



SCANTLINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIMBER FRAMERS GUILD
NUMBER 181
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This was the Burlington 2013 Conference

Overall impressions

NICOLE COLLINS

I'm fairly new to the Guild, but over the last three years, I've attended conferences on both coasts with Trillium Dell, as well as workshops and Apprentice/Journey-worker assessments. My experience in Burlington was distinctly different.

The individuals of the Guild have impressed me from the beginning in their unusually intense inventiveness and deep passion for making and doing. I've also noticed a particular vision held by most: that we all belong to something that isn't only now. It is mindful of centuries past and looks generations into the future.

I came to the conference concerned for the Guild's future. I had been reading and hearing about serious financial troubles and large internal structural shifts. As a 10-year non-union carpenter, I appreciate the education value of the Guild, not only for professional development, but for the longevity of the craft and our quality of life.

After the first day, I was relieved and excited. I have never experienced such a sense of vibrancy, collaboration, and family at a Guild event. That said, there is nothing easy about changing the Guild's framework at such a critical juncture.

The conference began with a clear message from our board of directors: an eye on long-term objectives, based on mindfulness and respect.. Discussion and strong disagreement took place regarding the best path of action; many ideas surfaced. People spoke of moving beyond individual goals, recognized our responsibility to the mission we all share, and expressed a desire to carry the Guild's values into the future. Many also wanted to honor our past, and the members who have built the Guild. A common sentiment came forth—that the Guild will continue to be a part of our lives, and that we will continue to benefit from its presence in the future.

Flexibility on a strong foundation . . . this kind of internal restructuring allows long term resilience and regeneration. It is how organizations remain successful through decades and centuries. With the right groundwork, we'll ensure the Guild will always be true to the goals that brought us together in the beginning and at the same time remain a manifestation of the vibrant members that are the Guild.

In words spoken by John Abrams I heard echoes of what I'd observed Guild members expressing. I feel lucky to be associated with such a phenomenal group

See Burlington, page 8



Joe Miller and Ben Brungraber conducting shear testing.



A young timber framer affixes the wetting bush during Family Fun Day.

Mary Richardson

SCANTLINGS

Newsletter of the Timber Framers Guild
Number 180 August–September 2013

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Founded 1985

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LETTERS



Hello from our new executive director

It is truly my pleasure to be writing to you as your new executive director. In my introductory note, I want to tell you about my background, describe how an association management firm operates, and share my thoughts on what I believe is a bright future for the Guild.

I have managed associations for over 20 years, with additional significant for-profit business experience. This includes executive management of the Pellet Fuels Institute (manufacturers of the fuel for pellet stoves and furnaces) and the Hearth, Patio, & Barbecue Association (hearth products). In these positions, I worked closely with the timber, forest, housing, architectural, and remodeling industries.

For the past several years, I have been a senior executive at the Drohan Management Group (DMG), an internationally recognized and accredited full-service association management company (AMC) in Reston, Virginia. DMG has been in business for over 25 years and has 50 employees. AMCs support the headquarters operations of more than 10,000 non-profit organizations around the world. They are recognized for delivering “best practices” in non-profit organizational management while improving the relevance and sustainability of the nonprofits they serve. After this introductory note, you will likely never hear mention of DMG again. We are your staff, and we serve you through the direction of your elected board of directors.

As the Guild transfers operations to its new home in Reston, you will see a high level of customer service and professionalism. In addition to the everyday operational work, we will also be working with Guild leaders on strategy and future vision.

I am very excited about the future of the TFG. In the four days that I spent at the Burlington conference in August, I could feel the spirit of the organization and the great sense of pride that you have as Guild members. The spirit and camaraderie was especially apparent during the Saturday auction. Moreover, I spent a good deal of time with your board. Their passion and dedication to TFG is very impressive. I admire the hard work that they have done for the members.

As discussed in the member meeting, in order for TFG to do its good works, it must get its fiscal house in order so that it can continue to invest in the outreach and member services you value. Hiring an AMC was an important step in the process.

Rounding out the “core” team for TFG is Angella Kim as administrator. She will be on the front lines for all of your inquiries. You can reach her at TFG’s new phone number, 703/234-4055, or [email Angella](mailto:Angella@tfguild.org).

I look forward to working with you. Please call me on my direct line, 703/234-4116, or [email me](mailto:Don@tfguild.org).

Kind regards,
Don Kaiser

Thoughts on the conference

Another enlightening, invigorating conference is in the history books. Thank you to Brenda Baker, Will and Michele Beemer, the conference committee, and the Guild volunteers for putting together a very successful event. Here are my bookend experiences.

At the Friday morning members' meeting, Mike Beganyi gave a thorough and well-presented description of the Guild's financial issues and the rationale for moving to a professionally managed organization. Time will tell if this direction leads to a more viable and successful Guild. Unfortunately, the board did not communicate to members the recent seismic changes in Guild personnel.

John Abrams' plenary presentation Sunday morning was, as always, entertaining, enlightening and thought provoking. At the end of his talk, an audience member asked him what he thought about the future of the Timber Framers Guild. His response was that the Guild is a fantastic organization of great people, but he didn't like the name; that we should change the second word from "Framers", which is very limiting, to something more all encompassing. At that moment, it was probably a good thing that the throwing axes were sheathed and safely stowed away!

For many years, prominent Guild members have been preaching that we must be more than just timber framers. We owe it to our clients to be educated in efficient methods of designing and finishing our structures. This is evident in the content of our publications and conferences. We should strive to keep up with the pros and cons of the ever-changing technologies and current schools of thought as to the "best" methods of construction.

My hope is that the Timber Framers Guild is here to stay. When I fill out a form such as a tax return and come to the box that asks for occupation, I always fill in "timber framer". I am proud of simply that, nothing more and certainly nothing less.

Duncan Keir
Liberty Head Post & Beam

Garden farewell

If you garden, you will quickly understand. If you do not garden, I invite you to imagine.

Working in my garden a few weeks ago, I pulled weeds, rearranged rocks, amended the soil, tucked dirt around plant roots, and thought about what I was doing. I love the work: hands and back to effort, mind to design and plant needs, heart to love of growing and the earth. Then I thought: what will be here in 10, or 20 years? I certainly cannot be sure the garden will be here like this. Do I despair, and give up? No, for the good is in the doing. It is now.

Then I thought how like this is, and has been, to my work with the Guild. For more than 25 years my life and the Guild have been entwined, through my own work and through the work of my husband, Joel McCarty.

By the time you read this, my work in the garden of the Timber Framers Guild will have been ended, through actions beyond my control, and just as happened to Joel. The model and management are changing.

Still, in my final days, I try to take comfort in the concept of the garden and gardening. I see the work I have done and am well pleased. I have given unwavering commitment to efficient, honest, thorough, dedicated, and kind service to the members and customers of the Timber Framers Guild and to the organization. Thank you for the opportunity and the gifts of friendship. Peace be with you. Please continue with friendships and with your own good work. Farewell, for now. Garden on.

Susan Norlander

*Silently a flower blooms
In silence it falls away;
Yet here now, at this moment, at this place
the world of the flower
the whole of
the world is blooming.
This is the talk of the flower, the truth
of the blossom:
The glory of eternal life is fully shining here.*
Zenkei Shibayama (1894–1974)



Bob Peterson via Wikimedia Commons

Our timber framing organizations

With the conference in Burlington ended, I left yet another gathering feeling more inspired, more alive, more challenged to do better, and yet again happy and blessed to be part of this amazing group. There was magic everywhere. You know the drill: great white beards, buff younger members, shared knowledge everywhere, challenges by experts for even more improvement in our craft and its role in structure.

