's Walk for Pat Tillman](#) by contributing 40% of the proceeds from our walking stick commissions to this cause. All you have to do is commission a walking stick, cane, or hiking staff and mention the "[Cause for Walking Sticks.](#)" Of course if you're not interested in a stick, nothing is stopping you from contributing on your own so, no excuses!

May 15, 2009 we published a blog entitled "[The Sticks are Picked](#)" announcing that we received a commission for four walking sticks under the Walk For Pat fund raising project. At the time, we couldn't release all the details as these sticks were commissioned by our client, Matthew, until after the wedding.

What do walking sticks and weddings have in common you ask? Matthew's creativity, sentimental nature, and desire to offer a gift to his four groomsmen combined with his support for our nations armed forces and his admiration for the work of the [Pat Tillman Foundation](#). Matthew's clan carries a history of military service and active roles in college football across multiple generations.

Each staff was personalized for the groomsmen, representing their names, family crest, service to our nation, and accomplishments as athletes. When you present a staff representing an individual's life to a young man, you also leave space for what he will achieve when he reaches the next stages of his life. Each staff can be returned at any time for an update; the names of wives, children, or depictions of their adventures yet to occur will someday adorn what is now a blank slate.

"My hope is that these guys are moved by the larger meaning behind the stick and donation. I hope that they will display them proudly in their homes, offices, wherever....and that the sticks may become a conversation piece. I am envisioning somebody walking into my brothers office, asking about the stick, learning about Pat/Rory, then going out and in their own way making their own contribution to a meaningful cause or project...and so on...." - Mathew Quinn

We offer our congratulations to the bride and groom, and we thank them for their generous support of Rory's quest. We are proud to have contributed to this effort, and we look forward to our next opportunity for our artistic skills to generate funds for such a worthy cause.



W E D D I N G B R I D G E S

We often emphasize that Artisans of the Valley is one of those eclectic studios that often takes on the projects that most other restorers would shy away from. In this case, we took on a project to restore a solid mahogany coy pond bridge hand crafted by our client's Japanese American uncle shortly after his release from the WWII Interment camps. The bridge had a special place at the family farm, until it was passed on to the next generation when the farm left the family.

On arrival, the little red bridge was severely rotten, showing significant signs of weather damage which given its age of nearly 70 years honestly wasn't unexpected. This is a case where we go outside the normal steps to preserve as much as possible of the original piece, but of course having to replace sections that were simply too far gone to save. The technique employed to regain the integrity of the material is the use of a two part extremely durable coating very common to the boating industry, [MAS Epoxy](#).

Epoxy bonds to the surface of wood, creating as close to an impregnable seal as possible over wood. Rotten fibers are encased in a tough and hard surface just as the thin strands of fiberglass are in the same process to create the hull of a boat. Once cured, an epoxy finish can be painted normally and that's exactly what we did in this case.



Shown above is one of the main arch beams reconstructed and sistered to new material to provide additional strength. This actually increased the width of the beams by 3/4" which was necessary to ensure structural integrity was regained.

If you have ever wondered why woodworkers are constantly browsing stores, catalogs, yard sales, flea markets, eBay, and anywhere else they may hope to find more clamps, simply look at the image above left! Projects like this often employ dozens of clamps to twist, bend, and "gently" nudge things back into position and hold it stable until the adhesive cures.

This prized family heirloom is the work of our clients uncle Kinzo Yamamoto, circa 1960. Mr. Yamamoto was the 3rd born out of six brothers, he hand built this mahogany bridge as a gift to their father. This traditional art form maintained a position of honor on the family farm, a property settled by the Yamamotos after their time served in the WWII internment camps.

Shown below right, we decided to honor this restoration by photographing it positioned over Stanley's coy pond behind our shop. We'd like to offer a special thanks to our coy and goldfish for finally cooperating and swimming into the frame after about an hour or so of coaxing and baiting.





Congratulations to Bride & Groom Joan & Rob Pelletier

Right: Sister Susanne Y, Mom (Helen Yamamoto) and niece Rachel Careno

Below: Lynda, Joan, Rob, Lia, Kolbi, Winsor Yamamoto



GREEN-UP TIP RE: INK & TONER



Recently, we made a few discoveries about our printer that were somewhat disheartening ... fortunately there is a relief from the despair. Artisans has obviously has our website but until last year we also relied on printed materials as a primary means of conveying information. This has been shifted to our CD based portfolio, but the lessons remain intact to support our ongoing needs for printing. The blatant truth is, that your printer likely claims it is out of toner or ink long before it actually is; the printer is ripping you off!

Our Brother printer will run about 1,000 pages past the end-of-life indicator on our toner cartridges before they actually run dry. Of course the manufacturer claims that quality will drop, and that if you refill the cartridges the warrantee on the cartridge will be voided. Let's ask a simple question: Who cares about a warrantee on an empty cartridge?

