



SCANTLINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIMBER FRAMERS GUILD
NUMBER 111 FEBRUARY-MARCH 2005

President's report

FOR THOSE who remember the first Timber Framers Guild meeting at Hancock Shaker Village back in June, 1985, it's hard to realize that it has been 20 years since a few committed, passionate, dedicated individuals came together to form an organization dedicated solely to the training, education, and promotion of the craft of timber framing. Who would have thought that it would lead to a group of over 1800 members with a substantial budget, three educational conferences each year, several workshops, projects, and rendezvous per year, and the formation of two additional organizations? The Traditional Timberframe Research and Advisory Group (TTRAG) and the Timber Frame Business Council are both direct offshoots of the Timber Framers Guild.

dedication, and commitment to these projects is contagious. Everyone involved is there because of their love of the craft and the force and power arising from their cumulative efforts.

Clearly, the strength of the Guild has evolved beyond the original founders' wildest dreams or expectations. The management of a group this size requires more: more manpower, more dollars, more organization, more planning. That is what the Guild board of directors is currently addressing. The board is dedicated to making sure that the Timber Framers Guild will continue to be the strong and viable organization that it is now.

Last year the board committed to a year-long visioning process to determine where the Guild is going, how

We especially want to address the professional timber framers, those shop guys and gals rich in knowledge who timber frame every day.

The Guild began as a board-governed group with an executive secretary. It has evolved to include two executive directors, four administrative staff, a director of publications, a *Scantlings* editor, and nine elected directors. This is just amazing! And the Guild continues to grow.

Thinking back to some high-profile Guild projects such as the Habitat Houses in Pennsylvania, the Guelph Bridge, the Rindge Pavilion, the Dolly Copp Pavilion, Malabar Farm, the Russian boat apprenticeship, the Golden bridge, the Trébuchet, and Project Horizon, just to name a few, I realize just how incredible it is to have been in some way connected to these events. The energy,

it will get there, what it does best, and what it will be in the future. The commitment to follow the original vision—that the Guild is devoted to the education of the craft of timber framing—will continue as we focus on education through conferences, workshops, rendezvous, training programs, and quality publications. That is what we do and who we are.

During this time the board reestablished a committee structure that will allow more members (that means you!) to help lead the Guild into the future. We especially want to address the professional timber framers, those shop guys and gals rich in knowledge who timber

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frame every day. Research on a program to certify and document those skills is in the works. The curriculum and apprenticeship program will continue to develop, as will the quality publications for which the Guild has become so recognized.

The Timber Framers Guild has come a long way, bringing its magic to so many people while expanding the reach of timber framing around the world. For many of us old-timers who were here 20 years ago, now is a different time. It's no longer necessary to explain to someone what timber framing is. It is rarely confused with log cabins any more. Now, when folks hear that we build timber frames, the first response is often how much they love timber frames and how gorgeous they are. Lending institutions no longer question the type of structure when homeowners apply for a construction loan for a timber frame. This recognition is due in very large part to the word spread by the Guild. The sophistication and creativity of timber frames are limitless; that's obvious at the conference slide shows.

The future is wide open.

As president, I know I speak for the other board members when I say we all look forward to the continued progress of the Guild. We welcome input, suggestions, thoughts, and ideas from the members.

A recent letter in *Scantlings* lamented the loss of so many of our "tall trees." It is hard for us to even think that this could be happening. We still imagine ourselves as the young, naïve, carefree yet responsible folks who just loved what we were doing. The voids now in our group can never be filled. We will continue to work at

Timber Framers Guild

Brenda Baker, president
Leon Buckwalter, vice president
Curtis Milton, treasurer
Gordon Macdonald, clerk
Al Anderson, Laura Brown, Rudy Christian, Rick Collins, and Grigg Mullen, directors at large.

Will Beemer, Joel McCarty, executive directors
Ken Rower, director of publications
Susan Witter, *Scantlings* editor

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: March 10.

Please address contributions or information to:
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the craft that these "tall trees" were all so strongly committed to, and we will remember them with our scholarships—a fitting legacy.

We invite you to be a part of as many Guild events as possible. The Western Conference is coming up in April. The Eastern Conference in Burlington, Vt., in October will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Guild (though, yes, Will, it is the 21st conference). It will be a celebration of where we've been and a look at where we're going. Hope to see you there.

Here's to many more years of success.

—Brenda Baker, President, Board of Directors

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Conference coordinator sought

WE ARE looking for someone to assume a paid position as Eastern and Western Conference Coordinator, taking over much of the work currently done by Will and Joel in planning these events, which have become a big part of the Guild's activities. This will allow our executive directors to concentrate more on other projects and educational events which are taking more of their time each year.

The job entails:

- Researching potential conference sites and negotiating with the facilities
- Planning the agendas and activities associated with the conference
- Finding and negotiating with presenters and maintaining contact with them up to the event
- Developing the budget for the conference
- Developing sponsorship and grant opportunities
- Designing the conference registration flyer.

Applicants should have email and database capabilities. They should also be well experienced in timber framing and previous conferences in order to be able to develop a relevant, enriching, and educational program for the event. Accurate budgeting and organizational skills are a must.

We offer a base wage of \$3750 per conference plus expenses, with bonuses linked to performance and/or conference attendance.

Please contact Will Beemer at will@tfguild, 413-623-9926 for more details. We will want a letter of interest, résumé, and references to complete the application. Employment begins Jan. 1, 2006, but we would like to have the person selected prior to the Eastern 2005 Conference in Burlington (Vt.) in order to provide some preliminary training.

—Will Beemer

TTRAG erratum

ROOM AND board costs for the TTRAG conference reported last issue were correct, but the span of days is not. The correct information is as follows.

Room and board costs are \$245 (double occupancy) or \$329 (single occupancy) for *Friday* dinner through Sunday lunch, and include breaks, taxes, and gratuity.

We regret any inconvenience or misunderstanding this may have caused.