There was also a great cry of alarm as the depth of the financial crisis in the Guild became known. Mercifully but not surprisingly, the conversations didn't degrade into finger pointing and Monday quarterbacking, but in where to go and how to get there. The quality of discourse was high, and any thought of absolute collapse never gained credibility. There are just too many amazing people pushing the cart out of the mud. You all are impressive.

I suggest we think about re-organizing the Guild and its sister groups under a single banner, a single professional management. The paths we've taken as various groups have been all good. They've been needed and were excellent choices in their times. Now is a new time, and the Guild has a hired a professional management team, at least provisionally. (I'm not aware of the details.) At the same time, the Business Council has weathered the recession intact with its professional management, and TTRAG, the TFEC, and the Apprentice Program could all benefit to varying degrees from additional support.

But how can we do this? I'll use my community of companies, New Energy Works, *NEWwoodworks*, and Pioneer Millworks as a model. I could also use others that you know, like Bensonwood with their various divisions or any number of timber framing companies with attached SIP shops. The commonality is that while each division has differences in production needs and styles, sub-markets, bookkeeping, management requirements, and legal structures, all are related by similar clientele, base market, philosophical vision, and ownership.

At NEW/PMW/*NEWwoodworks*, an umbrella management team—president, financial staff, reception—office administration—marketing, and facilities—spread themselves across our related but independent groups of timber framing, woodworking, construction, design, and recycled wood products. Each group's manager runs the department as a standalone company with its own growth plan, budget, reporting, and production staff. Yet every other week we gather as a team, share concerns and triumphs, take from and give direction to

the umbrella management team, and . . . share all the resources and efficiencies that this process suggests.

Similar shared resources, increased communication, professional management expertise, and intra-group coordination would bring timber framing to the next level. I can see easily a six-person (or so) staff: executive director, marketing director, events coordinator, financial manager, administrative assistant, and in my opinion very important, education–apprenticeship coordinator, as effective and affordable, spread across so many. Each individual group and board would be far better supported, trained, guided, and successful with an experienced professional manager over all.

But let's not get into the details yet, and let's not think this thing could happen quickly, even if many of you might agree conceptually. I'm suggesting we talk about it; look at its strengths and weaknesses. Discuss it with the professional staff we have now, knowing that they may be part of this picture as it comes into focus. We need to move forward, clearly, and this is a valid path to consider.

Jonathan Orpin

Rebuilding

I shared disappointment and privilege in attending the August TFG conference in Burlington. The disappointment was in witnessing the turmoil experienced by Guild members struggling with the TFG's financial condition. I believe this is a macro-economic condition that has tragically been transformed to internal strife. The privilege was reconnecting with members I have known for decades. I feel fortunate to have shared time with many friends, including Ed Levin whose passing I now mourn.

In writing this letter, my prayer is that we remember in Ed's legacy a lesson relevant to our current dilemma. In a *New York Times* [article](#) published on Christmas Day over 30 years ago, Ed Levin mused, "The world goes to hell in one direction and rebuilds itself in another."

To rebuild is to make extensive changes or repairs to something that is broken. Rebuilding in another direction is to deviate from the road well trodden and seek new paths. As a specialized trade association, the Guild cannot continue to do the same thing over and over and expect different results. Change is inevitable. It doesn't take an enormous paradigm shift to move from living in the past to building our future. I am reminded of the legend of John Henry, a steel-driver working on the railroads in a race against a steam powered hammer, which he won, only to die in victory from physical exhaustion with his hammer in his hand.

This is a new world order based on unprecedented communications via social media. I am not a timber framer. Yet I am deeply involved in building trades. I believe the TFG needs to develop a brand and message to rebuild itself on a path demonstrating leadership within the mainstream building community. That message will engage sustainable design based on centuries of construction best practices—and the science of building envelope and structure exclusive to our art.

Al Wallace

Vicksburg project completed

The Vicksburg project was a rousing success, well documented in a project blog run mostly by Polish volunteer Olga Micińska, with help from apprentice–volunteer Jon Santiago and more than half a dozen other contributors. If you haven't visited it yet, now is the time. See [the Vicksburg blog](#).

TFEC: new timber grading course

TOM NEHIL

The premier workshop sponsored by the [Timber Frame Engineering Council](#) (TFEC) is a three-day course on timber grading, at [Heartwood School](#), in Washington, Mass., to run April 7–9, 2014.

The course will be taught by Ron Anthony, wood scientist, Anthony & Associates; Bob Falk, PhD, research engineer, USDA Forest Products Lab; and a grading instructor from the Northeast Lumber Manufacturers Association (NELMA).

It is intended for anyone working with timber as a designer, framer, investigator, or small mill operator, where a grader certification is not in place. This is for those who are faced with grading questions frequently but not daily, and who may be working at many different sites.

Day One will introduce the science behind the grading rules and develop an understanding of how the interpretation of the grading rules can impact the performance of structural timber. It will also examine issues associated with use of re-claimed/reused timber.

Day Two will cover the NELMA grading rules as they pertain to structural timber and apply those rules to

full-size samples. (Note: grading rules are nearly identical across the various grading agencies, so skills learned will apply beyond the species graded under NELMA rules.)

Day Three will continue training using full-size samples, and will culminate with a written and practical examination. Upon successful completion, participant will receive a certificate of course completion issued by the TFEC.

This course won't make you a certified lumber grader. But you will likely know more about the science and understand the grading rules better than many certified graders, especially as they relate to structural timber. We think this is a good way for all of us in the timber framing industry to raise the bar on what we are doing and provide better value to our clients.

The cost, \$600 per person, includes three days of instruction and hands-on training; course materials; lunch, coffee, and light refreshment. Enrollment is 13 to 20 people, and a 20% deposit is required to reserve a spot.

For more information or to reserve a spot, reach [Tom Nehil](#), 269/383-3111.

Welcome, summer joiners!

SUSAN NORLANDER AND SUSAN WITTER

The following 44 people have joined the Timber Framers Guild in June, July, or August. We welcome you to our group and look forward to seeing you at projects, regional meetings, or conferences; and please feel free to reach out to other TFG members in your area. The member directory contains a listing by state and province. Keep on timber framing!

Ron Anthony, Fort Collins, Colo.
Richard Barnes, Vicksburg, Mich.
Junius Beebe III, Marblehead, Mass.
Jennifer Bittner, Foster, Rhode Island
Richard Black and Nicole Montesano, Dundee, Ore.
Craig Bridgman, Cornwall Bridge, Conn.
Robert Brinkmann, Chesterfield, Missouri.
Robert W. Chambers, River Falls, Wisc.
Terry L. Clark, Greenville, Ohio
Travis Cooke, Pittsfield, Mass.
John Dresser, Northfield, Mass.
Jim Fifies, Jackson, Wyo.
Joyce Fischetti, Cary, N.C.
Brian K. Hall, Amery, Wisc.
Brian Hayes, Huntington, Vt.
John Hehre, Minneapolis, Minn.
Duane D. Houghton, South Berwick, Maine
Tony Jans, Whiting, Maine
Michael Jones, West Winfield, N.Y.
Germain Joyet, Renens, Vaud, Switzerland
Michael Kantola, Marquette, Mich.
Greg Katz, Lake Placid, N.Y.