Do some research on your printer, Brother for example uses a light sensor that can be tricked by simply putting a piece of electric tape over the cartridge window. Yes, at the end you'll figure out the cartridge is empty by running a few bad pages; but the savings in the meantime far outweighs this loss and you can always recycle the bad pages. Extending the life of, and refilling cartridges is a sound business and environmental practice!

VENEER REPAIRS TURNED FULL FRAME

This small table is a classic example of veneer that has undergone the stress of time, losing its adhesion to the substrate and having already undergone dozens of previous repairs, it has reached a point where patchwork simply didn't make sense. The trick is to find new veneer with the same thickness, figure, and patina of the majority of the original veneer.

Of course as we began to dig deeper, the project turned into a total rebuild, and apart came the piece frame, legs, and all. Once we got it all reassembled, it was then time to apply the new veneer. Bottom line, this small table will last another generation or two!



WEST PENN HARDWOODS

West Penn was started back in 1995, founded by Rocky and Kim Mehta with a mission to supply domestic and exotic hardwoods in whatever quantity that may be required by amateur and commercial woodworkers. Specialty suppliers take pride in quality, and today they take equal care in sustainable inventory.

Our last three oak gothic tables were crafted from West Penn Hardwoods, including our own. A properly managed forest will actually improve the habitat, a healthy tree makes for improved stability and grain patterns in the material.

Artisans will be continuing to source our materials from sustainable and local environmentally sound forests including approved lot clearing, local forestry management cutting, and natural tree falls. We'll be happy to provide our clients with a list of sources and material safety data sheets defining the origin and contents of lumber, hardware, and finishing materials.



West Penn's Rocky Mehta Visiting an FSC certified mill in Central America.

AMAZING TRANSITION – PINE COUNTRY CORNER UNIT



This country pine corner unit arrived with no feet, no moldings, and a broken crown. Paint inside was oddly colored and deteriorated to say the least. The finish was worn all but off, doors were out of align, and the glazing was completely decayed.

Restoration involved restructuring the main corner and back panel structures, matching face moldings. The unit was refinished, all old paint and finish was removed as feasible. Glass was removed and old glazing cleaned out of all the surfaces.

Restoration of the door frames included new glazing. We also realigned all four doors and installed new locks and closing mechanisms. A few of broken glass panels were also replaced with antique glass.

New interior is a milk paint cream color with a sealer of an oil based cream paint. Exterior is natural hand rubbed tung oil varnish. Antique pine was used to replace missing pieces and fabricate new structures as required.

This substantial unit is a great example of a green salvage, furniture pulled from a home and revitalized instead of sending it to a landfill. Some creative restructuring turned the battered built-in into a free-standing country corner unit.



AMAZING TRANSITIONS BEDROOM SET

This is a fine example of an old growth mahogany bedroom set typical of what was made between 1920 and 1950. The sets are a mix of solid wood and quality plywood materials. Restoration requires full breakdown, reassembly, and refinishing. In this case we also affixed new hardware to cap-off a truly revitalized appearance.

The breakdown is required due to the deterioration of the adhesives of the period, generally an organic (animal based) glue that has a lifespan between 20-50 years. Once the glue begins to crystallize the shock and vibration common to moving furniture will usually loosen the majority of the joints. We often hear the story from our clients that the pieces “seemed” solid before they were moved from an estate or parents home to a new location. Once they arrive after a few hours in a truck, they are shaken and literally falling apart.

The most common original finish on these sets is a colored lacquer, which actually served to obscure the natural beauty of the wood. Sets like this are rich and warm with patina and depth of tone. The careful use of penetrating stains, hand rubbed shellacs, and tung oil varnishes present the restored set with an entirely new perspective that generations will enjoy.

Restoration is obviously environmentally friendly, there is absolutely no reason any furniture of this quality should turn up in a landfill. Hardware for this project was supplied by [Horton Brasses](#).



HORTON BRASSES

Artisans could not produce our custom furniture or complete a full restoration without the availability of high quality hardware. We need drawer pulls, hinges, escutcheons, handles, and other metalwork. This is when we reach out to companies like [Horton Brasses](#).

Frank A. Horton founded the company as a basement operation in the 1930's supporting his wife Angie's antique business. She needed high quality hardware, and his skills as a tool and die maker gave him the means. Over the next decade or so Frank established his reputation by making hardware for many of the finest antique dealers in the east.

In 1946, James B. Horton joined his father. Together they built Horton Brasses into a thriving concern. By 1964, the company relocated to the former site of the J. & E. Stevens Iron Toy factory in Cromwell, CT. Within a few years James bought out his father, and the business was now second generation.

As is often the case, generation two brought on expansion and new lines of business. Jim and his wife Barbara worked as a team. Jim handling the shop and Barbara managing the office. By the 70's, the couple brought Horton's own foundry on-line, ensuring that the quality of their castings would never be compromised. Jim learned the foundry trade and built a foundry from the ground up. Horton Brasses' fine castings remain a tribute to his efforts to this day.

