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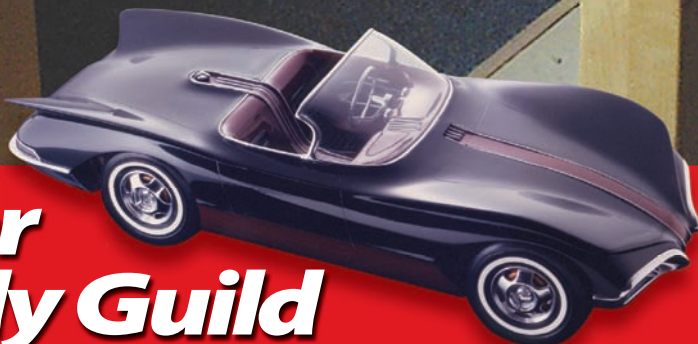
**Designing
Caricature Patterns**

**Carving the
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**Free Form Chip
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SPRING 2007 ■ ISSUE 38



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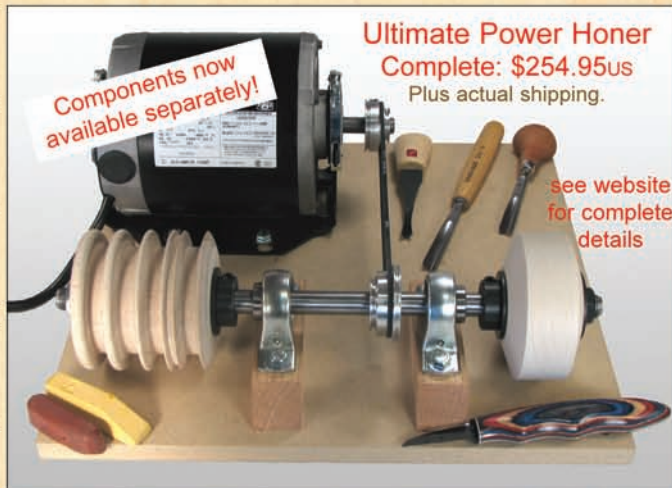
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* mounted with bolt inserts onto a MDF warp resistant platform.

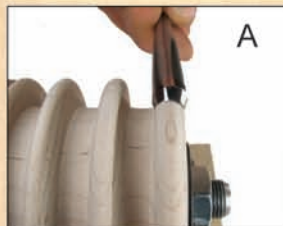
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A



B



C

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Roger Schroeder, noted carver, author, and editor writes: "I was amazed at the finely sharpened and honed edge I achieved - and ..Last, but hardly least, the sharpener is in my price range. I've purchased machines that, when all the bells and whistles are added on, cost five times more than the Ultimate Power Sharpener."

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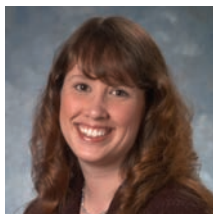
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When Jeff Jones (see his article in this issue on Recreating a Masterpiece) first mentioned the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild (see article page 38) I was definitely curious. The more I discovered about

the guild, the more intrigued I was. A contest that promoted craftsmanship, ingenuity and creativity to teenagers—what a wonderful concept! While not every teen was concerned about their education, they all loved cars, and that made the guild a huge success. What similar bond do today's youth have? It would be a difficult endeavor to develop a contest promoting craftsmanship based on video games.

I recently learned an interesting statistic—by the year 2020, ½ of the people in the U.S. will have been born after 1975. The majority of the population will not only be familiar with—but will be accustomed to—computers, satellite tv, digital music, and cellular phones. Today's youth no longer spend their weekends in the workshop at their father's side, but firmly planted on the living room sofa with video game controllers in hand. High schools have replaced wood shop with computer labs. While our kids do need to be computer literate, surfing the web cannot compare with the satisfaction you get from creating a work of art with your own hands. It's that tactile process, the trial and error, that helps to build character.

Kids today no longer carry on actual conversations. They communicate with instant messages via the internet and text messages on their cell phones. This evolution into an era where everything is instantaneous and digital is a bit disturbing to me. Maybe our technical advancements aren't that beneficial after all, or maybe we all need to take a step back and try to understand what their value really is. I certainly enjoy the security of having a cell phone when I'm on the road, but I also enjoy "unplugging" and spending a few hours with my children—creating with our hands and imaginations.

Participation in the youth category at carving competitions is sparse to say the least. We do see some fantastic emerging talent, but will there be enough interest to sustain the craft? When today's carving instructors retire, who will step up and teach the art of woodcarving to the next generation?

Shannon Flowers
Shannon@FoxChapelPublishing.com



Young students explore the art of woodcarving in Jan Oegema's carving class.



See page 86 for details.



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ILLUSTRATED

Spring 2007

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Woodcarvings by Frank Russell, 2006

Woodcarving Applications	Color	Grit	Recommended Speeds RPM 9/16", 3/4" & 1" dia.*
Remove wood (cut, carve)	Brown, Green, Yellow	36, 50, and 80	500 – 3,000
Remove or set grain	Yellow	80	1,500 – 4,500
Less aggressive carving	White	120	500 – 3,000
Clean up	White	120	3,500 – 5,000
Fine sanding	Blue, Red	400 and 220	3,500 – 5,000
Higher luster on burnished surfaces	Pink, Peach, Lt. Green	Pumice, 6 and 1Micron	2,500 – 4,500

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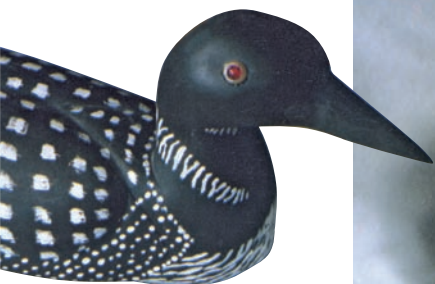
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These photos demonstrate the huge strides that a carver can make with the desire to improve and a little practice.



Gaining Skills

I became interested in bird carving in 1986 while spending the summer at my cottage. I carved a common loon with a pocketknife. After reading copies of your magazine, I became more interested in carving, and have moved on to power carving and carving with chisels and gouges. I have enclosed a picture of my very first carving, the common loon completed in 1986, and a shorebird I carved in 2006. It is a pleasure to sit here at my summer cottage, which is now my full time home, enjoy the beauty of the lake, read articles and try different projects from *Wood Carving Illustrated*.

Floyd Hall

Cambridge Narrows
New Brunswick, Canada



Miniature Santa Carving

I am sending another photo of my miniature Santa carving because the one shown in the gallery of entries in the 2005 Woodcraft/Wood Carving Illustrated Santa Carving Contest didn't really show the size of the carving. This photo shows the scale. Also, my address was misprinted in the article. I live in Rio Rancho, NM

Marilyn Meuret
Rio Rancho, NM

Sanding Woes

In the spring of 2005, I bought my first copy of *Wood Carving Illustrated*. I was hooked on trying some amateur woodcarving. A couple of months later, I bought a flexible shaft power tool and assorted carbide bits and subscribed to the magazine.

I spend hours and hours sanding my projects with fine-grit sandpaper trying to get rid of the fine scratches. I usually quit before I've gotten them all. How can I remove the fine scratches in a timely manner?

I usually use tupelo, pine, laurel, dogwood, and walnut.

I am also torn over what type of finish to apply to my carvings. I've applied a natural stain, a Vermont maple stain, a rosewood stain, a walnut stain, and Briwax. After staining I rub the carving with 0000 steel wool, clean it off, and reapply the stain several times. Do you have any finishing suggestions?

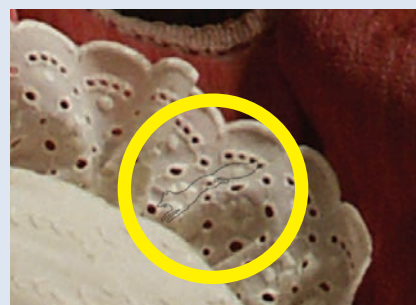
Kohlan J. Flynn

Hendersonville, NC

Power carving instructor Frank Russell says: The only way to remove those scratches is by working your way up through finer and finer grits of sandpaper. I'll often work up to 600-grit, and if there are still scratches, move on to synthetic steel wool. If you have one troubling area, I suggest feathering that area out with several of 3M's Bristle Discs chucked in a mandrel.

Technical Editor Bob Duncan responds: You also asked about finishes for your pieces. I'd suggest an oil finish for many of them (tung oil, boiled linseed oil, or Danish oil). They will protect your piece, are easy to use, and Danish oil comes in a variety of colors. If you apply an oil finish, apply a little bit of mineral spirits to your work piece before applying the oil. That will raise any of the grain that

was pushed down during the sanding process, and allow you to remove it. Then dip the carving into the oil finish or brush on a liberal coat. Apply a coat of clear lacquer to seal the carving. This will highlight the grain on your carvings without a lot of effort.



FOX HUNT

Joe Greyzck of Remus, MI and Jim Alex of Montrose, MI were randomly drawn from the 134 entries who correctly located the Fox in Holiday 2006 (Issue 37) *WCI*. The fox was located on Page 70 in the lace throw pillow on the lead photo.

If you find the fox in this issue, contact us and tell us the page number and location. Two readers randomly selected from all correct replies will receive a \$25 Fox Chapel Publishing gift certificate. Entries must be received by 4/1/2007, to be eligible.

NOTE: Contest fox faces left (other foxes appearing in *WCI* don't count).

Send your entry to Wood Carving Illustrated, Attn. Find the Fox, 1970 Broad St., East Petersburg, PA 17520, or e-mail to Editors@WoodCarvingIllustrated.com.

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by Cam Merkle ©2005

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Giving Back

In the 15 years since I started this publishing company—literally at my kitchen table—we've grown a lot. Out of gratitude for the support of our readers, we try to give something back. We're usually quiet about such things, but I thought I might share what we have been up to lately.

Sponsoring our Open House (page 22) was one way we recently gave back to the carving community. It was a great event that served to introduce many new people to the best of woodcarving and a reunion for seasoned carvers.

For our local Lancaster County community, we've just created a deluxe volume—*The Illustrated Historical Atlas of Lancaster County*—an 8lb. coffee table book on this beautiful county we call home. (Check out this limited edition at www.historicalatlases.com.)

I feel very strongly about helping disadvantaged children. It's easy to forget how fortunate we are in North America. Through our partnership with Mennonite Central Committee (www.mcc.org), over the last four years, our company has been the sole sponsor of the Balm of Gilead orphanage in Dodoma, Tanzania. For our donation of about \$8,000 a year, 20-25 children are provided with food, shelter, safety, education, medical attention and the love they so desperately need. MCC's Sarah Adams—back from a recent visit to the orphanage—shared photographs with our staff and told of each child's story and progress. These stories are heartbreaking (most of these children have lost both parents due to HIV/AIDS) yet inspiring, as these kids never give up. The beautiful handprint quilt they made for us, helped us to connect to "our kids" and remind us what a privilege it is to live where we do.



Beautiful quilt from our "African family."

Alan Giagnocavo
Publisher

SETTING THE EDGE by
Gerald Copeland won
Best in Show at the
2006 International
Woodcarvers Congress.



Best in Show

Gerald Copeland of Holton, KS, took home the Best In Show and the First Runner Up awards at the 2006 International Woodcarvers Congress.

Gerald's *SETTING THE EDGE* took home Best in Show, first place in the human figure over 15"-tall group, and first place in the realistic human figure natural or stained category. *MOSES-MAN OF GOD* took home the First Runner Up award, first place in the human figure—bust, head, or mask group, and first place in the realistic, natural or stained category.

The 2007 event, hosted by the Affiliated Wood Carvers, is scheduled for Jun. 21-24 in Bettendorf, IA (near Davenport, IA). The event is held at the Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds. The show is open to the public from Thursday to Sunday, but there are classes and seminars with some of the most popular carving instructors in the country the week leading up to the show.

For more information on the show, classes or seminars, contact Carol or Larry Yudis, PO Box 104, Bettendorf, IA 52722, 563-359-9684 (days), 563-355-3787 (evenings) or www.awcltd.org.

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From Jim DePaulo, Lakewood, CO

I was in the middle of a project, and didn't want to wait for a new flexible shaft cable for my Wecheer tool, so I designed this easy repair.

Start by straightening out the broken ends of the shaft and trim off any wires that are sticking out. Cut a $\frac{5}{8}$ "-long section of $\frac{3}{16}$ "-diameter brass tubing (available in hardware or hobby stores). If you have a different brand of tool, you may need to check the cable size.

Apply JB Weld 2-part epoxy to both cable ends and insert it into the brass sleeve. Clean off excess epoxy and let it cure for 24 hours.

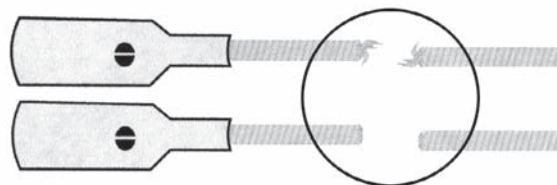
One repair lasted five months before it broke. When it broke, it snapped right where I made the repair. Since the epoxy joint is slightly weaker than the cable itself, it acts like a shear pin, which breaks to protect the rest of the cable. It is easy to make the same repair and get back to carving.

Power carving instructor and author Frank Russell suggests that all carvers buy an extra shaft to keep on hand. A repair like this will stand up to light use, but not roughing out with an aggressive bur.

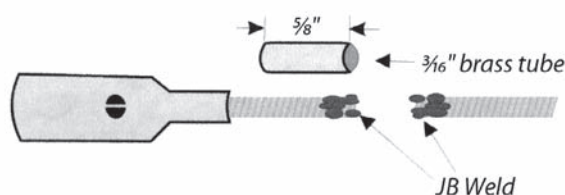
1. Straighten bends in the cable



2. Trim frayed ends



3. Cut a $\frac{5}{8}$ " piece of $\frac{3}{16}$ " brass tube. Apply JB Weld cement to both broken ends



4. Insert the ends into brass tube—clean off excess and let cure 24 hours



Tips from the Masters

Leave extra wood around facial features for experimenting

(Mark Gargac, Page 54)

Mark thin areas before burning in texture

(Leah Wachter, Page 35)

Wear gloves on both hands when carving found wood

(Rick Jensen, Page 58)



Portable Ornament Display

From JD Hughes, Ham Lake, MN

I designed this ornament display to show off my ornaments at the carving shows I attend. It cost me less than \$5 in materials and I made it in less than two hours. The display can be taken apart for transportation and storage. Also, you can use different stems to adjust the height and rotate the stems to create a balanced display.

The base is made from a 6"-diameter log, and the stems are made from $\frac{1}{8}$ "-diameter steel rods. The one shown is about 20"-high, 16"-wide and displays 10 carvings.

The stems are interchangeable, so you can arrange them to best show off your carvings. You can make extra stems for different displays. I used the top of my vise to bend the rods into the shape shown. The size of the base will determine how high the stems can be.

The size of the hole in the wood determines how many stems you can have. This one has a 1"-diameter hole and holds 10 rods with enough pressure to keep the stems from turning on their own. This is a drawback because if you don't use 10 rods, the display becomes unstable. A taper plug can be used to hold the stems tight if you want less stems, but it is a little harder to work with.

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Shearing Head Replica

Frank Howett of Wellington, Australia, carved this exact replica of a sheep shearing head. The piece was commissioned by a private collector. It is carved from Tasmanian Huron Pine. The carving, which is nearly 12" long, took Frank 28 hours to complete. At 72, Frank is a long-standing member and past president of the Sydney Woodcarving Group.



Muskie Caricature

Charles Weiss, of Toronto, ON, Canada, carved this muskie caricature from a piece of white pine. Charles, whose Hollow Core Muskie article appeared in *WCI* Spring 2006 (Issue 34), is a full-time artist who enjoys wood caricature and trophy fish carving.

Native American Relief Carving

Bill Dulaney of Yellville, AR, carved *GERONIMO AND COYOTE* from a 2" x 36" x 48" piece of basswood. He has been carving for more than 30 years. Most of his pieces go to friends or family.

SHOW OFF YOUR LATEST WORK

For inclusion in Reader Gallery, please send crisp, clear images of your carvings, along with approximately 100 words about yourself and the carving to: Reader Gallery, Wood Carving Illustrated, 1970 Broad Street, East Petersburg, PA 17520; or email your text and high-resolution images to Duncan@FoxChapelPublishing.com.



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Get perfect edges on carving tools—fast

By Tom Matus

WCI asked world-champion decoy carver and noted author, Tom Matus, to share his thoughts on the JoolTool sharpening system.

One of the most difficult aspects of carving is to keep and maintain a razor's edge on your carving tools. If you like to use sharp knives, hand tools, and like a razor sharp edge, this revolutionary new sharpening system called "JoolTool" is the system for you.

After 25 years of carving and searching for the right stone, jig, gauge, or grinder, I was reluctant to make a large purchase for a newer/larger unit that would take up more space in my shop. But when I tried the system at the Fox Chapel Open House in September, using my own gouge and pocketknife, I was hooked. The speed and accuracy of the tool was amazing! Now everything in my house with the slightest resemblance to a sharp edge has been re-sharpened to perfection. Once you learn what is required, creating the burr and angle you want is quick and easy.

The tool is designed to spin the 3M Trizact NINJA discs at an appropriate speed. The Ninja discs are designed to be see-through, which makes sharpening much easier.

Before I made the investment in this tool, I tested it on a Flexcut gouge to see for myself just how powerful the JoolTool sharpening system is. I was having a difficult time getting an edge on my palm gouges, so David Bennet of Flexcut showed me how they sharpen their tools with the system. I took the time to get to know the unit at the show.

We ruined the edge on a fishtail gouge and proceeded to restore the angle and bevel on the gouge, and sharpen it to a polished edge. This was the best edge I have ever put on a gouge! Right then, I knew this new system was going to be headed home with me on the plane!

There are a wide range of sharpening grits available for this machine. The progression of grits helps to maintain the ever important bevel. The polishing wheel is also a very valuable feature that helps take the edge to a higher, polished level. I am also pleased with the pad life of the 3M Trizact discs.

For the amount of money you spend on individual tools, you owe it to them to maintain a razor-sharp edge. Bar none, the JoolTool is the most useful tool in my shop.

The JoolTool sells for \$349.99 and includes all the accessories you need to start sharpening. For more information contact them at 888-337-1230 or visit www.jooltool.com.



The revolutionary see-through Ninja discs are one of the primary features of the sharpening system.



A variety of sanding grits and polishing wheels are available.

In a nutshell, here are some of the advantages of the JoolTool sharpening system:

- 1) You can see what you are doing through the Ninja disc. You can actually see the angle you are putting on the tool. You are not blind grinding.
- 2) The tool does not get hot, you can touch the tool and work the edge without worrying about the steel losing its temper!

Deficiencies of this sharpening system:

- 1) Tough to get a long consistent bevel on knives longer than 6" (such as filet knives).
- 2) Light weight—I recommend you secure it to a bench.



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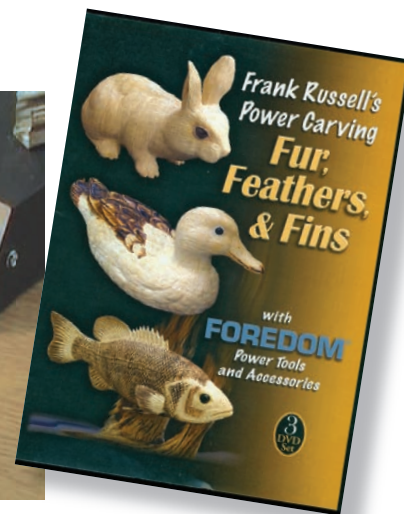
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New DVDs are a wealth of knowledge

By Bob Duncan

Frank Russell and Foredom have teamed up to produce *Power Carving Fur, Feathers, & Fins*. Foredom is the premiere manufacturer of flexible shaft carving tools and Frank is a world-class carver and instructor, author of WCI's series of *Power Carving Manuals* and has written numerous books on woodcarving with power.

The new three DVD set covers nearly every question a novice power carver would have. More advanced carvers will pick up a variety of tips and tricks to improve their carving. Frank takes time to introduce the tools and materials used in power carving before covering the techniques. He introduces the handpieces available for Foredom flexible shaft machines, and discusses the advantages of a foot pedal and having a rotary power carver that you can reverse.

He also goes into detail on the types of wood to carve, and shows exactly which carving burs a beginner needs. Interestingly enough, the most useful bur shape, in Frank's opinion, is a flame shape. The tapered point can be used to make V-shaped grooves and the rounded sides make a U-shaped trough. He also shows how to reshape stones using diamond hones or reshaping stones.

Frank spends time discussing the safety concerns when power carving. In addition to explaining the need for adequate dust collection, Frank explains how to protect your hands from aggressive carving burs.

After covering the tools and materials, Frank moves right into the basics of carving. He explains how to use individual burs to achieve specific results. The first project is a rabbit. The viewer is shown the entire carving process—from transferring the pattern to the blank, cutting it out on the band saw, roughing it out with aggressive burs, to final shaping.

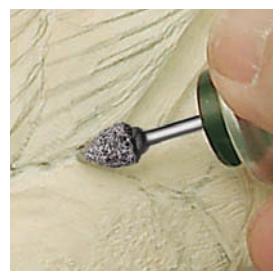
Not only does Frank show the proper techniques to use the rotary power carver, but he shows how to

maintain the proper proportions on the carving using the pattern as a reference.

Frank demonstrates a variety of detailing and texturing techniques using a buck, a bobcat, and the rabbit as a guide. Then he shows how to carve a Mallard Drake Duck (to demonstrate how to carve feathers), and a Small Mouth Bass (to demonstrate how to carve scales). The only thing not covered in the DVDs is painting.