Caroline Kerr, Willseyville, N.Y.
J. K. Leemon, Longmont, Colo.
Curtis A. Lynd, Columbus, Ohio
Scotty McGuffie, Madison, Miss.
Olga Micinska, Warszawa, Poland
Jim Morphet, Ajax, Ont., Canada
Jack Nault, Lincoln, Vt.
Terry Necciai, Philadelphia, Pa.
James O'Donnell, Limerick, Maine
James, Angie and Joseph Orr, Hilliard, Ohio
Sebastian Williamson Persh, Morin Heights, Québec, Canada
Greg Purdy, Arva, Ont., Canada
Arielle Miwa Oseki Robbins, Somerville, Mass.
Gary Roberts, Dedham, Mass.
Jayne Rogers, Galesburg, Ill.
Grant Ruehle, Fort Collins, Colo.
Jonathan Santiago, Evans, Ga.
Wyld Searcy, Guilford, Ind.
Luke Vaillancourt, Manchester, N.H.
Philip Walguarnery, Liberty Corner, N.J.
Terry Williams, South Surrey, B.C., Canada
John Henry Yoder, Middlefield, Ohio

Ed Levin , 1947–2013: In Memoriam

SUZANNE PENTZ

I was very fortunate to have had the opportunity to go on an excursion with Ed to the Japanese House in Fairmount Park in Philadelphia and to have lunch with him on the day before he died. I had been asked to give a guest lecture for a wood conservation course at Penn including reference to traditional Japanese timber framing of the 17th century, and I had reached out to Ed for advice.

We had a lovely visit to the authentic Japanese garden and the beautiful house built in 17th-century Japanese style. I knew of Ed's recent hip replacement surgery and I had told him that the building was not handicap-accessible because of its construction, and that the park did not allow wheelchairs, crutches, casts, or other prosthetic devices that might damage the tatami mats. Ed gamely agreed to go anyway and to leave his crutches behind. He seemed to manage well, although slightly unsteady, and he even successfully negotiated a couple of steps at the entrance after removing his shoes. Of course Ed found all kinds of interesting things about the building to point out, including the way that the interior openings perfectly framed the views of the garden and how appropriately the natural ventilation was performing on a very hot day, bringing refreshing breezes in from the garden. We admired the clever roof framing and interesting pieced-in

repairs to the decking. Toward the end of our visit, we got separated, so I ended up phoning him on my cell to learn where he was. He said he was out on the veranda just enjoying the garden. When I caught up with him, he explained that it was hard being on his feet for so long, so he just wanted to sit a while and relax. He truly seemed to enjoy the visit and the pleasant surroundings.

I then drove us back into town to drop him off at his house on 19th Street. We stopped in to feed the dogs, and we decided to have lunch together at the Continental Diner just down the street. Ed still without his walker or crutches, we slowly walked along. I was amazed and impressed how everyone we passed seemed to light up when seeing Ed. He was warmly and loudly greeted as a celebrity, by every doorman, cop, mailman and waitress—at least a dozen people in two blocks. I was amazed and impressed how he had become a celebrity in his Philadelphia neighborhood after just five years. He said it was the dogs who were the celebrities. But they weren't with us.

We had a delightful lunch. We talked about his kids and we discussed what I was going to say in my lecture. I was flattered when he asked if he could attend. Now there is so much more that I wish I had talked to him about. Like Ken Rower, I have no idea where I will turn when I have another "question for Ed."



Richard Starr

STU WHITE

Long ago, in the dawn of the email age, I received a message from one Ed Levin. I came close to trashing it because I had been told not to open things from strangers. I opened it and saw that it was very long. I almost trashed it again. But I began reading and very soon I could not put it down. Ed had heard about the proposed Dartmouth Skiway project and introduced himself to me as a graduate of the college and a timber frame designer. The letter was, of course, artfully written and I was instantly on board, in Ed's world. Thus began a friendship that I had imagined would just go on and on.

Poet, philosopher, raconteur, humorist, humanitarian, mathematician, historian, artist, craftsman, gentle critic, technological genius, brilliant designer, loyal friend, loving husband and father—add your own tag. But I must add one more: his astonishing erudition on all things. How could one person be so well versed in so many areas, retain it all and pull it up at the appropriate moment in conversation?

Our discussions always veered onto different pathways, one thing leading to another, and it was often difficult to get back to the starting point, which may have been something like a complex joint detail. Then out would come the computer, which he could make sing like no other.

I remember in particular our discussions about the never-ending process of design and its imperfect results.



Matt Fahrner

Design does not end even with the hammering home of the last peg. It cannot be tamed by schedules (or insignificant design fees—Ed’s fee structure, if you could call it that, was the best buy in town). Summing up one of our memorable dialogues, Ed sent me an excerpt from Moby Dick, Melville concluding his exhaustive study of whales:

But I now leave my cetological System standing thus unfinished, even as the great Cathedral of Cologne was left, with the crane still standing upon the top of the uncompleted tower. For small erections may be finished by their first architects; grand ones, true ones, ever leave the copestone to posterity. God keep me from ever completing anything. This whole book is but a draught—nay, but the draught of a draught. Oh, Time, Strength, Cash, and Patience!

We were soulmates. I have so wanted once again to collaborate with him on a project. How I will miss him! My heart goes out to the family of whom he was so proud.

The day after I received the awful news I dreamt that Ed was standing at a lectern, addressing a large audience. It dawned on me that he was speaking at his own memorial service. I woke up smiling. Not even Mark Twain could pull that off.

KEN ROWER

Although we had met as early as 1972, Ed and I first worked together in 1980, on a reproduction of the 1637 Fairbanks House for the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. This effort began as a commission offered by the Museum’s Jonathan Fairbanks (a direct descendant of the original proprietor) to my friend Rob Tarule, now a

maker of 17th-century furniture in Essex Junction, Vermont, and in 1980 a medievalist teaching at Goddard College who had built a timber frame house on which I had worked. I brought the two men together and eventually the three of us with much help built the frame in Canaan and raised it on Boston Common as part of Boston’s 350th Birthday celebration. Despite its genesis, the building became known as an Ed Levin project because, of all of us, Ed became its public face, eager to mix with all the interesting and influential people with whom it brought us in touch, and the most confident at rubbing shoulders, and he wrote about the job in *Fine Homebuilding* in 1983 (not without a prominent credit to Rob as project director).

In the next decade Ed and I worked together, at first occasionally as a pair and then steadily in a group of five (Paradigm Builders), with much collaboration in design, tooling and technique, to produce a series of interesting frames. In those days Ed was all about self-promotion or, as his friend and photographer Richie Starr puts it, “building a life,” very conscious of his abundant cleverness and competence and quick to exploit contacts and opportunities. In the midst of this period, with Tedd Benson, Steve Chappell, Jack Sobon and others, we founded the Timber Framers Guild. Ed’s forte, with all his connections, was to pull in most of the speakers for the early conferences.

After several years of working collaboratively, we five at Paradigm Builders held many earnest meetings in an effort to form a partnership, but we did not arrive at a conclusion. In the end Ed could not accept a group dynamic. He said, finally, “I have to have my name on it.” We broke up and went separate ways. A loner once again, Ed then became a specialist as a lay engineer and distinguished timber frame designer and consultant, thereby befriending and advising multitudes, much to the benefit of the world—perhaps to the greater benefit of the world than if he’d accepted the idea of a partnership.

