



SCANTLINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIMBER FRAMERS GUILD
NUMBER 108 AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2004

Tedd Benson, Mark Abraham to keynote Eastern Conference

THE AGENDA is set for the Guild's 20th annual Eastern Conference, October 28–31, at the Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Champion, Pennsylvania. Please see the July issue (No. 107) of *Scantlings* for details, or visit the TFG website.

Since the last issue, we have confirmed new speakers who make the program even more exciting. Tedd Benson will end the conference on Sunday with a talk entitled *Timber Framing: a Key to the Past or a Bridge to the Future?*, on the evolution of one of the major companies in the industry today and on the changes in timber frame design that accompanied it. Mark Abraham will open the conference with *For our Children's Children*.

The conference theme is looking to the future and to the next generation. The international timber frame workshop (a pre-conference event that continues through Saturday) will join the children's discovery workshop in various ways to both produce children's structures and give the kids a chance to work alongside craftsmen from other countries: a cross-cultural *and* an inter-generational event, and it should be quite an inspiration. Ryosei Kaneko, Boris Noël, Filippo Campagna, James Wiester, and Kimberley Reagan are some of the

leaders. Gary Norton of the Timber Shop has signed on as a sponsor by providing timber for the event at no charge. Thanks, Gary!

See Eastern, page 3



photo Will Beemer

The children's discovery workshop, Montebello 2003. This year, children will work a bit with timber framers from other countries.

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Curriculum progress

THE COMPETENCY outlines for the timber frame training curriculum the Guild is developing are now 75 percent complete. Gordon Macdonald is writing the sections, with a committee of Will Beemer, Leon Buckwalter, Rudy Christian, Chris Feddersohn, and Curtis Milton overseeing the efforts and providing additional input. (For more on the curriculum, see *Scantlings* 106, May–June 2004, page 12.)

We now are expecting the package to be complete by the time of the Eastern Conference, and we are planning an in-depth rollout of the material at that event. It will also be published for review by the TFG and TFBC Boards, and other interested parties will find it accessible on the Guild website.

After this phase is complete, we will begin to collect content (the materials needed to teach each section). Some of this will already be in hand from our current curriculum and publications; more will have to be written by experts in the field recruited from the membership or collected from other sources if already written and appropriate. The final phase will be writing the tests for each section, which will indicate the learner's successful attainment of the goals for that competency. This work may take another year or more, but in the end we hope to have an objective and useable tool for both instructors and employers to use in gauging the skills of a timber framer. —*Will Beemer*

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Scantlings is the member newsletter of the Timber Framers Guild. It is published eight times yearly. Deadline is generally the 10th of the month before an issue comes out (though it often shifts).

Next deadline: September 10.

Please address contributions or information to:

Susan Witter, Editor, 2406 Williams Street,
Bellingham, WA 98225, phone and fax 360-647-0310,
witter@nas.com

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Bainbridge Island memorial

THE JAPANESE-AMERICAN MEMORIAL (Nidoto Nai Yoni) on Bainbridge Island, Wash., a volunteer project, has begun its first construction phase.

We are ready to begin building of a roofed gate to be installed first in the town of Winslow and then later at the memorial site. This gate is the precursor to a much larger project planned for next year, in which we hope to collaborate with our Japanese carpenter friends to build a visitors center. In its temporary location, the gate, constructed of Port Orford cedar with cedar shingles and copper ridge covering, will serve to raise awareness and funding.

We plan to devote at least two full weekends to the project, tentatively in August or September. Further details will be on the Guild website as they become available.

If you have the time to meet us in Port Townsend, or if you or your shop would like to take on some portion separately, please let us know. The materials are to be delivered to Timbercraft, so if you want to work at your own shop, we will arrange to get material to you or replace material you supply.

This is short notice and we apologize. The project is not that large, though, and a few capable hands will make light work of it. Please call John Buday, Cascade Crest Designs, at 253-884-9349 (jb@cascade-crest.com), or Kevin Coker at Timbercraft, 360-385-3051 ext. 14 (kc@timbercraft.com).

We appreciate any help you can give.

—*John Buday and Kevin Coker*

Call for nominations

WE ARE looking for candidates for the Guild board of directors. Each member of the nine-member board serves a three-year term. Three Board seats need to be filled.

We seek nominations from you. Those who agree to become candidates will be introduced at the Eastern Conference in October; you'll vote on them there if you attend. If not, you'll receive a mail-in ballot. The October *Scantlings* will contain the statements of the candidates. Those elected will serve beginning January 2004. We encourage self-nomination and nomination of colleagues. Confidentiality is assured.

We're looking for an enduring love of the Guild, self-motivation, teamwork, patience, and a sense of humor.

Please submit your nominations to Laura Brown, nominations committee, 781-826-7314, handshouse@comcast.net.

Eastern (from page 1)

Another strong Basic Track addresses our needs for the future by providing entry-level training. Topics include scribing (double session by Josh Jackson), brace layout, beam sizing, site safety, and sharpening. We will also include the latest update on the development of the competency profiles for training curriculum in timber framing, which is nearing completion.

The Natural Building Track, coordinated by Chris Dancey from Nature First Building Systems, continues to provide us with fresh information on healthy building alternatives. Mary Golden, coordinator of the recent Natural Building Colloquium East, will give an overview of natural building. Paul Lacinski, author of *Serious Straw Bale*, will tell how to select natural wall finishes and monitor moisture. Sarah Highland will describe her projects using straw-clay, and Mark Hoberecht and Chris Fox will show a new version of straw bale enclosure. There will be a panel discussion concentrating on detailing timber frames for natural enclosure systems, and the open forum where you'll be able to ask questions of the Natural Building Track presenters.

Other late additions to the program include Doug Reed on 19th century timber frame and log buildings, Chris Koehn on the Rottweil experience (an in-depth look at the three-week training session for U.S. timber

framers at the Gewerbe Akademie in Germany), Harrelson Stanley on the deconstruction of the Soma House, a feudal-era Japanese farmhouse, and Lea Cloyd on the latest developments at the newly-accredited College of the Building Arts in Charleston, S.C. You'll have a chance to get outside for a tree identification walk with Rick Collins, who will also explain the uses for the varieties discovered. Leon Buckwalter will lead a tour over to nearby King's Bridge, a uniquely stabilized queen-post truss that awaits repair. (Arnold Graton, Jr., Dave Fischetti, and Bill Collins assisted in the stabilization.)

Your conference flyer will be arriving in your mailbox shortly with complete details and registration information, or you can register on the TFG website. Reserve your room early at the hotel by calling 800-452-2223 or 814-352-7777, ext. 7009. Be sure you mention the Timber Framers Guild to get the special rate. See Seven Springs at www.7springs.com.

Help us celebrate the past and look to the future of the Guild, by joining us at one of the most kid-friendly resorts in the country. And although Saturday night is the night *before* Halloween, we hope you'll bring a costume to wear at the auction to make that a night to remember. That means the slide show will be Friday night this year, and we'll be asking you to get those images in to Joel McCarty early!

—Will Beemer

Trade fair

THE TRADE FAIR features suppliers for the timber frame industry, who will display their products and services and explain in detail how they're used. Meet those who support our craft in the field, including panel suppliers, tool vendors, and wood brokers. Don't miss the mixer Friday at 5 pm in the trade fair area. The Timber Frame Business Council organizes the trade fair. If you wish to exhibit, tell TFBC Executive Director Nancy Wilkins at 888-560-9251, or nancy@timberframe.org.