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Come to the mountain in April!

SOON YOU'LL receive your Western Conference registration flyer in the mail, and you should also be able to sign up online at the TFG website by now.

Anchored by our keynote speakers Tedd Benson, Sim Van der Ryn, and David Eisenberg, along with a host of other exciting presenters, this promises to be a spectacular conference in every sense of the word.

—Will Beemer

Join in!—expo and auctions

PLAN NOW to participate in two events at the 2005 Western Conference at the Resort at the Mountain.

The Project Expo gives timber framers the opportunity to show a recent project of which they are proud. You are encouraged to vote for a favorite project; the winner will receive the Peoples' 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. This will include information on how to reserve a piece of foam core so that you are not juggling that with your airline luggage.

The TFG Benefit Auction is a major fundraiser of the year, made successful through our members' generous and creative contributions of goods and services. Our three-tiered auction format gives plenty of space for the generous contributions of our members and plenty of opportunity for everyone to have a good time. Whether your donation is big or small, heavy or light, edible or wearable, serious or silly, it helps your Guild. Thank you!

If you cannot attend the Conference but would like to participate in either of these events, or if you have other questions about them, please tell me at susan@tfguild.org or 603-835-2077.

—Susan Norlander



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Treasury notes 2005

An educational report on the board's January face-to-face

WHAT A difference a year makes. When I published this report last winter, the news was not great. Many financially astute members looked to Will Beemer, me (as treasurer), and the whole board of directors for answers to the apparent loss of funds for the year 2003. We had fallen short of budgeted income for a number of reasons—but we also had some accounts receivable, inventory, and undeposited funds that just were not part of the report. We decided to obtain better systems in the accounting department and additional advisors with specialized skills.

Our financial health greatly improved in 2004. The accuracy of information available when you push that report button is partly why. Accurate reporting also reflects the true cost of doing business. The resulting knowledge helps us refine the cost components of all our ambitious plans. Substantial expenditures are best considered in the light of our available funds. Finally, it remains a priority to make sure the collective effort of staff and members is producing results according to plan.

There is now a finance committee charged with oversight and strategic financial planning, and we are setting up an accrual system of accounting, for the moment in parallel with our cash system. If you'd like to volunteer for the finance committee, please tell me.

This profit and loss budget comparison deserves discussion and analysis. I feel we still need to work on the presentation of information to improve its readability, so I welcome your input.

Advertising fell short of the budget by almost 10 percent. This shortfall occurred in all publications and may impact advertising prices in the future, though no increases were suggested at this year's board meeting. Research is under way to determine what we might do to better serve our advertisers, including exploration of the possibility of advertising on the website. The publications committee is charged with examining existing publications, future publications, and the Guild website.

Advertising on the website is now under discussion from both an ethical and a revenue perspective.

Auction income, always a moving target, also was less than budgeted for 2004. Some suggestions have reached us that the auctions, often four hours of fun, last too long. We have reduced 2005 budget predictions in response to this.

Conferences and seminars posted improved attendance, thus above-budget net income thanks to excellent programming and marketing.

Donations shown here reflect active donations from the membership in the check box on the membership form.

Dues income is up, thanks to your willingness to accept higher rates. Regular increases to keep pace with cost of living are a part of life, but additional staffing requirements and long term goals may also necessitate increases in 2006. This year we are adding lifetime memberships, which will add a bit of complexity to the paperwork but offer members a real value. I am not convinced the expenses associated with an individual membership can be supported over the life of that individual with a lump sum cash payment, so I expect an ongoing discussion on this matter. The membership committee will be weighing in on these and other service related issues.

Interest and dividends are down; no surprise there. The Memorial Scholarship Fund, which received donations to the original principal this year in the memory of Dave Gaker and Mark Witter, is invested in various low-to-no-risk devices that are just not paying very well currently. We will continue to monitor, adjust, and grow this fund. Whereas the annual proceeds from this investment were to be made available for scholarships, with the recent decline in returns on these funds, the BOD recommended (in 2003) a minimum of \$3000 per year for scholarships. The scholarship committee, a standing committee, will now add budget recommendations to their duties.

Projects and workshops continue to be a source of income for the Guild. The BOD realizes this and also realizes the obligation we all have to improve these venues for everyone who takes part. There is huge potential to fulfill our educational mandate for amateurs and professionals, build quality structures, and raise money for our various long-term investments, including curriculum development and publications. During the visioning process of 2004, the board realized the need to recognize and involve the working professionals of the industry we populate. Many of these individuals are not members of the Guild and many never have been.

The worth of the contributions that Guild members (and TFBC members) have made to the recognition and desirability of timber frames cannot be overestimated.

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New for 2005:

Drawing in the Way of the Compagnon,
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Cruck Framing, with Jack Sobon: July 25-29

Historic Barn/Timber Repair, with Jack Sobon: Aug. 15-19

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Profit and Loss Budget Comparison January 1–December 31, 2004

INCOME	Jan-Dec '04	% of budgeted
Advertising	50,749.60	92.4%
Auction	40,768.00	84.5%
Conferences/Seminars	219,478.32	105.0%
Donations	3,427.15	100.0%
Dues	148,301.25	112.6%
Int'l Mailing Fee	550.00	
Interest/Dividends	882.78	73.6%
Misc Income	560.70	116.8%
Projects/Wkshops	184,240.38	130.8%
Sales	37,250.54	83.1%
Trade Fairs (Net)	4,000.00	100.0%
Total Income	690,208.72	108.6%
*Cost of Goods Sold	-5,440.96	
GROSS PROFIT	684,767.76	107.8%

The resulting real jobs and real careers are proof of our efforts to educate both professionals and the public. I hope to encourage a long-term relationship between the experienced, educated labor of the timber frame industry and the Guild. We are, however, a volunteer, non-profit educational association, *not* a trade or labor association. If the timber framing industry supports the value of our educational materials and opportunities, then at the very least a person possessing the knowledge and, ultimately, recognized educational credentials should benefit directly. I believe the greatest benefit of investment in education will be to the consumer: better products, increased efficiency, fewer defects, longer service life.