After the breakup of Paradigm, our occasional woodworking collaborations were exceeded in number by our editorial collaborations. Impatient with him as a contributor to *Timber Framing*, I eventually swore off asking for pieces because it was just too difficult to deal with his endless delays while meeting a fixed publishing schedule. I had come to value our friendship more than any written material. But last year, for a book-length collection of articles, it was briefly necessary to resume an editorial relationship. As we fell into the expected delays, I said nothing. But as they accumulated, Ed surprised me by remarking, “I hate doing this to you. It’s a sickness.”

Ed’s loss does not feel to me like the loss of a friend nor even of a brother. It feels as I’ve lost a parent. If I was impatient with him, nevertheless he slipped his way past my impatience to a deeper place. When he died I felt immediately bereft, and the triggers to grief are all around me. Too soon old, too late smart, Ed would say. I’d say he was right.

Burlington, from page 8

at this moment of growth. We are in this for the long haul. We are people of vision.

Our group has great potential for creating a modern building renaissance—resurrecting knowledge no longer commonly taught. We reconnect the thread that binds us to those who apprenticed, built, and trained centuries before. We can inspire our communities and teach them about the power of fellowship.

Membership breakout session

ELLEN GIBSON

This was one of four working meetings at the conference. (The other three were projects, fund-raising, and collaboration.)

More than a dozen participants (members plus some directors and staff) brainstormed about how the Guild can better serve past, present, and future members.

Building a broader and more diverse membership base is very important. We discussed identifying potential related organizations, schools, and businesses; clearly, member participation is vital to our success. We explored how/whether to grow our numbers, how to reconnect with those who have left, and how to make the organization relevant to new framers and enthusiasts. We need to provide for the interests of the younger generation. They are facing challenges that did not exist in previous decades. Many who attended the conference expressed an interest in helping in any way they could and said they just wanted some guidance.

We discussed the idea of a volunteer coordinator: someone who could organize the efforts of individuals, making sure the work was reasonable, focused, and beneficial to all. A progressive to-do list is one way to list the tasks/skill sets needed, and a written volunteer guidebook would be a help. Many talented people in the Guild might have the time, energy, and interest to help in a variety of ways, some having more time than others. Some people may have connections with schools, businesses, or clients who might like to learn more about timber framing. Some can manage social media, or make phone calls about the Guild and timber framing. A member could do a presentation in their local school or library about an event they attended, or demonstrate a skill. A member could coordinate volunteers, plan a regional project, or hold a regional meeting.

Regional gatherings have become important, informal events to get interested framers, historians, and enthusiasts together in small groups for an educational, friendly opportunity to share skills, for a reasonable price and time commitment. New members have come from these events. We discussed creating a guide for local hosts in planning and completing a community timber frame project. It might be accompanied by a package of TFG materials: member enrollment, copies of publications, photos of past projects, and testimonials of enthusiastic participants. We talked about the benefits of offering an incentive to join

during an event and the importance of following up with all participants to get feedback and to continue a personal connection. This would be useful for projects, conferences, and workshops.

It was clear from the meeting that members wanted to help: we have only to ask. Guild leaders have to provide the tools needed to help these volunteers. Please join the ongoing discussion.

Peter Henrikson: *Grindbygg* in Norway

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS

Sometimes, simplicity trumps all. This might be the case with the *grindbygg* methods that Peter Henrikson told us about. In southwestern Norway, the climate demands covered storage (rainy fjords). Slate is local, so start there—a really heavy roof. This brings substantial thrust of the common rafters outwards against the plates. Rafter tails are joined to the timber plate in ways that ensure they will work together and push out, not slide.

Now, use that thrust to keep the tying joint tight. A tie beam that narrows down with cheeks on both sides (the “neck”) slips handily into an open slot on top of the posts. So, the plate is pushed hard against the post, and the post is prevented from being pushed over by the relish on the ends of the tie beam.

Knowing that rafter thrust is reliable, rely on it for holding the entire structure together: simple. All joinery is open and easy to cut. None is blind. There isn’t a mortise or a tenon. Is there any tension joint at all? Perhaps only the fork-and-tenon rafter tops.

The *grindbygg* method is not comely. Don’t expect the elegance of the Viking-era log *lafts* (log homes; they are totally-compression monocoques/building shells). But when I see simple things that work well together, it makes me cast a critical eye over the work we do every day. It makes me think that the benefits of compression should be re-examined, and gravity honored. Utilitarian—and homely—in its olde meaning: simple and sheltering.

Ace McArleton and Ben Southworth: Alternative Enclosure Systems

MIWA OSEKI ROBBINS

I thoroughly enjoyed this session, one of two on energy-efficient enclosures. (The other, by Ace McArleton, was on straw bale houses.) Ben spoke about net zero and passive house systems. Both of these systems work by having high R values (up to 100 in the roofs of a passive house system!), minimizing thermal bridges, and building a super-tight house that is then mechanically ventilated. Continuous air and vapor barriers are the result of great attention to detail, and air and vapor tightness are key.

This contrasts with straw bale insulation systems which, although air-tight, are not vapor-tight. Straw bale walls can achieve a very high R-value and should also be air tight, but there is no vapor barrier. Instead, lime or earth plaster is used on both the interior and exterior wall, and

goal is for the vapor to move through the wall as it needs to, with equal breathability on both sides of the wall.

I doubt that these straw bale houses have achieved the energy performance yet of a passive or net zero house, but they may have other merits worth considering. Ben spoke about the global warming potential of certain materials as a reason why he prefers to use cellulose whenever he can over foam. To me it seems that a straw bale wall with earth or lime plaster would have to win if we compare the embodied energy and global warming potential of the materials that go into a passive or net zero house.

Another difference in these approaches is that the passive and net zero systems are both standards whose required performance is highly specified. Currently, straw bale enclosure systems seem much less regulated. But I was excited to hear that Ace McArleton and her group, New Frameworks Natural Building, has been collecting data about the performance of the houses they have built, perhaps laying some groundwork for official standards to be put in place in the future.

New testing

JOE MILLER

After several years testing scarf joints in flexure as well as the tensile capacity of wooden joinery at the Guild conferences, Fire Tower Engineered Timber revised their test setup to test joist to girder shear connections. A veritable menagerie of connections was tested, from the traditional housed dovetails (some taken to extreme proportions) and soffit tenons, to more modern counterparts with joist hangers and screws. Failure modes ranged from the expected crushing of grain and beam failures to the less anticipated failures of tension perpendicular to grain and even rolling shear in tenons. Perhaps the most striking failure was our failure to imagine all of the exciting ways wood responds to overload.

A rather unconventional connection consisted of three 12x12 hunks of dripping green white oak with full-depth, sloped, bearing surfaces—no tenons—with only a high strength steel rod, drilled through all three members, to inhibit spreading. As the load on the sample neared the rig's 50,000-lb. limit, a curious observer wondered if the ram's 1-in.-thick reaction plate was designed to fold in half. We stopped the test.

The undoubted crowd favorite proved to be a rather plain soffit tenon connection fabricated from dense, straight-grained Douglas fir. We loaded the 6x6 joist to nearly 29,000 lbs., inducing considerable deflection in the carrying beams before the lower half of those beams abruptly peeled away. The sudden release of the seriously deflected upper half of the beam snapped it back to straight and launched it several feet in the air, above the sound of cracking and splintering wood to the audible delight of the audience.

Rick Collins: Estimating for small timber frame companies

SUSAN WITTER

A lot of young timber framers attended this standing-room-only session. Rick distributed printouts from his cost spreadsheet at the outset and was equally free with his philosophies on process, project management, client relations, and fairness, all of which come into play in cost estimation. At less than ten frames a year, Rick considers his Trillium Dell Timberworks a small company.

