

Jeff Cormier, President  
Joe Comeaux, Treasurer

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Barry Humphus, Editor, Bubba Cherie  
George Kuffel, John Marcon, Chuck Middleton

**Mentoring Program** - If you have a project, a problem in any woodworking area, these members have volunteered to help. Give them a call. Jeff Cormier: 582-3278; George Kuffel: 478-2707; John Marcon: 478-0646; Chuck Middleton: 625-3134; Gary Rock: 433-1679; Eltee Thibodeaux: 436-1997; Dick Truth: 583-2683. Each has years of experience and knowledge.

### May Meeting Highlights

We had to switch at the last minute from John Marcon's shop to Jeff Cormier's and the word may have not gotten out to everyone. Barry could not attend as he was out of town so Joe Comeaux graciously took over the note taking.

Jeff reported that Mickey Hart was injured while using one of his table saws. He lost part of his index finger and injured his long finger on his left hand. He has tried to go over exactly what he did but cannot remember. Not surprising. These injuries happen so fast it is often hard to remember exactly what happened. He cannot even remember why his left hand was involved in the cutting operation. So we must remember to think through every operation in the shop. Before making the cut, think of how you will begin, proceed through the cut, and finish. It doesn't take long to do this, but might keep you from doing something that could result in an injury.

Mickey was told by the ER nurse that nail gun injuries are their most common cases nowadays. Some of the ER customers are repeat visitors. If you have or use a nailer, it might be something to think about in the future. I will do some research on nail gun safety for a future meeting. I only use brad nailers and have not used a framing nailer or large stapler in many years. If anyone in the club has more experience with them, please offer to give a safety presentation. There are more options now than nailers with a hose out there.

Jeff said that Jimmie Everett's has increased health problems. Jimmy said he is giving up the club as he is now having trouble standing without a cane, and sometimes even with one. Anyone who wishes to call him, or visit, he will likely enjoy the conversation.

Jeff was in Beaumont, TX a couple of weeks ago on the day of the SE Texas Woodworkers Club meeting, so he went. Their meeting is normally held on Monday evening at Acadian Hardwoods, but on that night no one showed up to unlock the store. So it was changed to Steve Brady's shop north of Vidor. They do some of the same things we do, some things different, and some more activities. A young man named James Berry gave a talk on the CNC router he built for \$1200, including the Makita 2 HP router. The most ex-

pensive items he bought included software, three stepper motors (\$48 each), three interfaces (\$40 each), and the router. Almost everything else could be bought at a lumberyard (MDF and standard hardware). He was giving a workshop and demonstration on the following Saturday morning.

New member Chris Smith brought two items made with his CNC router. The first piece was a "plaque" made using a beautiful piece of padauk wood. In the center of two v-groove ovals was a flower with stem and leaves. Outside the two v-grooves in the four corners of the "plaque" were ornamental designs. The second piece was a "Lazy Susan". The top of the "Lazy Susan" was a grid work in a "pizza pie" shape divided into six equal areas. The top was made using soft maple. The bottom of the "lazy suzy" was made from oak. Both the top and bottom were made using glued up panels.

Mr. Thibodeaux brought scroll work items. The first item presented was a clock guitar with case. The "guitar" was cut from a piece of oak. The fret board was made of a piece of cherry. The guitar case was cypress and cedar. The second item was a tissue box cover. The four sides were made of birch plywood featuring hummingbird scenes. The top was made of pecan

: Jimmy Couvillion brought a bowl he made using a piece of plywood that he had gotten from a friend. Jimmy also brought a stack of woodworking magazines for anyone present that would like to have them.

Jeff Cormier showed us an entertainment unit he was making for a friend. The wood is pine boards that had been salvaged from the old Pat's Steak House Restaurant in Welsh. The boards were removed before the building was torn down by a son of one of the original owners.

Joe Comeaux won the \$15.00 gift certificate from Stein Lumber.

Jeff Cormier then did a demonstration on sharpening band saw blades. See the article later in the Newsletter.

Coming Up . . . Saturday, June 13, 9:00 a.m at the shop of Tom Bergstedt. This will be our first visit to Tom's place since he joined and we all look forward to that.

## Sam Maloof : 1916 - 2009

Sam Maloof, whose simple, practical handmade wood furniture that sits in the Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as the White House, passed away May 21 at his home in Alta Loma, Ca.