Back to the point: more, better hands-on professional education opportunities that create revenue for the Guild. The newly-forged projects committee views the established tradition as a good foundation and intends to improve the entire process, including the bottom line. Delivery of certification and credentials in exchange for labor or tuition seems like a win-win situation and is but one of the possibilities.

Sales, including web and conference sales, were off target this year. Most of this is due to the accounting practices still in place (no inventory recorded), but we're watching this sector closely. Shipping and handling charges were raised this year. We continue to look for specific products that are of use to our members, but we do not wish to become a retail operation.

The conference *trade fairs* are still generating some income, and we want to keep them a good value for all the vendors who participate.

On the expense side, numbers are posted, but again we face the challenge of accuracy and clarity in reporting.

EXPENSE	Jan-Dec '04	% of budgeted
Auctioneer	500.00	83.3%
Bank Fees	11,863.66	146.5%
Board of Dirs. Expense	14,979.94	91.5%
Conference/Seminars/Mtgs	163,532.05	106.2%
Curriculum Development	18,019.86	100.1%
Guild Advertising	0.00	0.0%
Insurance	6,573.00	119.0%
Office Expense	21,881.23	95.5%
Postage	8,888.44	74.1%
Professional Fees	3,100.00	119.2%
Research	10,764.00	100.0%
Rent	4,500.00	125.0%
Travel	7,665.22	106.5%
Utilities	5,440.30	90.7%
Wages	119,658.02	103.1%
Payroll Taxes	6,304.25	100.1%
Employee Benefits	17,133.86	100.0%
Membership Expense	14,206.71	98.4%
Misc Expense	37,780.00	101.6%
Projects/Workshops	85,763.70	159.7%
Publications	104,367.22	89.3%
Taxes and Licenses	265.00	58.9%
Total Expense	663,186.46	105.2%
Net Ordinary Income	21,581.30	428.7%
NET INCOME	21,581.30	428.7%

This is not a criticism. We are driven to improve the information available and are doing so daily.

The investment in 2004's visioning process proved worthy. Investing about \$9000 in BOD expenses (travel, lodging, and food), we discussed, debated, and defined the need to invest in infrastructure and staff development to better serve our members. We thank Scout Wilkins of the TFBC, who worked with us as a friend and trained facilitator, and the Guild and TFBC board members who donated time and energy. The theories and decisions will be tested many times this year. The board decided that budgeting for additional staff will benefit the membership through better publications, conferences, and workshops and give our executive directors more time to fulfill their ambitious job descriptions. The human resources committee is charged with review of the organizational chart, job descriptions, and performance evaluation process. They'll collect time management data to refine existing structures and plan for the future. This committee will be responsible for relevant budget recommendations.

Balance Sheet Comparison as of December 31, 2004

ASSETS	Dec 31, '04	Dec 31, '03	% Change
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
TFG Money Market	78,155.35	27,672.60	182.4%
TFG Checking	48,740.09	87,632.52	-44.4%
Total Checking/Savings	126,895.44	115,305.12	10.1%
Accounts Receivable	-10,218.62	0.00	-100.0%
Other Current Assets			
*Inventory Asset	15,971.77	0.00	100.0%
Scholarship Fund	62,896.52	42,033.36	49.6%
18 Mo. CD	11,678.80	11,498.52	1.6%
15 Mo. CD	11,667.79	11,488.25	1.6%
12 Mo. CD	11,596.25	11,524.12	0.6%
Undeposited Funds	10,240.00	0.00	100.0%
Total Other Current Assets	124,051.13	76,544.25	62.1%
TOTAL ASSETS	240,727.95	191,849.37	25.5%
LIABILITIES/ EQUITY			
Retained Earnings	350,966.23	364,591.20	-3.7%
Net Income	-269,784.25	-313,894.53	-14.1%
Opening Bal Equity	159,545.97	141,152.70	13.0%
TOTAL LIABILITIES/ EQUITY	240,727.95	191,849.37	25.5%

An education committee will continue to study issues of trade education and make recommendations to the board. The much-discussed investment in curriculum will continue. In 2005, we are budgeting for the development of two modular programs into presentable, repeatable, certificate-bearing programs to be delivered on a trial basis this year. Further modules (all based on the collected works of Will Beemer, Gordon Macdonald, and countless others) will be developed according to the feedback on the first two. The budgeted funding from 2004 to 2005 is being reduced, but we are also prepared to invest money on hand as needed. The long-term planning and annual budget requirements for this programming are viewed by the entire board as priorities. You can expect to see substantial annual expenses for at least five years in this area.

The Profit and Loss Report includes several expense line items that need explanation.

Research is in payment to the University of Wyoming for the peg research report. The amount for this investment was matched dollar for dollar by the TFBC.

Rent is for the office spaces we occupy.

Travel is Executive Director and staff-related travel expenses.

Membership expenses are those associated with elections, membership directory, and membership drive, sensible spending to be sure.

Miscellaneous Expenses are better noted as the check paid to the Gewerbe Akademie for the program in Germany. We handled all the funds for this event, and the income to support this expense was in the 2003 calendar year.

Our balance sheet confirms for all of you exactly where the various monies were the day that report was published. The comparison to 2003 is slanted slightly, as there were substantial receivables not posted in that report.


As an organization we are just now 20 years old, and mature thinking is becoming part of our organizational culture. Accounting and reporting on a cash basis served us for many years, but we are moving on to an accrual system better able to grow with the organization. Upon the advice of our accountant, we will still be reporting on a cash basis to the I.R.S. The full conversion to an accrual system will involve a close look at the way we classify spending and revenue, more professional accounting fees, and additional staff time. Should we decide

to make the complete change, we must be prepared with the correct systems and individuals in place.