In all, there is so much information packed into these DVDs that it will take a couple of viewings to absorb everything. But Frank is such a great teacher that you can work your way through the first project after watching the movie once and expect reasonably good results. My only criticism is that some of the transitions and camera angles can be distracting, but Frank's thorough descriptions and demonstrations more than compensate. The wealth of knowledge and expert instruction is well worth the price of \$29.95.

The DVD set and the V-stones below are available from Foredom, 16 Stony Hill Road, Bethel, CT 06801, 203-792-8622, www.foredom.com.



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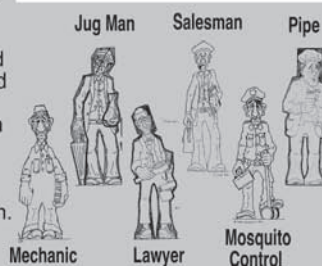
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Largemouth Bass

By Ray McKenzie

Carved by Al Archie, Bessemer, MI

In general, this is a great carving of a largemouth bass. The head and throat structures (opercle, branchiostegalrays, nostrils, etc.) are an especially important area on any realistic fish and it is difficult to evaluate these structures from a photo. Overall, the body structure of the fish seems to be well carved. The girth is well proportioned to the size of the fish and the lateral line is visible, but not too prominent. The piece is well painted with colors that are within the range of a largemouth bass. The blending from belly to back is nicely done.

The base is rather unique. In my opinion, it detracts from the overall carving. I would suggest an oblong base with some carved rocks and grasses. A simpler base, in conjunction with the driftwood, lily pads, and crayfish would better enhance the presentation.

Working from good reference material is essential for a realistic carving. Gather as many photos as you can and refer to an actual specimen whenever possible.

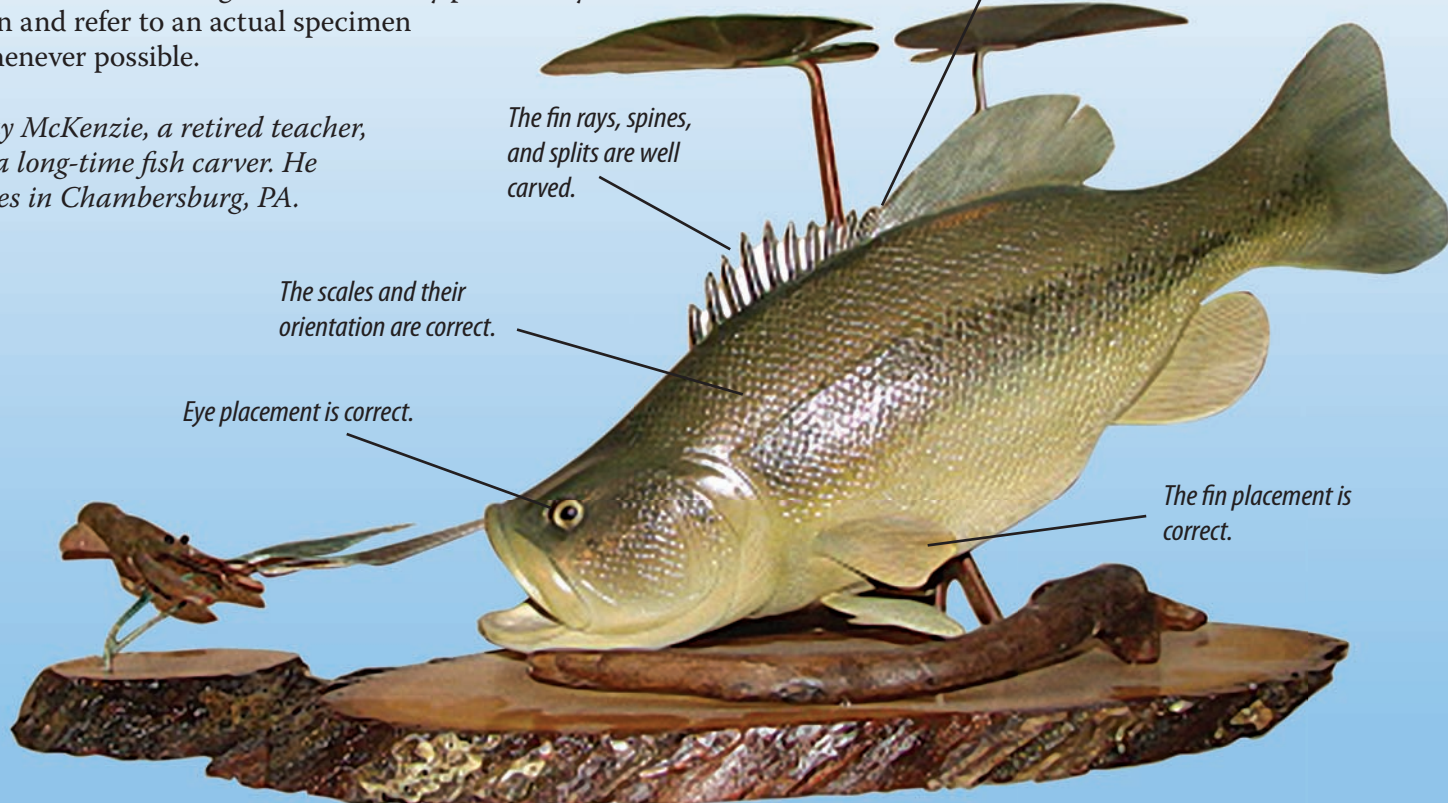
Ray McKenzie, a retired teacher, is a long-time fish carver. He lives in Chambersburg, PA.



Largemouth bass all show characteristic markings behind the eye area. These markings, which look like dark lines radiating from the eye over the opercle (gill covers), are lacking on this carving.



The notch between the front and rear dorsal fins could be a little deeper.



The fin rays, spines, and splits are well carved.

The scales and their orientation are correct.

Eye placement is correct.

The fin placement is correct.

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By Lora S. Irish

Maple Leaf Greenman

This profile pattern of a *MAPLE LEAF GREENMAN* can be used to decorate any number of items. It is the perfect design for a set of bookends or the brackets that hold a mantel in place. The greenman is also an ideal embellishment to use on the garden chair featured on page 26.

To assist you in roughing out your project, I've provided a pattern denoting the suggested levels of the relief carving. Level 1 is the highest point of the carving (where the least amount of wood is removed), and level 4 is the lowest level of the carving (where the most wood is removed).



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For more patterns from Lora S. Irish, visit www.carvingpatterns.com. The website features free patterns and patterns for purchase as well as helpful carving advice. Please note that the patterns are only available online.

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# Celebrating 15 years of Craftsmanship in Wood

Over 1,200 people gathered in East Petersburg, PA, Sept. 29 and 30 for our Open House. Celebrating Fox's 15th Anniversary and this magazine's ninth year of publication, the event provided an ideal way for craftsmen to learn new techniques and meet the Fox authors, contributors, and staff.

With 50 demonstrations and more than two dozen vendors, visitors enjoyed an action-packed experience full of education, fellowship and fun. It was a great event, and our way of saying thank you to all our subscribers and advertisers. We'd also like to extend a special thank you to the Lancaster County Woodcarvers who graciously volunteered their time and energy to help make the event a huge success.

At this point, we have no immediate plans for another event. Perhaps for our 20th anniversary?



Canadian carvers, Stephan Forrin (above) and Alfie Fishgap worked in tandem to complete an eight-foot totem pole during the event.



Marv Kaisersatt (right) humbly accepts WCI's 2006 Woodcarver of the Year award from Alan Giagnocavo, publisher (left).







Everett Ellenwood, Tom Matus, and Lori Corbett (left to right) offered valuable instruction. In all, 86 seminars were given throughout the weekend.

The chips fly as chainsaw carver Ben Risney creates both art and excitement for Open House attendees.

Chris Lubkemann's whittling circle was a popular attraction.



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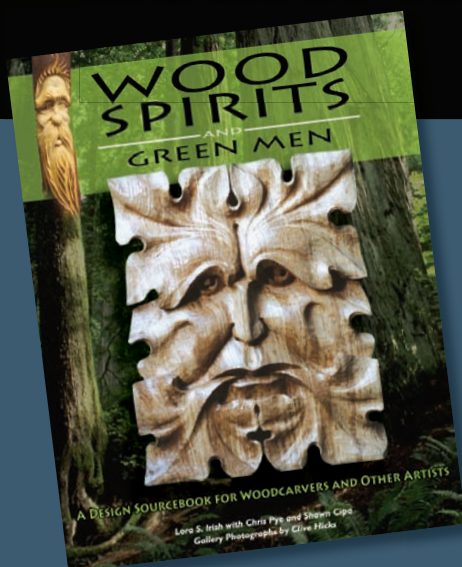
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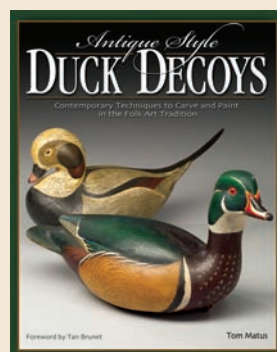
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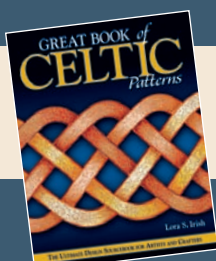


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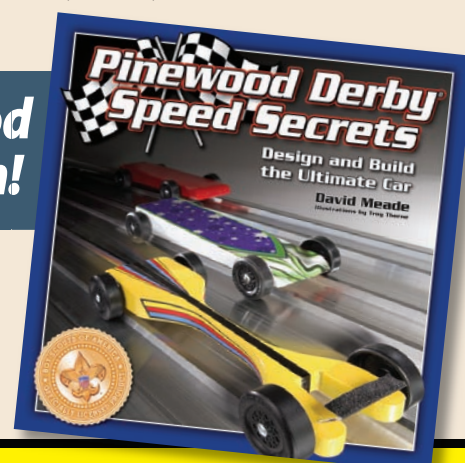
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This one-of-a-kind chair makes a unique addition to your garden or back yard. The chair is easy to construct, extremely sturdy and very comfortable. By adding a relief carving to the chair back, you can create your own functional work of art.

The chairs can be made from materials you find in home improvement stores, but I prefer the rustic look of unfinished wood. Contact your local sawmill to check on pricing and availability. If you decide to purchase materials from a home improvement store, buy two 2x8 pieces of lumber and edge-glue them together.

**Step 1: Cut the two main pieces.** The mitered cut on the bottom of the chair back should match the mitered cut at the back of the seat. The easiest way to do this is to cut the seat portion off of the bottom of the longer back piece. Set the table saw at a 65° angle, and cut 14" from the end of the 61" slab. The chair back should be 47"-long.

**Step 2: Cut the 2x4 to size.** The 2x4 should be cut to 48" in length.

**Step 3: Attach the 2x4 to the seat.** Center the 2x4 on the bottom of the beveled end of the seat, 12" in from the beveled end. Apply wood glue to the face of the 2x4 where it will join the seat bottom, and screw it in place with wood screws. Make sure the length of your screws provides adequate strength, but won't stick up through the seat.

**Step 4: Cut the hole for the 2x4.** Mark a line 10½" up from the bottom on the chair back. Cut a 2"-high x 4"-wide hole in the center of the chair back, using the line you just marked as the bottom. Drill a pilot hole, and cut the square with a saber saw.

**Step 5: Embellish the seat back.** I suggest a wood spirit or outdoor theme for the relief carving on the back of the seat, but you can choose any design you wish. Bold designs work better than patterns with fine details for this type of project.

**Step 6: Apply the finish.** Since this chair is intended for outdoor use, I recommend applying an exterior spar varnish to protect it from the elements.

# Carved Garden Chair

Customize this sturdy chair with your own relief carved design

By Jan Oegema



## materials & tools

### MATERIALS:

2" x 14" x 61" wood of choice  
2" x 4" x 48" stud-grade lumber  
Spar varnish  
Waterproof wood glue  
2½"-long wood screws

### TOOLS:

Table saw that can cut at an angle  
Drill with ⅜"-diameter drill bit and screwdriver bit  
Saber saw with wood-cutting blade  
Carving tools of choice



### About the Author

Jan teaches six woodcarving classes a week from his studio in Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada. Visit his website at [www.janscarvingstudio.com](http://www.janscarvingstudio.com).





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# THE DESIGN

## Taking a caricature from concept to completion

By Marv Kaisersatt

By relying on commercially available patterns, your scope of subjects is very limited. It's actually quite simple to design your own caricature by determining proportions and positions with models before beginning the carving.

By making a model of your carving, you can anticipate many problems and change the design to remove them. Many people resort to using add-ons when they realize



**1**

### Sketch your idea down on paper.

This is just a rough idea to get you started. Experiment with alternate poses.



**2**

### Make a chenille stem mannequin.

Chenille stems, or pipe cleaners, work great to get the basic armature from a sketch.



**3**

### Make a basic wire frame

**armature.** Use the pipe cleaner mannequin as a guide to get your basic bends and curves.



**5**

### Make a pattern.

Trace around the clay with a pencil if it isn't an involved carving. If it is a more involved carving, I add a centerline string to the clay model to make sure the balance is correct.



**6**

### Cut out the pattern.

Trace the pattern onto the wood. Cut the pattern out on a band saw. Drill out any large open areas. On some carvings, I band saw the side and front profiles; other times, I just cut one profile.



**7**

### Block out the major masses.

I use a mallet and large chisels to remove wood fast. Make sure you secure your carving for safety. Continually sketch in your centerlines and landmarks during the roughing out stage.



# PROCESS

that the arm they planned to carve will break off because of the way the grain runs. With proper planning, you'll be able to foresee obstacles like these and plan around them.

I go through a thorough planning process that starts with a drawing and ends with a clay model. Not every carving requires such an intricate plan, but since I carve most of my pieces from one block of wood, I don't want any surprises.



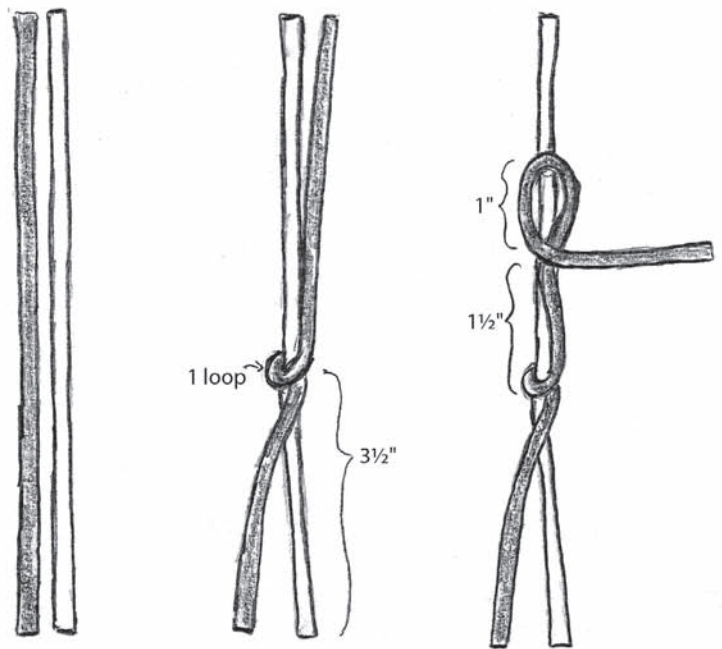
4

**Apply clay to the armature.** I use plasteline (an oil-based clay). It doesn't dry, so I can shape the figure during the design process.



8

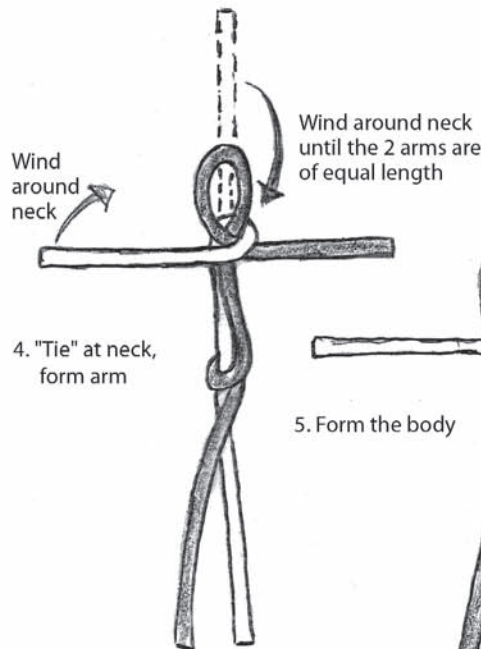
**Add the details.** I use carving knives and palm chisels to detail the carving. Major masses are refined by carving them into smaller masses, which are in turn carved into smaller masses, etc., until the final details appear.



1. Start with two 12" chenille stems (flexible pipe cleaner-type wire)

2. "Tie" at hips

3. Form head loop and arm



4. "Tie" at neck, form arm

5. Form the body

A. Bend at joints

shoulders

elbows

wrists

hips

knees

ankles

B. Bend figure to desired shape



## Detailed features

I'll sometimes carve the hands and face out of Sculpey clay, which can be baked hard.



### About the Author

Marv Kaisersatt of Faribault, MN, is an award-winning carver, author, and instructor. In addition to being a member of the Caricature Carvers of

America, he was the 2006 Wood Carving Illustrated Carver of the Year. Contact Marv at 227 Central Ave., Faribault, MN 55021, 507-332-7912.



# Chip Carved Landscape



## Free-form chip carving enhances natural wood grain

by Barry McKenzie

### tips

#### FREE FORM = FREEDOM

*Being a free-form style chip project, there is no set pattern you have to follow. Anything that you carve will look good!*

In the past, wood that had blemishes, discolorations, stress lines, or remnants of knotholes would have been discarded or burned. But a closer look at this wood reveals images in the wood grain that can be interpreted as a landscape or sea scene. Using some imagination while looking at this wood grain is like looking at cloud formations and seeing all sorts of images and scenes in the clouds.

Each board reveals something different with no two pieces being the same. The Dutch have used these pieces of wood for years, embellishing them with just a few chip cuts to enhance the scene. When creating landscape art, I follow these basic rules:

- Find wood that has unique characteristics. With a few embellishments, it can become a work of art.
- The location of the tree will represent the land mass.
- Look for a place on the wood where the tree roots will have something to lock onto, such as a knothole or dark spot on the surface of the wood.

- Add a few birds (three preferably) grouped together. Make them different sizes representing the near and far, to give the landscape depth and to identify the sky above the horizon.
- Let your child-like imagination run free, and let the wood grain speak for itself.

### Finding tree shapes

There are a variety of places where you can find tree shapes suitable for this style of landscape chip carving. You want a single standing tree that has been affected by nature and the weather. It should not be symmetrical, and should have a very individual form. You can find trees like this on top of mountains, on sea coasts, or on the rim of large canyons. You can also look up photos of bonsai trees on the internet or in a library.

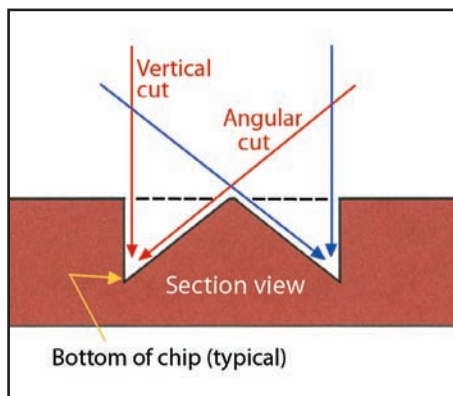
Finish the landscape with a frame made of old wood.



## The Cuts:

This unique chip is usually found in Egyptian-type sandstone carving that produces a relief image in the surface of the carving. It has the look of a Japanese landscape painting—a mystical, old, weathered look.

Start with a vertical cut along both sides of the outside of a portion of the tree. Then make an angular cut from the center of the width, converging the angular cut with the vertical cut.



**Step 1. Transfer the pattern to the workpiece.** Size the pattern to fit your blank. Tape a piece of graphite paper face down on the wood. Then tape the pattern on top of the graphite paper. Trace over the pattern with a red pen or slip a piece of wax paper over the pattern so you know where you have already traced without having to lift the pattern and transfer paper.

**Step 2. Make the vertical cut.** Make vertical cuts along the entire profile of the tree. Do not outline the limbs if they get too narrow or too close; these areas will be removed with angular cuts from both sides. Go back over the vertical cuts a few times to give the cuts some depth.



**Step 3. Make the angular cuts.** Start in the center of the width, and cut down at an angle to the bottom of the vertical cuts made in step 2. Sometimes it is better to start the cut with a shallow cut near the vertical cut. Then go back, and make the cut deeper and wider until you reach the center of the tree or branch width. Detail the smaller branches with two angular cuts. Finish the branches with a few stab cuts to simulate thin twigs and leaves.



**Step 4. Detail the trunk and roots of the tree.** On the main project, I locate the tree over a knot, which anchors the tree to the land mass. If you don't have a knot or discoloration to anchor the tree, make a few vertical and angular cuts perpendicular to the trunk to anchor the tree to the land profile.

## Finishing

I lightly stain parts of my landscape scenes to highlight certain surfaces or to separate the land from the sky. After carving, apply a few coats of your finish of choice to seal the wood. This will keep the stain from soaking into the wood too deeply. Apply the stain, and immediately wipe it off the areas you don't want it with a damp rag. A small paint brush can also be used to feather the stain out to lessen the contrast between the stained and unstained wood. It is all a matter of personal preference.