A key strategy, he said early in the talk, was to manipulate the scope of work to come up with a doable project and a sellable price.

A few quotable gems from Rick: You get paid for what you negotiate (so don't just accept the client's counter-offer). Cost-estimating is an important part of relationship building. You must allow for winter work, unplanned events, health and well-being, R&D, and



Mack Magee

The images at left show the unconventional connection mentioned above, of white oak with full-depth, sloped, bearing surfaces—no tenons—and a high strength steel rod. Center, the loading bar (in another test) crushing grain of “joist” while pulling it down into housings in “girders” at either end. Right, this soffit tenon connection in 6x6 Douglas fir broke at 29,000 lbs.

error. Never give something without getting something in return. Corners cost money.

Rick routinely estimates labor costs by several measures: by number of sticks, by process, by board-foot, by piecework, and based on competitor's prices. Having reviewed past performance and estimate-to-actual of past jobs, he can determine which metric he wants to use for a given job. He cited working in another shop as a useful comparison basis.

Questions came up about contingencies, shop and site rates, overhead, opportunity cost, cost-plus, profit margin, and so on. Rick answered all of them competently and most of those in the room were taking copious notes. He was happy to share his spreadsheet to those in the session. This topic was clearly of interest and useful to those who attended.

Robert W. Chambers: New Log Joinery

WILL BEEMER

Rob Chambers has always been at the “cutting” edge with innovative techniques in the log building industry, and he recognizes the crossover to the timber framing world. This was evident in his double session revealing several layout methods for joining naturally-shaped logs. With the assistance of the late Ed Levin (in his final Guild presentation), the first session explored the theory and engineering behind the joinery, and after lunch the group reconvened outside to witness a full-scale demonstration by Rob and Gerald David of the layout and cutting on some massive round logs meeting at a typical truss angle.

Two aspects of this method make it unique and innovative. In previous systems, the logs would have to be scribed in some manner to a floor drawing or to each other, requiring much fussing and handling of material. In Rob's new system, a template, or portable storyboard, can be made to transfer the information to each timber, and while a drawing is still required, the timbers do not

have to be placed over it to get the data points.

Secondly, the joinery is used with timbers of equal diameters with a “chambered” tenon hidden within, providing all the bearing required; this results in better-looking joinery than previously obtainable and requires no reshaping of surfaces at the joint.

The geometry and finer points of the method were a lot to grasp in three hours, and I look forward to Rob sharing it in print in the future.

Brenda and Frank Baker: Veteran Voices

ELLEN GIBSON

Brenda and Frank have been a part of the Guild for a long time. The opportunity to listen to their presentation at the Burlington conference was important to take advantage of. I meant to take notes, to capture bits of wisdom, but I didn't. I listened to them speak, often in back-and-forth relays, reviewing the decisions, insights, and experiences that have shaped their lives.

The Bakers started a business with very little knowledge of what they were doing. They spoke about paying attention to customers' needs and learning the skills necessary to meet those needs. Treating staff and clients like family was critical to their plan. In fact, they worked with good friends and family, early on, which made it difficult when it was time to shift direction. But respect and honesty made the transition possible and the relationships lasting. They tried new approaches without knowing what the result would look like. They had passion for what they did and the people they worked with and served.

After more than 30 years making timber frames and panels, leading 50 workshops yearly, running 60 to 90 projects a year, being sued by nuns, having over 100 employees (caution! caution!), enduring some health issues, and going through a buyout and a merger, Brenda and Frank have ended up with an amazing résumé,



New log joinery design by Robert Chambers, above in red shirt.



Will Beemer

many memories, multiple skills, a wide circle of friends, great kids, and cuter than possible grandkids. Their future promises more challenges and adventures of their own creation.

I started my woodworking career by rationalizing that if I could make my own clothes I could make the front steps and kitchen cabinets for a client I had done some painting for. Luckily, I didn't know what I didn't know. Sometimes controlled ignorance can lead to many wonderful experiences. I hope always to find the confidence to just go for it, whatever it is. Life's challenges can cause me to question the unknown.

Thank you Brenda and Frank for reminding me that sometimes you just have to jump in and enjoy the ride.

John Abrams: The Long Now

JONATHAN ORPIN

As we entered the lecture hall, I said to two young co-workers, "I've heard John speak many times. I'm not sure what he still has to tell me, but I can't help being excited." Sure enough, John had something to say. His message wasn't entirely new, certainly, and there is much we need to hear yet again. Nor was the news he shared surprising, unless you've been hiding under a blanket. And while he ended with some exhortations for the Guild and our industry that should be considered, even they were not the very best reason to be there.

John offers hope. In sharing his stories with us, he sends the message that yes, we can do well and do good; we can believe in our craft, in our co-workers, and even in our society. He is indeed one of us, and we can see ourselves in him.

John said that the economy as we know it must change. It will require a restorative, beneficial approach to commerce. It will require more democracy in the workforce, for who else will make the choices that are needed? He told us to look into B-Corporations, the new legal category for companies that place environmental and human needs in their necessary position: equal to (not as an afterthought of) profits. He suggested books by Marjorie Kelly, (*Owning Our Future*), Gus Speth (*America the Possible*), and Stewart Brand (*The Clock of the Long Now*), among others. All have helped place John's own work with South Mountain Company in a global context.

He shared his long association with the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association, a close-knit, long standing

organization with its own growth story. Its re-envisioning process over the years has allowed it to remain vital, to its members and the larger build community. John suggested that we in the timber framing industry must do the same. The struggles of growth are natural and needed. Even our name could use re-thinking, with, who knows, Timber Framers Guild one day becoming Wooden Building Guild. Who knows, indeed?



Robert W. Chambers

Earl Rafus (left) and Josh Jackson discuss ways to find center separation during setup for a bubble scribing demonstration, part of Josh's pre-conference workshop on scribing natural forms.

The Conference axe throw.

This year's winner was John Dresser, of Hardwick Post and Beam.



Mary Richardson

TFEC Symposium selections

MARK GILLIS

Once again, the Timber Frame Engineering Council (TFEC) put together a full day of amazing topics and passionate speakers. The 30 or so participants were awed by the scope and details of the projects that our members are involved in. We were treated to incredible photos and stories. Here are a couple of highlights.

Phil Pierce (covered bridges)

Phil reflected on two covered timber bridge projects from the many on his résumé. The Bartonville Bridge (Rockingham, Vt.) project replaced a Town lattice bridge lost during Hurricane Irene in 2011. Phil walked us through the entire process, from his initial design considerations and rules of thumb to the re-opening of the span to vehicular traffic.

Fitch's bridge is a single-span Town lattice built 1870, then dismantled and moved to its current location in 1885. (This bridge has outlasted the first two replacement bridges it was moved to make room for.) As part of the rehabilitation, the lattice trusses were extended back to their original lengths to help distribute loads across the abutments and truss connections. Phil described the enhanced lateral bracing system needed to square up and stiffen the bridge against wind loads.