Increased revenue is required to improve all our programs, and improved systems of accounting, reporting, and oversight will aid in the measurement of our financial health. Increased participation in all endeavors by a larger number of members and non-members will yield tangible results. This cooperation is a measure of our health as a real community.

Have a great year, and please help when you can.

—Curtis Milton



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New Guild technical workshops

WE ARE happy to present a new format for Guild education: technical workshops using TFG projects (in this case the Angola pavilion) as the framework for professional development. Portions of the new TFG curriculum will be offered in both classroom and shop production format May 2-7. Hosted by Trillium Dell Timberworks in Knoxville, Ill., the workshop will introduce students to 17 of the TFG curriculum modules, taught by qualified professionals. Subjects to be covered include:

- Reading drawings and details
- Square Rule layout and cutting joinery
- Tree identification and properties
- Sustainable harvesting
- Estimating and grading on the stump, visual grading, engineering standards
- Project management and small business basics
- Timber selection and yard management
- Timber handling, including forklifts
- Communicating with clients and co-workers
- Good work habits
- Estimating
- Shop flow.

Instructors from the Trillium Dell staff, experts from throughout the Guild, and graders from the National

Hardwood Lumber Association will lead this series of lectures, demonstrations, and in-shop applications. Intensive sessions will run all day and into the evening, with certificates of completion awarded to those who successfully finish the program. Free primitive camping and showers are available on site; off-site lodging recommendations are also available. Final budget and scheduling details are still being worked out; there will be a modest tuition charge that includes meals.

The second week (May 9-13), we are offering a hands-on workshop featuring shop production techniques and related skills. Students may work alongside experienced timber framers in a production-oriented environment.

We are encouraged by the support of the Timber Frame Business Council and the TFG Board in developing this exciting new program, which will provide immediate and applicable skills improvement for those working in the shops.

Registration should be available on the Guild website by early February and in the next *Scantlings*, along with complete details on the schedule, instructors and cost. If you have any questions, please ask me at 413-623-9926 or will@tfguild.org.

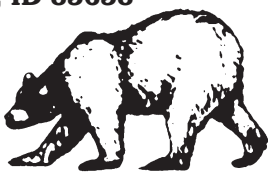
—Will Beemer

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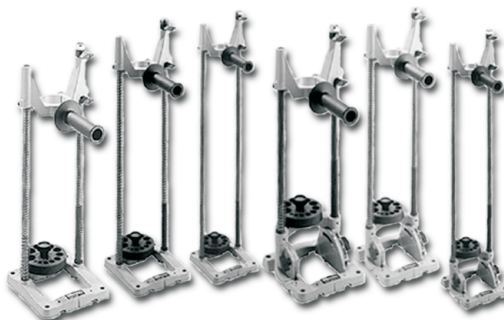
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Evenings in Salem

DURING THE Rotary Club pavilion project in Salem, Ore., April 18–May 1 (just after the Western Conference), we'll hold these evening enlightenment sessions.

Curtis Milton will lead a six-hour compound roof practicum—a brief PowerPoint presentation followed by plan reading, review, length verification, layout tricks, and cutting tips.

Gordon Macdonald and Steve Lawrence will introduce scribing as practiced today in the UK. All are encouraged to try scribing, but space is limited, so we will

rotate in and out. Knowing where layout systems can be interfaced based on frame design is key to this frame.

Jennifer Anthony of Fearless Engineers will describe some of the challenges of this particular structure. First, she'll consider the moment column foundation required. Next she'll discuss the process of joinery design. John Mumaw of Lost Bent Woodworking & Design did the joinery design for this structure; Jennifer will share her review and analysis.

—Joel C. McCarty

Memorial Fund report, 2004

\$1475 IN SCHOLARSHIPS was awarded in 2004. \$3642 was donated by members, leaving \$2167 to carry over to 2005. Also, \$165 went unused from the \$1640 allocated from 2003, carrying another \$165 over to 2005.

Finally, \$12,208 was donated in memory of Dave Gaker and Mark Witter, and another \$5013 was collected in their memory at the Eastern Conference, for a total of \$17,220. An additional \$3643 in interest and dividends was earned in 2004, which (as per policy) is allocated to scholarships.

So the total available for scholarships in 2005 is \$2167 + \$165 + \$3643 = \$5975. Nice! Now, apply!

—Will Beemer

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From the Ask the Experts web forum: Tsunami relief

John Buday. Seeing news of the tsunami devastation in Asia, it occurs that perhaps there would be some reconstruction the Guild can do.

Will Truax. We could design a house frame that is small by Western standards and also in section, yet still big enough to support simple joinery (bevel laps, daps, cogs, clasps). Say 17 x 21 with the largest timber section at maybe 6 x 7, with window and door wells to cover with traditional local or donated enclosures. These small precut frames could be shipped from afar and raised in hours. The hundred Hundegger-cut pieces could stand side by side with smaller donations of dozens of two and three man shops; teams of instructors could go to teach local folk to cut this same frame again and again, helping create the housing they so desperately need. We could join with likeminded groups: www.shelter.org, www.eeri.org, www.world-housing.net/countrylist.asp (see Indonesia and others, and also the small grants link). The south Asian countries desperately need housing that stands up to seismic activity.

Mark Davidson. I would join the line-up to cut some pieces. We could use eastern white cedar, which would be light to ship. A few of us could cut timbers and send them to a central spot to be test raised, then sent on.

Emmett Greenleaf. Concept: Woodmizer portable mill and a crew of TF folks working in concert with existing on-the-ground relief agencies in South Asia. This part of the world still has lots of standing forests, a lot closer than anyplace in North America. Now to find a sponsor to pay the board and transport bill.

Will Truax. I have worked up such a design and have enlisted help in AutoCADing a digitized set, from there an FEA, then hopefully a seismic analysis, then it's how to get the ball rolling.