## materials & tools

### MATERIALS:

- Landscape board of choice
- Graphite transfer paper
- Wax paper (optional)
- Red pen (optional)
- Tape
- Finish of choice
- Stain of choice
- Old-wood picture frame (optional)
- Small paint brush

### TOOLS:

- Chip carving knife of choice

## special sources

Barry McKenzie has put together a landscape chip carving kit complete with a landscape board and booklet of tree silhouette shapes. Contact him at 23427 Route 66, Lebanon, MO 65536-5325, 417-532-8438, [www.chipcarvingschool.com](http://www.chipcarvingschool.com).



### About the Author

Barry McKenzie is a popular instructor and owner of the School of Chip Carving. He has several instructional and pattern booklets available. Barry also writes a regular chip carving newsletter. Contact him at 23427

Route 66, Lebanon, MO 65536 or visit him online at [www.chipcarvingschool.com](http://www.chipcarvingschool.com).



# Realistic Rabbit

**Texturing techniques  
bring this adorable  
rabbit to life.**

*By Leah Wachter*



Rabbits are undeniably cute and gentle creatures. They are quick and ever alert, which probably has something to do with their low position on the food-chain. This was made most apparent to me one day while I was sitting outside my home, and a rabbit came racing past. It stopped dead right in front of my feet. I was a bit confused by this odd behavior, until I spotted an eagle sitting on the roof right behind me. The eagle looked me in the eye as if to ask “are you going to eat that?” The rabbit wasted no time and beat a hasty retreat.

Because the rabbit shape itself is simple, a beginner can carve this piece and expect good results. More advanced carvers can carve the basic shape quickly and get right to detailing the ears, face, and fur. Start by tracing the outline pattern onto a piece of basswood. Cut out the blank on the band

saw. Cut the side view first, and rough out the remaining views, using the top view pattern. Because the rabbit is round, leave plenty of extra wood to ensure a nice shape. Draw on a centerline so you have a point of reference.

## ROUGHING OUT



**1**

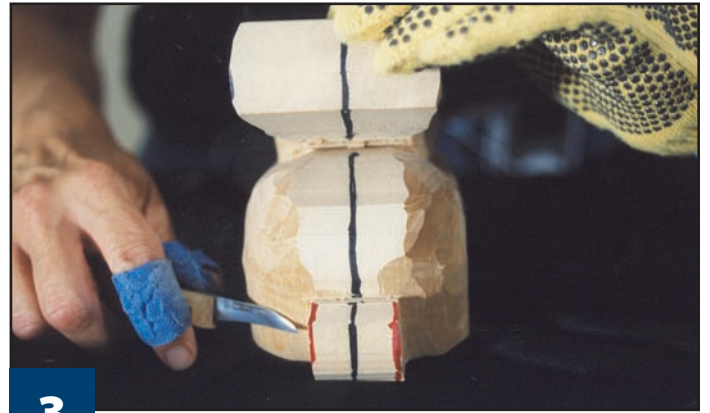
**Round off all of the edges.** Use a bench knife. Round off both sides of the back of the rabbit to the base of the ears to get a nice shape.





2

**Separate the jaw from the body.** Draw guidelines on both sides of the head for the jaw. Make stop cuts along the guidelines, and remove the wood to create the basic shape of the rabbit head. The front part of the face should begin to take a somewhat conical shape. Round the wood below the jaw line to begin shaping the upper body.



3

**Roughout the tail.** Using the centerline for symmetry, draw the  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " area for the tail. With a bench knife, make a stop cut along this line, and remove wood on both sides until the tail sticks out approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Continue rounding the back of the rabbit. Continually redrawing your centerline and guidelines will help you keep the correct proportions.



4

**Rough out the hind legs and feet.** Draw the outlines of the hind legs and feet onto both sides of the rabbit. Use the centerline to make sure they are equal in size and shape. Make stop cuts along the lines with a bench knife. Remove wood from above and below the hind leg sections with a 6mm #6 palm gouge.



5

**Rough out the forearms.** Draw on the forearms, and make a stop cut along the lines. Remove the wood with a bench knife. This will define the chest and forearms. Round the bottom portion of the forearms as well.



## CARVE THE DETAILS

6

**Carve the folds of fur behind the hind feet.** Draw the lines separating the folds of skin from the body. Make stop cuts along the lines, and remove a small amount of wood from above and below the lines to define the hindquarters and back feet. Round off the hindquarters and feet. You may need to remove more wood on the bottom of the forearm area and in front of the hind feet to get the proper shape



7

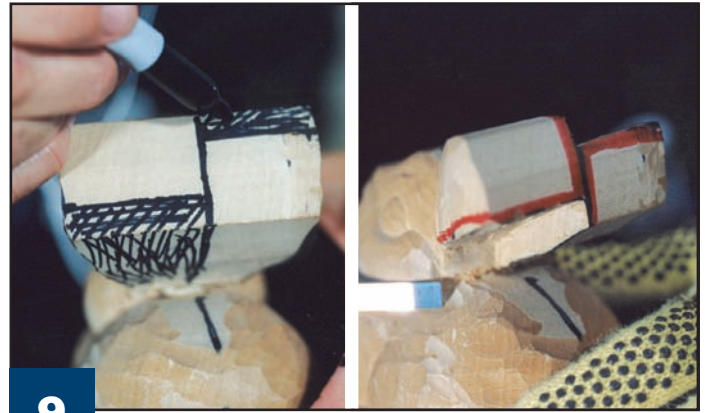
**Shape the eye mounds.** Draw the circles for the eye mounds. These circles should be proportionally larger, because they will form the eyes and the eyelids. Draw in the rabbit's muzzle and the back of the cheek for an additional reference. Make a stop cut around the eye area, and remove wood from outside the circle with a bench knife. Once the inner circle has been raised, round it over to form the mound.





8

**Shape the face.** Carve around the eye mound to make it protrude. This will begin to form the top of the cheek and shape the top of the rabbit's head, which should be rounded at this time. Make a stop cut around the back of the muzzle and cheek along the reference lines. Remove some wood and round over the area to form the muzzle and cheek of the rabbit. Keep things symmetrical by switching sides often.



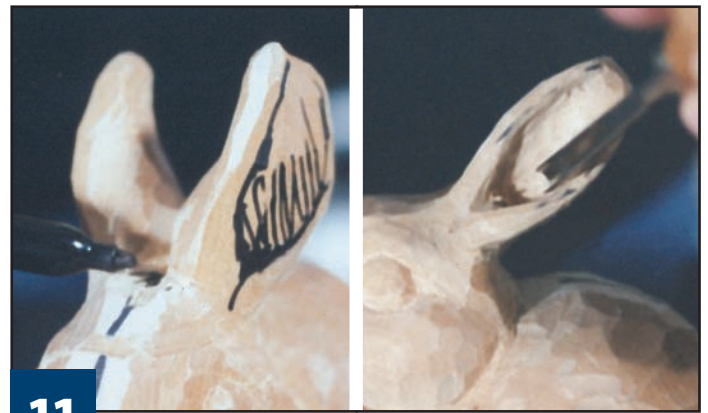
9

**Rough out the ears.** The shaping of the face will start to bring in the ears at the base of the rabbit's head. The ears are designed to be slightly askew. Block out the areas (shaded black) to be removed from both ears. The ear section that will not be removed is outlined in red. Make a stop cut along the centerline and around the wood to be removed, using a bench knife. I use a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " straight chisel to remove the extra wood in this section.



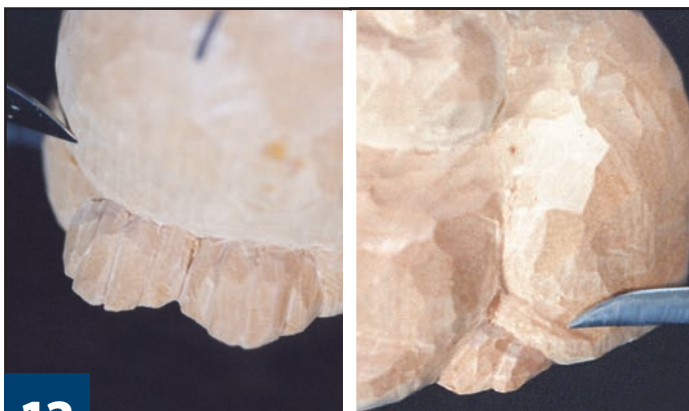
10

**Separate the ears.** Make a series of V-cuts along the top part of the ears to begin separating them. Continue cutting until this separation is nearly half way down the ears. The separation should be deep, but not wide. Round and shape the back of the ears with a bench knife. Use caution when you get to the fragile outer edges.



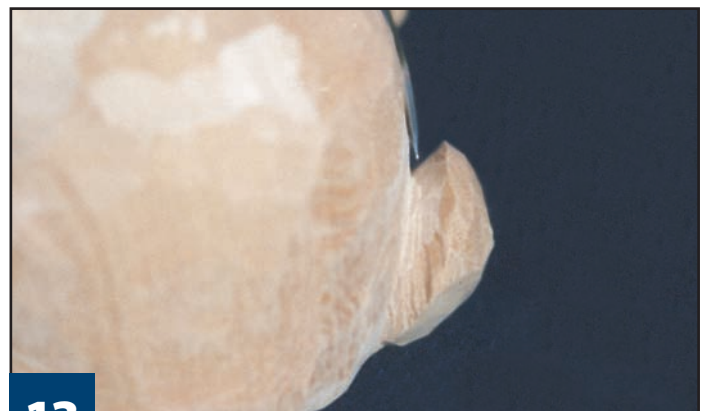
11

**Shape the ears.** If the ears appear too far apart, remove wood from the top outside. Sketch in the inner part of the ears. Make a stop cut along the line. Remove the wood inside the ears with a #6 gouge. Work carefully and slowly. Remember to alternate sides to keep things symmetrical and balanced.



12

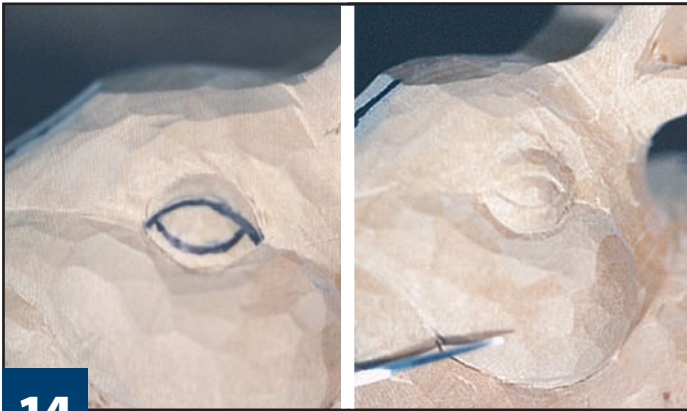
**Carve the toes.** Draw two toe sections on each hind foot and three sections on the front paws. The lines should be slightly angled towards the body. Make a V-cut along the separation lines with a bench knife. Then round and shape the toes slightly.



13

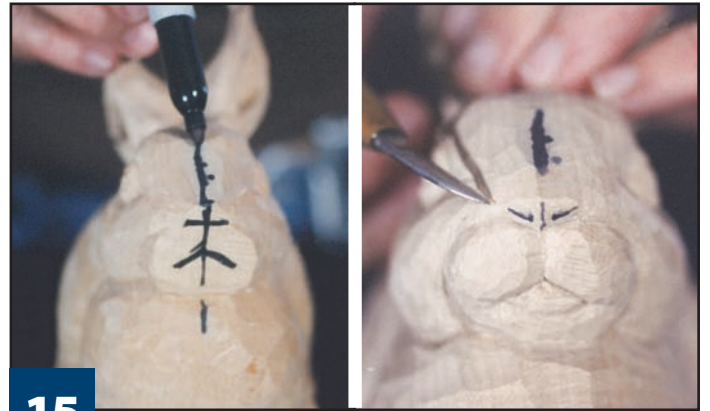
**Shape the tail.** Use a bench knife. Keep the natural curvature of the rabbit's body in mind. The tail should flair out slightly from the hind end and be rounded on the outside.





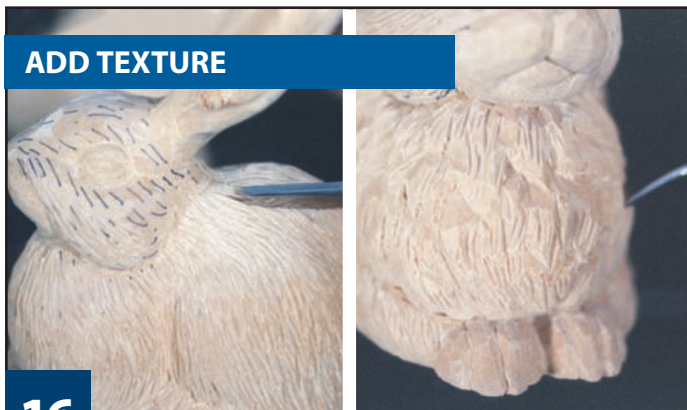
**14**

**Shape the eyes.** Draw the eyelids onto the eye mound. Make a stop cut along the upper eyelid using a detail knife. Remove small amounts of wood from below the stop-cut until the upper lid protrudes slightly. Repeat the process for the lower lid until the inner portion of the eye is recessed slightly. Then round the eyeball area.



**15**

**Shape the nose and mouth.** Sketch in the nose and mouth. Make a V-cut, using the point of a bench knife along the muzzle. Round the muzzle and mouth area, taking out small chip cuts. The nostrils are done last due to their delicate nature. They are V-cuts with very acute angles. The nostrils can also be created with a wood burner.



## ADD TEXTURE

**16**

**Carve in the basic fur texture.** Draw the hair tract direction on the rabbit. Make small random strokes with a palm V-tool to create the hair texture. The only areas on the rabbit left untextured are the ears, muzzle, feet, and eyelids. Section some of the areas with a bench knife, and then use a V-tool to give the separations texture.



**17**

**Sand the outside of the ears.** The goal is to reduce the thickness of the ears and to refine the overall shape. Use small pieces of rolled up, fine-grit sandpaper to shape the ears. Hold the ears up to the light often to reveal spots that are getting too thin. Mark these spots with red marker to avoid burning through them during the woodburning stage.



**18**

**Add the texture to the face.** Use a woodburner set at a fairly high temperature and a small skew tip. Burnish the eyes to give them a smooth look. Burn in the hair on the eyelids. Make short, fine, random strokes. Move on to the cheeks and top of head, and make the strokes slightly deeper. The strokes for the muzzle are short and fine, similar to the strokes on the eyelids. Smooth out the nostrils at this time as well.



**19**

**Texture the body, feet, and tail.** The fur on the feet and chest are made with the same small skew tip. The strokes are fine and shallow. The tail is done with the same tip, but the strokes are deeper and longer. The remainder of the body is done with a large skew tip and short, deep strokes. Follow the V-tool fur tract, and let the tip of the burner sink in slightly. This gives the body fur a slightly rougher appearance.





20

**Texture the ears.** The fur on the ears is made with a small skewer tip, fine strokes, a gentle hand, and lots of patience. Burn the hair tracts on the outside. Once the outside fur is completed, finish the inside of the ear, using a rounded tip. Burn a deep inner ear, and smooth out any bumps, keeping in mind the thin areas marked with red marker.



21

**Apply the basecoat.** Gently brush the rabbit with a clean, old toothbrush to remove any bits of charred debris. Thin the paint to a creamy consistency with water; thin enough to get into the details without clogging them. Use a large round brush to apply the basecoat. Use Parchment White for the white areas and Raw Umber for the remainder of the rabbit.



22

**Drybrush the fur.** Thin the paint slightly with water, but keep it relatively thick. Place a small amount of paint on the tip of a flat brush, and blot it until most of the paint is gone. Hold the brush at an angle and paint only the tip of the wood-burned texture. Apply several light coats. The first coat is a mixture of Raw Umber, Cadmium Yellow Medium, and Parchment White, drybrushed over the brown basecoat. Dry brush Parchment White over the white basecoat, and the very bottom of the feet.



23

**Detail the ears, nose and eyes.** Mix Parchment White, Naphthol Crimson and a touch of Cadmium Yellow to achieve a light pink color. Dry brush both the inside and outside of the rabbit's ears with this mixture. Use a small round brush tip to color the end of the nose pink. Allow to dry, then dry brush the tips of the ears Black. Paint the eyes solid Black with a small round brush.



24

**Add shadows and highlights.** Thin Black to a water color consistency. Apply to the top of head, back, between the toes, inside the ears, and to any crevices. Dab off any excess with a paper towel. Likewise, make a Parchment White wash, and apply to the back of the tail and the eyelids. Dab off any excess paint with a paper towel.



25

**Drybrush highlights on the fur.** Mix Parchment White, Raw Umber and Cadmium Yellow to a light tan color (slightly lighter than the tan used in the first dry brushing). Dry brush the places on the rabbit most highlighted: cheeks, haunches and forearms. Apply a clear drying acrylic over the rabbit's eyes for added sheen. I use Mod Podge.





Right



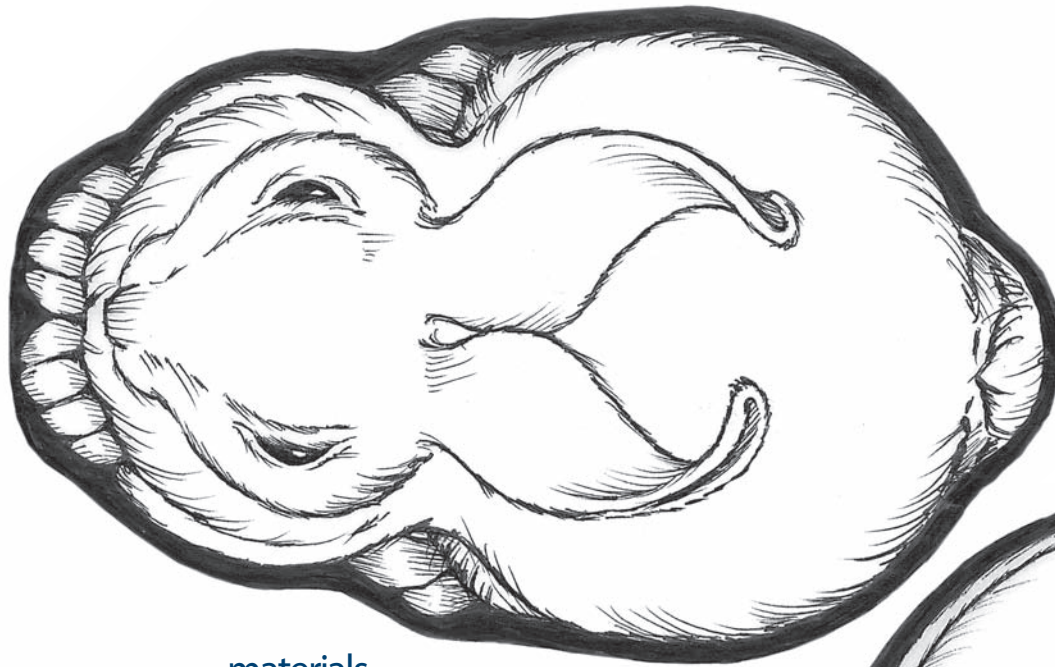
Front



Left



Back



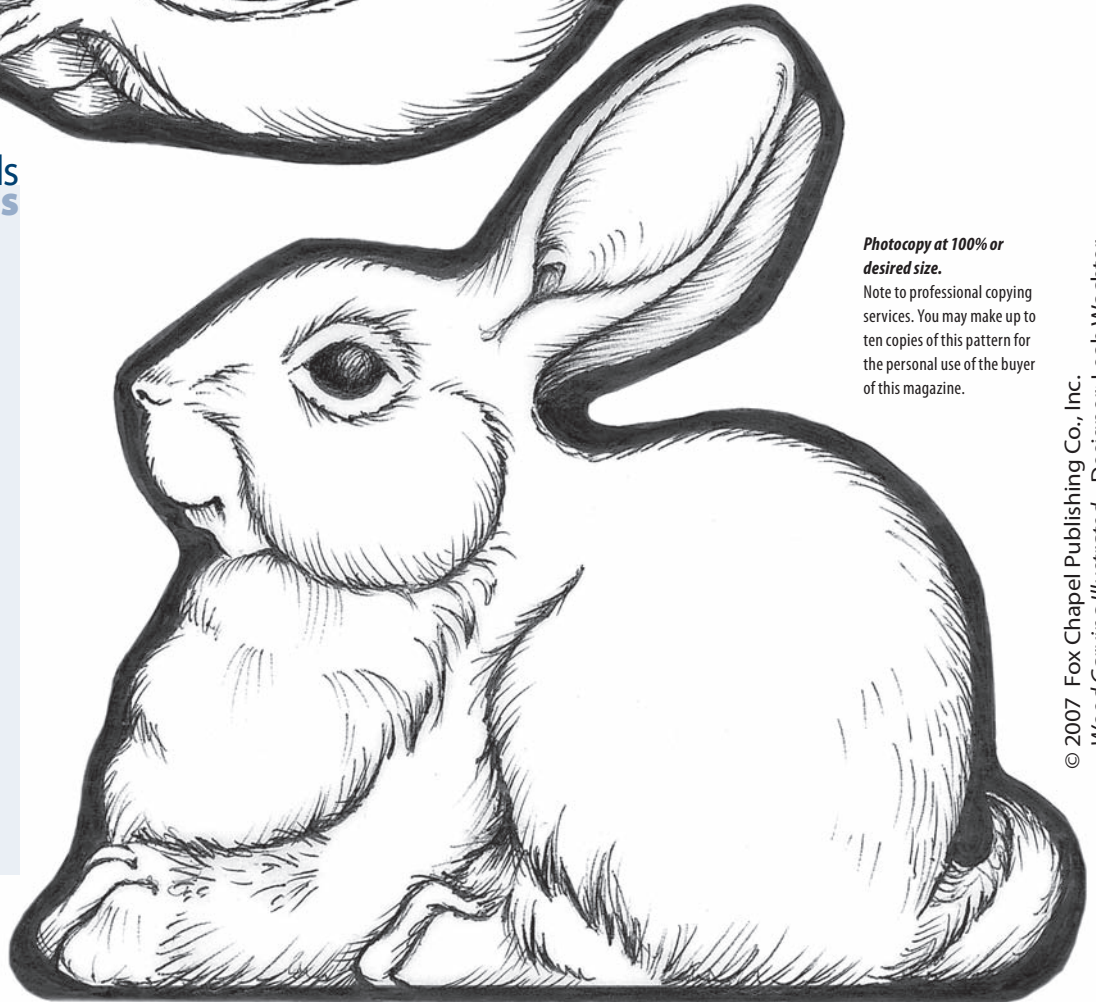
## materials & tools

### MATERIALS:

4" x 5½" x 6" basswood  
Sandpaper, 220 grit  
Liquitex Paint: Parchment  
White, Black, Raw Umber,  
Cadmium Yellow Medium,  
Naphthol Red  
Mod Podge