Project expo

THE CONFERENCE Project Expo offers timber framers the opportunity to show a recent project of which you are proud. Projects are displayed in a central location. People are encouraged to vote for a favorite project, which will receive the People's Choice Award. Entries are usually presented on display boards, but other forms of display are welcome.

Watch for the project expo entry form included with your conference confirmation packet. It includes information on how to reserve a piece of foam core so that you are not juggling that with your airline luggage. Questions? Please ask me (susan@tfguild.org or 603-835-2077).

—Susan Norlander

Guild auction

THE TFG benefit auction is a major fundraiser for the year, made successful through our members' generous and creative contributions. The auction will be a three-tiered event: the live auction on Saturday night, and the silent auction and bag auction throughout the conference. Watch for the auction registration form in the conference confirmation packet and plan to include your name and item in the auction catalog. Then, have a good time participating in the opportunities our auction threesome provides! Your happy bidding is a wonderful contribution to your Guild. Questions? Please ask me (susan@tfguild.org or 603-835-2077).

—Susan Norlander



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Guild Japanese compound joinery workshop in B.C.

CHRIS HALL will lead a two-week Guild workshop specializing in Japanese compound joinery and hip roof layout at his shop on Gabriola Island, British Columbia, November 8–19.

The first two or three days will introduce the *koh-ko-gen* method of using the Japanese framing square (*sashigane*) and descriptive geometry to determine compound angles. Theory is followed by application through the construction of a water stone trough (a hopper in form). In this exercise, students will learn both mitered and butted compound joinery. Joinery variants will include tongued and nailed, through-tenoned, dovetailed carcass, and sliding dovetail-wedge.

The next three days will apply *koh-ko-gen* to splayed post work, with students using through-tenon joinery to construct either a sawhorse or a small table.

In the second week, the focus will turn to Japanese hip roof layout. Again, with further elaborations of the *koh-ko-gen* method, along with some selected descriptive geometrical techniques, students will learn all of the pertinent cut angles involved in laying out hip and jack rafters, along with the plate (*keta*) corner joints. Several variants of the corner joint will be studied. The students will apply what they have learned by constructing a small hip-roofed structure, possibly a gatehouse or storage building.

Some evenings during the course will feature presentations on the Japanese roof as an architectural and

structural element, wall structural systems, *ki-wari* (proportioning), sharpening, plane setup, and more.

Chris Hall studied carpentry in Japan before moving back to Canada, and he has presented on the techniques he learned, especially roof layout, at both Western Conferences at Asilomar. He is currently working on a book for Linden Publishing on the subject of Japanese carpentry layout methods. He has worked at Len Brackett's Eastwind company in Nevada City, California, as well as at Joinery Structures in Oakland. Both firms specialize in Japanese carpentry.

Chris now has access to a 2400-sq.-ft. shop that provides an ideal workshop setting, right on the ocean with stunning views of the Strait of Georgia. There is space for camping (although November weather might be iffy), but there is a hotel with rustic cabins (\$40 CDN per night, \$20 CDN for camping) right next door. Chris will offer space for RVs or tents as well. Gabriola Island is just off the southern coast of Vancouver Island and is easily accessed by ferry from the city of Vancouver on the mainland. There are a number of B&Bs, stores, and restaurants on the island.

Tuition fee for the two-week workshop is \$750 for Guild members, \$835 for non-members (includes one-year membership). Tuition fees include lunch and materials. Students must attend both weeks. Registration deadline is October 9. Class size is limited to 16 students. A \$200 deposit is required to hold your spot, with the balance due 2 weeks prior to the course. Course deposits are refundable less \$50 up to four weeks prior to the course.

Use the form at right to register, or you can also register on the TFG website. A tool list (which will include a *sashigane*) and more details will be sent to you upon receipt of registration. For more information, reach me at 413-623-9926.

—Will Beemer

This just in

DEDICATION OF the Gateway Visitors Center, N. Woodstock, N.H. (Guild project 2002), will be September 22. Dick Hamilton extends a warm invitation to us all. Please R.S.V.P. to Joel, joel@tfguild.org, 603-835-2077.

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Japanese Compound Joinery Workshop Registration

November 8–19, 2004, Gabriola Island, B.C.

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Daytime Phone _____ Fax _____
Email _____ Vegetarian? _____
Age _____ Gender _____
Occupation _____

☐ I would be interested in sharing a room at the hotel with another student.

Experience level (circle one)

in Timber framing: Beginner Advanced

in General Construction: Beginner Advanced

In Woodworking: Beginner Advanced

Guild member? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Guild membership fee or year 2005 renewal (\$85) \$ _____

☐ Tuition fee: \$750 for Guild members, \$835 for non-members \$ _____

Tuition is refundable minus a \$50 administration fee if we're notified by October 9.

After that, fees may be applied to another 2005 Guild event if you cancel.

TOTAL \$ _____

Method of payment (check one):

☐ check ☐ money order (make payable to Timber Framers Guild; US funds only, please)

☐ credit card (Visa, MasterCard, AMEX or Discover only)

Card number _____ Name on card _____ Exp. date _____

Send completed form and fees to: TFG, PO Box 60, Becket, MA 01223; credit card payments may be faxed to 888-453-0879 or called in to 413-623-9926.

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In memory: Dave Gaker

DAVID SCOTT GAKER, 50, of Liberty Township, Ohio, died at his home on July 7, 2004 after a long and valiant struggle with cancer. His family was at his bedside.

David was born November 30, 1953 in Rochester, N.Y. He grew up in Middletown, Ohio, and he subsequently graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in agricultural engineering. In October of 1979 he married Karen Lamping of Cincinnati. He is survived by his wife Karen and children Jennifer and D.J. He is survived by his parents, Dr. Louis and Carolyn Gaker, his brothers Jeffrey, Bruce, and Douglas, and his sister Lisa.

Dave was engaged and involved. A childhood friend, Jeff Heck, said of Dave that “his passion for his work never overtook his ability to enjoy his blessings, from the sun setting over his beloved farm, to the rich fellowship of his family and many friends. He traveled extensively and lived life with exuberance; his friendships and adventures from childhood to the end of his life are a reminder of how full a life can be.”

Full indeed. Even a brief look at just the Guild projects Dave engaged himself in is impressive for its depth and scope. Those projects include: Ameriflora, the Speed River Bridge in Guelph, the boathouse in Russia (twice), Malabar Farms, Penetanguishene, Lone Mountain Ranch, Green’s Island, the Dolly Copp Pavilion, trébuchets in Scotland, windmills in Indiana, the Kicking Horse River Bridge, the Marine Gateway and the Seaside Centre in Sechelt, B.C., and lastly a teahouse workshop at Asilomar. Mike Goldberg remembers a day early in the Scottish adventure in this way: “Dave set the bed timbers for the trebuchet; sounds simple huh? Oh no. Dave was on his knees in ankle deep, cold, black, sticky mud, digging with his hands to get those bed timbers level.” Dave was there to get something done, whatever it took, and did not lose sight of why he was doing it.

Dennis Marcom tells this story: “Dave and I had worked together on some Guild and other projects over the years since our meeting in 1985. This past April, Dave and I worked together again. By this time the struggle with the cancer had become a part of his daily routine, like taking on another part-time job. The work, this time, was on a fine 19th-century barn that he was rebuilding for his brother Doug. In my own life, I’ve been struck with the difficulty of balancing family, work, fun, making the ends meet in the middle. The seesaw swings

(careens sometimes) from out of balance in one direction to out of balance in the other. Yet here was Dave working with a far longer seesaw—working hard to stay alive, preparing for death, caring for his craft, and fussing with all the details of recreating a fine old barn put to use now, stopping for an ice cream on the way home, taking care—good care—of his fine family; and he had somehow managed to turn the balancing act into a beautiful dance. I was proud to be his friend; proud, really, to be a member of the same species.”