John Buday. Any plan must keep in mind that these areas have little to no infrastructure left. The island of Sumatra suffered both from the tsunami and the quake that spawned it. The most common indigenous building in Indonesia, India, and so on, uses masonry walls and timber trusses. Walls are supporting or not, but all provide shear or (a recent innovation in India) masonry enclosure to a self-supporting, braced timber frame. The last seems to me the model that would allow for local enclosure systems while not precluding the use of panels or other donated enclosure. It would allow us to introduce a seismically-resistant building type.

Emmett Greenleaf. Am I the one and only retired military person in the Guild? We enjoy free air transport the world over on a space-available basis. After the initial loads of relief supplies, there will likely be space available. Any relief supplies (like a trailer-mounted bandsaw) could probably be negotiated with the USAF. We need three basic things: (1) An easily replicated frame design with positive seismic characteristics; (2) commitments from builders and vendors and (3) a single point of control.

Mark Davidson. I offer to help organize the cutting of some small frames by several shops. Is it a good idea to have frame pieces arrive at a central spot in North America for a test fit? I was thinking maybe 16 x 21 might be easier to find spare materials for.

Anthony. As I am in the middle of milling Doug Fir for my frame, it would be easy for me to mill some additional pieces. I have quite a few logs that I can use. Also, I could do some joinery in February when I am done milling and move on to cutting joints.

Ian Lawford. I'm willing to donate time and material to the cause. Would it make more sense to do all the layout and cutting at once, at a rendezvous?

John Buday. We should identify a recipient in a specific region and learn from them what works.

Bob Smith. What would it take to make this a sanctioned Guild event, and how to reach an even wider audience? The situation in Indonesia is going to be long-term. Charitable response around the world has been overwhelming. Organizations are starting to turn away donors, so finding a partner may not be difficult. Again, it might be easier to attract partners if we operated under the Guild umbrella. How do we get there? Perhaps an ad-hoc committee is needed to marshal all this energy.

Michael Yaker. I would be willing to do my share in helping out.

Laura V. As a student at an art school I'm sure I could drum up a group of very eager volunteers to contribute time and labor for this.

Cole. I would gladly donate my time to the effort.

Emmett Greenleaf. I see two ways to go: ship precut and fitted frames for erection onsite, or send a bandsaw and crew to do it all onsite. Cost-compare shipping materials vs. people to S. Asia. We still have to identify need, an agency already on the ground for supervision and logistics and, the big one, selecting an area where our folks are relatively safe. The S. Asia insurgents and bandits are not to be taken lightly.

Mark Davidson. I'm all for cutting pieces here and shipping. Perhaps by the time some frames are ready, we will have figured out a good place to send them? The building should have timber groundsills (even if the floor is dirt); this would make setup and moving the buildings much faster.

Ian Lawford. I'm constantly reminded by relief orgs not to send goods over because it's too costly and we would be just getting in the way. Why not have a Guild gathering, cut a frame or a number of frames (on-site or regionally by different shops), using donated materials, and auction the frames off? That money could be used by either relief orgs or the Guild as buying power abroad when the time is right.

Bob Smith. The giving is for the giver as well, and I would prefer to see the direct product of my sweat be delivered. Egotistic perhaps, but there it is. I see multiple, simultaneous rendezvous around the country. Laura, could you host one in Boston? John, Lakebay; me, Lexington; Mark, Ontario; and so on. We could get ten sites and make at least ten frames. Once they are complete, we gather them to a shipping location and send them via a [military?] partner along with a small crew of framers to erect them. We could then be connected with a local housing relief group.

John Buday. Before we spend more time discussing who, how, and with what, we really should come with a for whom and where. The area hit by the tsunami was large geographically (affecting logistics), culturally (receptivity), and politically (safety). I think the place to start is to identify the "client" and some partner organizations. Until we do that, we are ignoring vital information. I can entirely identify with Bob's wish to send something from his hands; however, Ian's suggestion (build-and-auction) might be the quickest help we can offer. Or, what if, in the build-and-auction concept, we used the proceeds to hire Hundegger shops to turn out more frames than we might otherwise accomplish?

Will Truax. I see a potential benefit in several ways: helping to answer housing need for thousands of people, introducing a building technology that may minimize the death toll in some future event, and possibly helping rebuild the region's economy. An effort begun here will attract enthusiasm, ideas, and even money. This effort would naturally be transplanted to the region and take on a life of its own. It all starts here; mayhaps it already has! I do like that multiple rendezvous model. CAD file is near completion, analysis around the corner. Folks want to take this by the horns. Maybe the time has come for a more direct form of conversation.

See Tsunami, page 20



**TIMBER FRAME
BUSINESS COUNCIL**

Report from the NAHB International Builders Show

WE GOT timber framing in front of 130,000 builders this weekend!

Now the big mid-January show in Orlando is over, and the union is threatening to strike tonight while our beautiful tower stands waiting for enough space to develop around it for us to be able to bring in a boom truck to take it down. A memorable story seems to once again be developing around a timber frame project.

This show has been absolutely incredible. Almost 130,000 builders came from all over the world to see 1600 displays of products—windows and doors, tools and software, mold mitigation and mortgages ... and timber framing! It was beyond overwhelming.

This show, reportedly the second largest trade convention in the world, alternates among three locations, staying in each spot for two years. We'll be back in Orlando next year (January 11–14), with some modifications to the booth and space so that we get better exposure. It's a great place to be, to help make more builders aware of the possibilities in timber framing.

We were very well received: people were excited by the idea of timber framing, and many expressed their delight to find an organization that can help them connect with timber framers and suppliers. We handed out lots of TFBC business cards and TFG postcards, gathered dozens of names of people we'll be contacting further, and spoke with a multitude of suppliers who are interested in getting involved.

The TFBC presence there came about because of our increased determination to do major outreach to builders and architects outside the normal sphere of people who are already considering heavy timber. We are also finalizing the details of a program through which our members will be trained as speakers qualified to offer seminars on timber framing to architects, gaining them AIA Continuing Education units. We have the presentation developed, and we will be offering professional speaker training to members at a pre-conference seminar at the TFG Western Conference this spring. All this is targeted at

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greatly increasing the visibility and understanding of timber framing in the wider professional design community.