### TOOLS:

Bench knife  
Detail knife  
6mm #6 palm gouge  
Palm V-tool  
⅛" flat chisel  
Wood burner with small skew  
tip, larger skew tip, and bent  
round tip  
Assorted sizes of round and flat  
paintbrushes



### About the Author

*Leah lives in Sarasota, FL, and is a teacher, author, and professional artist. She*

*discovered woodcarving in 1991 and published her first book a few years ago. She not only teaches adults, but as a certified elementary educator, works with all ages and ability levels. For class information, contact her at 3161 Prairie Lane, Sarasota, FL 34231, 941-921-2671*

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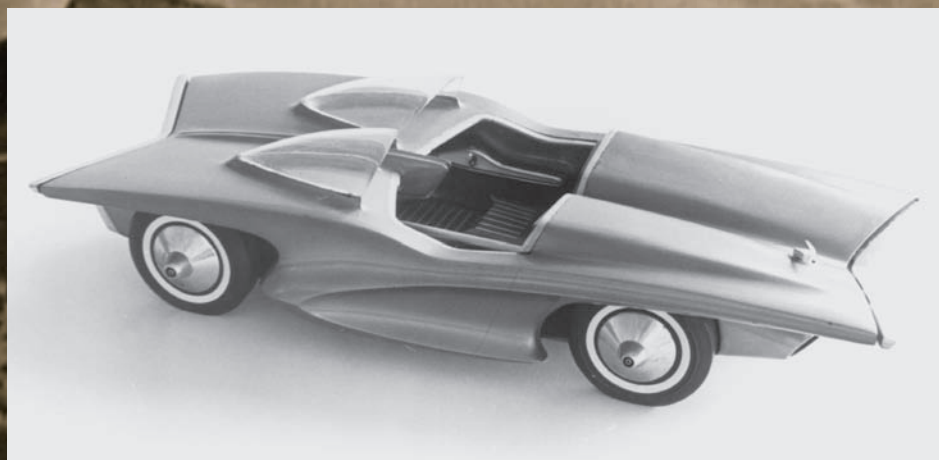
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Wood Carving Illustrated Designer: Leah Wachter



# GM's Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild

Terry R. Henline, at age 17, works away on his 1958 scholarship award-winning design. Photo courtesy of Terry Henline

Terry's 1958 award-winning design. The piece was carved from a solid block of poplar with more than 80 separate pieces of polished aluminum used for details.







Nearly 10 million teenagers participated in the GM Fisher Guild talent search from 1930-1968. The best entries made it to judging floors—the exceptional, to showroom floors.

## Carving Out a Career in the Design World—1950's Style

By John L. Jacobus

Many woodcarvers got their start as a youth designing cars for the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild competition.

The Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild (FBCG) was a corporate-sponsored youth outreach program, which brought together boys and young men (ages 12-20) from across America in a combination industrial arts competition and a General Motors' (GMC) talent search. College scholarships were awarded to those demonstrating the highest technical skill in constructing a 1:18 scale Miniature Model Napoleonic Coach (1930-1947) or a scratch-built 1:12 (1"=12") scale model "Dream Car," incorporating their own original styling ideas (1937-1968).

The later contest was famous among American, European, and Australian youths fascinated with cars. It was known on the street as the Fisher Body Design Competition and has been described by

some as the "Grand Daddy" of the model car competitions. Carving out a career in auto design, so to speak, appealed to youth of the 40s, 50s, and 60s.

In the early 1930s, Harley J. Earl, the auto-styling guru famous for designing and launching the Corvette in 1953, used to stage clay model design team competitions to bring out the best and brightest ideas from his design staff. The winners got extra vacation time or a little extra in their paychecks. The guild was founded on this same belief that competition was the "spice of life."

By 1937, Detroit had this wonderful new darling called "Automobile Styling," but nobody knew how to do it. Since only a few schools nationwide broached the subject of automobile aesthetics, including Harley Earl's own auto-styling correspondence course, where could GMC get the young creative styling talent they needed, except from some kind of a talent search or competition? Harley J. Earl and the Fisher brothers (Fred and Larry) decided to "fill the bill" at GMC by sponsoring an annual amateur auto-styling competition, or talent show, under the banner of the FBCG.

Ronald C. Pellman took home second place (a \$4,000 scholarship) with this entry in the senior division of the 1960 competition.





**the world  
needed more  
craftsmen..., who  
could use both  
their hands and  
their intelligence  
to master almost  
anything they  
tried**

Earl had put automotive styling on the map with flamboyant new designs (front bombs and rear fins; pastel color, two-tone paint jobs; chrome and glitter; etc.). Automobile stylists (most of whom we'd never heard of except for maybe Raymond Loewy and Virgil Exner Sr.) were our heroes. Every kid wanted to emulate them, because their latest creations were being driven everywhere, and their shapes and colors changed every year.

The Fisher brothers were committed to the idea that the world needed more craftsmen—men with skills and abilities, who could use both their hands and their intelligence to master almost anything they tried to do in the industrial world. Harley J. Earl and the Fisher brother's philosophies fused together and became the premise for the FBCG program.

The Fisher brothers and their ad agency devised the idea of a series of 32 FBCG Chapters across the country, sponsored by major market newspapers, to bring youths together in an after-school, industrial arts program, to learn how-to build a



1931 Napoleon Coach

## The Fisher Brothers

The highly successful Fisher brothers (Fisher Body Company and Fisher Body Corporation) who had pioneered the "closed body" for the automobile industry by 1911-1915, sold their enterprise to GMC's Alfred P. Sloan in 1926 for \$234.7 million; thus the Fisher Body Division, GMC, was born. All seven of the Fisher brothers apprenticed at their father's, "Norwalk (OH) Horse and Carriage" shop, and mastered the tools of their trade. Some of the brothers had even studied automotive drafting. Almost all of them (6 out of 7) later joined the GM Board of Directors.

3-D scale replica of the "Body by Fisher" trademark, called a Napoleonic Coach.

The coach competition successfully survived the depression years, but it waned in popularity after WWII. In 1947 the decision was made that the model car design competition, begun in 1937, would be the only game in town.

During the model car competition phase of the FBCG, America's youth annually besieged and swamped Fisher Body Central Engineering Headquarters (in Detroit, then Warren, MI) with their fresh and original auto styling and design ideas. Thousands of models were mailed in specially-designed "crash-proof" wooden crates via Railway Express, a forerunner of FedEx. The youths, as young as 12 years old, signed over their creative and intellectual property rights exclusively to GMC in order to compete for college scholarships, publicity, and recognition. Hopes were high among contestants that they would be one of the top national winners (\$5,000), a styling scholarship winner (\$1,000), or a state winner (\$50-\$150 in cash awards).

After sculpting a 1:12 scale clay model car, the model cars would be carved by the contestants from



**Senior division  
first place winners  
E. Arthur Russell  
(left) and Bill  
Moore (right)  
show off their  
winning designs.  
Bill won the \$5,000  
scholarship in 1956  
and E. Arthur won  
in 1957.**

**The FBCG Class  
of 1957 national  
scholarship winners,  
teenagers full of  
hope and aspirations  
of becoming auto  
designers.**







laminated blocks of cherry, balsa, bass, mahogany, poplar, or white pine. The final carved wood body was sealed with shellac and painted. Later in the program (mid-60's), guildsmen learned how to carve rigid polyurethane and seal it with polyester resin to speed-up the carving and shaping process. They even carved "Ren Board," a synthetic model-making material available in various densities. The latter two approaches had the

advantage of a smooth body surface, which was needed to support a flawless paint job.

Perfection was the name of the game. Whether a coach or model car, everything was scratch-built, costing only a few bucks, and employing materials found mostly around the house. Ingenuity, creativity, inventiveness, and tireless commitment were required to complete a Guild project. It was fun and entertaining in an odd kind of way. If one was going to wear the mantle of "guildsman," academics would still be "job one," and there was little time left to cruise the drive-ins or watch TV.

Somewhere between 8 and 10 million teens signed up for the FBCG during the life of the program (1930-1968). More signed up and competed in the United Kingdom, West Germany, Switzerland, and Australia.

Regional winners got a four-day, all-expenses paid, trip to Detroit for the annual Guild Awards Banquet and Convention.

Scholarship winners usually went on to become the top auto, product, architectural, graphic, and packaging designers. You had to be an artist, painter, sculptor, designer, and an engineer, all rolled into one. The Craftsman's Guild taught values and virtues such as patience and

perseverance as well as the American work ethic e.g., your hard work was rewarded and recognized by GM and your community. An award-winning scale model car might require 500 hours to construct and a miniature model Napoleonic Coach 1,000 to 1,500 hours. You had to be dedicated to this process to succeed and possess an ingredient the FBCG called "stick-to-it-tivity."

The FBCG taught many basic math, science, and engineering principles, which helped young men succeed in college, as well as later in life.

With each successive model entry, the guildsman (and prospective scholarship winner) moved up the learning curve. But, overall, you had to think like an engineer and solve problems through logic, trial and error, and experimentation. Each model you made was a learning experience—they got better and better, approaching excellence in design and craftsmanship—the definition of a top national winner.

**the model cars  
would be carved  
...from laminated  
blocks of cherry,  
balsa, bass,  
mahogany, poplar,  
or white pine.**



**Guildsman,  
John L. Jacobus,  
the aspiring  
national winner  
shown in his  
workshop at  
age 15.**



#### **About the Author**

*John currently resides in Maryland and recently retired from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Previously he worked as a Design Engineer for the Fisher Body Division, General Motors Corporation in Warren, MI. As a youth, he participated in the FBCG from 1961-1966. His hobby and passion for the past 40 years has been automobiles, automotive history and automotive design history. Contact John at [johnjacobus1@aol.com](mailto:johnjacobus1@aol.com).*

#### **further reading**

*The Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild—An Illustrated History is the definitive work on the history of the FBCG. Copies can be purchased for \$49.95+\$4 S&H from [www.FisherGuild.com](http://www.FisherGuild.com) or 800-253-2187.*

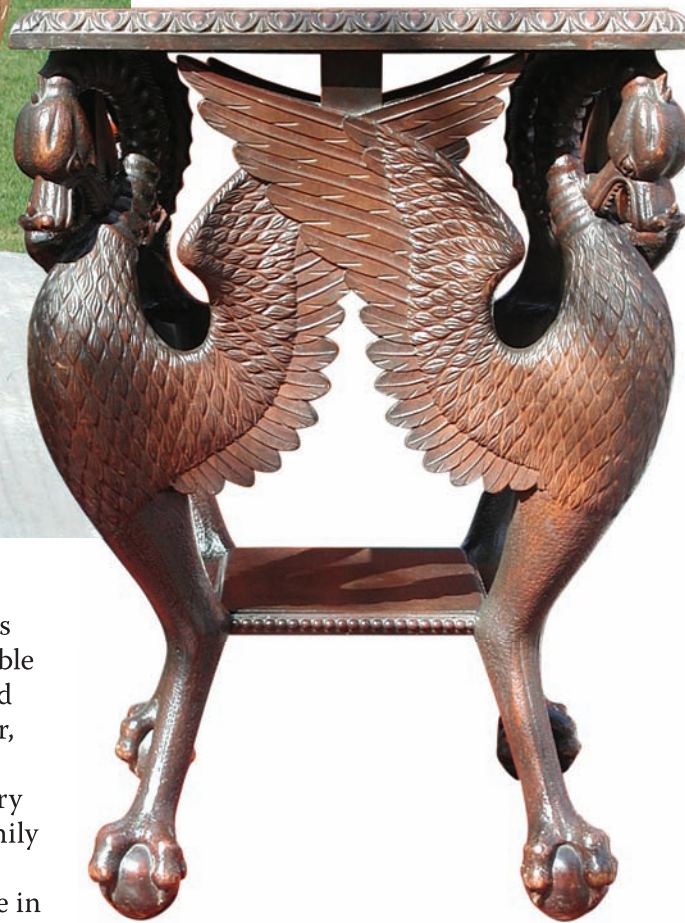
*A CD featuring hundreds of photos from the 2004 FBCG Reunion and Annual "Eyes On Design" Exhibition is available for \$12 including S&H. Send check or money order to David Chartier, 1171 Waterside Lane, Brighton, MI 48114.*



# Recreating a Masterpiece

**Turn-of-the-century table inspires a life-long love of carving, three generations later**

*By Jeff Jones*



When I was a young boy, I was infatuated with a magnificently carved table that was in my aunt's possession at the time. The table featured four griffins, one on each leg, and was carved by my great, great-grandfather, Adolf Arvidson. Adolf was a master woodcarver around the turn of the century in the Chicago area. There are a lot of family legends about him. The most prevalent is that he carved a lot of the sculptures done in public buildings at the time.

His legacy to our family consists of three exquisite pieces handed down to my mother, aunt, and uncle. My mother's piece is a mahogany secretary with an intricate eagle relief carving in the center piece. The second carving is a life-sized eagle, again in mahogany, that was originally to be placed on the top of my mother's secretary.

The third piece is the most incredible of the three—a griffin table. This piece captivated me every time we visited my aunt. I would sit in front of it for hours studying

**Reproducing my great, great-grandfather's Griffin table is one of my greatest carving accomplishments. The original table, shown directly above, was crafted in 1903.**

the craftsmanship, design, and construction methods. That table is probably why I began carving in the first place. We lost close contact with my aunt's family for several decades and My aunt eventually passed away.

My cousin inherited the table. In 1999 we visited my cousin, and I was reacquainted



with the table which had lost none of its magical powers over me. However, being 45 years older and slightly more experienced in carving and woodworking, I toyed with the idea of carving a version of the table for myself. I knew my cousin would never give the original to me! During the actual carving phase, I worked from 7am until 7 or 8pm with rarely a break, and it took two months to complete the table. I have never been more proud of a carving—it was worth every second of effort and I hope one day it will inspire future generations the way Adolf's table inspired me.



### Carving the table

I took several dozen pictures with my digital camera in preparation for the project. I traced the photos I took of the end and side details of the griffins. Then I had the tracings blown-up into full-size patterns at Kinko's.

Although the original was done in mahogany, I decided to carve mine from black cherry. It was a combination of not wanting to presume that I could approach the original and of having the cherry already in my wood stack. Since the massive parts of the table dictated they be made from glue-ups, I had to mill my boards to use only heart wood.

The crossed wing pairs for adjacent birds were made as one piece. I left the scrap web between the wing pairs until carving was finished to prevent the wings from splitting. The bodies and wings of the birds were roughed to shape, and the top and the lower shelves were cut to size so I could work out the joinery early in the process. Since the carvings end up as one infinite piece, they had to be carved as a unit as much as possible.



Assembling the table required some clever clamping techniques.

### Assembling the table

For additional strength, the wings are pinned to the bodies with two  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-diameter dowels, and the rectangular tabs protruding from the top of the crossed wing tips fit into sockets in the top made from  $\frac{3}{4}$ "-thick stock. A square  $\frac{3}{4}$ " block is screwed to the head of each bird, and that, in turn, is screwed to the underside of the top. Finally, there is another  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-diameter dowel in the knee of each bird that is inserted into a corner of the bottom shelf. Nothing was glued in place until all of the carving was finished, but the pre-assembly was crucial to having all of the pieces join seamlessly together.

The bodies and wings were assembled to the top and bottom tables, but no holes were drilled for the wings. This put all of the major pieces in the proper alignment so all that was needed was to glue a 45° wedge to the body and to mark and drill for the wing dowels. That gave me nearly perfect joints.

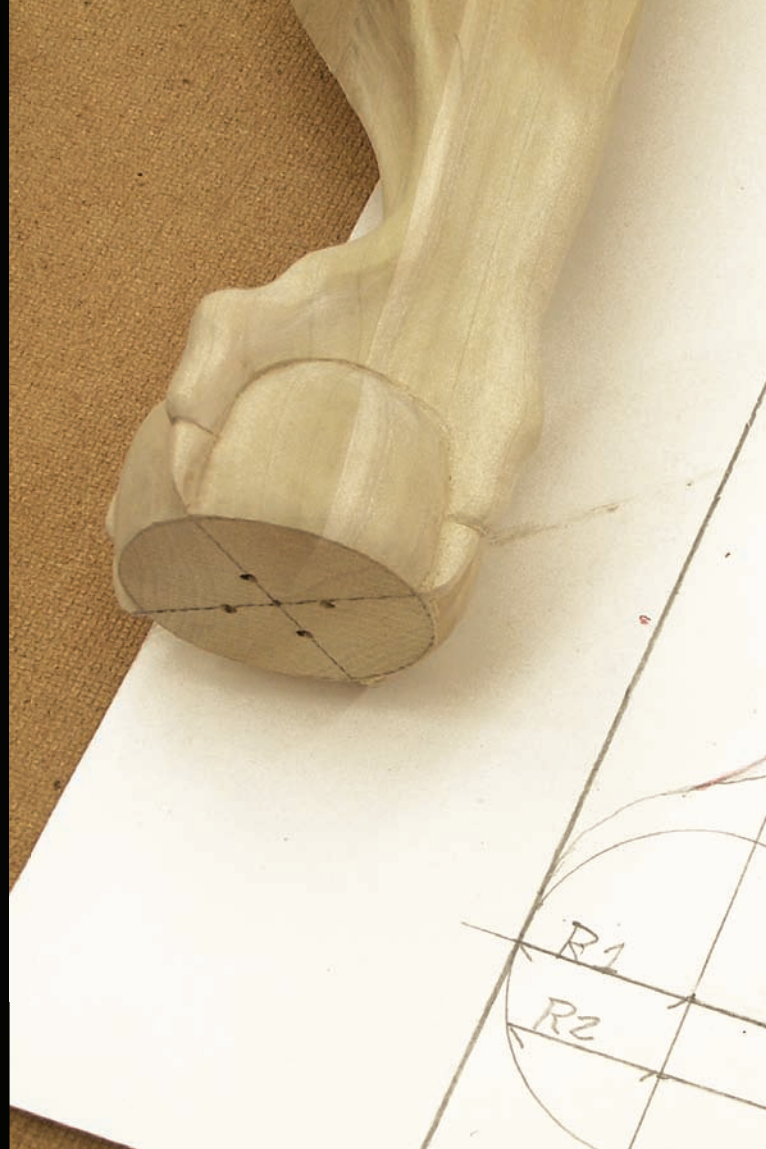
After the carving and assembly was finished, I stained the table with walnut stain. Then I applied three coats of oil-based, semi-gloss urethane. I am not happy with the shiny patina of that finish, so I plan to add a coat of satin urethane.



### About the Author

Jeff Jones of Bakersfield, CA, is a 57-year-old petroleum engineer and has been carving for 50 of those years. He started out whittling with his mother's favorite paring knife and never looked back! He entered five models in the old Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild contest in the early 1960s. His projects range from whittled caricatures, to carousel animals, to classic carvings like this table. In addition to carving, he does woodworking, builds hot rods and model cars, and collects die-cast Willys models, Marx toy trains, and Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild memorabilia.





## CARVING THE

# Ball & Claw

**Sequential carving  
helps you duplicate  
this traditional  
furniture element**

*By Mike Burton*

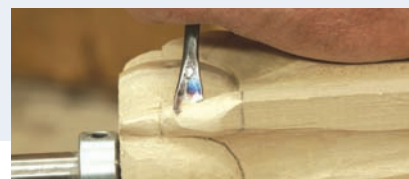
Animal feet and legs have been used as a form of carved embellishments for centuries. One of the more familiar and recognizable is the ball and claw—a representation of a bird of prey's foot resting on or grasping a ball. This motif appears in many different styles. The carved ball and claw is not anatomically correct, but it is a good sculpture containing hard lines, soft lines, and flow.

The design is not difficult to execute, especially if you get off to a good start. The ball-and-claw requires no special tooling, and if the same sequence of events are followed, lends itself easily to duplication.