Maloof was a furniture designer and woodworker. He attended high school first at Chaffey High School in Ontario, California, where he took his first woodworking class and was recognized by his art teacher as having extraordinary skill. Later he attended Chino High School. Shortly after completing high school, he began working in the art department of the Vortex Manufacturing Company in Claremont, Ca. He was drafted into the United States Army on October 11, 1941. After serving in the Pacific theater and then transferring to a post in Alaska, Maloof left the army in 1945 to return to Southern California.

Maloof married Alfreda Louise Ward in 1948 and the couple moved into a house in Ontario, Ca. where Sam set up a furniture workshop in the garage. Mostly from necessity, Maloof designed and built a suite of furniture for his home using salvaged materials. Commissioned pieces followed, and from 1949-1952 Maloof continued working in the garage of his Ontario home. In 1953, Maloof relocated to Alta Loma, California where he built a studio to continue making furniture.

Maloof's work is in the collections of several major American museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum. In 1985 he was awarded a MacArthur "Genius" grant. Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan have both owned Maloof rockers.

He was described by the Smithsonian Institution as "America's most renowned contemporary furniture craftsman" and People magazine dubbed him "The Hemingway of Hardwood."

But his business card always said "woodworker." "I like the word," he told a Los Angeles Times reporter, his eyes brightening behind large, owl-eyed glass frames. "It's an honest word."

Sam Maloof and I exchanged many emails years ago. He was always very gracious and helpful as I built some of my early furniture. *Barry Humphus*



## Sharpening Band Saw Blades

This is not a procedure any band saw sharpening shop will recommend. Several members of Sawdusters, a woodworkers mailing list on the Internet, use this procedure for at least one sharpening. Before going over the procedure, let's talk about band saw blades and how they work. One website, don't remember which, claims the hardest working part of the blade is the band itself. No surprise – it is moving fast and changing direction rapidly. It must be made of a metal that can take it. The second is the gullet. It must remove and release the sawdust. The third is the point that actually does the cutting. My own experience is that a somewhat dull blade still cuts fairly well, but it does not cut curves very well, but stalling and burning begin to occur.

A little information on band saw blades before we begin.

**LENGTH** – simple, you must buy the one that fits your saw. For example, a Craftsman 12 takes an 80 inch blade. A Delta 14 takes a 93-1/2 inch blade

**WIDTH** – wider blades are stronger, harder to break, cut straighter with less drift. They also restrict your ability to cut a tight radius. Blades vary from 1/8 inch to as much as 3/4 inch on larger consumer saws. Some saws can also take a sanding strip in place of a blade.

**PITCH** – this is the number of teeth per inch. You can compare this to crosscut and rip blades. A rip blade is great for cutting along the grain. It cuts faster. A crosscut blade makes a cleaner cut across the grain. Suffolk Machinery, make of Timberwolf Blades, claims you should have 6 to 8 teeth in the cut for ideal cutting. Thus, a 1" thick board should be cut by a 6 to 8 tpi blade.

**TEETH TYPE** – regular, skip, and hook. Normally, regular and skip teeth hit the work squarely. Hook teeth often have a 10 degree angle of point. Variations of these types are available from some manufacturers.

**BLADE SET** – alternate (also called regular, standard, and every tooth) and raker (every third tooth is not set to allow better chip clearing and faster cutting, but with a rougher cut. Other tooth sets are available such as wavy for metal cutting. Check out a new hacksaw blade and you'll know what I mean.

**BLADE THICKNESS** – determined by the diameter of the wheel and the work to be done. A thicker blade is stronger and not as prone to break. But it is stiffer, harder to mount and does not do a tight radius.