Our tower was the first major community project the TFBC has taken on. We got a place on the main show floor by being a part of the SIPA booth, and we built the 33-ft., three-level tower to demonstrate timber framing and draw people to the booth. Several companies submitted tower designs. We ended up selecting a design by Steve Arthur of Dreaming Creek Timber Frame Homes. Clark's Fork Timber donated the wood and had it shipped to Timberpeg, who fabricated, pre-fit, and finished the frame. Timberlinx supplied connectors for some of the joinery, and CBR Products in Vancouver, B.C., arranged to donate the finish (which unfortunately got stopped at the border and did not arrive in time, so Timberpeg used the finish they had on hand). A highly competent crew from Goshen Timber Frames came from North Carolina to erect the frame, along with Bob Marx and crew from Universal Timber Structures right here in Lakeland, Florida, who provided the invaluable assistance of bringing ladders and scaffolding. They will also take the tower down and store it until next year.

The effort was further supported by generous cash donations from many members. Our Gold Level sponsors, who each gave \$1000, were Winter Panel, Normerica Authentic Post and Beam Homes, and South County Post and Beam. 3D Building Plans/BRCH, Davis Tim-

ber Frames, Legacy Timber Frames, the International Log Builder's Association, The Timber Shop, Vermont Timber Frames, and Harmony Exchange were Bronze level sponsors with donations of \$250. Thank you all, team members and contributors.

I'd also like to thank Joelle Mattioli of Timberpeg, who did an outstanding job helping me represent the entire industry and was a great pleasure to work with.

We encourage and welcome participation in the TFBC, and in these initiatives, from any company—whether timber framer, supplier or professional associate—interested in helping advance the industry.

—Scout Wilkins



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THINK SUSTAINABILITY

Doing enclosures right

I'm sure I enjoy the benefits of the modern Western lifestyle at least as much as the next guy. I've got a large comfortable home equipped with all the conveniences and an above-average selection of toys ranging from electronic gadgets and cameras to boats, campers, and sports cars, and including my personal weaknesses, more tools than I need and (according to *She Who Shall Not Be Named*) way too many bicycles. At the same time, I'm quite aware that inhabitants of this earth surely can't keep up this level of consumption indefinitely. Am I living high on the hog at the expense of my grandchildren and great-grandchildren?

Much of what makes this lifestyle possible is derived from petroleum and other finite, irreplaceable resources, often at great energy cost or damage to the environment. I applaud when I look around and see exploration of alternatives to practices which are harmful, cost-ineffective, or wasteful. There are many examples of ways we could change our consumption habits; some of these involve a return to an old, low-tech method that has been forgotten as we rush to embrace high-tech products backed by slick advertising claims.

In the timber frame industry, we have our own set of assumptions and standard practices developed over re-

cent years. I'd like to look at an alternative to the industry standard of enclosing frames with foam core panels. The foam core is derived from highly processed petrochemicals, and materials that enter the waste stream are unfriendly to the environment. Panel materials are expensive, but today's high-priced professional labor costs are minimized. By contrast, the practice of assembling building components from straw-clay is labor-intensive but relies on readily available low-cost materials.

For thousands of years, clay has been a staple building material, often supplemented and reinforced with fiber such as straw. Birds have used the same material for their homes for much longer, I'm sure. The materials are available in most parts of the world and ready for the industrious to put to use, at little or no cost. Not for the faint of heart or weak of back, this system has its own set of disadvantages, not least of which is the amount of time and degree of effort that goes into completing the project.

While my involvement in straw-clay projects has been minimal, I've followed the rediscovery of the ancient techniques with interest. I had the chance to take part in them, though, in a house being built in nearby Angelica, N.Y., by Richard Drachenberg and his wife, Patty



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O'Connor. Started ten years ago, it's a fairly straightforward timber frame, with 4-ft.-wide roof overhangs providing extra weather protection. The walls are composed of straw mixed with a creamy liquid clay, packed tight between temporary forms to create a 12-in.-thick wall. The clay serves several purposes in addition to bonding the materials into a substantial assembly. Perhaps most important, its hygroscopic nature assists in wicking away the moisture that inevitably enters the wall and which would promote rot or mold if allowed to remain. It adds protection against unwelcome inhabitants such as mice or insects, and it gives a great deal of fire resistance to an otherwise flammable material. The clay's thermal mass also evens out temperature extremes and stores heat.

The long hollow stems of the straw intertwine to reinforce the walls and create a multitude of air spaces, making it an effective insulator. The assembled wall very slowly breathes, which provides a healthy exchange of air and, unlike a great number of manufactured building materials, neither contains nor outgases toxic chemicals or other unhealthful components.

The roof insulation is also unconventional. The rafters are 16-in. truss-joists (wooden I-beams) to accommodate the 14-in. thickness of straw-clay and allow 2 in. of air space for ventilation. The inner surface of the rafters was sheathed and the straw-clay mix was packed loosely in place by hand. The proportion of clay in this mixture is less because it doesn't need to be structural, and greater volume of air space equals greater insulation value.

Because of the severity of the weather to which the house will be exposed, Richard decided to apply wooden siding to the exterior rather than the natural plaster or stucco-like finish that's popular in many parts of the country. The interior, however, is finished with a very attractive hand-troweled plaster that emphasizes the way the walls are beveled alongside window openings to accentuate their thickness and mass. Cherry windowsills are wide enough for window seats. Further accenting the interior are an assortment of fine woods, most notably book-matched curly-maple panels at the kitchen partition and a long wide curly-maple slab at an opening in the partition, inlaid with butterfly keys and hand-planed

from a very solid thickness at the center to a delicate inch or so at both ends. Another personal touch accenting the Vermont slate floor of the main circulation area is an inlaid hand-cut stone shamrock. As Richard says, there should be no doubt that an Irishwoman lives here!