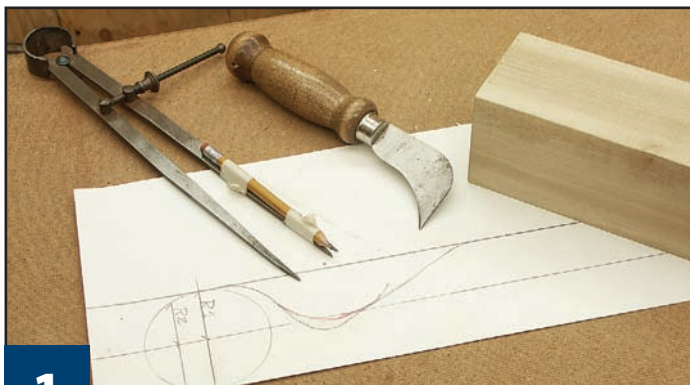
## GRAIN CHANGES ON THE TALONS

## tips

*You will encounter a grain change where the talon meets the toe (the cuticle area). One way to contend with it is to cut across the grain with a sharp, medium-sweep gouge. If you have a pair of skewed gouges, here is an excellent place to use them. While the tool is moving across the grain, it is cutting from top to bottom and actually with the grain.*







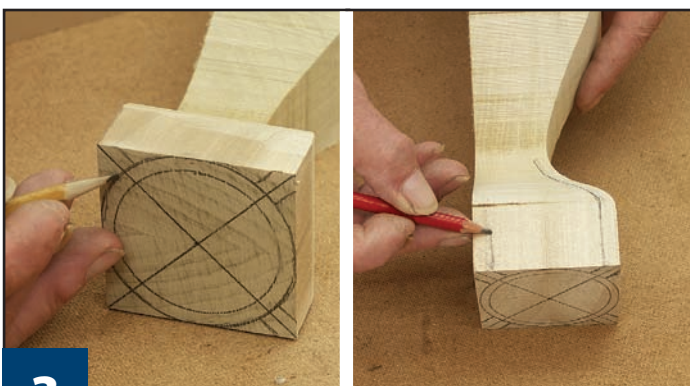
**1**

**Transfer the pattern to the workpiece.** The pattern provided is sized for a  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " x  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " blank. Enlarge or reduce the pattern to fit your blank. I suggest that beginning carvers start with a blank the size listed or larger. The smaller the carving, the more difficult it will be to complete. The pattern should be drawn on adjacent sides of the blank, knee to knee.



**2**

**Cut the blank out on the band saw.** When cutting the first side of the pattern, leave about  $\frac{1}{16}$ " of material holding the scrap onto the blank at the top. Turn off the saw, and back out the blade. Turn the block over, and completely saw the waste from that side. Then turn the block once more, and free the waste from the first side.



**3**

**Make the layout lines on the blank.** On the base of your blank, draw lines from corner to corner to locate the center. Determine the radius for R1 and R2 and use a compass to draw two circles on the bottom using these measurements. Draw lines from the R1 circle to the outer edge of the blank that are parallel with the corner-to-corner lines and separated by  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Scribe lines down each edge of the blank. These lines will be about  $\frac{5}{16}$ " from the edge in order to correspond to the layout lines on the bottom of the blank. The area within these guidelines will become the talons. You will be removing the wood outside of these lines to form the ball.



**4**

**Establish the ball.** Clamp the blank. The vise shown was detailed in WCI #34. Run a V-tool down each of the scribed lines cutting about  $\frac{1}{32}$ " deep to make it easier to position the tool used to set in the toes on an angle. Set in the toes to a depth of about  $\frac{1}{8}$ ", parallel with the layout lines on the base; these are not perpendicular to the axis of the ball. For the front and rear toes, a straight chisel will work. For the side toes, higher up, use a shallow gouge of the appropriate sweep. Keep the toes square. Mark the center of the ball  $\frac{5}{8}$ " up from the bottom and centered between the set in toes. This marks the highest point of the ball; it will remain until sanding.



**5**

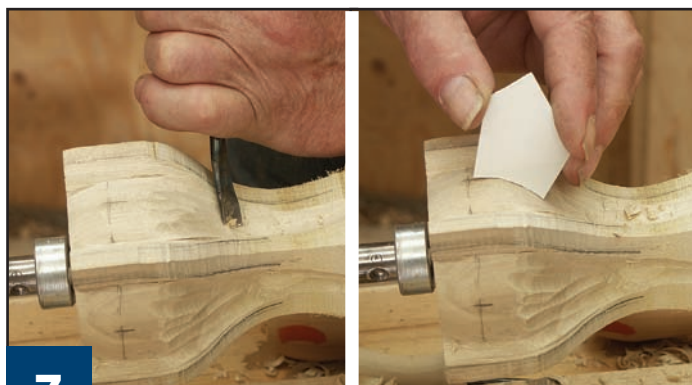
**Begin to carve the curve into the ball.** Continue setting in and carving, developing a curve that is perpendicular to the circle R1 drawn on the bottom of the blank. Do not over-cut into the ball. Scribe a line across the ball  $\frac{5}{8}$ " from the bottom. From this line, cut the ball round to R2 on the bottom. If you have a gouge that will cut a 6"-diameter circle when rotated, try it. I've had the best luck with a straight chisel or skew chisel, using a slicing action as the tool moves around the ball.



**6**

**Rough out the upper part of the ball.** From the approximate center of the ball down, the toes and talon will form a hard line against the ball. From the center upward, the toes will form a soft line, because they are attached to each other with a web of skin. Use a deep gouge to separate the toes. Do not undercut into the toe. The sides should be parallel to each other, much the same as from the center of the ball down. Cut from the ball center to the grain change. Then cut from the top to the grain change.





**7**

**Clear the chips away where the grain changes direction.**

Use a short-bent gouge to free the chips. You can also remove the chips and smooth the area by cutting across the grain with a medium-sweep gouge. Use the ball template from the pattern as a guide. You are not refining at this point; leave a bit of extra material.



**8**

**Rough out the talons.**

Mark the location of the center of the first knuckle on each toe. In this case, it is  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " from the bottom. From a point about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below this mark, taper the toes to the diagonal lines on the bottom. Make light cuts on both the talon and the ball, being careful not to over-cut into either.



**9**

**Draw in the web between the toes.**

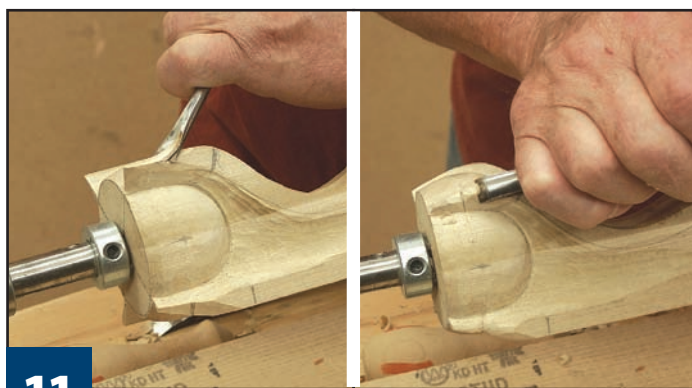
At the center of the upper ball, make a mark that is in line with the first knuckle. From this point, sketch a curve that meets the toe at a point about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below the first knuckle; you can use your template as an aid. This line represents the web of skin between the toes. Make a stop cut along the line you just drew, using a gouge with an appropriate sweep.



**10**

**Detail the web between the toes.**

Refine the ball to the stop cut with a bull-nose gouge that will cut a 6"-diameter circle if rotated 360°. A skew chisel or the corner of a straight chisel will work equally well. Stand back periodically, and make sure the ball has continuity between each quadrant. Then move on to the waste above the stop cut. Don't define the toes yet; leave the web about  $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick.



**11**

**Define the talons and the lower toes.**

Start  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below the mark of the first knuckle and taper the material to about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick at the bottom. Make a mark  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the bottom. This is the location where the talon meets the toe—the cuticle. Make a stop cut, and roll the toe into the cuticle to give the talon an oval, hooked shape. Create a concave area between the cuticle and the first knuckle. Round this area over, but do not carry the concave line quite to the ball. In some carvings, the knuckles are defined against the ball, but that makes the foot look arthritic.



**12**

**Define the upper toes.**

Start with the rear toe. It's the easiest, as there is only the one joint, like a thumb. Create a rounded, concave area about  $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep above the knuckle. This will give a flowing shape to the back of the foot. On the front toe, make a mark about 1" from the first knuckle for the second knuckle. Create a concave area between these two knuckles. Use the same technique to shape the rest of the toes. After detailing the toes, refine the area of the web to each side of the toe. For more definition of the toe, use a tighter sweep gouge for the soft line between the toe and web.





13

**Smooth and sand the carving.** A fine, flat riffler is an excellent choice for smoothing the talon, while a round file will smooth the area between the knuckles. I made a custom scraper from a piece of 1¼" band steel. This type of scraper has two 90-degree cutting edges formed by the shaped edge and either face. Used between the toes, it will cut slightly against the grain at the grain change area, making quick work of that troublesome spot. Tear a piece of sandpaper from a used sander belt, and roll it into a firm cone shape to get into the tight areas. Protect your fingertips with rubber grips available at office supply stores. I also use a fingernail emery board, which can be bent around the curve of the ball, and the tip will smooth the area next to the web. When the tip dulls, break off about ½" and continue with fresh abrasive. Apply your finish of choice.

## materials & tools

### MATERIALS:

2¾" x 2¾" x 11" basswood  
Rubber fingertip grips  
(optional)  
Band steel (to make a scraper,  
optional)  
Fingernail emery boards  
Old sanding belt  
Finish of choice

### TOOLS:

Assorted chisels, skew chisels,  
and gouges of choice. I make  
my own tools, and feel that you  
can complete this carving with  
a variety of different chisels and  
gouges. Use what you have;  
don't rush out and buy a new  
tool until you have to.  
Riffler  
Round File

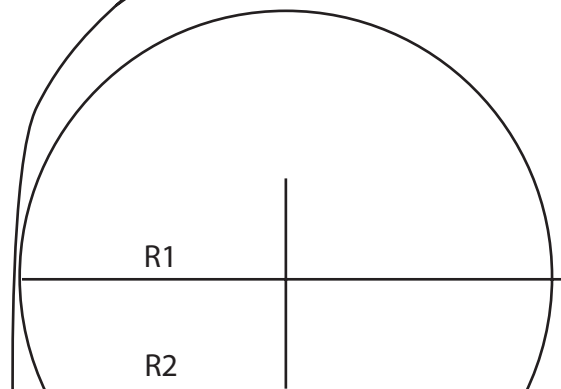


### About the Author

*An Ogden, UT, cabinetmaker who specializes in architectural woodwork, Mike Burton spends most of his time freelance writing. His books include Veneering a Foundation Course, Simple Marquetry, Architectural Carving, and his newest endeavor: Make Your Own Woodworking Tools. He does take commissions that include carving, turning, veneering, marquetry, and some curved cabinetry. Mike can be reached at [StickBndr@aol.com](mailto:StickBndr@aol.com).*

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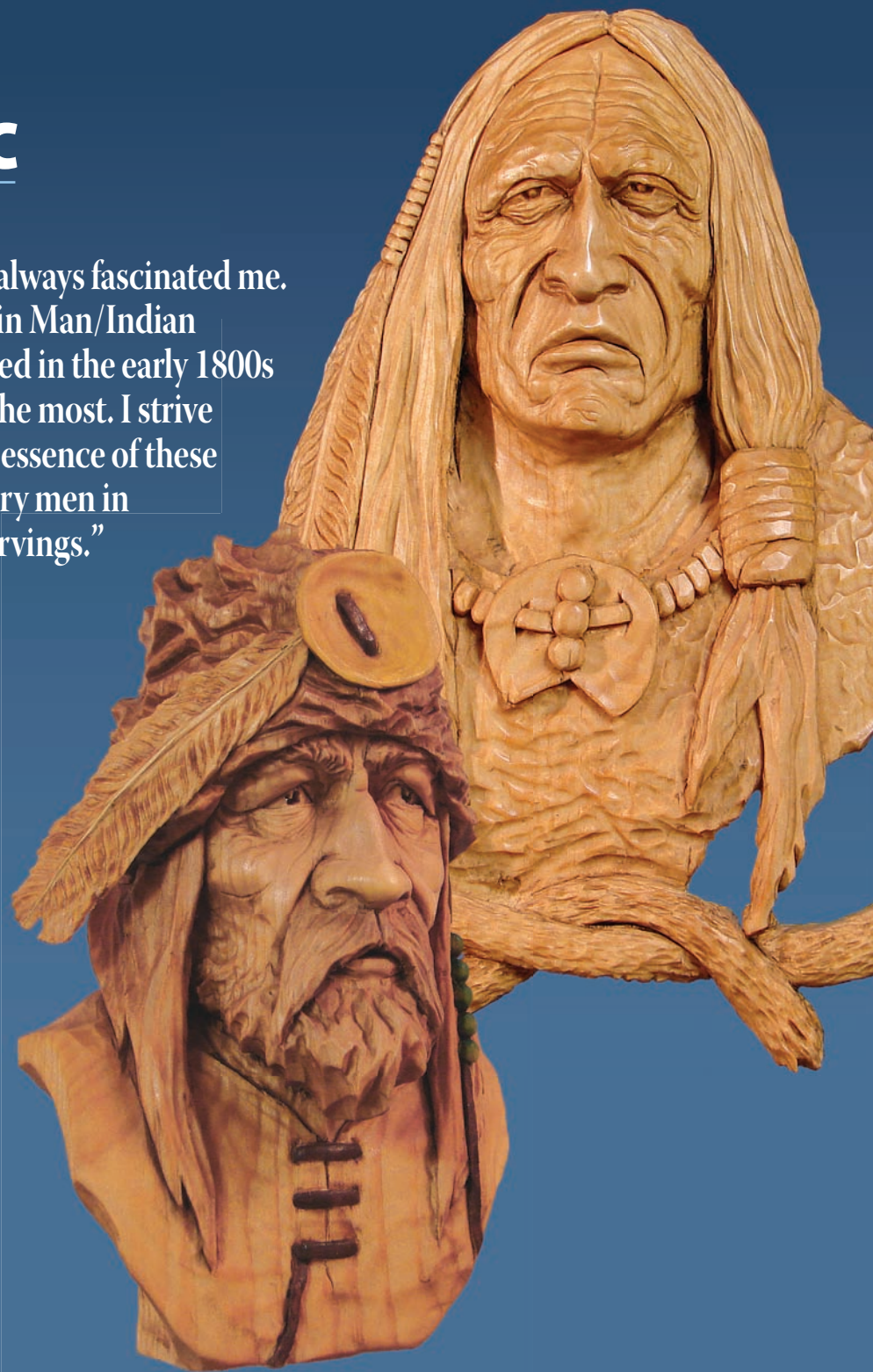
Ball  
template  
(Step 7)





# The Carvings of Mark Gargac

“The Old West has always fascinated me. The Mountain Man/Indian fur trade that started in the early 1800s intrigues me the most. I strive to capture the essence of these legendary men in my carvings.”



## About the Author

Mark Gargac, of Broomfield CO, is an independent H.V.A.C. contractor and semi-professional woodcarver and instructor. Mark began woodcarving in the fall of 1998 when his wife Sandy bought him his first set of woodcarving tools for his birthday. He has won awards at local carving shows in Colorado and the International Woodcarvers Congress in Davenport, IA. He is a member of the Colorado Carvers Club and the International Woodcarvers Congress. For more of Mark's work, or to order carvings and rough outs, visit his website at [www.gargacsoriginals.com](http://www.gargacsoriginals.com).



# Native American Bust

Portraying character with distinctive facial features

*By Mark Gargac*

This carving allows you to concentrate on capturing detail and emotion in realistic facial features. The instructions begin from the rough out stage. If you don't plan to begin with a rough out, you will need to carve the bust to the basic proportions before following along. The smaller size and focus on the head and face reduce the commitment of time while producing an attractive carving that is easily displayed.

Native Americans have strong, prominent features and a leathery appearance to their skin, which makes a good subject for woodcarving. Strong wide cheekbones, a hooked nose, a broad mouth, and a thick forehead with heavy brows are distinctive features to incorporate into a carving of the Native American.

I highly recommend studying reference material on any subject you plan to carve. Gather as many references as you can and have a good idea on which direction you want to take your carving. Draw up sketches. Mark the wood to show pieces that you want and don't want to remove.





**1**

**Make the initial stop cuts.** Sketch in the basic reference cuts that divide the carving into sections. Make the stop cuts and relieve up to the cuts with a carving knife or a 6mm #9 gouge. Use a 13mm #7 gouge to knock the knob off the top of the head and round the hair area. Use the nose as a guide, and carve the part in the hair using a 6mm #9 gouge. Use a pencil to divide the face into thirds. Make pencil marks at the inside corners of the eyes and the inside bridge of the nose to guide your next cuts.



**2**

**Rough out the eye sockets.** Start just above the bottom of the nose, and cut up at a slight angle towards where the corner of the eye will be with a 6mm #9 gouge. Don't cut into the nose area. Cut across the bottom of the brow line, just below the pencil mark, with the same gouge to free the chip. Make the same cuts to define the other eye.



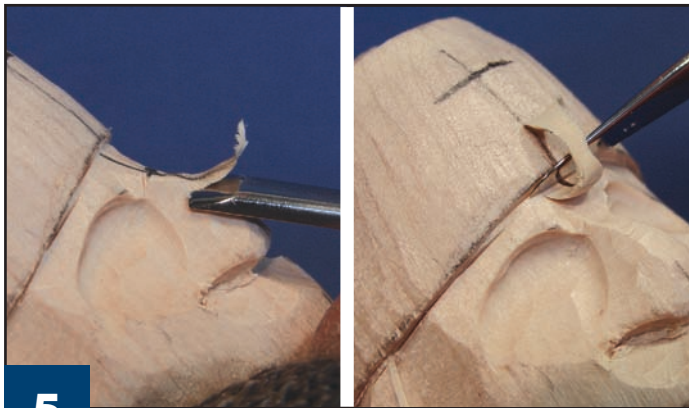
**3**

**Shape the cheek area.** Start right next to the centerline, and use a 10mm #7 gouge held at a low angle to remove a small amount of wood from the cheek area. DO NOT cut straight into the face or you will remove the extra wood alongside the nose that you need for detailing later.



**4**

**Define the nose.** Make a 1/8"-deep cut under the nose with a 7mm #7 gouge. Don't pry or twist the gouge; it is easy to break the tip off the nose. Invert the same gouge to make stop cuts for the lower wings of the nostrils. Slide in from the bottom to relieve the wood up to these cuts.



**5**

**Shape the bridge of the nose, and separate the eyebrows.** Flip a 6mm #7 gouge over, and start a cut at the tip of the nose. Shave off a small amount of wood up to the center of the eyes (along the bridge of the nose) to shape it. Then flip the gouge over, and carve up between the brows to separate them. Cut the chip free with a detail knife.



**6**

**Detail the bottom of the nose.** Round the mouth barrel with a 10mm #7 gouge. Shape the area, but do not flatten it out. This will also bring the nose further out from the face. Round off the tip of the nose with an inverted 6mm #7 gouge. Press the same gouge into the face at a slight angle to define the outside wings of the nose. Use this gouge to remove the chip and to cut above the wings to clean up the sides of the nose.





7

**Carve the smile lines.** Pencil in the center of the eyes and the line where the lips will part. Start at the corner of the nose and carve down to below the corner of the mouth with a detail knife. Start back at the top, and cut around the wing of the nose. Don't undercut the area; carve it just deep enough to create a slight shadow. Remove this v-shaped chip and repeat this step for the other side.



8

**Define the cheek bones.** Use a 13mm #7 gouge to carve under the cheek bones to make them stand out. Use a 12mm #3 gouge to shape the mouth back to the smile line. Switch to a 6mm #9 gouge to shape the chin. Start the cut just past the right side of the chin, and carve back at an outward angle to the outer neck area. Repeat for the other side.



9

**Separate the lips.** Cut the line where the lips meet with a 3mm micro gouge. Cut along the corners of the mouth with the same tool. This will isolate the mouth muscles. Make a cut at a slight angle along the upper lip down into the mouth muscle area with a 6mm bent-back V-tool. Start in the corner of the mouth, and shape the lower lip with a 3mm micro gouge.



10

**Reduce the chin.** Use a 6mm #7 palm gouge to carve under the mouth. This creates the shoveled mouth barrel prominent in Native American features. Use a 4mm gouge to cut the dent between the nose and upper lip. Use the #7 gouge to separate the lips from the skin. Flip the gouge upside down to round the bottom lip and take sharp corners off the chin.



11

**Shape the cheekbones.** Use a 14mm #5 palm gouge to round any sharp edges on the cheekbones. Cut with a 6mm #9 gouge along the inside corner of the lower part of the cheekbone into the inside corner of the eye socket to accentuate the cheekbones. Using a 4mm micro gouge, cut along the s-shaped pencil line up to the bottom corner of the cheekbone to add detail to the mouth muscles.



12

**Smooth the brows.** Flip a 6mm #7 gouge over to round and smooth the area. Carve up to the bridge of the nose, and turn the gouge up to create a hard stop cut. Remove the chip with the same gouge. Don't cut too close to the bridge of the nose; you can always go back and thin it out later. Round the bridge of the nose with the #7 gouge flipped upside down. Remove a sliver of wood to shape the nose.





**13**

**Shape the area under the nostrils.** Push a 6mm #7 gouge  $\frac{1}{16}$ " into the nose. You are aiming for a slight undercut. Don't twist or pry with the gouge; you want a nice clean cut. Relieve the wood up to this stop cut with the same gouge. When carving, use the sweep of the tools to dictate the shapes you carve. For noses, I use #7 and #5 gouges.



**14**

**Deepen the eye trench.** Start at the inner corner of the eye, where the pencil dot is marked, and carve out. Make the inside corner of the eye deeper than the outside corner. Take some 220-grit sandpaper, smooth off any rough edges on the face, and blend the areas together. Be sure to brush away any grit left by the sandpaper, which will dull your tools.



**15**

**Cut in the separation of the lips.** Use a detail knife. Use 220-grit sandpaper to round off the sharp edges left by the detail knife.