At the memorial service for Dave, on Saturday, July 10, Mike Goldberg put out a call for volunteers to finish up one last job that Dave had not been able to complete. A fine crew of framers and friends completed that work on Sunday to install eight loft timbers in the frame: a fitting memorial to a man who loved his work, but who placed an even higher value on his fellow human beings. Dave himself, writing in *Scantlings* after the Asilomar tea house workshop, wrote: “Reflecting on my experiences with the Guild, I hate to think how I would have evolved without this group. It is an organization with a big, big heart.” And how would we have evolved without you, Dave?

—Karen Gaker and Dennis Marcom



Left, Dave at work on the trebuchet in Scotland.

photo Rick Brown

Above, Dave and Karen in Halloween attire at the Montebello conference.

photo Janice Wormington

In memory: Mark Witter

MARK RAYMOND WITTER, timber framer and musician, born Utica, N.Y., July 27, 1953, died suddenly on June 16, 2004, Bellingham, Wash., of a heart attack. Mark is survived by his wife Susan (editor of this newsletter), daughter Rachel and son Brian, brothers Scott and Gregg, parents Bruce and Janet Witter, and numerous nieces and nephews.

I don't recall at which early Guild gathering I first met Mark Witter, but I remember I liked him right away—tall, solid, deep-voiced, enthusiastic, and modest withal—and I always welcomed our later encounters and the chance to talk over any question of the moment. Even if he knew others much better and spent far more time with them, he made it plain to me that he was my friend, a demonstration much rarer than you might expect.

In Montana, once, he showed me that you must spread the pizza sauce right to the edge of the circle of dough, and so for years I thought of him every Thursday when it was my turn in the kitchen, and I obeyed. In New York at one of the Troy conferences, we played together in a pickup softball game, and I have no doubt that I hit the ball better because of his presence. When Mark wrote for me in the Guild journal—which he did a dozen times—I admired his easy use of the colloquial, particularly, in one case, the phrase “upside the head,” and his vigorous style. He was pretty much on time, too.

I last saw Mark in April a year ago in Bellingham, on a passing visit to the Cascade Joinery, where he worked for the last ten years. After he and Jeff Arvin chatted with us on a tour of the shop, and after determining whether it was a *dry* rain or a *wet* rain that awaited us outdoors if we walked, a small crowd of us headed uptown to a cheerful, crowded restaurant where we had a good lunch and a fine time, talking mostly of family matters. Company expense or no, when it was time for all of us to be on our separate

ways, it was Mark who picked up the tab. “Mark, you had it right all along,” wrote his musical colleague and eulogist Brian Sheldon, “The secret is to work hard when need be, but drop it all for a song.” —Ken Rower

Mark, like many of us in the Guild, was fortunate to be able to work at something he loved. He was even more fortunate to work with people he loved, and who loved him in return. The entire Guild shares this fortunate circumstance, it seems: a group of talented craftspeople sharing what they love to do with others they care very much about. This is quite unusual in the business world. But it didn't happen by accident. The Guild is a reflection of its founding members and leaders. Mark was there when the Guild held its first meeting at Hancock Shaker Village in 1985, and he served on the Board of Directors for a number of years. Sometimes we felt like porpoises riding the bow wave of a great ship: as the Guild grew we got to participate and enjoy some truly remarkable events.

Mark was a teacher, sharing his hard-won knowledge of the craft as an instructor at Guild events. The Rindge Pavilion was the first all-Guild workshop that recruited instructors from various backgrounds and regions, and we looked for the best. At that workshop they were Craig Aument, Ross Grier, Chris Madigan, Scott Murray, and Mark Witter. The openness, patience, willingness to share, and humor that we see throughout the Guild is a reflection of Mark and the others who lead it, and will continue to be a reminder of him and an inspiration in the years to come.

Mark was a leader; his company and friends at the Cascade Joinery have never seemed to shy away from the challenges of pushing the timber framing envelope. He led this far-flung group of friends called the Timber Framers Guild. The circles of our lives intersect one or two times a year; we come and go, often in pairs, and amid hugs, music and an occasional beer, share our visions and memories.

—Will Beemer
(excerpts from memorial speech)



Far left, Mark and Susan in fall, 2003.

photo Brian Witter

Left, Mark playing the harmonica at the Williamsburg Conference, 1995.

photo Ken Rower

High schoolers with attitude

EXPOSING YOUNGSTERS to timber framing took on a unique form in Fairfield, Vermont, this spring. High school students from the Northwest Technical Center cut and raised a timber frame sugarhouse on the grounds of the grade school. The building will be used as a working maple sugar house and extension classroom for the school. The youngest kids got to sign pegs used for the building, the first ones driven by community members who spawned and sponsored the project.

Prodded and cajoled by TFG members Randy Churchill, John Colombo, and Dave Johnson of Joint Effort Timber Framing (JETF), the students first made a scale model of the project. Then, over a *blitzkrieg* three weeks within the normal school schedule, 30 students laid out and cut all the pieces for the frame. Friday, April 30, was the ultimate test: would it all work as planned? In front of 200 elementary school students, news media, and families, the frame was raised as planned, on schedule, and topped with a ceremonial bough at 3 pm. The collective back-slapping and high fives illustrated everyone's enthusiasm. Prior to this project, neither

students nor teachers had experienced anything like this. The school hopes to provide a similar experience to next year's class.

At the end-of-year awards banquet I was presented with a Special Recognition plaque and spoke briefly about the good behavior and dedication shown by the students to bring together a very complicated, fast moving project. Chad Rocheleau, one of the high school students, is now working in the JETF shop for the summer and will carry the TFG spirit back to classes in the fall. Congratulations to all participants for a successful, safe event.

—Randy Churchill



photo Cal Churchill

The triumphant teenagers perched on the sugarhouse frame.

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Thanks for the saws!

OUR SINCERE appreciation goes out to the kind and generous folks at Benson Woodworking, who have contributed to the tool crib some very large and very old timber framers power saws (of Flintstonian proportions), each of which comes with a series of stories from the Good Old Days. Note the human-scale figure on the handle.

—Joel C. McCarty

TTRAG Symposium 2005 site changed

BECAUSE OF an unexpected conflict at the previous facility, we have moved the 2005 TTRAG Symposium and Tour from the Mohican Resort to the nearby Salt Fork Resort in Cambridge, Ohio. The dates remain March 18–20, 2005. Look for details in a future *Scantlings*.

