



P.O. Box 68343  
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## FEBRUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER

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## *The Cumberland Furniture Guild's February Meeting*

will be on Saturday, February 7th, 2009 from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m. at  
Berry & Patrick and Bob's Saw Shop in Nashville, Tennessee.

*This meeting is our annual "bring your portfolio" members' meeting, and will include the infamous*

## SLIDE WARS

### *Directions to the meeting:*

The February Meeting is in the shop of Dianne Patrick, Martha Berry, and Bob Corrigan at 607 Bass Street in Nashville. The phone number to the shop is 255-6809. From 8th Avenue South headed into town, turn Right on Chestnut Street, then Left on Fort Negley Blvd., past the Adventure Science Center, going toward downtown. Look for a sign on the right that says "Bob's Sharpening" just before the bridge that crosses over to Sixth Avenue. The building is off the road a little bit and their shop is at the very end of the building.

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## Letter From The President

By Alf Sharp

I'm writing this short epistle because I didn't want this to be the first issue of our newsletter that didn't contain a president's letter. Circumstances have conspired, however, to keep me from having time to pen one of the typical long-winded rambles you may have become accustomed to. One of those circumstances is the opening of a new sideline hardwood lumber business. I won't abuse this bully pulpit to flog my new venture; that'll come from the advertisements my business sponsorship will allow. Fellow member Alan Daigre and I are working together on this. It's been very exciting, and busy.

A couple of weeks ago I attended the semi-annual Furniture Society board meeting, where we appointed our new executive director, David Edgar. David is a very capable arts administrator as well as being a noted contemporary sculptor. He's a great fit. At the same meeting we approved adoption of the Society's strategic plan for the next five and ten years. There are several exciting aspects to it; one very important one is a commitment to broaden the scope and influence of the FS, to include industry, mainline as well as cutting edge design, and a stronger representation for traditionalists.

From there I went to Williamsburg for the Society of American Period Furniture Makers conference and Cartouche award banquet. The award this year went to Dennis Bork from Wisconsin, an amazingly prolific maker. Things are looking better and better from this end for a rapprochement with contemporary makers.

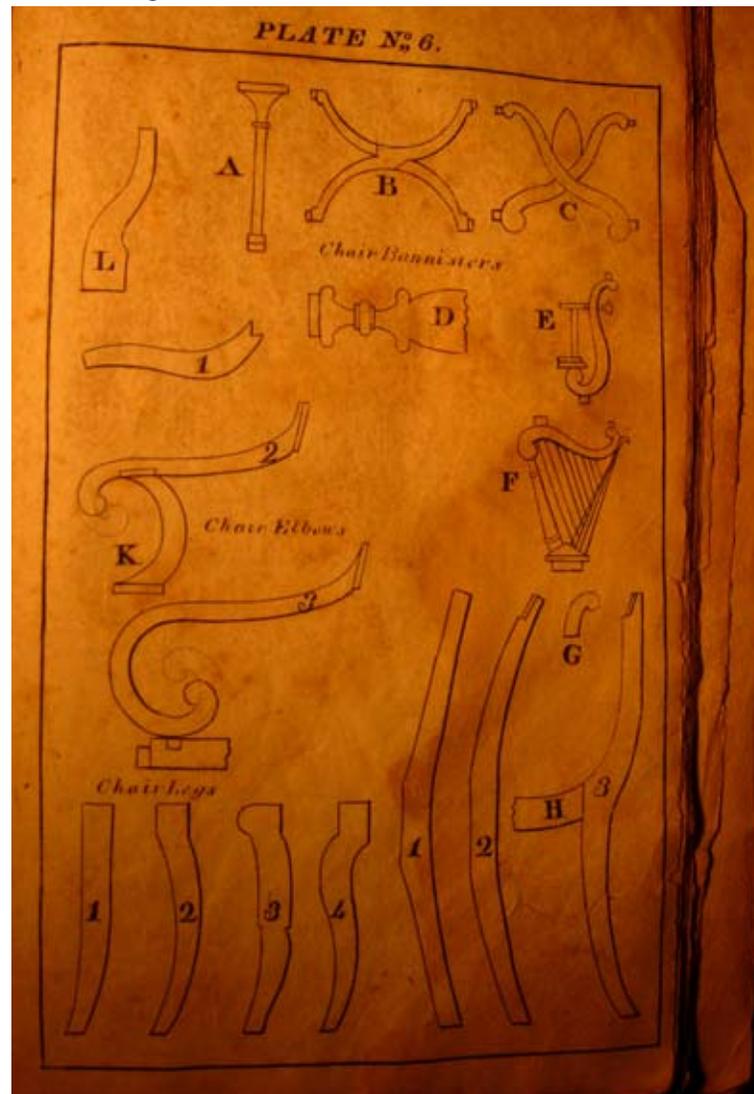
One of the main reasons I bring up my involvement with these organizations is that I'd hate to see our region's makers slip back into the backwater mindset that has been the general status over the past several decades. Unless more from our guild avail themselves of the incredible inspiration, community, education, and opportunities offered by associating with likeminded artisans and collectors from around the world, we'll continue to be a footnote in the history of furniture making. The Furniture Society's conference is being served up on a silver platter to those of us in Middle Tennessee this summer – it's in Boone, NC, at Appalachian State College. I hope we can have ten or more from our guild attending.