**16**

**Rough out the eyes.** Mark the center of the eye with arrows on either side of the horizontal line to define the area. Cut from the bottom up towards the centerline with a 2mm micro gouge, cutting deeper as you get closer to the centerline. Cut down from the top to remove the chip. Round off the cavities with a 4mm micro gouge.



**17**

**Separate the eyelids from the eyes.** Sketch in the eyelids. Make a stop cut along the lines about  $\frac{1}{16}$ "-deep. Start where the under-eye bag will be, and shave up to the stop cut at the eyelid with a micro-detail knife. Keep the area round. Cut from the top of the eye channel down to the stop cut for the upper eyelid. Relieve and round the eyeball between the eyelids. The eye should slant back into the head.



**18**

**Carve the bags under the eyes.** Make a stop cut under the eye by pressing a 6mm #7 gouge in under the eye. Angle the gouge away from the eye as you press it in. Walk the tool around under the eye to make a half-moon stop cut. Cut up to the stop cut from the cheekbones with the same gouge. Round off the outer orbital of the eye with the same gouge.





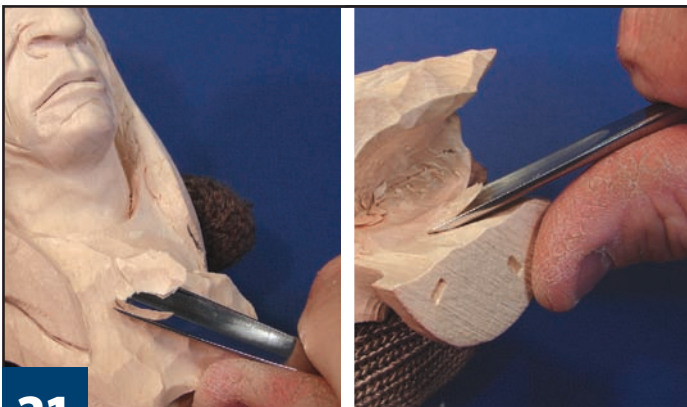
19

**Carve the final details around the eye.** To make the eye look realistic, I add deep wrinkles to give it a weathered look. Carve in the wrinkles with a 2mm micro gouge. Use the same gouge to remove some wood to shape the upper eyelid. Go over the gouge cuts with a small V-tool to add extra depth. To highlight and create shadows around the cheekbones and smile lines, carve a  $\frac{1}{16}$ "-deep groove with a 2mm micro gouge. Remove the sharp edges of this cut with a 6mm #7 gouge. Smooth and soften the cuts with 220-grit sandpaper. Deepen the cuts with a V-tool. Soften the upper edges of the V-tool cuts with 600-grit sandpaper.



20

**Shape the neck area.** Round the neck area with a 6mm #7 gouge. From the center, take off small amounts of wood as you work back into the neckline. Add more detail with a 6mm #9 gouge. Remove the sharp corners left by the #9 gouge with a 6mm #7 gouge. Make a stop cut with the detail knife straight in on the outside of the face under the cheekbone. Remove the chip to create a shadow in this area. Flip a 6mm #7 gouge upside down to smooth the transition between the shirt and neck.



21

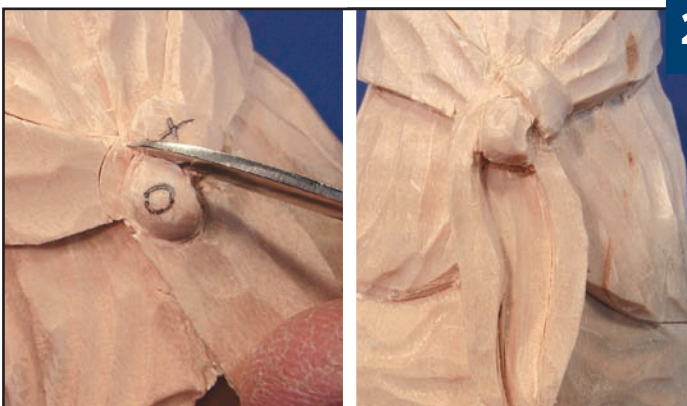
**Detail the buffalo robe, and remove the duplicator knob.**

Make a series of random "S" and "C" shaped cuts with a 10mm #7 gouge. Remove the sharp edge at the bottom of the robe with the same gouge. Tuck the edges back into the carving to give the robe a more natural look. Then cut along the inside bottom edge of the robe and start carving away the duplicator knob. Work in to the center, and carve a recess approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter to attach and hide the cork when viewed from the front.



22

**Detail the hair.** Separate the hair from the robe. Use a detail knife to cut a notch breaking up the line and giving the hair a more natural flow. Carve some shallow grooves with a 10mm #7 gouge. Do not run one continuous line from bottom to top; break them up with each proceeding cut. Otherwise, the hair will look stringy. Cut into the gouge grooves with a 6mm #9 gouge to define them some more.



23

**Carve the headband and knot.** Sketch in the headband and knot. The "X" section will be higher than the "O" section. Round off the edges on each side of the "X" section with a 6mm #7 gouge turned upside down. Use the same gouge to make a stop cut around the top of the piece marked "O." Relieve the "O" section so it is lower than the "X" section. Undercut the stop cut with a detail knife to make it look like "O" is tucked into "X." Make several small cuts to get the necessary depth. Cut a little deeper around the knot with a detail knife to separate the knot from the bandana. Use a detail knife to outline and remove the wood from around the dangling ends of the bandana. Thin the bandana with a 10mm #7 gouge. Add folds and wrinkles with a 6mm #9 gouge. Use a 3mm micro gouge to carve in on the sides of the bandana to make it look like it is stretched into the knot tight. Round the upper and lower portion of the bandanna with a 6mm #7 gouge flipped upside down.





24

**Carve the iris.** At this final stage, use 320-grit sandpaper to lightly sand the entire piece. Switch to 600-grit sandpaper for the face. Then cut straight into the eye with a 3mm micro gouge to define the outline of the iris. Don't put the iris directly in the center of the eye; choose a side, and set both irises in the same position. Knock off the sharp edges around the iris with the same gouge. Sign your carving before applying the finish.

## Finishing Options

### Natural Finish

Dunk the carving in boiled linseed oil (BLO). I push a pencil or dowel into the dowel hole and dip the entire carving into a can of BLO. Hold the carving over the can, and allow the oil to drip off. Then wipe the excess off with a paper towel. **CAUTION:** BLO-soaked paper towels or rags can spontaneously combust. Soak the rags in water until you can hang them outside to dry. **DO NOT** just ball them up and throw them in the trash!

While the oil is still damp, apply one heavy coat of Deft Satin Spray Lacquer. You want a thick coat, but don't apply so much lacquer that it drips off the carving. Allow this to dry for at least 15 hours. Finally, apply a dark satin wax to the carving. This dark wax will really highlight the details on the carving. Wipe off excess wax with a paper towel, allow it to dry a few minutes, and buff it to a high sheen with a soft buffing cloth.

### Acrylic Paint Wash

I use thinned paints to stain the carving. Mix approximately four drops of desired colors of Delta Ceramcoat paint with 1 tablespoon of water. Paint the carving using the photos as a guide. I've listed the colors in the Materials & Tools list. Dry the paint with a hair dryer. Once the paint wash is dry, you will barely be able to see the colors. That is expected. Dip the carving in BLO, which will bring the colors back out. Complete the finishing process, using the natural finish method above. To complete the carving, attach the cork and dowel to the bottom of the carving, using wood glue.

### ROOM TO SHAPE

### tips

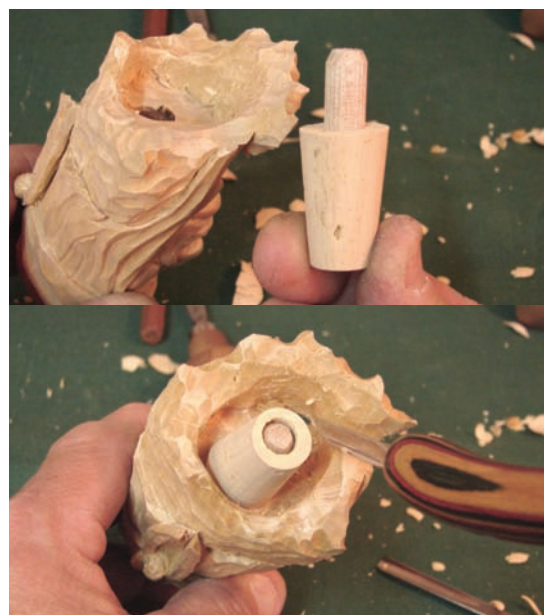
*You want to always leave extra wood around the facial features. This will give you room to experiment with different facial expressions.*

### MATERIALS:

2½" x 2½" x 5" basswood or rough out  
 ⅜"-diameter x 2" dowel  
 Bottle cork with ⅜"-diameter hole drilled in it (available from most carving supply stores)  
 Norton sandpaper, 220, 320, & 600 grits  
 Acrylic paints: Folk Art Alizarin Crimson (headband), Delta Ceramcoat Black (hair), Delta Ceramcoat Burnt Umber (buffalo robe), Delta Ceramcoat Straw (shirt), Delta Ceramcoat Egg Shell White (whites of eyes), Delta Ceramcoat Honey Brown, (pupils of eyes)  
 Boiled linseed oil (BLO)  
 Deft Satin Spray Lacquer  
 Watco Dark Satin Finishing Wax  
 5-minute epoxy

### TOOLS:

Detail knife with a 1½"-long blade (I use a Bo-T detail knife)  
 Micro detail knife of choice (I use a Dockyard Micro Detail Knife)  
 Drill with ⅜"-diameter drill bit (to drill the dowel hole in the carving)  
 #7 palm gouges: 13mm, 10mm, 7mm & 6mm palm gouges of choice (I use Pfiel)  
 12mm #3 palm gouge (I use Pfiel)  
 14mm #5 palm gouge (I use Pfiel)  
 6mm #9 palm gouge (I use Pfiel)  
 Dockyard Micro Gouges: 2mm, 3mm, 4mm, & 5mm  
 6mm back-bent V-tool  
 70° ⅜" V-tool (I use Flexcut)



### Inserting the cork

Drill a ⅜" hole into the center of the bottom of the bust. If you use a roughout, the hole is already drilled. Corks are difficult to drill, so buy a pre-drilled one. Attach the dowel to the cork with 5-minute epoxy and dry fit the cork into the recess in the bottom of the carving. Make any adjustments to the recess area to ensure the cork sits flat. The cork assembly will be attached to the carving after the finish has been applied and allowed to dry thoroughly.





Right



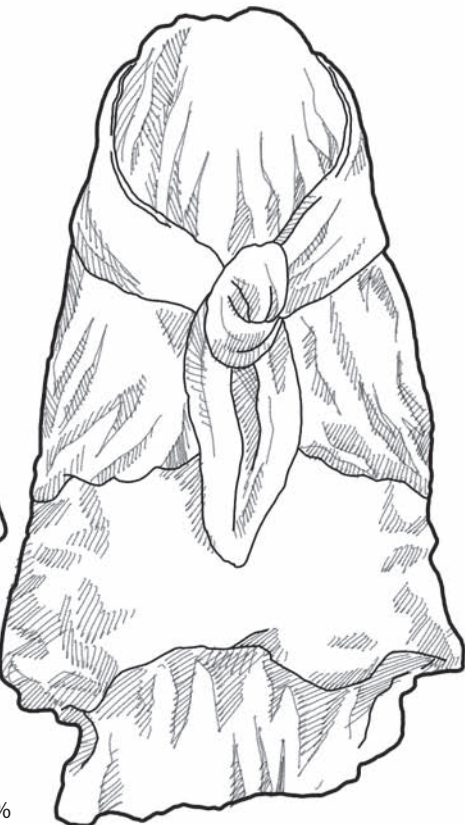
Front



Left



Back



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### special sources

Native American bottle stopper kits (including rough out, premium grade cork,  $\frac{3}{8}$ " dowel, & 4-view color reference sheet) are available for \$15.00 each through [www.gargacsoriginals.com](http://www.gargacsoriginals.com).

### Rough Outs

Some carvers look down on rough outs. But I disagree. By carving from a rough out, the style will remain consistent, but it still allows the carvers to add their own touches. This allows endless opportunities in creating different facial expressions. With a rough out, the designer has already established the proper proportions, which lets the carver get right to the fun part of detailing the piece.



# Hand Carved CLASSICS

Practice your knife carving with chain links and a ball-in-cage

By Kivel Weaver

You don't need lots of tools to carve a masterpiece; I have carved a wide variety of things with just a pocketknife—including a variety of chains!

I started whittling and carving at age four when my father gave me my first pocketknife. It was an old, rusty relic that he had found, but it was a jewel to me. I carved any stick or wood I found laying around.

My first attempt at sharpening was with a rock I picked up off the ground. After sharpening for a while, I was satisfied—and it seemed to cut better. My father borrowed my knife, dulled it, and returned it to me. After I re-sharpened it, my father again asked to borrow it—and I said, “no, you just want to dull it again.” He never asked again.

I sold my first carving, a monkey carved from a peach pit, for a quarter when I was ten. Later, I heard about a fellow who whittled working pliers from wood. He wouldn't show me how to make the pliers, but gave me a pair that were broken. I worked for three years before I made my first working pair. Then I moved on to ball-in-cages and chains.

All my carvings are done with basic tools. Most of the work is done with a pocketknife.

## CARVING A CHAIN

1

**Start with a piece of 1" x 1" x 4" clear white pine or basswood.** Mark a line  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in from each side. Cut along the line with a sharp knife. You want to remove the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " x  $\frac{1}{4}$ " section from each corner. You will be left with a 4"-long cross after cutting out all of these sections. Mark the center of the cross on two sides opposite of each other. Then make two marks, 1" from each end, on the sides not previously marked. This divides the chain into three links with each link being about 2" long.

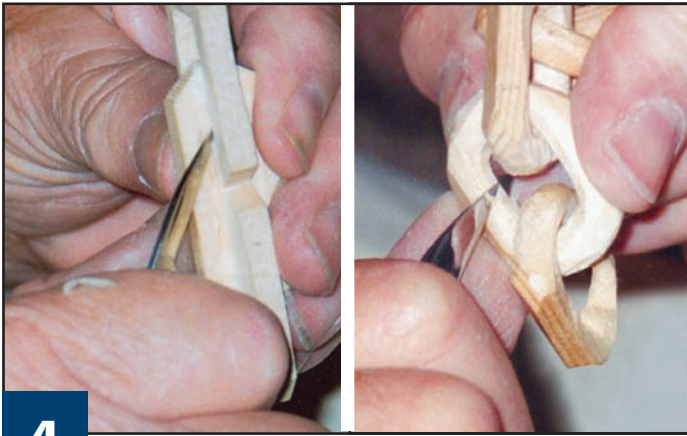
2

**Make a V-shaped cut at the center mark on both sides.** Cut down to the flat of the cross. This establishes two distinct links. Make a V-shaped cut at each of the 1" marks. Then shave the 1" end sections down to the flat of the cross on both sides. This establishes the third (middle) link.

3

**Carve the inside of the links.** Use the point of your knife blade to hollow out the end links. Then cut the space between the two links; this will completely separate the two links.





**4**

**Separate the links.** Use the tip of your knife to follow the outline of the place where the end links join the center link. Keep making small cuts until the links are free. Hollow out the center link and continue making small shaving cuts to smooth all three links



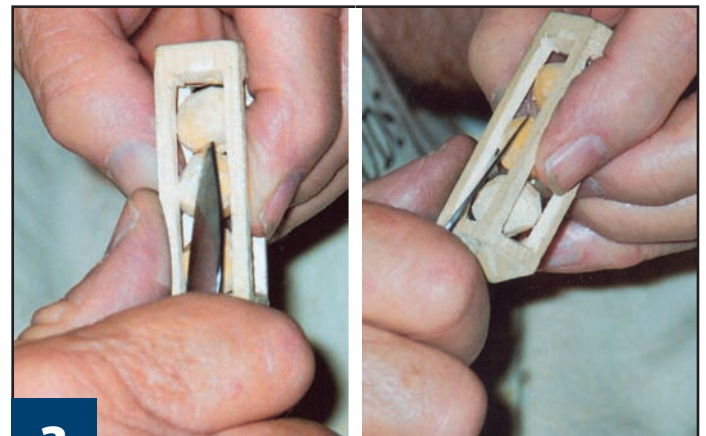
**1**

**Start with a 1" x 1" x 4" block.** I use pine. Lay out the lines. Start by marking lines  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in from each corner. Mark lines  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from each end, then mark a line  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " from each end. This will divide the blank into the cage and three balls.



**2**

**Make stop cuts around the cage and balls.** Use the point of the blade to make  $\frac{1}{8}$ " deep cuts around the edges of the cage and between the balls. Cut out a fairly large triangular chip from each inside corner of the cage. Then make a similar cut to create a diamond shape for each of the three balls. Repeat the process on all four sides to rough out the balls.

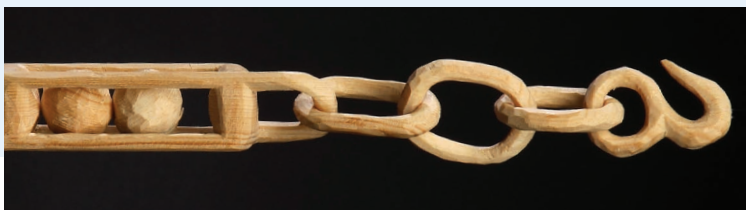


**3**

**Continue making small cuts to free the balls.** Use caution to make sure the balls don't get too small, otherwise they will fall out of the cage. After the balls are free, use small shaving cuts to round the balls. Clean up any cuts on the cage walls and smooth the inside top and bottom of the cage. You can also taper the top of the cage for a more finished look.

## COMBINE THE TWO PROJECTS

Now that you've completed the chain and ball-in-cage, you're ready to incorporate the two into an interesting chain. Start with a 1" x 1" x 12" blank. Layout several links, using the method above. Then lay out a section for the ball-in-cage near the center of the block. Add a few more links, and end it with another ball-in-cage. I like to carve a hook at the end of the chain to make it easy to display. It is carved similar to the chain links. Once you get the hang of it, you can combine a number of different elements and complexities in a single chain for a truly unique work of art. Don't be afraid to experiment and have fun!



materials  
& tools

### MATERIALS:

2 each 1" x 1" x 4" pine or basswood  
1" x 1" x 12" pine or basswood

### TOOLS:

Carving knife of choice

### About the Author

Kivel Weaver of Fayetteville, AR, has been carving for 68 years. He started carving and whittling at age four, and never quit. He has carved more chains than he can count. His primary tool is a modified Case pocketknife.



To see more of Kivel's amazing chains, visit [www.WoodCarvingIllustrated.com/issue38/hand-carved-classics.php](http://www.WoodCarvingIllustrated.com/issue38/hand-carved-classics.php).





# Cottonwood Bark **VIKING**

**Rugged features make this warrior the perfect subject for bark carving**

*By Rick Jensen*

*Photography by Monte Draper*

The Vikings were rough, tough, and fearsome people from the Scandinavian countries. Although history tells us that the Vikings did not have horns on their helmets, the ones I carve do, because I choose to carve them as a somewhat whimsical creation. The style that the Viking is carved in is somewhere between realistic and folk art.

Viking carvings are always popular here in Northwest Minnesota, as well as Wisconsin and North Dakota. Their popularity can be compared to cowboy carvings in the western states. I believe it's because of all the Scandinavians that originally settled in this area.

Cottonwood bark's ease of carving and interesting texture make it one of my favorite mediums for carving. The irregularities generate design changes as you carve, making each work of art unique. Keep it simple and have fun. Remember to use the largest tools you can, as it will make your carving much easier. Also, think safety throughout the whole project.

## **PROTECTING YOUR HAND** **tips**

*Wear a leather glove on your tool hand when carving to avoid scrapes and bruises from the rough bark.*





**1**

**Clear off the outer bark near the center of the piece for the nose.** Use a 25mm #5 fishtail gouge. Taper the wood from the center outwards. Don't clean off more of the gray, rough bark than you need. Establish a centerline in the area you cleaned off, and draw lines to represent the bridge and bottom of the nose. The distance between these two lines is approximately 1½".



**2**

**Make V-shaped cuts at the bridge and bottom of the nose.** Use a long-bladed knife. Re-draw the centerline. Turn the carving so the bridge of the nose faces downward. Invert a 12mm #7 gouge, and cut from the bottom of the nose towards the bridge of the nose. Repeat this cut until the bridge of the nose tapers down to the bottom of the V-cut.



**3**

**Separate the center of the brow area and the bridge of the nose.** Keep the carving positioned so the bridge of the nose faces down. Use the same #7 gouge to carve a groove between the brow area and the bridge of the nose. Redraw the centerline.



**4**

**Shape the ball of the nose.** Invert the same #7 gouge, and use the curve of the gouge to make stop cuts around the nose. Continue using the inverted #7 gouge to cut from the centerline on the ball of the nose towards the cheek area, angling this cut downward as you carve. This will shape the wings of the nose.



**5**

**Rough out the eye sockets.** You can see that the wings of the nose have been set in and some of the bark has been removed for the nostrils. Also, the eye socket area has been drawn in. Carve this area with a 10mm #11 gouge, leaving a high spot in the center of the eye socket.



**6**

**Rough in the three planes that make up the mouth area.** Use a large fishtail gouge. The mouth area is divided into the area under the nose and the areas on either side of this area. Note: You can see the mound left in the center of the eye socket in the last step.





**7**

**Draw in the smile lines.** These lines will become the top of the mustache and the bottom of the cheek. By angling these lines downward, the Viking will have a somewhat fearsome look. Carve along these lines with a 75° 12mm round-bottom V-tool.