—Will Beemer

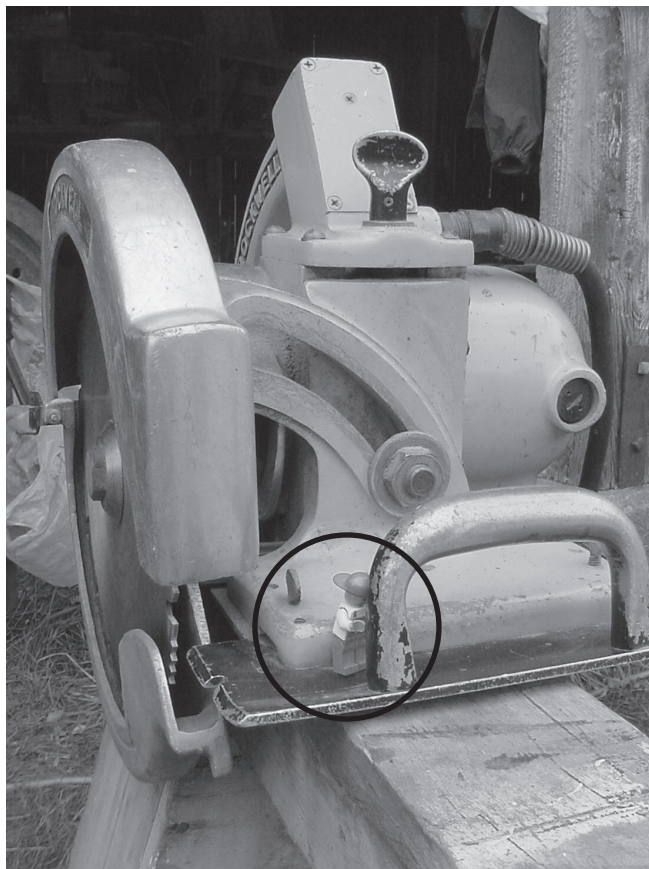


photo Joel C. McCarty

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Palomar College hosts 2004 Kezurou-Kai U.S.A.

THE CABINETMAKING AND FURNITURE TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT at California's Palomar College is honored to host, for the second time, Kezurou-Kai U.S.A. This woodworking conference will feature over a dozen Japanese master craftsmen, temple builders, blacksmiths, tool makers, and woodworking experts. They will be teaching and demonstrating their tools and techniques. Continuing highlights are the *kezurou-kai* hand planing contests themselves: the thinnest wood shavings made with a hand plane and the thinnest crosscut with a hand saw. Start sharpening your favorite hand tools now and come test your skill. This two-day event will take place September 4-5, at Palomar College in San Marcos.

The Kezurou-Kai U.S.A. sponsor is Hida Tool, of Berkeley, Calif. They will offer an impressive variety of

fine Japanese woodworking tools, hand planes, chisels, waterstones and saws. For event registration or further information, consult Hida Tools at 800-443-5512 or www.hidatool.com. Pre-registration is \$50 for the 2 days or \$65 at the door. For fall classes or to check out the last Kezurou-Kai at Palomar College, go to www.palomar.edu/woodworking.



The Yin Yu Tang Symposium

THE YIN YU TANG SYMPOSIUM brings together eleven of the most prominent scholars in Europe, the United States, and China to discuss new approaches to Chinese domestic architecture and the rich culture that envelops it. This year's symposium, *New Perspectives on Chinese Architecture and Culture*, will take place at the Peabody Essex Museum, in Salem, Mass., November 13-14, where a 200-year-old Chinese timber frame house, Yin Yu Tang, has been relocated from China and is the subject of a special exhibition. Speakers will focus on aspects of the culture that have formed and influenced Chinese domestic architectural structures over the centuries. Preservation carpenters will enrich the weekend program with a demonstration workshop of housebuilding techniques.

World-renowned musician Wu Man will present her personal experiences of Chinese domestic architecture plus a creative musical expression of these experiences. Other scheduled programming includes guided tours of the house by featured speakers.

The workshops will be led by Guild member Jan Lewandoski and Chinese traditional timber frame specialist Zhu Jiming. Both Jan and Zhu Jiming were instrumental in the relocation and restoration of Yin Yu Tang.

You can view the symposium brochure online at www.pem.org/pdf/yyt.pdf. I hope you will be able to attend.

—Bruce MacLaren

Assistant Curator of Chinese Art, Peabody Essex Museum

Scholarship program changes

IN HONOR of our deceased members, the Mark Brandt Memorial Scholarship Fund is now the Memorial Scholarship Fund. Donations in the name of Mark Witter and Dave Gaker will be added to this fund. Scholarships will be awarded as the Mark Brandt Scholarship, the Dave Gaker Scholarship, and the Mark Witter Scholarship, on a rotating basis.

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Vision becomes action

MEMBERS OF the Guild's Board of Directors met in Manchester, N.H., on the weekend of June 11. We were joined by John Miller from Dreaming Creek Timber Frames (as a representative of the Timber Frame Business Council) and Andrea Warchaizer (past president of the Guild), with Nancy Wilkins (TFBC Executive Director) continuing in the role of session facilitator.

This was the action plan phase of the initiative begun in Estes Park, Colorado, earlier this year. We all came away from this meeting with task- and timeline-specific actions. Those not in attendance were not volunteered in any way.

I worked with Andrea to develop logical steps and timelines for two items. First, within the next calendar year, develop and launch a technical conference-seminar series that can be delivered regionally, using member demographics to establish geographic choices. It will be targeted toward, but not limited to, professional timber framers. We imagine weekend events with a single track and content of such quality that employers would encourage (and perhaps compensate) employees to attend.

Second, in the same time frame, collect and publish a book of affordable timber frame plans for structures of various sizes (previously built), with timber list, joinery

details, and engineering calculations for a defined geographic location; they'll include the advice that a local engineer be contacted to modify timber sizing and connections as needed. A discussion of a variety of architectural treatments of each plan would be sensible. Contributed designs would be credited but not compensated. Legal advice would develop language to remove liabilities.

This information will become part of a survey that Joel is preparing on the issues resulting from the meetings. For the first item we need input from industry. For the second item we need a collection of contributions to choose from. I am looking for volunteers to assist me in the ongoing development of these two items.

—Curtis Milton

Your two cents

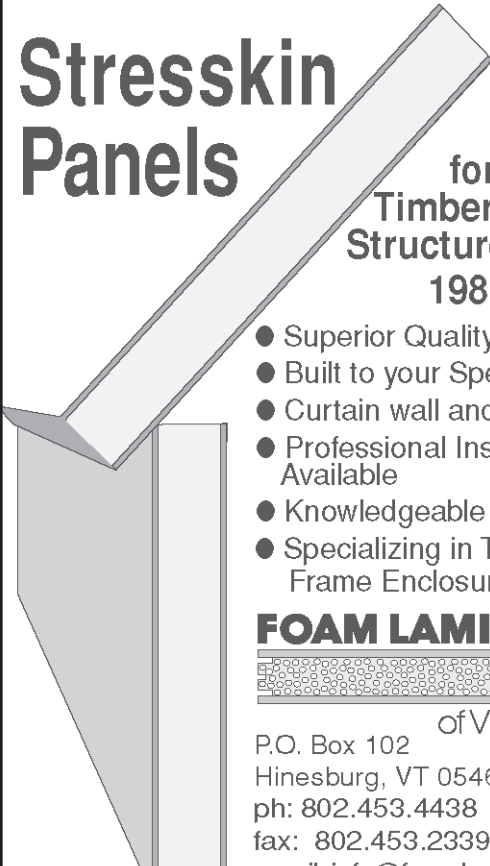
IF YOU haven't taken the Guild insurance survey yet, please do so. You can fill out the form in the July *Scantlings*, or go to www.tfguild.org/members/insurancesurvey.html and let your voice be heard. Thanks!