Tim Krahn (natural infills) and Paul Laudenschlager (non-conventional lateral load systems)

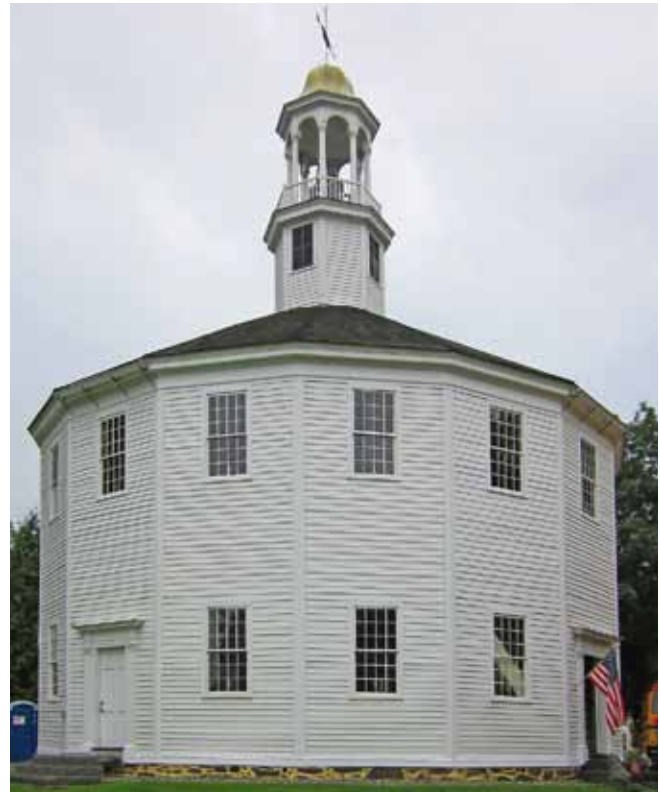
Tim gave us a thoughtful introduction to alternative enclosure systems and what is required to make them work as a lateral load-resisting system for timber framing. He reviewed straw bales and rammed earth, and he introduced us to cellulose-clay hybrid systems as well as straw SIPs! His presentation helped expose the TFEC to workable solutions for lateral load resistance based on natural materials.

Paul considered specific alternative lateral load systems used on projects with high seismic or lateral snow loads. Apparently, a whole gable dormer can fall off a house if it's pushed too hard. He walked us through some unique SIP details for projects featuring limited or non-continuous panel areas—his details included a SIP panel with screws spaced every 3 in. around the perimeter! He also introduced us to lateral truss assemblies (trusses within bents) and frames with very large braces (X-bracing in a spiral-shaped frame), and he discussed when and how knee bracing can be an effective lateral load-resisting system all on its own, in outdoor structures.

Conference historic building tour

KEN ROWER

The 2013 Burlington conference tour, led by framers Eliot Lothrop and Jan Lewandoski and a feature of this year's combination general and traditional programming, took a large group in two crowded school buses around the Vermont countryside to examine and explore five barns and a 16-sided church.



Helen Watts



photos Ken Rower except where noted

Richmond, Vt., Round Church (1813), hexadecagon about 54 ft. in diameter.



Above, Handy triple bypass barn, Williston, Vermont, late 1790s, showing in-kind repairs.



Helen Watts

Above and below, Shelburne Farms Breeding Barn, Shelburne, Vermont, 1891.



Thanks, auction donors!

We thank you, donors, auctioneer extraordinaire Rick Holder, spotters Gabel and Whit Holder, and scribes Cindy Mullen, Michele Beemer, and Sue Warden for a splendid auction. Our team gave us lots of fun and put items up for bid smoothly. Item donors and bidders produced a total donation of \$24,975, which will help Guild operations considerably. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you.

Jennifer Anthony	Olive jade earrings; colorful musical note earrings, anodized aluminum; adjustable necklace and 2 pr. earring set, dichroic glass; adjustable length necklace and earring set, antique mustard, cinnamonabar, black agate, coral, and glass beads, all made by Jennifer.
Tom Barfield	Afghan and Turkish carpenter's hammers (teshaa).
Michele Beemer	Dilly beans; hand knit wool socks (wash-dryable); quatrefoil basket, all made by Michele.
Mike Beganyi Design + Consulting	Lake Champlain chocolates made in Burlington, Vt.; Heady Topper beer brewed in Waterbury, Vt.
Joe Bell, Cabin Creek Timber Frames	100 octagonal locust pegs.
Tedd & Christine Benson	Burdick chocolates.
Jonathan Blackburn	Hot air balloon ride for 2 in Cambridge, N.Y.
Clark Bremer	2 timber framers' protractors, black walnut (limited edition, the last 2).
Kris & Leif Calvin	5 days lodging in Fisherman's Quay, Sitka, Alaska.
Robert Chambers	2 Lyra 100% graphite crayons, very soft, great for labeling wood; DVDs (Log Home Construction, 5 hours of instruction); Log Construction Manual.
Charlotte Cooper, Summer Beam Books	Books.
Heritage Natural Finishes	\$75 certificate and \$350 certificate for Heritage Natural Finishes products.
Delson Lumber	Jameson 18-yr-old limited reserve Irish whiskey.
Billy Dillon and students	Stair model built at Billy Dillon's pre-conference workshop.
Fire Tower Engineered Timber	Wood laminate sunglasses with polarized glass in all-leather case.
Fraserwood (Mack Magee, Peter Dickson)	Glenlivet 18-yr-old Scotch whiskey.
Fearless Engineers	10 hrs. engineering.
Ellen Gibson	Moisture meter; 2 mallets; 3 chisel steels; softwood pulp hook; adze; Starett level; unused harness.
Great Brook Forest Products	2 bottles Vermont maple syrup from Riverledge Farm.
Herrmann's Timber Frame Homes	2 boxes Heco-Topix flange head screws.
Hamlet Heavy Timber	India pale ale made by Hamlet.
Whit Holder	Barbeque sauce.
Home Buyer Publications	Free 1/6-page ad or ad upgrade.
David Hourdequin	4 hrs. engineering.
Lancaster County Timber Frames	Aluminum work stools for mortising; Amish lantern—no electric.
Lee Valley Tools	Low angle block plane.
Duncan Keir, Liberty Head Post & Beam	1 qt. Vermont maple syrup.
Bruce Lindsay, Evergreen Specialties	3 guitar tops (cut from Western red old growth cedar hand split, air dried); violin top (from spruce in Cremona, Italy).
Joe Miller	Tasty treats from Michigan's upper peninsula.
Eric Morley	Japanese plane.
Accacia Mullen	3 reversible caps made by Accacia (100% cotton, machine wash).
Grigg and Cindy Mullen	2 pair reconditioned vintage cowboy boots; gift box of Virginia-made foods.
Grigg Mullen III	book, <i>Preservation of Structural Timber</i> (Howard F. Weiss);
Jonathan Orpin	2 bottles of Oregon Pinot Noir from the Willamette Valley.
Preservation Trades Network	Long sleeved PTN T-shirt.

See Auction donors, page 14

Project Horizon	2 pincushions, woven at Lexington, Virginia's Project Horizon art therapy center.
Gary Richter, Timber Tools	Buffalo Tool Forge traditional bevel edge 3-chisel set; small combination stone carborundum/Belgian blue garnet hone.
Alfredo Rico	Stainless steel Japanese square from Lee Valley tools.
Andy Roeper, Winn Mountain Restorations	"Vinyl is Evil" T-shirt; <i>Allowable Stress Design</i> manuals.
Bob Shortridge Sr.	1 week in the Bahamas' Abaco Islands.
Laurie Smith	Design study with Laurie Smith (includes signed books).
Timberwolf Tools	2 Wood Owl ultra smooth anger bits; Makita 5104 10¼-in. circular saw; Makita 1806 6¾-in. planer; Makita 1002BA curved planer.
TFG board of directors	\$200 gift card to TFG online store.
Vantem Panels	Napa Smith Lost Dog red ale.
Al Wallace	Book: <i>Geothermal HVAC Green Heating and Cooling</i> (Jay Egg & Brian Clark Howard); antique scribe tool; 1 hr. consulting with Al in exchange for: (1) donate \$50 to TFG, (2) recruit 1 new member, (3) mentor someone younger; domain names (TimberFramingPlans.com, HybridTimberFrame.com, GreenTimberHome.com); antique wood and brass scribe.
Susan Witter	Trivet/hot plate made by Susan from bottle caps and scraps of fabric from West Africa.