Excelsior! -Alf ♦

## John Erhart Rose's New York Price Book, or "SHOW ME THE MONEY!"

By Mike Bell

These images display pages from John Erhart Rose's copy of an 1810 New York Price Book, which was revised in 1816. I have the book on loan from the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts for research purposes. Rose (1767–1860) worked in Knoxville, Tennessee, from about 1820 to 1828 and signed the book "John E. Rose's Book 1826." (I included images of his furniture in prior newsletters, which demonstrate his excellent carving skills). He sketched out some of his ideas for glazed bookcase doors and bedstead headboards in the rear of the book, amid several furniture patterns which were printed in the



original publication. Some of his sketches match up to antique southern furniture which came from his bench.

The medieval guild System which produced titles such as "master" and "journeyman," set the groundwork for future collective bargaining agreements. As a result of increasing arguments and complaints within the cabinetmaking trade in colonial America, committees were formed which represented both the employers and employees, and these committees presented their findings in the form of price books. The earliest

## Member News

**Guild member Tim Hintz** has a chair in the exhibition of works by TACA members at the Nashville Airport from December until March 2009.

**Kim Winkle** will be a guest demonstrator at Southern States Woodturning Symposium in Gainesville, GA in April. She will also be teaching a one day workshop Saturday May 23 at Highland Hardware in Atlanta, as well as being a guest demonstrator for the Georgia Association of Woodturners in Atlanta on May 21.

**Greg Pennington** will be assisting Curtis Buchanan with a continuous arm Windsor chair class May 25-30 at Kelly Mehler's School of Woodworking in Berea, Kentucky.

**Craig Nutt: *Wood Transformed*** opened at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau, Wisconsin January 24 and continues through March 29, 2009.

**Tom Fuhrman** is currently in Trinidad working on a large stained glass church installation. "Temperature everyday is about 90+, eat your hearts out." He is teaching the procedures for crafting stained glass in the copper foil technique. He will have an exhibit opening February 6th at the Centennial Art Center in Nashville's Centennial park that will run thru March. Everyone is invited to the opening on February 6, 2009 from 5-7 PM ♦

Photos by Mike Bell

TABLE No. 1.  
PRICE OF PUTTING ON BRASS WORK.

Each castor, on turned work, fitted by the turner,	£ 0 0 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Ditto shouldered on square legs,	0 0 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Each claw castor, the bottom of the socket not let in,	0 0 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Ditto lions paw, ditto	0 0 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
When the socket is let in all round, extra, each castor,	0 0 2
Round or square plate castors, below paws, each,	0 0 3
When the plate is one inch and a quarter diameter and let in,	0 0 4
he castor,	0 0 6
	0 0 9
heon,	0 0 5
and escutcheon,	0 0 6
	0 0 9
	0 1 4
	0 0 4



known American example was the Philadelphia "Prices of Cabinet and Chair Work," published in 1772.

This 1810 New York Price Book notes in its preface: "The Committee have endeavored to equalize the prices in such manner, that two men working at different pieces of work, will not be paid, one more than the other, which has been hitherto, in many instances, the cause of much jealousy among men, working for the same employer."

I have included their prices for applying brass hardware to furniture, which I hope will prove interesting to studio furniture makers. Other pages give prices to the smallest details of cabinetry, including joining, turning, veneering, carving, fluting, reeding, etc. Prices are given in English pounds.

The fact that John E. Rose never worked in New York

suggests that he was more interested in the furniture drawings than the prices of labor. Indeed, he probably made considerably less money for his work in the Southern backcountry than did his New York counterparts. Like other pattern books put out by Thomas Chippendale, George Hepplewhite, and Thomas Sheraton, this price guide along with its drawings helped shape early American furniture designs in the early 19th century.

But you know, I'll bet those early New York journeymen cabinetmakers still felt they didn't charge enough for their work—something all of us guild members can relate to. -Mike  
Guild member Mike Bell is the Curator of Furniture and Popular Culture at the Tennessee State Museum ♦

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**Wenge Dining Table by Chris Barber**

*31 X 44 X 96 - (144 with leaves)*

*Solid Wenge and Wenge veneers over MDF substrate.*

Traditionally, a blacksmith forged the holdfast. You might possibly do it yourself if you are interested in a fairly simple iron project, or you might find a blacksmith who is willing to make one. Several different types are sold commercially. For example, Woodcraft has two sizes available. For this article, I tested the smaller size holdfast and found it to be quite adequate for holding material that was not too thick. Lee Valley has designed one that reaches way over the material being clamped and applies pressure by means of a brass knob and fulcrum. It lacks the speed of a traditional holdfast, but would work well in specific and repetitive situations.

This tool is worth looking into whether you carve, make cabinets, or use a router or a hand scraper. It is beautiful in its simplicity and effectiveness. **-Scott**

## Cool Tool Review

### Traditional Holdfast

By Scott Thompson

If simplicity, efficiency and elegance are part of the process in your furniture making, then you probably already use a holdfast in your shop. If you do not, you should know about this simple tool, which can easily clamp and hold material of various thicknesses and shapes for carving, shaping or fitting. Two of the most appealing aspects of the holdfast are its ability to reach from the center of a workbench beyond the edge of the material being clamped and the speed with which one can clamp and un-clamp material.

The clamp works by inserting the post (or rod) into a slightly oversized hole in the workbench top (or in an anvil for metalworking) –it should slide up and down easily in the hole. After the arm of the clamp is extended onto the material being clamped, a mallet is used to strike the top of the holdfast with a firm blow. The metal holdfast flexes slightly and pressure is applied to the sides of the hole by the rod. This creates some tension in the arm of the holdfast which will hold down the work on the bench with a varying amount of pressure based on how hard the mallet strikes it. Striking the back of the tool releases its grip.



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