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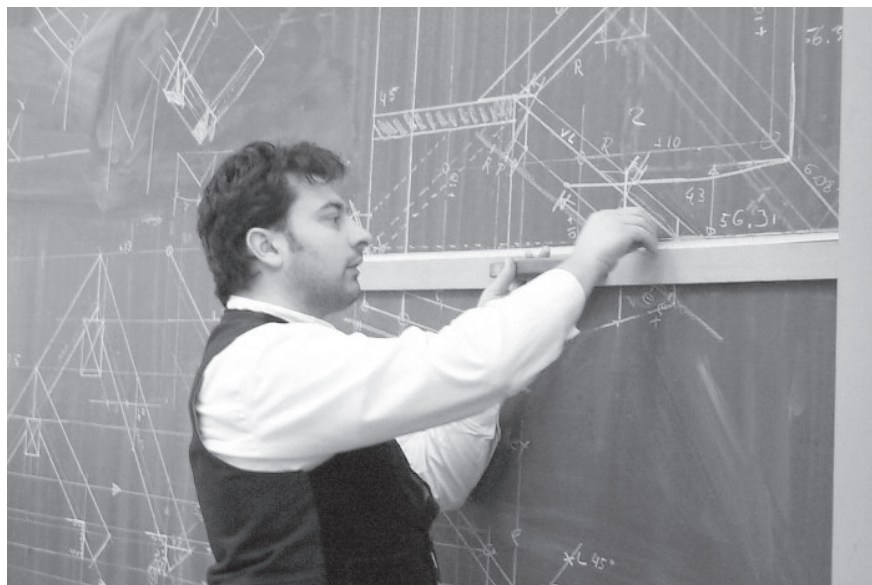
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Scenes at Rottweil



Rottweil photos Chris Koehn except where noted

Filippo Campagna develops a valley rafter tail for all to see. This one is the start of the famous hexe schnitt—the witch's cut.

SOME SHOTS from courses at the Gewerbe Akademie, the rigorous-yet-fun three-week intensive joinery and compound layout course in Rottweil, Germany. (For more information, see the July *Scantlings*.)

The course runs September 26–October 16. If you want to attend, make your plans now! Deadline for registration is August 27.

For more information, ask Will Beemer, the Guild representative (will@tfguild.org), Heiner Maute, principal of the academy (garw-maute@hwk-konstanz.de), or Filippo Campagna, instructor (garw-campagna@hwk-konstanz.de). Then hold on to your hat and get ready to learn!

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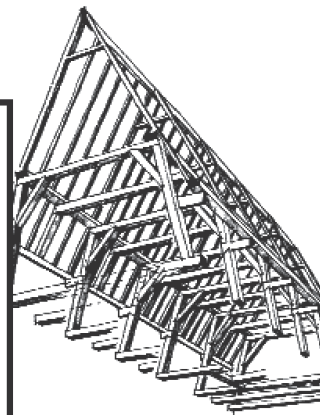
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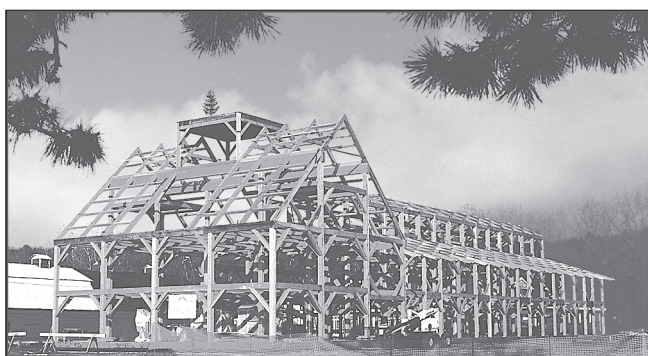
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photo Man Young

Photos at left, Stilly Sprague and Ying Hong work on valley rafters. Above, on completion of the course, each student receives a certificate and a traditional zimmermann hat. Filippo, left, and Heiner Maute (partially in view) award them to Chris Koehn, who cherishes his.



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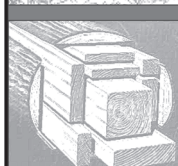
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Using ratios in financial planning

TFBC Timber Frame Industry Benchmarking Study

DO YOU ever wonder how other people manage their companies, where they decide to put their resources, whether you're being as efficient as you would like to be, if you're using the information you have about your company in the best way? There is information in your books that you may not be using to anywhere near its full advantage.

You may have run across financial ratios rarely, if at all; most likely, they might have reared up when you were asking for a loan and your banker resisted, pointing out, perhaps, that your quick cash ratio was outside their lending parameters.

Ratios may seem dry and uninteresting, compared to other parts of your business, but if you take the time to learn what they mean and how to make changes based on that understanding, they can actually be a stimulating management tool. Financial analysis using business or

financial ratios and norms provides a means of assessing a firm's strengths and weaknesses. Using data from the balance sheet and income statement, you can calculate various ratio and then compare them directly to those of competing firms. Comparing the firm's operating results with those of specific competitors or with the industry as a whole helps identify relative strengths and weaknesses. In addition, comparing changes in a firm's ratios over time can highlight performance improvements or problem areas.

Active financial management of your company requires a series of well-executed steps. First, you need to gather accurate and timely financial information (which just means, stay on top of your bookkeeping). Then you need to organize that information so you can see the underlying relationships: this is the purpose of profit and loss statements and balance sheets. The first tells you

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how much money you've brought in and spent over a period of time, and the second gives you a snapshot of your financial position at any given moment: how much you own, compared to how much you owe.

Using these two reports (which are easy to generate using simple bookkeeping software like QuickBooks) you can calculate your important financial ratios. Each ratio has a specific definition, and the calculations are simple mathematics. As an example, for the quick cash ratio mentioned above, you divide the total of your cash plus your accounts receivable by your current liabilities. This site is a great source for ratio definitions:

www.onlinewbc.gov/docs/finance/fs_ratio1.html.

The next step is to compare these ratios to what is happening in other companies, particularly in companies of your size, that have a stronger bottom line than you do. That information will help you consider what they are doing differently than you are. If there are glaring differences, are there things you should change about your management decisions to make your company more profitable? You may be making decisions (or, more commonly, *not* making decisions) that impact your bottom line in ways that are not always apparent until you start looking at your ratios. A couple of these are inventory control (too much inventory, or too little?—either can be the cause of unnecessary spending) and control of accounts receivable (making sure you get paid on time).

Of course, you may decide not to make those changes because of company culture or different values, but at least you will have made the decision consciously, rather than by default. You will have considered your options and made the right decision for your company based on all the available information.

Who do you compare yourself to? To date, the norm has been to use the ratios listed in the Risk Management Associates Annual Statement Studies. (Your banker will surely have a copy of this available for you to go through. You can see a sample page of this book by going to the RMA website at www.rmahq.org/Ann_Studies/asstudies.html. You find the best match for your business, which in the case of timber framing might mean taking a combined look at cabinet shops, furniture

shops, and construction of various types to arrive at a composite of those industries with costs and systems similar to your own.

The TFBC is in the process of completing its first study of financial ratios within the timber frame industry. We have 29 companies in the study, for which we hired the Seattle consulting firm Business Resource Services, Inc. BRS is gathering and compiling financial information (balance sheets and P&Ls) sent in by participants. They will analyze this information and return an individual consulting report for each company and an overall report for the entire group. This will allow us to begin to get a feeling for how companies within the industry are performing and what the really successful companies may do differently.

Clearly, this effort requires accurate reporting. This will be an ongoing effort over time, which will allow us to compare years and fine-tune results, improving confidence in the accuracy of the information. We welcome all companies who wish to participate. The TFBC has sponsored part of the cost of the study for members.

There will be a general session at the Guild's next Eastern conference in the fall introducing the basics of financial management using financial ratios, taught by Barbara Carper of BRS, as well as working sessions for participants to review and work with their specific ratios. Please come!

—Nancy Wilkins

SoBA graduates to ACBA

FORMERLY KNOWN as the School of the Building Arts, the American College of the Building Arts recently became licensed by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, reports Annette Dixon, Educational Programs Manager.