**8**

**Shape the outline of the face.** Use a 75° 12mm, round-bottom V-tool to shape the bottom of the helmet. Outline the mustache with the same tool. The round bottom of the V-tool leaves a softer cut than a regular V-tool.



**9**

**Clean up the brow and forehead area.** Use a large fishtail gouge. Cut in and narrow the temple area.



**10**

**Shape the bottom trim on the helmet.** Make a stop cut with a large fishtail gouge or long-bladed knife. Begin shaping and tapering the helmet with the fishtail gouge by cutting up to the stop cut.



**11**

**Redefine the bottom trim on the helmet.** Use a 75° 10mm V-tool. Then rough-out the trim on the upper part of the helmet.



**12**

**Clean up the eye socket area.** Use a 10mm #11 gouge. Draw a centerline on the eye sockets. The centerlines have also been drawn in for the helmet trim that protrudes from the rest of the helmet.





**13**

**Drill the holes for the horns and the rivets.** Drill  $\frac{3}{8}$ "-deep holes for the horns with a  $\frac{15}{64}$ "-diameter drill bit in a hand-held drill on each side of the helmet. Make a number of evenly spaced marks along the centerline of the helmet trim for the rivets. Using a micromotor tool with a  $\frac{7}{64}$ "-diameter drill bit, drill  $\frac{3}{8}$ "-deep holes. These will be used to install  $\frac{1}{8}$ " wooden dowels that will represent rivets on each of these marks.



**14**

**Remove the marking lines, and soften the edges.** Use a 3M Scotch-Brite™ pad #7440. Then use an emery board to taper one end of the  $\frac{1}{8}$ "-diameter x 1" wooden dowels for the rivets. Insert the tapered end of the dowel into the hole, and use a hammer to tap it in about  $\frac{3}{8}$ ". If the fit is too loose, glue can be used to hold the dowels in place. Insert the dowels into each rivet hole and trim them so they protrude about  $\frac{1}{8}$ ".



**15**

**Clean up the face.** Using a skew chisel, smooth out the sharp facets off the face. I use a Stubai SK2 rounded skew. Then sketch in the eyes.



**16**

**Carve the eyes.** Make a stop cut with a detail knife along the bottom of the top eyelid. Cut upward to the stop cut from the bottom of the eye socket, keeping the rounded shape from side to side and retaining the high spot in the center. Stop cut along the lower part of the eye. Cut the rest of the eyeball from the top downward maintaining the roundness.



**17**

**Clean up the eyeball area.** You can see the finished shape of the eyeball. Note that the bottom lid always tucks in under the top lid at the outside corner—no exceptions. Use a Scotch-Brite pad with a light touch to clean up the eye area, the face, and mustache.



**18**

**Carve the eyelids.** Use the side of a 75° 10mm V-tool. One of the ways you can make this carving your own is by creating as heavy an upper lid as you prefer. Use a 12mm #7 gouge to shape the eyebrow where it meets the bridge of the nose.





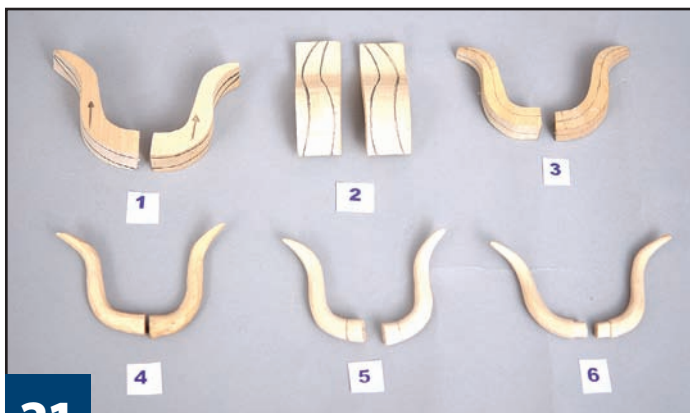
19

**Shape the beard and mouth area.** Use a round bottom V-tool to carve in the beard and mustache hair. Then draw a line below the split in the mustache. Make a stop cut on this line for the mouth with a detail knife. Remove a triangular-shaped piece above the cut. Use a 10mm #11 gouge or a knife to create the lip at the bottom of the mouth.



20

**Detail the eye area.** Draw the eyebrow hair and bags under the eyes. Using a 4mm V-tool, cut in the bags and add some wrinkles to this area. Use a 10mm 75° V-tool to create crows' feet at the outward corner of each eye. Use a Scotch-Brite pad to lightly clean the whole eye area, softening the bags, wrinkles, and crows' feet. Carve the eyebrow hair lines.



21

**Carve the horns.** Cut the side profile (arrows show grain direction). Draw the top profile, making sure they face opposite each other. Rough out the horns (3) and draw centerlines on the top and sides. Sand the horns to shape. Draw a line  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the base. Make a stop cut on the line, and shape this area to  $\frac{1}{4}$ "-diameter. This creates a shoulder for mounting.



22

**Carve the pupil.** Using a #5 Dockyard micro gouge, create the pupil in each eye. Darken the inner part of the pupil with a pencil. This is also a good time to clear a small spot on the bottom of the carving to sign your name. Use a large fishtail gouge to expose some of the inner wood to make your signature show up.



23

**Finish detailing the face.** Use a Bobbi-T tool or a double-ended pin vise with a needle-shaped diamond bit to clean up around the nose. I use diamond and ruby power carving bits with a  $\frac{3}{32}$ "-diameter shank in this tool. Then insert the horns for a test fit and adjust if needed. Use a small amount of 5-minute epoxy glue to hold them in place.

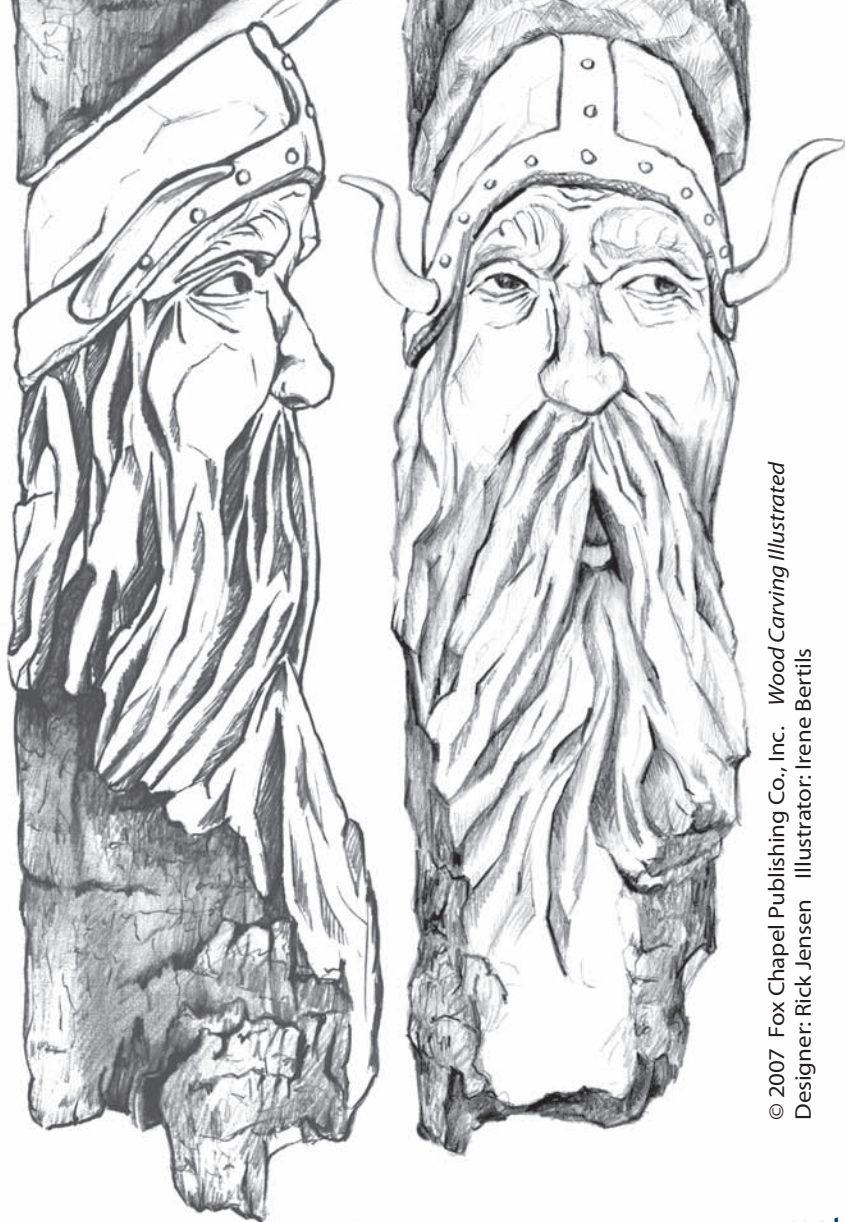


24

**Apply a finish to the carving.** Apply several coats of spray lacquer, allowing time for the lacquer to dry between each coat. Apply a coat of mixed (50/50) Watco dark and neutral wax, and remove the excess wax with a rag. After the piece has dried for 24 hours, finish by buffing it with a rotary horsehair brush to give the piece a soft luster.



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Designer: Rick Jensen Illustrator: Irene Bertils

## FIXING CRACKS **tips**

Cyanoacrylate glue, also known as CA or Super Glue™, can be used to fill cracks in the bark.



### MATERIALS:

3" x 4" x 14" cottonwood bark  
1" x 2" x 5" basswood (both horns)  
11 each 1/8"-diameter by 1" dowels  
Cyanoacrylate glue, super thin  
5-minute epoxy glue  
Watco Liquid Dark Wax  
Watco Liquid Neutral Wax  
Deft Semi-Gloss Spray Lacquer  
3M Scotch-brite pad #7440

### TOOLS:

25mm #5 fishtail gouge  
12mm #7 gouge  
10mm #11 gouge  
#5 Dockyard micro gouge  
14mm skew chisel  
75° 12mm round bottom V-tool  
75° 10mm V-tool  
75° 4mm V-tool  
Drill with 15/64"-diameter bit

Micromotor with 7/64"-diameter drill bit  
Bobbi-T tool or double-ended pin vise  
Long blade knife  
Detail knife  
Rotary horsehair brush  
Emery board  
Gloves (safety & leather), thumb guard

## materials & tools

## special sources

### COTTONWOOD BARK

Art Olver, 253-804-3488, [artolver@comcast.net](mailto:artolver@comcast.net)

Chipping Away, Inc., 888-682-9801, [www.woodcarvingstore.com](http://www.woodcarvingstore.com)

Rick Jensen, 218-281-5107, [rrjensen@gvtel.com](mailto:rrjensen@gvtel.com)

### BOBBI T TOOL

The Woodcraft Shop, 800-397-2278, [www.TheWoodcraftShop.com](http://www.TheWoodcraftShop.com)



### About the Author

Rick is an internationally known carver and author and is often on the road as a carving instructor. His work is featured in *The Illustrated Guide to Carving Tree Bark*, which he co-authored with Jack A. Williams, as well as *Carving Found Wood* by Vic Hood and Jack A. Williams. Rick lives with his wife, Jody, in Crookston, MN. You can contact Rick at 218-281-5107, [rrjensen@gvtel.com](mailto:rrjensen@gvtel.com), for information about classes or seminars.



# *The* **Netsuke** *Carvings* *of* *Cornel Schneider*

**Detailed carvings  
demonstrate  
a love of nature**

*Photos by Alfred Borer*



Drawing inspiration from his surroundings in the Swiss countryside, Cornel Schneider devotes much of his time to rendering wildlife and nature in wood. These highly detailed miniature carvings are called Netsuke. Netsuke are miniature carvings that were traditionally used by the Japanese to hook their carrying bag through the sash of their kimono.

Cornel started carving in 1988 while working at a Catholic mission station in what is now South Africa. Cornel spent his evenings practicing his carving techniques and developing his unique style.

When asked about his early carvings, Cornel reminisced, “I started out with a pocketknife and sandpaper; my first carving was a mermaid with no arms, and by the time I finished her, I had fallen in love with carving miniatures. Now, 18 years later, miniature carvings are my daily bread.”

In the early 1990s, he was carving miniatures for museum

dioramas. His first experience with netsuke was in 1995 at an art fair.

“I was totally fascinated by these small, carved wonders and went home and carved my first one.”

That first netsuke carving sparked a new passion. For Cornel, netsuke is not only a means of support, but is an important part of his life—second only to his family. He rises early and carves. After a few hours, he stops carving to spend time with his two young children, or to walk or bike in the countryside. He takes great pride in his work and the joy that it brings to others.





Netsuke carvings are small enough to fit in the palm of your hand. These two frogs are carved from boxwood, a hard wood with tight grain.



“I started out with a pocketknife and sandpaper... by the time I finished [my first carving], I had fallen in love with carving miniatures.”

Cornel's first miniature carving, a mermaid with no arms.



Cornel spends weeks working on each of his miniature carvings.





## Tips and techniques for Netsuke carving

by Cornel Schneider

### Designing Netsuke

Each of my carvings is made out of a single piece of wood. That means that I can only take away material. I do not add anything to my pieces. That makes the design process much more important.

- **Make a 3-D clay model the same size as the proposed carving.** Don't worry about adding a lot of fine details to the model, but make sure the landmarks and guidelines you need to carve the project are on the model.
  - **Choose your wood carefully.** I use boxwood for my carvings, because it is very hard and compact, so I can carve in any direction. I sometimes cut several pieces of boxwood to make sure the one I choose is consistent the whole way through. I spend two to three months on a single netsuke, so if there is a bad spot, it is a lot of lost time.
  - **Work the piece down to the final shape carefully.** You should see the final shape in the block as you carve. Keep an eye on the landmarks you sculpted into your model.
- **Roughing out:** I use an old dental power tool and a variety of bits. Then I switch to a micro-motor tool with a quick-change hand piece. This process goes quickly, but it only accounts for about 10% of the carving process.
  - **Scalpels or replaceable blades:** I use a lot of these types of knives, because I don't want to spend time sharpening.
  - **Shop-made tools:** Because most of my work is on a very small scale, I fashion my own chisels out of denim or leather sewing needles.
  - **Sanding:** Cut the end off a toothpick, flatten it, and glue a small piece of sandpaper onto it. I sand up to 1000-grit to get a nice polish. These sticks work great for getting into small corners and making undercuts.
  - **Other tools:** I use a variety of old engraver's chisels, watchmaker screwdrivers sharpened into chisels, and very small knives.
  - **Magnification:** I wear magnifying glasses so I can see the tiniest details.

### Netsuke Carving Tools

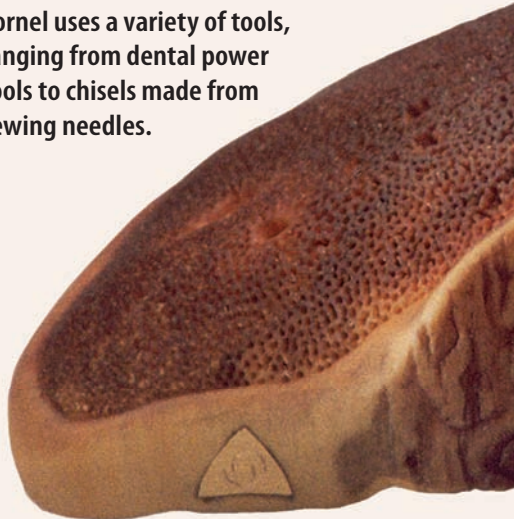


### Finishing Netsuke

I color my netsuke with alcohol soluble stains. I dilute the stains so they produce a very light color, because when I apply an oil finish, the colors deepen. I hand polish the netsuke with oil. I will often watch a movie while I polish the netsuke with just fingers and the oil.



Cornel uses a variety of tools, ranging from dental power tools to chisels made from sewing needles.



Cornel uses sandpaper glued to toothpicks to smooth his tiny carvings.



### About the Author

Cornel Schneider of Kleinlützel, Switzerland, has been crafting miniature carvings for more than 15 years. From his home in the

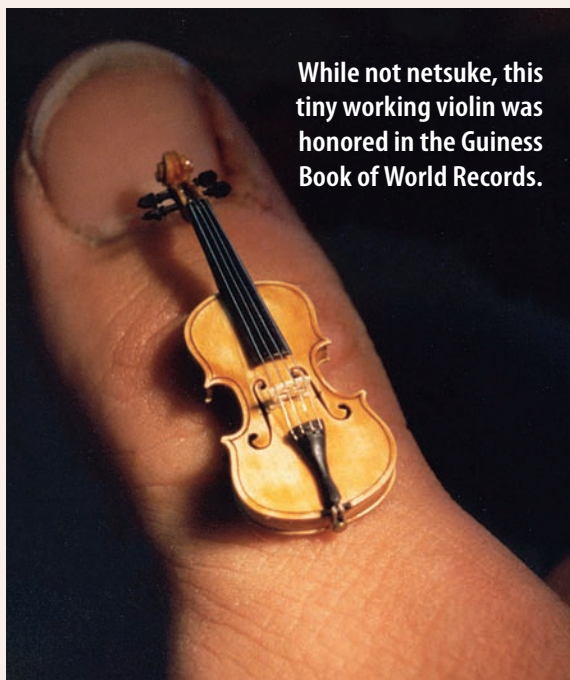
Swiss countryside, he carves his intricate creations, trying to capture in wood, the natural wonders he sees outside.

For more of his miniature carvings, visit [www.cornelschneider.ch](http://www.cornelschneider.ch).

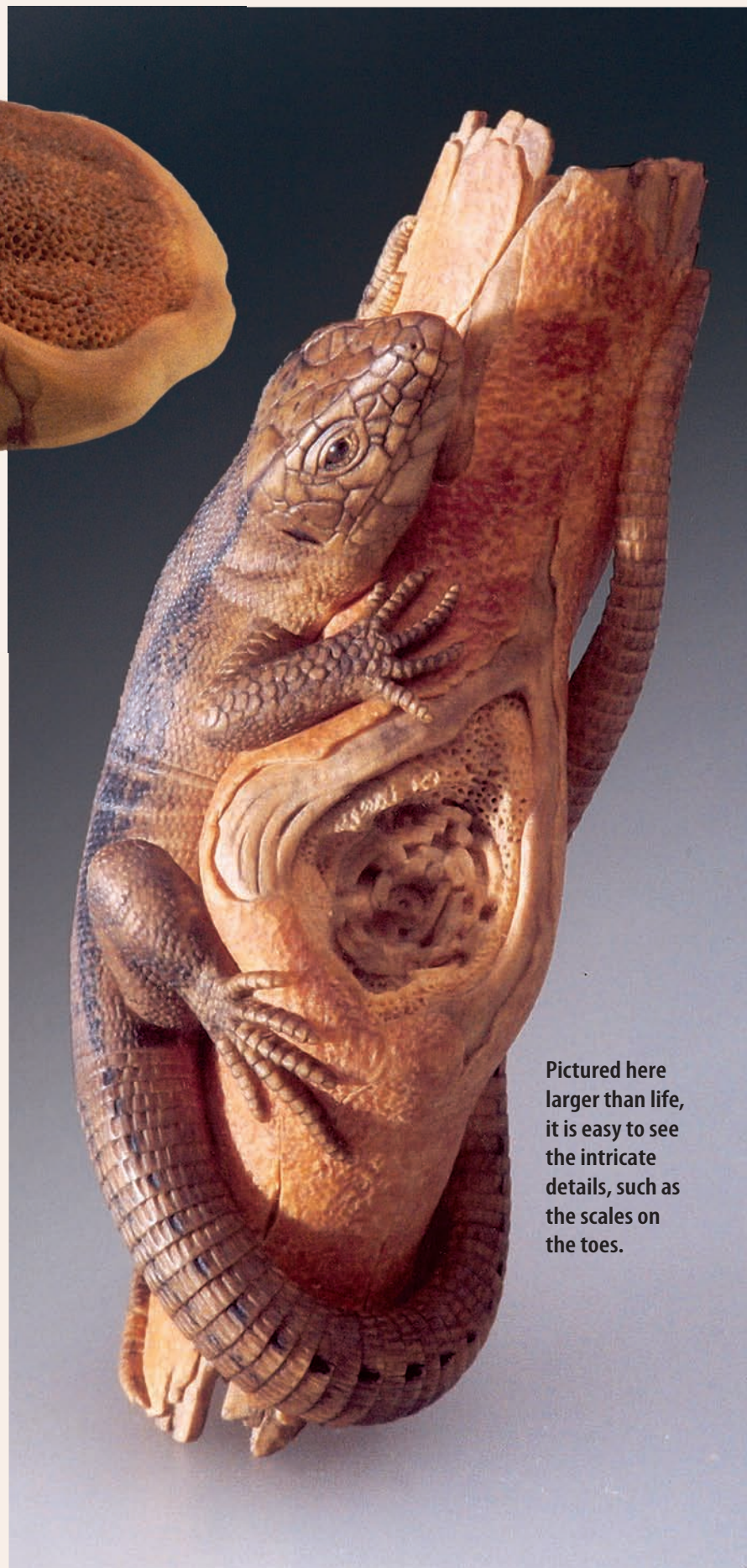




“I love what I do and  
love being my own master.  
If my work is pleasing  
to the eye, and is an  
inspiration for others—  
what more can  
I wish for!”



While not netsuke, this  
tiny working violin was  
honored in the Guinness  
Book of World Records.



Pictured here  
larger than life,  
it is easy to see  
the intricate  
details, such as  
the scales on  
the toes.