Northwest to Northeast: a tale of two regional meetings

OLGA MICIŃSKA

My travels in the U.S. often followed the tracks of the Guild. Late one night in mid-July, I pulled up at Jackson and Hannah DuBois' house, who kindly hosted me in Bellingham, Wash., where the Northwest Regional Meeting was happening. I had met Jackson in Sanok, Poland, while working on the synagogue roof replica project. Although two summers have passed since then, time has shown it doesn't take much more than moving a few timbers together to make good friends.

It doesn't take much more than moving a few timbers together to make good friends.

The next day was the meeting, at Cascade Joinery's workshop outside of town. When we arrived, everything was ready: they had put all the machines to sleep beforehand, moved things out of the way, and let the audience mess around the shop for a day. When a good number of guests appeared, Cascade's John Miller began the event. Around 30 persons showed up: apart from locals, visitors were from British Columbia, Colorado, Oregon, and San Francisco (one person came from there especially for this meeting).

In the front yard, Jackson (who works with Cascade Joinery) had two red alder longs and a double bevel broad axe. He explained each step of the process,

alternating his description with action. We observed attentively the big chunks and rough chips flying over the field while his long axe was swinging in the air, hitting the log in perfect rhythm. Jackson also shared stories about the challenge of hewing the 200 silver fir logs that



John Buday

Jackson DuBois hewing.

arrived in Sanok. Then people tried hewing themselves, to get the feel, find the right motion, and achieve the desired surface. Everyone who wanted to, at all levels of experience, had a go. Jackson mentioned that he liked his double-bevel broad axe, but he wished he had a single-bevel too. Right behind the hewn logs, a freshly painted axe-throwing target drew the attention of the crowd.

John Miller gave a brief yet precise explanation of compound joinery. He referred to the complex relevant math but did not overload us with formulas, and he shared clever, simple sheets of patterns following the calculations. The two presentations showed me well how Cascade Joinery cares about high precision in design as well as traditional craft. The fact that the company held the event showed me that it cares about the community. In addition, this event was generously supported by Fraserwood, TruDry, Small Planet Workshop, and Fire Tower Engineered Timber. Thanks, all of you.

The rest of the day was devoted to small-group chats: a valuable exchange of professional ideas and personal thoughts, accompanied by special local brews and excellent food from the Mexican food cart that appeared in the parking lot. When the cooks were sure we had enough, they treated us to a cheerful honk and left. A breeze from the Pacific was blowing in the field where the two logs were located. Every once in a while somebody would leave a discussion and go produce more wood chips. By the end of the day one of the logs was entirely hewn. Joint effort, elegant effect.

A week later I was back East, at the Northeast Regional Meeting in Hallowell, Maine. I was excited that Ellen Gibson (whom I also met in Poland) was organizing the event at her family's estate. Just as on the Friday before, I arrived at Ellen's late in the evening. I spent the first night on the floor in the woodshop, and the following nights in a tent in the beautiful gardens of the Vaughan Homestead.

Saturday morning's mist revealed the special character of the greenness around as we enjoyed breakfast (locally grown goods donated by community members) on a porch overlooking the Kennebec River. As the fog broke, more and more people were coming—from New England, but there were also visitors from New York and Virginia, circa 40 in all.

Ellen, with Arron Sturgis, took us on a tour of the house and barn. As the Cascade Joinery tools were idle for one day, at Vaughan Homestead we were surrounded by objects that had been dormant for much longer. Certainly active in the past, when used by the family, today they form an impressive museum collection, now managed by The Vaughan Foundation. (The Foundation and the TFG provided financial support for this event; thank you.) We learned a lot about history of the residence, which often overlaps with significant milestones in American heritage.

In the first session, Amy Cole-Ives (architectural historian, conservator, and president of Sutherland Conservation & Consulting) explained how to create a Historic Structures Report, an extremely valuable source of information for an old dwelling needing rehabilitation. Amy explained the importance of creating HSRs: they track all the changes and repairs to a house. She cautioned us to never bind the document, since the history of a building may be an open study. By the end of the presentation we realized that nowadays the historic record of a house should originate from its builder, providing detailed documentation of its construction, just as a manual accompanies a device.

The historical preservation of Hallowell was discussed by Ron Kley and Jane Radcliffe, a couple who specializes in preparing collection records. Since the Vaughan property is a current focus for them, they shared many interesting facts about the estate and its owners, presenting some curiosities like a cribbage board supposedly



Olga Micińska

Left, the Vaughan dairy barn. Right, the Vaughan residence, Hallowell, Maine.

belonging to Benjamin Franklin and a copy of some journal pages found in a wall of the house. Why would these be stuck under layers of wallpaper? Probably because the content was not entirely supportive of government policy at the time.

There was no axe-throwing, yet some people enjoyed an alternative discipline: apple-throwing from a stick, using fruits from one of the trees in the Vaughan gardens. Alicia Spence's two sons, Elijah and Shiloh, hid behind the bushes and treated unaware guests with water pumped from a very neat old fire extinguisher. Meanwhile, we had a chance to buy some top notch tools from Jim Rogers, who set up his station in the old barn.

Arron Sturgis took us on a walk around the town, where we saw some exceptionally interesting frames, first the ones at the property of Ted and Carolyn Vaughan: a 20th century dairy barn with a beautiful gambrel roof and their house, including appealing elements like an arched center hall, an octagonal dining-room ceiling, and a truly impressive roof system whose half-dovetail joinery for the tension connections also holds a ceiling frame

that supports the lath-and-plaster. Then we paid a visit to the Dummer House, a plank house and one of the oldest timber framed homes in Hallowell, and climbed up the very tall steeple of the 19th century Old South Congregational Church. When we came back, a music ensemble was waiting for us on the porch, getting ready to play an accompaniment to dinner. Thanks to Gerry David who brought a vast selection of axes, some people tried hewing a small sample log, and they had hewn one of the surfaces by dusk. The best thing to do at this moment was to gather around the warm fire.

As the gathering at the Cascade Joinery focused more on the technology and practice of building, the one at Vaughan Homestead concentrated more on preservation of old structures. Attending both of them showed me once again how many aspects there are to the craft of timber framing. Crossing the continent allowed me to realize how big this country is. Specialists and enthusiasts are spread all around, and regional meetings seem essential in building community and sharing the mutual passion. There should be as many of these as possible.

ECO-LOGIC



The new plastic?

SUSAN WITTER

As featured recently in [The New Yorker's](#) innovation issue, a Green Island (Troy), N.Y., company known as [Ecovative Design](#) ("ecovative" to rhyme with "innovative") has been growing mycelium (the roots of mushrooms) into molded shapes to replace the Styrofoam box molds that, for example, surround the most recent printer you bought. Dell and other big manufacturers have already begun using it to replace styro.

Here's how the Ecovative people describe what they do:

Ecovative uses mycelium (mushroom "roots") to bond together agricultural byproducts like corn stalks into a material that can replace plastic foam. We've been selling it for a few years as protective packaging, helping big companies replace thousands of Styrofoam (EPS), and other plastic foam packaging parts.