Congratulations to the American College of the Building Arts for their significant step forward.

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Hudson project plan receives N.H. preservation award

ON JUNE 17, Guild members John Butler, Betsy Hahn, Lisa Sasser, and Arron Sturgis were among those honored by the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, with the Hengen award, named for a former Chair of the Alliance board, given to a project that reflects outstanding advocacy, education, or planning practices.

Excellent documentation and planning, as well as an effective partnership of government agencies and community members, distinguished this project, according to the Preservation Alliance, the state's not-for-profit historic preservation organization. Project partners include the Nashua Regional Planning Commission, Preservation Timber Framing, Inc., Dunne's Enterprises, LLC, Lisa Sasser, A.I.A., and John Butler, preservation artisan.

The Town of Hudson and Benson's Committee received the Elizabeth Durfee Hengen award for outstanding stewardship and planning of Benson's Animal Farm.

In the 1920s, entrepreneur John Benson transformed 19th century farms and woodlots in Hudson into a popular attraction where exotic animals appeared in naturalistic settings. A trip to Benson's Wild Animal Farm once ranked with visits to the Old Man of the Mountain and Storyland as must-dos. Over time, the original attraction was transformed into an amusement park, then closed down in 1987. The New Hampshire Department of

Transportation bought the property in 1989 for wetland mitigation, removing all of the buildings but three, which were turned over to the Town of Hudson.

The town undertook a campaign of planning and stabilization for these structures, reversing a generation of neglect. Leadership came from a partnership of public agencies and community representatives who engaged a team of thorough, creative conservationists to produce an outstanding Historic Structures Report, funded by the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, which demonstrated the significance and value of the three remaining historic structures.

The report contained a detailed condition assessment and rehabilitation cost estimates for stabilization and preservation of the three remaining historic buildings: the Haselton Barn, Benson's Office & Kitchen, and the B&M Railroad Depot. Guided by the report recommendations, the Town of Hudson was able to complete stabilization of the three buildings through contracts and substantial volunteer work. The Town was also able to use the Historic Structures Report to secure a Transportation Enhancement Act grant for rehabilitation of the B&M Railroad Depot.

—Jennifer Goodman
New Hampshire Preservation Alliance

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Call for sustainable building successes

FOR ITS new Exemplary Sustainable Building Award, the Sustainable Buildings Industry Council (SBIC) is putting out a call for entries. This award recognizes professionals who are making exceptional contributions to sustainability across the United States.

If you are a sustainable builder, this is your opportunity to be acknowledged for the valuable contribution you and your firm are making to the built environment. All building design professionals are eligible to take part. This year's focus is on sustainability and cost effectiveness. The winning entry or entries in this category will be published as a case study on the Whole Building Design Guide (www.wbdg.org), visited by 1.3 million people monthly.

To learn more about the awards program, please visit www.sbicouncil.org/prog_bpawards.htm. All entries must be received by the SBIC by 8 pm EST, Tuesday, August 31.

—Helen English and Greg Franta
Sustainable Buildings Industry Council

Trusses, treenails, and timber

SPEND A day on September 11 with members and friends of the Guild and The Preservation Education Institute (PEI) to explore some amazing timber trusses and frames in the Windsor, Vt., area: Old South Church (1798), Saint Paul's Church (1822), and the Cornish-Windsor covered bridge (1866).

Ed Levin and Jan Lewandoski, participants in a Guild study of historic timber frames funded by the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, will be our guides. PEI executive director Judy Hayward will explore with us the masonry arches that support the Windsor Post Office and Court House (1857).

Morning coffee and baked goodies will be served during the tour introduction at Windsor House. A lunch of hearty sandwiches and beer tastings at the Harpoon Brewery is included, along with dinner in the Patrice Room. Time to explore the Simon Pearce Glassworks and the American Precision Museum (admission fee is included) on your own is included in the schedule of the day. The cost for members and spouses of TFG or PEI is \$90 (non-members \$120).

For more information, ask Judy Hayward at 802-674-6752 or histwininc@valley.net.

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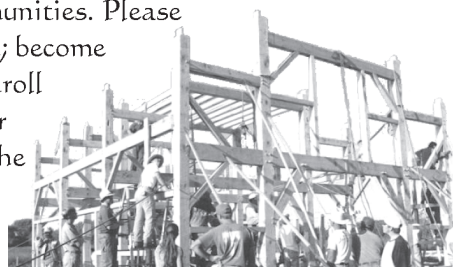


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Synagogue model takes shape

THE ZABLUDOW SYNAGOGUE model, a stage in the continuing Annihilated Heritage project to reconstruct a 17th-century wooden synagogue in Poland, is nearing completion. In the spring Handhouse studio workshop we made the walls and the unique timber framed roof structure over the main prayer hall. Later workshops focused on the tower roof structures and the finish work. Just as in full scale construction, the details take lots of time—making and laying the wooden shingles in a fashion similar to the work on the real thing, and building the windows, dormers, the front outside balcony, the inside balcony, stairs, and doors. The model has two sides finished to look like the original synagogue as seen in pictures and two walls left exposed, revealing the structural details and how it all went together.

The model has been made into five parts. The central part is the main prayer hall, the first original structure. The later additions—the two side women's prayer halls and the large front section—and the timber framed roof structure can be pulled away to show the stages of the historical development of the structure. The model is built to a 1:12 scale.

Information for the Zabludow Synagogue model came from several sources: the measured drawings done in 1923

by students and faculty from the Architecture Department of Warsaw Technical University, photographs from the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, and Maria and Kazimierz Piechotka's book *Wooden Synagogues*.

Handhouse Studio and Tom Hubka (University of Wisconsin, author of the book *Resplendent Synagogue*) are working together to have the synagogue model displayed at the Polish Center of Wisconsin along with the Annihilated Heritage exhibit, Oct 15–Nov 15. The Guild's Jim Krick (Rondout Woodworking), will demonstrate traditional building techniques probably used on the construction of the original synagogue. The full exhibition, Common Heritage: the Wooden Synagogues of Poland, features a wealth of demonstrations, lectures, and exhibits. Its full schedule is available at www.handhouse.org.

Handhouse is arranging a travel plan for the exhibition to Chicago, Boston, Florida, and several locations in Poland, including the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, the Museum Podlaskie in Bialystok, the Tykocin Synagogue in Tykocin, and the Stara Synagogue in Krakow.

This fall, Handhouse Studio will present a multi-college class on historic wall painting. This class will build a wooden replica of a cupola (ceiling) of the Gwozdziec