Jeff demonstrated a technique that is simple and relatively quick. Other ways to do this can be found at <http://www.woodturningvideosplus.com/resharpen-bandsaw-blades.html> *Jeff Cormier*

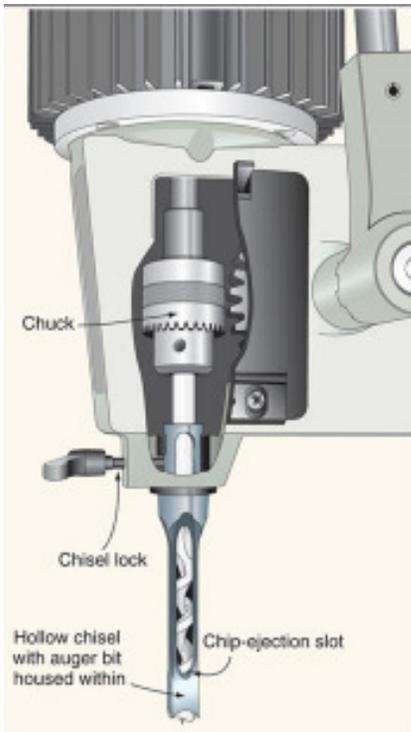
## Drilling Square Holes: The Mortiser

Mortise and Tenon joints are elegant, strong and relatively simple. A single mortise can easily be cut using a power drill and sharp chisel. However, if your woodworking plans call for a considerable number of mortises, you'll easily tire of cutting them by hand.

If you don't have a huge number to cut and don't plan to have many projects that require them, one solution is to purchase a mortising attachment for your drill press. While there are several of these on the market, the one from Delta fits several of the Delta drill press models and other brands as well.

In general, the mortising attachments for drill presses are not designed for continuous, long-term or heavy use. They are best when you need to cut mortises occasionally. It also depends on the project. If for example, you are building a six foot long teak park bench with 60 or so slats as the back rest and bottom, this device is not for you.

But other than the setup time, they work well and are as accurate as dedicated machines. You'll also get to tune up the muscles in your right arm if you are cutting a lot of hardwood. The cost is relatively low as well at about \$70 for most models.



A dedicated, hollow-chisel mortiser, however, can be a godsend. A dedicated mortiser is little more than a modified drill press that holds a square, hollow chisel with a drill bit in the center.

When looking for a dedicated mortiser, there are a few features to consider. First, most quality mortisers keep their bit speed on the low end (1500-1800 RPM) to reduce excessively heating the chisel. Most are table-top models with a small table and hold-down that keeps the workpiece

square to the chisel. Some larger, floor-standing models offer the ability to tilt the table for cutting mortises at an angle.

Look for a model with a travel of at least 4-1/2". Any less travel and you may have a difficult time cutting through-mortises on some boards.

The mortiser should use a smooth but strong steel rack-and-pinion system with a single arm to drop the chisel and bit into the stock. Pushing the chisel into hardwood can take a bit of muscle, and the action should be strong enough to handle considerable torque from the operator. Additionally, the chisel should complete the entire length of the travel in less than a 90-degree rotation of the arm.

Most mortisers are equipped to handle 1/4", 3/8" and 1/2" square chisels. Some are even capable of handling a 3/4" chisel, but keep in mind that this is a pretty healthy chunk to cut at one time and may require a lot of physical exertion. Remember that even if you're cutting a mortise that is 3/4" wide, you don't need to cut the entire width in one pass. A few cuts down one side of the mortise and then back up the other with a 1/2" chisel will be just as effective and not nearly as taxing on the operator.

The first thing to remember when using a mortiser is to always use the hold-down. The downward movement of cutting is rarely problematic, but often the upward movement of releasing the chisel from the stock will cause the wood to rise off of the table rather than the chisel releasing as desired. The hold-down will solve this problem.

Also, remember that the bottom of your mortises will not be nearly as clean as the sides, since the drill bit isn't square on the bottom. This is rarely an issue, but something to keep in mind if the bottom of the hole is ever going to be visible.

Before using your mortiser, always check to see that the chisels are square to the fence, and that your stock is securely against the fence. Otherwise, your mortises will not be square to the face of the board held against the fence.

Also, before cutting your mortises in your stock, make test cuts in scrap boards of the same thickness. This will allow you to set the depth of cut accurately and make any mistakes on scrap so you don't damage your project.

To keep your mortiser running smoothly for a long time, there are three tips to keep in mind. First, keep your chisels and bits sharp. If the chisels become dull, have them professionally sharpened or simply replace them.

Second, keep your unit as clean as possible. Sawdust can wreak havoc on the rack-and-pinion and drill chuck.

Finally, over time, the teeth on the rack-and-pinion can wear down a bit. Check your tool's manual for instructions on adjusting for normal wear and tear on the mortiser's travel mechanism. *Woodmagazine.com* edited by Barry Humphus.