Richard and Patty are justifiably proud of the fact that they have done (or at least actively participated in) most of the work on their house themselves, without outside funding, proceeding as their available money allowed. Others going down this road may find that they'll have to search for a flexible, innovative financing institution, as this construction method is far from mainstream.

As we discussed the long-term nature of this building process in relation to sustainability, Richard joked that the hardest thing has been sustaining themselves through the process. It's obvious, however, that by investing their time and selves into the project, they will have something of much more worth to them than if they had built a conventional structure by conventional means.

—Leon Buckwalter

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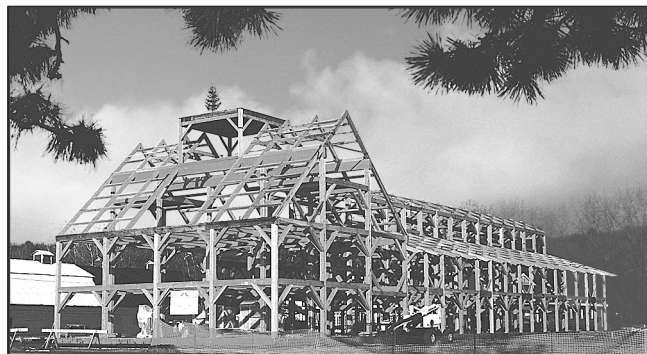
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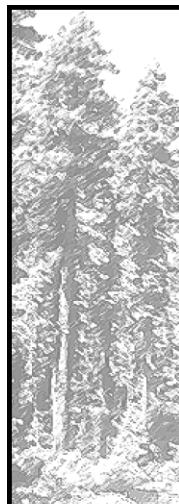
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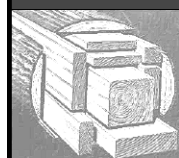
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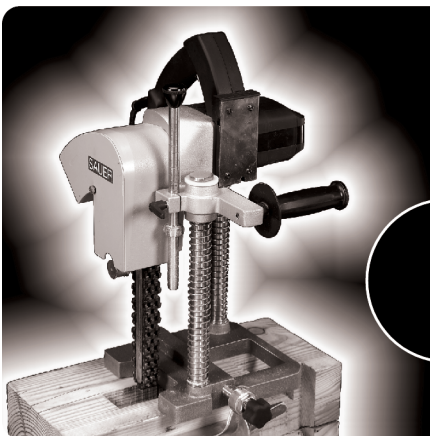


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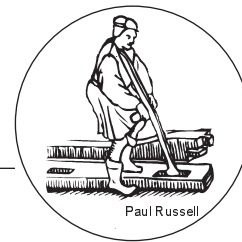
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EVENTS



Guild projects

In Salem, Oregon:

Rotary Club pavilion for Salem. Apr 18–May 1 (see page 10.)

In Fredericksburg, Va., sponsored by TFG, Fredericksburg Foundation, Virginia Military Institute

Great Oak pavilion. Mar 25–Apr 5. Joel McCarty or Grigg Mullen, grigg@vmi.edu, 540-817-9255.

In Angola, Indiana: Selman pavilion. Jun 13–24.

Guild projects contact:

Joel C. McCarty, joel@tfguild.org, 603-835-2077.

Guild technical workshops

Technical symposium on timber frame production.

Classroom, May 2–7. Hands-on, May 9–13. (See page 9.) Knoxville, Ill.

Guild technical workshops contact:

Will Beemer, will@tfguild.org, 413-623-9926.

Guild conferences

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.

Eastern Conference 2005. Oct 13–16, Burlington, Vt.

Western Conference 2006. Apr 20–24, Tigh-Na-Mara Lodge, Parksville (Vancouver Island), B.C.

Other conferences

International Log Builders Association

32nd Annual General Meeting and Conference.

Feb 17–20, 2005, Coeur d'Alène, Idaho.

Robert Savignac, robert@logassociation.org,

www.logassociation.org, 800-532-2900.

National Association of Home Builders

NAHB Green Building Conference. Mar 13–15, Atlanta, Georgia. www.nahb.org.

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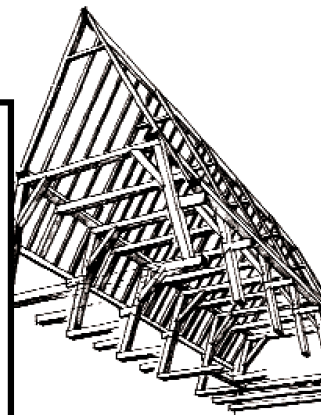
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Historic Deerfield

Dendrochronology in the Northeast: a research tool comes of age. May 19–20, Deerfield, Mass. Anne Grady, 781-862-9877, www.historic-deerfield.org.

Other workshops

International Log Builders Association

Pre-conference workshop: Hands-on timber frame roofs. Feb 5–16, Coeur d'Alène, Idaho. Wil Dancey, dancey@amtelecom.net or Robert Savignac, robert@logassociation.org.

Fox Maple Timber Framing

Introduction to timber framing. Feb 21–Mar 4, Costa Rica. Apr 18–23, Tampa, Fla.

Natural building. May 25–29, Jun 4–5, Brownfield, Maine.

Intro and advanced timber framing. Jun 6–18, Brownfield, Maine.

www.foxmaple.com.

B.C. Log and Timber Building Industry Association

Pre-conference workshop: Roof layout using Dietrich's FREE D-CAD-L. Feb. 24–25, Chase, B.C. Wil Dancey, dancey@amtelecom.net or Colin Williams, info@logbuilders.net.

College of the Rockies

German roof framing. Apr 4–8.

Intro to timber framing. May 9–13.

Natural building school. Jul 4–22.

Timber frame program (12 weeks). Sep 26–Dec 16.

Timber frame program (12 weeks). Jan 9–Mar 31, 2006.