[Chippendale Brass Pulls by Horton Brasses](#)

HORTON BRASSES CON'T

Generation three came into power in 1992; Jim retired, and his oldest daughter, Barbara bought the business. She and her husband Toby spent the next 15 years operating the family business. Toby introduced the legacy organization to the information age, bringing on the website and handling daily computer operations.

2001 brings Orion Henderson, who took the helm at Barbara's retirement in January of 2007. Horton, like Artisans, is a family operation that stands behind an American made product supported by generations of knowledge and tradition. Eric, Artisans Master Craftsman & Orion are products of the information age, they bring an aggressive online mentality to their business models, marketing, and operations; employing ever evolving technology to ensure their presence is known. Horton Brasses remains committed to producing the finest cabinet and furniture hardware, while delivering the highest level of customer service possible.

Artisans will be collaborating with Horton, as well as many of our affiliates, suppliers, and other resources to interlink our websites, newsletters, blogs, and other venues to reduce our marketing costs while still expanding our visibility. Keep watching for more Horton Brass features!



For More of Horton Brasses Visit: <http://www.horton-brasses.com/>

FAMILY HIGHLIGHTS JON & JACKIE'S WEDDING!



We join Greg & Joanne Soldivieri (shown far right w/ Jackie & Jon) offer our congratulations to Jonathan Saperstein and Jaclyn Soldivieri on their November wedding.

We welcome Jackie and her family as new members of our family. The Soldivieri's have accepted Jon in spite of his Eagles fan status; given their North Jersey roots that's an amazing concession for hardened Giants fans!

Shown above is the full wedding party in front of Pantagis Renaissance. Shown bottom right Stanley, Jon, Cynthia, & Eric Saperstein. To the far right brothers Jonathan and Eric Saperstein.



12 TRIBES WALKING STICK



We our plan to feature of our clients posing with their pieces a few times; Jerome Stoll (Photo Above) is a connoisseur of fine crafted canes and a tax expert, and founder of [National Tax Advocates](http://www.nationaltaxadvocates.com) spends his career life helping Americans resolve their IRS tax disputes.

He likes to make a statement with his canes. He is holding a special commissioned cane with the symbols of the Twelve Tribes of Israel carved into the walnut shaft. The head of the cane is a gold Lion of Judah, a traditional Jewish symbol. Jerome has also commissioned a cane featuring Moses holding the Ten Commandments and a black cobra; ideas for a few more are pending!

For More of Stan's Walking Sticks Visit: <http://www.customwalkingsticks.com>

For More Info about Jerome's Tax Advocacy Visit: <http://www.taxproblemresolution.com/>

ARTISANS OF THE VALLEY

HAND CRAFTED CUSTOM WOODWORKING



[Artisans of the Valley](#) offers museum quality period reproductions, original designs by commission, and antique restoration/conservation services, hand carving, modern furniture refinishing, onsite furniture repair, hand made walking sticks, and educational programs. Our website is now over 300 pages, including galleries, feature articles, and educational sections, company background, and our new adventure album section. We extend an open invitation to explore our site, and contact us directly with any inquiries or questions you may have.

Eric M. Saperstein is Master of Artisans, Owner, Webmaster, Editor, Bookkeeper, Buyer, Office Manager, Legal Pit-bull, and he's in charge of vacuuming the shop: eric@artisansofthevalley.com



Theresa Tonte is the Owner of Smooth Finish by Artisans of the Valley. Teri provides onsite touchup & repair services for residential, corporate, and institutional clients as well as serving to fill a variety of roles in the shop including referee: teri@artisansofthevalley.com



Stanley D. Saperstein, Master Craftsmen, Author, & Historian founded Artisans of the Valley in 1973. Stanley offers historic presentations, impressions, and various lecture series ranging from Civil and Revolutionary War, American Folk Art, and Interactive Role Play of Characters ... sometimes trying to reenact American Chopper episodes in the shop: woodcarver@artisansofthevalley.com

A COUPLE BLOG TOPICS

Be sure to check out these two great artists and their work on our blog site! Artisans is striving to feature a variety of unique art!

John Looser crafts some of the world's most amazing bird houses; our feature "[Lifestyles of the Rich & Feathered](#)" presents on our blog!

Charles Maxwell is a timeless, or well timekeeping artist who creates hand made hardwood clocks. Check out "[Hardwood Time](#)" on our blog site.



2010 CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?

Some Things Perhaps in the NEXT issue? ...

The 2010 Philadelphia Fine Furniture Show Approaches
 Ram Carvings: High Point Ridge in a Book Format; We can't explain it's a must see!
 Secretary Restoration Structure, Veneer, and Finish all renewed.
 Baker End Table Restoration - New Finish, New Leather, New Life!
 "Got a Blow Out? Blow In!" Restoration of an Antique Blacksmith's Forge Bellows



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