Two of the best things about this manufacturing process are that they use agricultural waste, like corn husks, as the fodder for the mycelium, and that when the box molds have served their purpose, you can just throw them out the door. In a month they will be gone.

It was inevitable that they'd try for insulation.

Ecovative Design's latest venture has been to create a tiny house—it is a perfect complement to the tiny-house movement—in which the insulation was grown in the cavities, forming one continuous insulated wall assembly.

Their explanation of this endeavor:

Mushroom insulation grows into wood forms over the course of a few days, forming an airtight seal. It dries over the next month (kind of like how concrete cures) and you are left with an airtight wall that is extremely strong. Best yet, it saves on material costs, as you don't need any studs in the wall, and it gives you great thermal performance since it's one continuous insulated wall assembly. The finished Mushroom® Insulation is also fire resistant and very environmentally friendly.

On their website or their Mushroom Tiny House blog, I could not find an actual R-value and have inquired about that. In the meantime, check them out. There might be some application in sustainable houses. I'm not a timber framer nor an enclosures expert. I'd very much enjoy hearing the perspectives of those of you who are, on this innovation.



www.mushroomtinyhouse.com

A new outreach idea

PAM HINTON

At the Burlington conference, TFBC tried a brand new event: Family Fun Day. The public was invited so they could learn about timber framing via a seminar and hands-on demonstrations. We encouraged children to attend with their parents and enjoy games and events just for them.

We thank Tom and Deb Musco of the National Barn Alliance for putting on their [Teamwork & Timbers](#) program. It's an exercise in teamwork as children raise a barn model. Along the way, the children learn about types of wood, history of rural structures, parts of a barn, and most important, why teamwork is critical—one person cannot raise a barn. They also use math, science, and engineering skills to raise the frame successfully.

Others helped as well. Thanks to Stephen Morrison and Eric Morley for their session on timber framing, Ellen Gibson, who taught children to build tool boxes, and Josh Jackson, who set up a scribe model on campus.

The first Family Fun Day brought four families to the conference site. TFBC hopes to grow this event at future Guild meetings.

I welcome ideas for improving the event. Just [email](#) or call me, 888/560-9251.



photos Mary Richardson

Some TFBC activities at the Burlington Conference: above left, a bubble toss. Above right, Gerald David chainsawing during a log joinery demo. Below, kids assembling a frame.



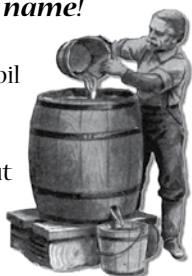
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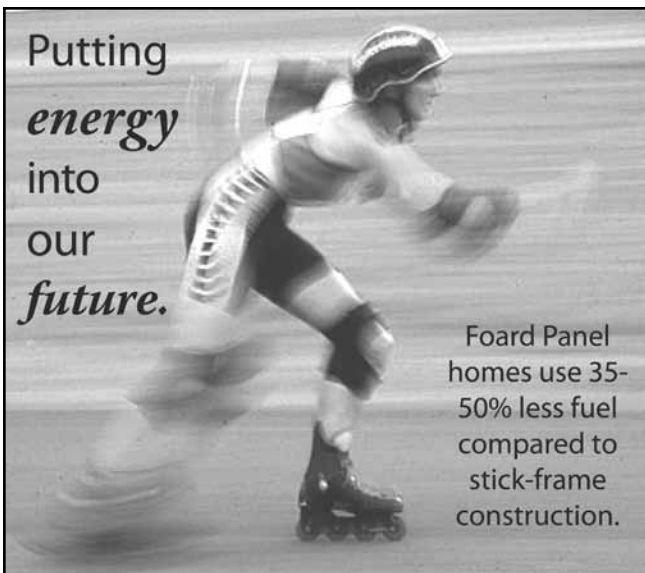
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EVENTS



These listings are for Guild workshops and meetings, were submitted by Guild members, or announce other relevant events.

Guild events

Southeast Regional Meeting Nov 2, Long Creek, S.C.
Steve Morrison.

other events

Heartwood School

Stairbuilding Sep 30–Oct 4
Home design for owners and builders Oct 21–25
Washington, Mass., Michele Beemer,
www.heartwoodschool.com,
request@heartwoodschool.com, 413/623-6677.

Island School of Building Arts

Timber frame post and beam Sep 30–Oct 25
Timber frame bents Oct 28–Nov 22
Gabriola, B.C., isba.ca, 250/247-8922.

Natural Cottage Project

Building a cob-timber cottage Sep 28–Oct 11,
Woodbury, Tenn., Sarah Highland,
www.naturalcottageproject.com, 607/272-3475.

Robert W. Chambers

Hands-on log home construction Jan 13–Feb 11,
2014, Geraldine, New Zealand, www.logbuilding.org

Whippletree Timberframing

Joinery Oct 12–13, Nov 23–24
Otonabee Workshop, near Keene, Ontario, Canada
Mark Davidson, wpltree.ca/workshopindex,
705/875-7906.

Southeastern Regional Meeting soon

STEVE MORRISON

The fifth annual Southeastern Timber Framer's Guild Regional Meeting will be held Friday, November 2, in Long Creek, South Carolina, at the new and improved MoreSun shop. (Don't go to the old shop or you will be lonely.)

The program is still developing, but as of now we have some great things in the works. The boys from Fire Tower Engineered Timber will be coming down to bust some joints, Eric Morley will give a presentation on Architectural Photography (if his motorcycle makes it here), and some combination of students and teachers from the American College of the Building Arts will be doing a hands on demo. We also have plans for a breakaway session for business owners and managers, topics to be determined.

Along with education we'll have good food (lunch and

other events, continued

Yestermorrow Design/Build School

Timber framing Sep 29–Oct 5
Undergraduate semester in sustainable design/build
Aug 18–Dec 6
Traditional hand-tool chairmaking Oct 6–11
Warren, Vt., www.yestermorrow.org, 802/496-5545.

NOTICES



*Notices are for one-time events and offers, and they run free to Guild members for two issues per year. The cost to non-Guild members is \$60 per notice per issue. A notice, whether free or paid, runs for a maximum of two issues. Notices are intended for onetime events and offers; appropriateness for inclusion is decided by the **editor**.*

help wanted

Journeyworker or apprentice carpenter.

Uncarved Block (western Mass.) is seeking a journeyman (ideally) or apprentice level carpenter. We do not cut timber frames exclusively; we do mostly turnkey projects. There is the potential for you to be in the TFG apprenticeship program, as I am a TFG timber framer. Visit www.uncarvedblockinc.com and send me an **email**.
Brad Morse.

Timber framer.

Lancaster County Timber Frames, Inc. (in Eastern York County, Pennsylvania) has a full-time, year-round opening for a person with a minimum of two years' experience. **Email** résumé or mail to LCTF 4825 East Prospect Road, York, PA 17406. Amy Good.

dinner will be provided), beer, a slide show (bring five photos on a flash drive), axe and hatchet throwing, a few games of stump (house rules), music, and more. There is room for tent camping behind the axe target . . . I mean behind the shop . . . and the closest hotels are in Clayton, Georgia.

Our sponsors are Sauter Timber, Cumberland Ridge Forest Products, Heritage Natural Finishes, D. Remy & Co., Trull Forest Products, and Productions Unlimited. We would like to keep this a free event for our members and any future Guild members we can lure in. Please come join us, and please help spread the word. Be sure to check out our **website for the meeting**.

RSVP—not required, but much appreciated. It will really help with planning and budgeting. **Email me** to let me know if you're coming. Can't wait to see everyone!