Kimberley, B.C. kimberley@cotr.bc.ca, www.cotr.bc.ca/kimberley, 250-427-7116.

Grand Oaks Academy of Timber Framing

Introduction to Timber Framing. Apr 17–29, Paris, Tenn. Scott Stevens, 731-642-2908, scott@grandoakstimmerframing.com.

Heartwood

Drawing in the way of the *compagnon* with Boris Noël. Apr 20–23.

Timber frame design and joinery decisions. May 30–Jun 3.

Timber framing with Dave Carlon and Josh Jackson. Jun 6–10, Aug 8–12.

Compound joinery with Will Beemer. Jun 27–Jul 1.

Converting trees to timbers. Jul 18–22.

Cruck framing with Jack Sobon. Jul 25–29.

Scribing with Dave Carlon and Josh Jackson. Aug 1–5.

Saving a historic barn: timber repair with Jack Sobon. Aug 15–19.

Washington, Mass. Will and Michele Beemer, 413-623-6677, info@heartwoodschool.com.

Rocky Mountain Workshops

Advanced timber frame engineering–modeling and joinery design with Grigg Mullen and Jennifer Anthony. May 25–29.

Mastering the basics of square rule timber framing with Dave Carlon and Josh Jackson. Sep 11–17.

Compound joinery with Will Beemer and Curtis Milton. Sep 18–23.

Pingree Park, Colo. Peter Haney, 970-482-1366, haneyrmw@frii.com, www.rockymountainworkshops.com.

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

Introduction to timber framing. Jun 6–10, Fairview, Alberta. 888-999-7882, x. 617.

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Tsunami, from page 11

Crabtreecreek. Perhaps these good intentions may be slightly optimistic and misplaced, as we cannot comprehend the devastation of these coastal regions. I agree, pre-fabbed frames might be prohibitively expensive to ship. Likewise, the initiative to obtain and transport a mobile sawmill assumes that the country has suitable “public rights” timber available. Most of the devastation took place in a tropical region where the trees are mostly palms or a species of bamboo. These are both suitable for building structures but not appropriate for milling and timber framing. The interior forests are primarily teak, mahogany, and rosewood, all too valued for commercial export to be used in housing. Obtaining access to these forests could be a political and environmental disaster.

It is only reasonable to believe that traditional masonry-steel-bamboo construction is the most practical. A big problem with timber frames in this region might be termites and wood-eating insects. On the positive side, maybe we could focus our efforts on building a couple of frames to auction off for charity, proceeds sent to the Tsunami victims.

Will Truax. While I see the validity in all you say and something of pie-in-the-sky in our premise, I cannot buy the certitude that shipping is a prohibitive factor in the same global market whose oceans are constantly criss-crossed by container ships, the same market that sucks all the useful timber out of an area, leaving its people to live in hovels. Mountains of materials are at this moment streaming in that direction, much of it far more inappropriate than most of what we are suggesting. On the auction, money raised with such great effort would still be a drop in an already overflowing bucket.

Crabtreecreek. The most severely damaged area was the Island of Banda Aceh, in particular its west and north coast. Most humanitarian efforts are currently focused on the eastern portion. In addition to homelessness, these problems exist.

1. Fishing communities and fleets have been destroyed.
2. Shipping lanes are closed and treacherous with loss of channel markers, navigational lights, and buoys. A 100-ft. natural trench, previously the shipping mainstay, is now less than 100 ft. deep. All lanes must be re-mapped (a task NOAA expects to take over three months) and debris cleared from ports before safe shipping can resume. All supplies must currently be flown in.
3. Water supplies are contaminated.

4. Salt has spoiled the soil for agrarian purposes for many years to come.
5. They are in an ongoing civil war.
6. There is little currency. Goods are bartered and commerce is chaotic.
7. The ocean has permanently reclaimed much of the island region.
8. Industrial areas have been wiped out, leaving most people permanently unemployed.
9. Much debris must be burned or carried off before rebuilding can begin.
10. Schools and streets are plugged with dead bodies awaiting burial.

This is much different from simply rebuilding after a hurricane as we do here in the U.S. We must also consider the culture, which is deeply religious—Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. They prefer humble abodes and shun flamboyant Western ideas. They do not all live in poorly constructed hovels and are actually well-versed in architecture. Just like the U.S. colonies, much of the Achenese province was developed in a Dutch Colonial style during the occupation of the Dutch. The Achenese have adopted steel and concrete structures with timber frame roofs because of the tropical elements. The collapse of these buildings is due in part to the lack of building code and enforcement, just as like the Turkish quake a few years ago. Last but not least, the hardwood forests are in dire straits because of exploitation and irresponsible practices, primarily by Japan (www.forests.org/archive/indomalay/malessay.htm).

On the positive side, I propose that rather than building homes in a style they might not embrace individually, we might rebuild a community structure. Many schools were destroyed in the area. By building a school we could provide an educational benefit in more than one way, and we would be able to identify a “client” and a place for the structure. It would be necessary to coordinate efforts with local government as to the needs and any code requirements.

Will Beemer. Much as we want to help as an organization, this effort is not part of our stated mission. Our mission is to educate timber framers, not provide housing. If you can convince the members and the IRS that using membership dues to finance any part of this effort helps fulfill our mission, then we could do something. It would be much more appropriate for one of you to coordinate this at a grassroots level, with the Guild providing promotional help through *Scanlings* and the website. We could build frames here as part of a workshop-training program; that would work. We could train Indonesians to build timber frames; that’s OK. But I don’t think we can mobilize timber framers to provide housing, according to our charter.

[Postings are accumulating steadily to the Tsunami topic (under General Forum Questions) of this forum. This excerpt from the 12/30/04 to the 1/21/05 postings is heavily abridged. If you’d like to see the entire thread, go to the Ask the Experts section of the Guild website, www.tfguild.org. To post your thoughts, go to the last post and click the double quotes (“ ”) above the last message. You may have to register to do so, but it doesn’t take long.—Ed.]



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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