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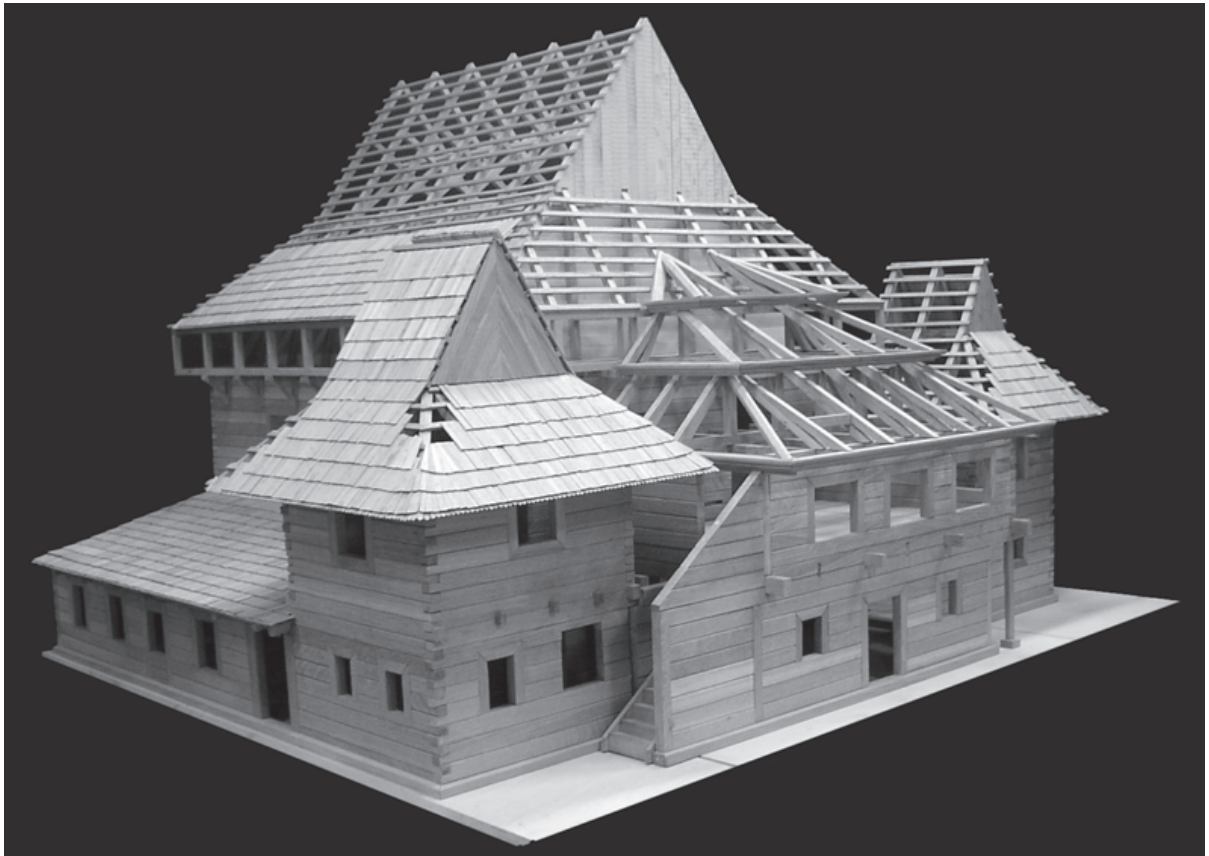


photo Laura Brown

The Zabludow synagogue model.

Synagogue, which was originally built in Poland in 1731 and was destroyed during the Nazi Invasion during World War II. Guest speakers will include Tom Hubka and Marc Michael Epstein, professor at Vassar College and author of the book *Dreams of Subversion in Medieval Jewish Art and Literature*.

In other Zabludow news, Tilford Bartman, whose father was born in Zabludow and who has been compiling an extensive history of the Shtetl of Zabludow, has produced a DVD called *The Zabludow Wooden Synagogue* as well as a highly informative website, www.zabludow.com. For more information on the model process, see www.handshouse.org. —Laura Brown

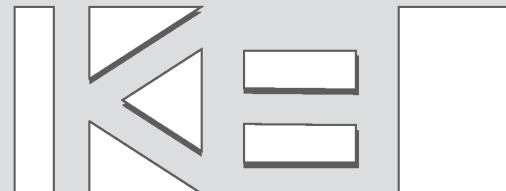
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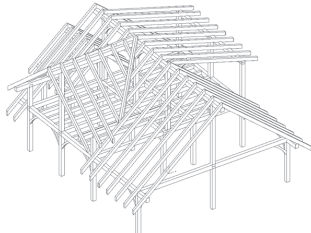


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Antique beam carts.

These old trolleys were designed for moving heavy steel beams for textile machinery, and they are perfect for timber handling on firm or hard floors. A farmyard full of these carts (60–100) is for sale for £50 each (about \$91 US) plus shipping.

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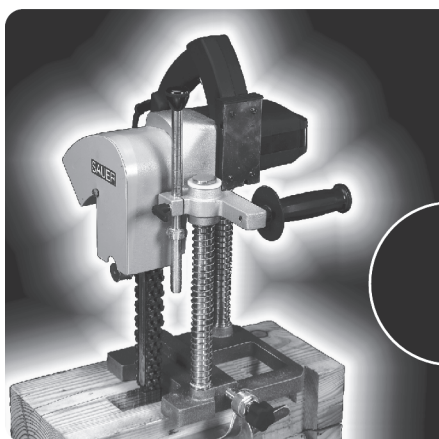
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Successful designer-fabricator of custom timber frame and log structures in Montana's Bitterroot Valley seeks experienced manager level individual. Email résumé to jim@bitterrootgroup.com, call 406-995-7806, or fax 406-995-7807.

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Let me help take your timber framing business to the next dimension by creating 3-D models and detailed shop drawings for your next project. My attention to detail, computer expertise, and commitment to the art of timber framing will provide your clients with impressive models and your shop with accurate drawings and/or Hundegger machine files. I use Dietrich's CAD/CAM software to blend modern technology with traditional craftsmanship. Please call Steve at 707-668-1830 or email alivedesign@sbcglobal.net for more information.

Project manager and sales dog needed.

Steward our customers through the custom timber framing process, from the first phone call through the raising party, while juggling other miscellaneous tasks involved in keeping a small company growing. Looking for someone who's great with people, organized, thorough, computer literate, and a good letter writer, with a background in residential construction. Bonus points for ability to do shop drawings, design, marketing, or timber framing.

We are a growing company specializing in unique, high-end timber projects. We offer a progressive work environment, good wages and benefits, and a beautiful Pacific Northwest location. Call or email Laurel or Pete at Two Dog Timberworks, Inc., Ferndale, WA for more info, 360-366-5350, info@twodogtimberworks.com.

Scribe and electric chain saw wanted.

Looking for a second hand Big Timberworks Double Bubble scribe. Also looking for an electric chain saw in good condition, hand saws, and 1½-in. chisels. I'm leading a high-school timber frame building project in the fall and looking especially for used hand saws and chisels for the students. Please contact Denis Buet at 509-382-2005 or sheden@bmi.net.

Timber framer wanted.

Well-established small shop located in beautiful Western Mass. seeks a timber framer to join our team in building a wide variety of custom frames. 3 to 5 years experience in layout, joinery, fabrication, and erection a must. Interesting projects, great environment, excellent benefits. Call Architectural Timber & Millwork, Inc., 413-586-3045.

Timber framer wanted.

Connolly & Company Timber Frame Homes and Barns, in business for over 25 years in beautiful midcoast Maine, has an immediate opening for an experienced timber framer. Send a résumé and cover letter to Phil Balicki, at info@connollytimberframes.com or fax 207-882-4247. Phone is 207-882-4224.

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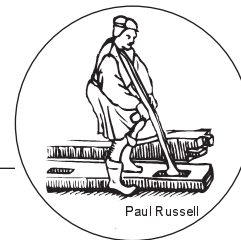
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Guild workshops

At Heartwood (Washington, Mass.):
Converting trees to timber. Aug 9–13.

At Rocky Mountain Workshops (Pingree Park, Colo.):
Square . . . scribe . . . cruck! Aug 22–Sep 24.
Compound joinery. Sep 5–10.
Timber frame design and joinery decisions. (See page 15.) Sep 12–17.

In Rottweil, Germany (Gewerbe Akademie):
Extended timber framing course. Sep 26–Oct 16,
Jan 9–Jan 29, 2005.

On Gabriola Island, British Columbia:
Japanese compound joinery and hip roof layout.
Nov 8–19.

Guild workshops contact:
Will Beemer, will@tfguild.org, 413-623-9926.

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Guild conferences

Eastern Conference 2004. Oct 28–31, Seven Springs
Mountain Resort, Champion, Pa.

TTRAG 2005 Symposium and Tour. Mar 18–20, 2005,
Salt Fork Resort & Conference Center, Cambridge, Ohio.

Western Conference 2005. Apr 13–17, 2005, Resort at
the Mountain (base of Mt. Hood), Oregon.

Western Conference 2006. Tentative mid-Apr, Tigh-
Na-Mara Lodge, Parksville (Vancouver Island), B.C.

Guild events on location

At Pisgah State Park, Winchester, N.H.:
Raising the Pisgah–Blood Farm barn. Sep 27–Oct 1.
In Salem, Oregon:

Rotary Club pavilion for Salem. Oct 4–17.

In Windsor, Vt., with Historic Windsor:

**Historic bridge truss workshop with Jan Lewandoski
and Ed Levin.** Sep 10–12.

Guild rendezvous contact:
Joel C. McCarty, joel@tfguild.org, 603-835-2077.

Other conferences

Palomar College, Hida Tool, and Kezouru-Lai
Kezouru-Kai U.S.A. Sep 4–5, Palomar College,
San Marcos, Calif. 800-443-5512, www.hidatool.com.

International Log Builders Association

**Third Annual ILBA Rendezvous and Log Builders
Games.** Sep 9–12, Klowna, B.C. Robert Savignac,
800-532-2900, robert@logassociation.org.

U.K. Carpenters Fellowship

Frame 2004. Sep 17–19, Cressing Temple, Essex, Eng-
land.

ILBA and Swedish Log Builders Association

European Log and Timber Builders' Conference.
Oct 15–17, Tällberg, Sweden.
Robert Savignac, 800-532-2900,
robert@logassociation.org.

Multiple organizations

**Common Heritage: the Wooden Synagogues of
Poland.** Oct 15–Nov 15, Madison, Wisc.
www.handshouse.org.

International Preservation Trades Workshop
International Preservation Trades Workshop.
Oct 21–24, Mobile, Ala. 866-858-9335, www.iptw.org.

Peabody Essex Museum
Yin Yu Tang Symposium. Nov 13–14, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Mass. www.pem.org/pdf/yyt.pdf.

The Stone Foundation, American College of the Building Arts
Stonework Symposium 2004. Nov 13–15, Charleston, S.C. 505-989-4644, www.stonefoundation.org.

Other workshops

North House Folk School
Basic timber framing. Aug 18–22.
Compound joinery with Will Beemer. Oct 6–10.
Grand Marais, Minn. 888-387-9762, www.northhouse.org.

Tillers Ox
Timber framing and raising. Aug 16–21, Wykoff, Minn. Sep 6–11, Kalamazoo. www.umich.edu/tillers.

Centreville Settlement
Nogging. Late summer, Cleveland, Wisc. Janet Lutze, 414-964-0319, www.centrevillesettlement.com.

Roepers Projects
Assessment and tagging. TBA, Lyndeborough, N.H.. Andy Roeper, 603-654-9831, andy@cwrrmarketing.com.

College of the Rockies
Intro to timber framing. Aug 24–29.
Timber frame production. Sep 27–Dec 17, Jan 10–Apr 1, 2005.
Mike Flowers, mflowers@cotr.bc.ca, 250-427-7116, www.cotr.bc.ca/kimberley.

Historic Windsor
Trusses, treenails, and timber: a tour with Ed Levin and Jan Lewandoski. Sep 11: Windsor, Vt. Judy Hayward, 802-674-6752, histwininc@valley.net.
Structural evaluation and repair: timber frame structures. Nov 19–20, Windsor, Vt.
www.preservationworks.org/registration.htm.

American College of the Building Arts
Introduction to hand tools. Sep 13–Nov 1 (Monday evenings).
Building a timber frame with Peter Bull and Donna Williams. Oct 9–16.
Charleston, S.C. Annette Dixon, 843-577-5245, www.soba.us.

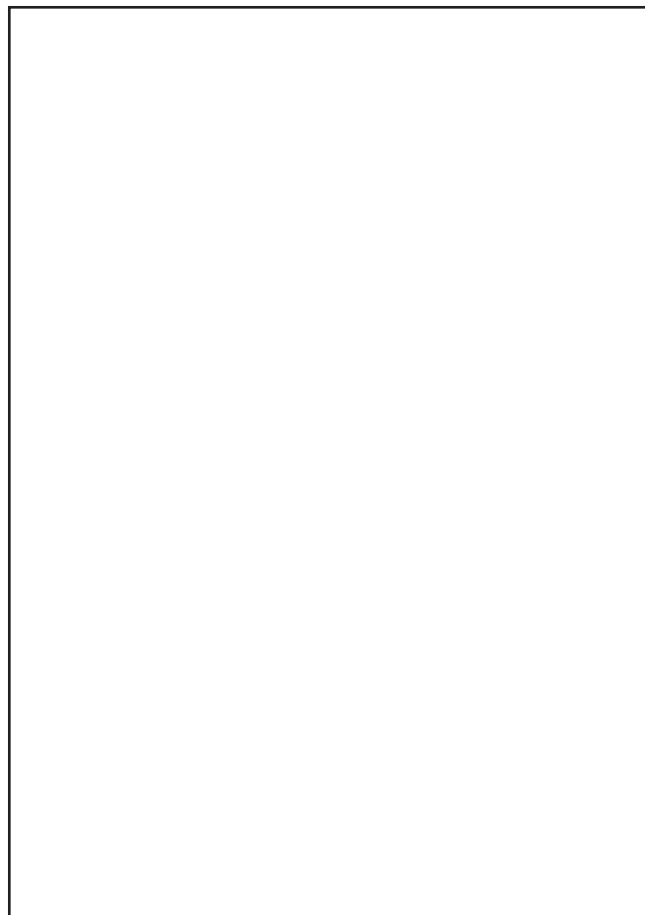
Sobon and Carlon
Traditional Timber Framing with Jack Sobon and Dave Carlon. Sep 22–26, Hancock (Mass.) Shaker Village. Jack Sobon, 413-684-3223, or Dave Carlon, PO Box 223, Windsor, MA 01270 at 413-684-3612.

Whippletree Post and Beam
Timber framing from tree to raising (women- and children-friendly). Sep 25–26, Keene, Ontario. Sue Nelson and Mark Davidson, www.wpltree.ca, 705-295-4446.

School of the Building Arts
Beginning timber framing Oct 9–16, Charleston, S.C. Annette Dixon, 843-577-5245, dixon@soba.us.

Goshen Timber Frames
Basic timber framing. Oct 10–15. Franklin, N.C., 828-524-8662, cathy@goshenframes.com.

Cowee Mountain Timber Framers
Basic timber framing. Nov 7–13. Franklin, N.C. Steve Smith, 828-369-8186, coveemtn@hotmail.com.



A look at the Salem project

The Guild project in Salem, Oregon, October 4-17, features a full gable scissors truss. This rendezvous should be fun! If you're interested in taking part, tell Joel, 603-835-2077, joel@tfguild.org.



News from Salle

GUILD MEMBER Mbah Salle, who in 2001 paid us a six-month visit from Cameroon, is back there working on some big jobs. The photo at left shows the rebar tying on quite a large, two-story house Salle and about 50 others are building for a local wealthy man. From left are workers Roland, Hilary, Fulla Nkenfac (with white hardhat), Rene, and Salle.



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