# Setting Up Shop

**A carver needs more than sharp tools; the workspace, bench, and lighting are equally important**

*By Chris Pye*

Carving, just like everything else, happens in a context. In other words, there are prior and surrounding circumstances that directly affect what you are doing. Indeed, they affect what you *can* do: the room where you carve, with its lighting and ambience; the bench at which you stand, its height and the ease with which you can move around it; the wood you've chosen and how you hold it; what carving tools you have at hand and other tools you have available to help prepare or finish; and so on.

It's a mistake not to consider this aspect of your world as a carver. My attitude is that carving is difficult enough as it is, so you want everything possible going for you, supporting and encouraging you to create your best possible work. This includes the environment in which you work, with all its bits and pieces. It's really about getting your mindset right before putting chisel to wood.

Before I turn to actual carving techniques in the next article in this series, I'd just like to highlight some important points to consider regarding the supporting elements of the carver's world.

Due to the space constraints of the magazine, I have boiled it down to the essentials. You'll find a lot more information in my book *Woodcarving Tools, Materials & Equipment, Volume 2*.

## **Workshop**

I'm continuously amazed that some students never wonder why they are disinclined to spend time in a damp, cold garden shed with no electricity, and therefore don't carve much; or wonder why they can't see torn grain when they are working in a dark corner of a garage with only a fluorescent ceiling light at their backs.

*W* A Beginner's Guide to  
**WOODCARVING**

A useful, dedicated bench by Sjöberg—a worthy attempt at meeting the needs of woodcarvers. Beginners often find the cost of a specialized bench out of reach. In this article we will think in terms of a basic “workstation” that fits your needs and can be adapted as you develop as a woodcarver.



As I said, we need all the help we can get! Of course, you may not have the luxury of a dedicated space. But wherever you carve, you want to look forward to being in it and find that it enhances what you are doing.

**Your environment:** Think about “orchestrating your environment.” You need to feel relaxed and comfortable; a space in which you look forward to spending time where it is not too warm or too cold. I like having quiet music on in the background. If you are standing—and you can stand more or less in the same spot for hours on end—think about rubber matting or something similar to ease your feet.



Tool rolls are great for transporting tools, but potentially hazardous if you choose to work out of them: to reach the one opposite you must pass over a row of sharp edges. Take all the tools out in one go and lay them on your work surface.



Drawers keep the tools safe, clearly distinguished and readily available as you need them.

**Tool storage:** Keep the tools you use a lot closest to your work area; store away those you seldom use. Tool rolls are good for traveling, but dangerous to use everyday—I see many cuts in fingers as students take out and put back their tools. Far better to keep your tools in racks or drawers.



Above, a simple, shallow feather carving: no paint, no pyrography, just cross light from the side creating the shadows and highlights that tell you what you are looking at. Below it, the same feather with the shadows destroyed by the camera flash: dull and hard to read. How light plays on your three-dimensional work is the very essence of woodcarving.

**Lighting:** Woodcarving is all about light and shadow. If you are not painting your work, what else is there? All carvers do is play with depth. Natural light is always the most pleasant to carve in. I almost always need more than a general background light and have a number of adjustable lights—most of which are cheap and readily available.

### Workstation

Since carvings vary so widely in size and type (from wide relief carvings to tall figures), there is no standard size and height, or even shape to a carver's bench, despite the guidelines you have read elsewhere.

Rather than thinking you must have a bench first and fit your carvings to it, think more of your carvings first and what you might need. I think of carving at a workstation rather than a bench, because although I have a carving bench, it is almost always holding something else (a post, a tilting surface, an adjustable vise, etc.) rather than being the “operating table” it could be.

You first need an idea of the sort of work you have in mind and then build a workstation to suit—but it's hard to know what you will be doing when you are starting. So, build something the equivalent of a strong table to get you going, but don't get preoccupied with “bench” as an idea.

Whatever workstation you have for carving, three things are very important:



**Construction:** Although proper joints are no doubt best, carving benches can be successfully cobbled together by bolting and screwing pieces of wood together. This is great for those without woodworking abilities, means, or interest: ask a lumber yard to supply you with the wood, cut to size and assemble it yourself. Whatever your workstation looks like, make it sturdy. You will likely have to add weights to its base or bolt it to the floor to keep it stable.



Carriage bolts and lag screws can be used to assemble a simple, yet solid, carving bench.

**Height:** Unless you are repeating the same thing time after time, the wide variety of size and type of possible carvings always makes the height of a bench or workstation a problem. You need to carve with as straight a back as possible to prevent discomfort while you work. This usually means your bench or workstation will be a lot higher than a conventional woodworking bench. Think where in space you would like to place your workpiece if you had a magic wand, and then find a means of fixing it there, at that height, rather than having the work too low because that happened to be the height of your bench top. Carving can be quite tiring. Frequent breaks, stretching, moving about and a bit of fresh air will help you work for longer periods and with more vigor.

**Adaptability:** Over the years I have ended up with a variety of adjustable options that add to my basic bench, and have long since given up the search for the magic bench to end all benches. At the end of the day, you must be prepared and able to change what you have to suit a particular project.

## Holding Devices

Traditional woodcarving involves long carving tools, and carvers hold these in both hands, often ambidextrously. There are certain exceptions—such as when you are using a mallet, or when “backing off,” a technique where one hand supports a fragile element of wood and just offers a thumb to aid the other hand as it manipulates the tool—but in general, both hands of the carver hold the carving tools. Therefore, we need something to hold the wood: a holding device.

Again, that wide range of carving types and sizes means there will be many ways of holding work, some suitable to one project, others suitable to another. Holding devices can range from cheap, simple bits of waste wood to expensive adjustable clamps. Whatever you choose, the more adaptable the better. Many beginners think they cannot achieve good work without a special and expensive way of holding work. Some modern devices do have many advantages, but remember just how ancient this craft is and how carvers must have worked in the past. You really don't need much!

Whatever you use, some principles are invariable in the way you hold your wood to carve it. Your device should:

**Hold the work securely:** Only the tools move, not the carving. A sudden tilt or shift of the work at a delicate stage can be nothing short of disaster.

**Allow you to get at the area you wish to carve:** This usually means some way of reasonably quick adjustments. The need for back-breaking yoga-like postures, while interesting to spectators, doesn't contribute

## A Variety of Holding Devices



A block of wood held by fences and wedges which are easily removable.



Moulding held in a jig and secured with double-sided tape.



A variety of useful clamps. I prefer the larger quick action type.



to successful carving and is a sign you should re-think the way you are holding your work.

**Be safe:** Not injure yourself or your work.

As we go along in the series and work on different projects, I'll briefly introduce you to a variety of ways of holding your work. For now, let me just mention my "A team:"

■ **Bits of wood:** Yes!—it's amazing what you can achieve with fences and wedges, posts clamped in carpenters' vises, boards onto which you can stick work with double-sided tape or glue and paper and so on. And all for nothing but a little effort!

■ **'C' Clamps:** These and a regular woodworking bench vise are standard fare in most workshops. Why? Because they are so useful! It's very satisfying to use these unassuming pieces of equipment and a few bits of wood to find a simple solution to holding your carving.

■ **Carvers Screws:** With these you can hold both relief and "in-the-round" work. A simple, elegant, often underrated solution to many holding problems.

■ **Adjustable clamps and vises:** There are many on the market and it's a good idea to see what other carvers use and what their opinion is. View these devices as a starting point. You can attach pieces of wood to the metal plates to suit the particular carving you are working on. This adaptability is a key element in successfully holding and working with your woodcarvings. Some are expensive, some reasonably priced and this doesn't seem to have a whole lot to do with the build quality. You just need one: see it as a starting point and create platforms, etc. using wood.

I'd suggest you wait to buy anything until later in the series when you see what these devices can do and whether they fit the sort of carving work you have in mind. Bear in mind that if you are only carving one sort of thing in the future, you will only need one (successful) way of holding it.

## Wood

Carving is all about light and shadow. This is the principal reason why traditional carving woods are, in themselves, actually quite dull and uninspiring. In Europe, limewood (US basswood), oak, mahogany, and walnut—these are all bland woods. Why? Because carvers were interested in the forms of the acanthus leaves or tracery, or covering up the work with gold leaf. They wouldn't want the figuring of the grain to confuse or dominate their 3-D forms.

You cannot really carve in the traditional manner on anything other than plain wood, mildly figured at best. I have seen heads carved in heavily figured wood that bestows what looks like some hideous skin disease on the subject. In traditional carving, the wood is a vehicle for the skill of the carver and does not intrude or play a role.

By all means use interesting timbers where you plan to show off the grain—abstract sculpture or those wide simple surfaces you see in woodturning—but remember that strong grain can really detract from the impact of a carving in the manner of a camouflage net.

Proportional to  
the time, the cost  
of wood in a  
carving might  
be less than 1%...  
Always get  
the best wood  
you can...



Woodcarver's screws: the larger one by Stubai and the smaller by Veritas.



An adjustable holding device by Jerry-Rig that pivots and locks.



A holding system by Woodcarvers Supply Inc., that is easily adaptable.





Here we have the starting block for a seated figure in limewood. The grain is fairly bland and the pieces carefully matched and meticulously glued together. Notice how the joints (shown in the close-up) are unobtrusive when carved over, as evident in the final carving.

Wood ideal for traditional carving should be seasoned (air-dried to ambient humidity); of tight, straight, predictable grain; knot and split free; of uniform color with minimal figuring, and medium density (halfway between say boxwood and pine).

Another virtue of negligibly patterned wood is the ability to join separate boards without noticeable joint lines in order to make a bigger starting block. Most carving in Europe has historically used European limewood and oak or South American mahogany (of which pattern-grade Brazilian is the nearest equivalent today). In the United States, basswood, butternut, and walnut are the most likely candidates—though there may be others of which I am unaware. Another wood that has good carving qualities is jelutong. Woods such as American cherry and maple would be too dense for conventional carving. The best thing is to look at other carvers' work and study the type of wood they have used.

When looking for sources of carving wood, ask other local carvers and clubs; check out suppliers in carving magazines.



Remember that most carving is done in relatively small pieces of wood, so don't forget about asking a local high-end cabinetmaker or woodworker for off cuts.

**Storage:** Keep your wood dry, out of direct sunlight and spaced so that air can circulate. Ideally, when you need a piece in the future, prepare it and bring it into your workshop to acclimate for as long as possible.

Most importantly: Proportional to the time, the cost of wood in a carving might be less than 1%. Think of all that time and effort you'll be investing. Always get the best wood you can for the job: "Don't spoil the ship for a pennyworth of tar."

### Other Tools and Equipment

Besides traditional tools, woodcarvers will usually have various other tools in the workshop to assist their work, either in the early or late stages:

**Shop equipment:** As a carver I find a band saw and a bench press (UK pillar drill) indispensable for preparing wood in the early stages. You don't actually need to own them—just know someone who does!

**Hand woodworking tools:** Saws, spokeshaves and rasps are used in tandem with carving tools to remove wood more quickly or consolidate forms and surfaces.

**Power tools:** For carvers, plunging routers and jigsaws can be particularly useful for setting in depths or removing waste wood. Sometimes I'm asked whether using power tools isn't "cheating?" My answer is that I finish my carving with traditional tools. Anything that helps me get to this point quicker, without imposing itself undesirably on my work, is fair game for me to use.



## Background Ideas and Designs

There are three elements to a woodcarving: the wood in which it is made, the tools with which you make it (and technique of using them), and your design. What can I say about design: the conception, the meaning of what you are making? Design is by far the most important element.

No matter how lovely your piece of wood, or the execution of your work, if your design is dull, unbalanced or—dare I say it?—poor, then the carving will fail. Conversely, a first-rate design will always carry imperfect technique or flawed wood.

Thus, if you are going to be creative and not just a copier, you must give full attention to the design side of your woodcarving: how it works or communicates with the viewer. Also you need your design to be sympathetic to your wood, and within your abilities.

Unfortunately, this aspect of carving daunts many students. (“I’m not artistic!” “I can’t draw!”). The good news is that although artistry seems to have an element of inborn talent, what seeds we all have can be nurtured and developed.

We all have self-doubt, just as we are all afraid we might not be good enough to succeed, but believe me, over many years of teaching woodcarving, I have not met a student who didn’t develop their design sense considerably when they worked at it.

And one of the best ways I can suggest to “work at it” and mature as a carver is to cultivate three books:

**Scrapbook:** A “catch-all” for anything you see in the areas in which you are interested—either the subject itself or someone’s representation. Get into a habit of ripping out magazine photos, sticking in photocopies of pages from books or printed pictures from the web. Don’t discriminate. Grab it! You can have different scrapbooks for different subjects of course, and in no time you will have a portfolio of subjects, views, and stimulating impressions.

**Notebook:** In your notebook—a journal that you carry everywhere—you catch ideas and thoughts; comments on carvings you’ve seen, why they work, why they don’t, the

**Carvings don’t  
begin when  
you put a chisel  
to wood,  
but long before,  
in your mind**

wood that was used, the choice of finish; techniques you’d like to try, and so on. Again, don’t discriminate, or edit; just write it in. Note everything! Putting a date is interesting and you’ll browse through this book in the future and be sparked to all sorts of carvings.

**Sketch book:** A “sketch” is a quick, informal draft; descriptive notes in lines with perhaps, a few shadows thrown in. My sketches often include written jottings or impressions too. We are not talking a gallery level of drawing, just private reminders of the detail you saw, or the idea you had.

Don’t wait—start now! And if you conscientiously work on these three books, you will undoubtedly cultivate a priceless garden of ideas that will both feed your creativity and develop your eye for lines and sense of design.

Finally: I’ve seen many a carving in which it’s obvious that the carver has only a minimal idea what they are doing, carvings that have been started without adequate research and preparation. Remember, no matter what you carve: you cannot have too much preparation, but you can have too little. In which case your carving will suffer. Carvings don’t begin when you put a chisel to wood, but long before, in your mind, with the conception and subsequent design. So that is where your efforts begin.

**I have and add to these sort of books all the time. It doesn’t matter exactly what form or combination they take, the aim is to get into a habit of capturing ideas and inspirations.**



### About the Author

**Chris Pye** is a master woodcarver, instructor and

author. He has written several books and offers one-on-one instruction at his home studio in Hereford, England. He also maintains an e-mail newsletter and website on woodcarving at [www.chrispye-woodcarving.com](http://www.chrispye-woodcarving.com).



# Carving Habitat: *Twig*



A similar twig used as a habitat element.



**Power carve  
highly detailed  
branches tailored  
to showcase your  
carving**

By Kenny Vermillion  
Photography by  
Carl Saathoff

## HAND HOLDING

## tips

*The twig should always be hand held while carving. Normal breathing causes the hands to independently move uncontrollably. Hold the power carver the same as a pencil, and extend a finger from one hand to touch the other. Now when one hand moves, the other moves with it for coordinated control.*

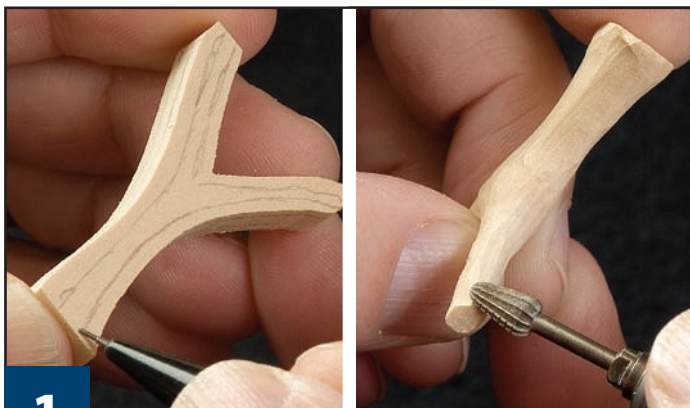
Take a look at the top winners in any bird or wildlife carving competition and you'll notice many have a common element—detailed habitat that is designed to highlight the main subject. You could use actual elements from nature, but they are often the wrong scale and can detract from your overall carving rather than enhance it. By carving your own habitat, you can achieve the specific effect you are striving for and create a professional presentation for your carving.

Examine short sections of a real twig and take note of the interesting details. Figure out how to replicate some of these details on your twig. The variety of colors found in a natural stick make me think of impressionism, and that has influenced how I paint some subjects.

Choose a real, single-forked twig for reference. Carving is a process. First determine the details you want to incorporate in your own carving and sketch them on the twig. Remove the wood around the details, then break each detail area down into components. When approached in chunks like this, even the most complicated carving becomes achievable. Analyze the colors in the same manner. Gesso the entire carving to prepare the surface for color details. Identify specific areas and the appropriate color. Systematically build cumulative coats of paint to the desired depth of color and finish. Break everything down into manageable components.

Approach carving and painting as a refining process. From the first cut, it is correcting the shape to conform to the pattern, and from the first coat of Gesso it is about correcting the colors. From start to finish, it is a series of corrections.





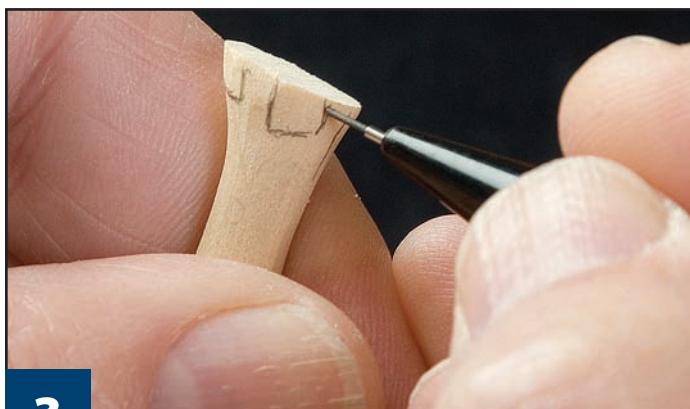
**1**

**Rough out the twig.** Divide each side into three equal sections. These lines are important references. Without them, it is easy to remove too much wood, creating a flat or undesired radius. Use a pear-shaped stump cutter to remove the original four corners to the pencil lines to create an octagon. Hold the bit at an oblique angle and carve from the ends toward the center. Round the twig by lightly stroking the bit along it.



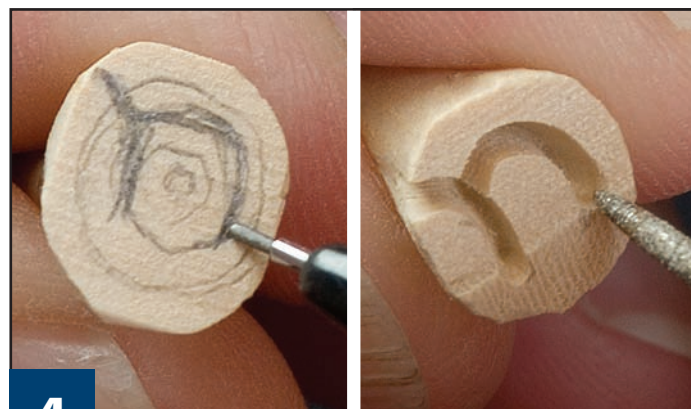
**2**

**Rough out the details.** Draw on details such as fissures and buds on the sides. Use a real twig as a reference. Remove wood around each pencil line with a small, ball-shaped diamond bur, being careful not to cut too deep. Evenly relieve the wood between the details. Stroke forward because pulling against the rotation creates digs. Use this diamond ball to make the texture and grooves of the bark between and around the details.



**3**

**Draw in the details on the ends of the twig.** When a stick is broken, the bark tears unevenly exposing the cambium. Cambium is the layer of tissue below the bark sometimes referred to as the second layer of bark. Sketch in some of these tears. When drawing and carving on any project, rather than “grip” the piece, “hold” it. Gripping can cause writer’s cramp and, over time, tendonitis.



**4**

**Rough in the splits and breaks.** Consider the circular growth rings when sketching the splits. Use a tapered-point diamond bur to make the large splits. Increase the depth with each pass. Jamming the bur in will burn the wood. Refer to a real twig to determine cut depth. Use a cylinder-shaped stump cutter to cut the next largest splits. Ease the bit straight into the end of the twig, as a drill bit, and move it sideways to define some splits.



**5**

**Relieve the wood from the perimeter of the ends.** Use a tapered stump cutter. There are two layers of bark, and when broken, they sometimes separate and only one is torn off. Notice that these tears may be quite shallow, ragged, and of various lengths.



**6**

**Continue detailing the ends.** With the tapered stump cutter, etch small splits within the designated areas on the perimeter of each end. Stay with the tapered stump cutter to carve even smaller splits in the twig ends. Continue following the dictates of the growth rings.





**7**

**Refine, deepen, and taper the splits.** Use a pointed diamond bur. Use this bit in the same fashion as in step 4 (like a drill bit). Too much force can break the tip of the bit. This creates even smaller splits and splinters. Lightly buff the splits to remove the fuzz and fragments with the pointed stone. The buffing also rounds the brittle edges to give a time-worn appearance. This stone can also define other features on the twig.



**8**

**Clean up the texture and grooves of the bark.** Use a round stone to clean up the cuts made by the ball-shaped diamond bit. Refine any detail marks at this time and examine the twig from different angles to spot any areas that need attention. Clean off any remaining pencil marks with an eraser. Stick a straight pin into the end of the twig to aid in clamping for the painting and finishing process.



**9**

**Seal the carving.** Make painting clamps by gluing popsicle sticks to the inside of a clothespin. Notch a dowel and glue it to the outside of the clothespin. I use 5-minute epoxy. A 2x4 with accommodating holes serves as a clamp holder. Apply three light coats of interior/exterior lacquer, letting it dry between coats. Allow the lacquer to cure for 12 hours.



**10**

**Apply a coat of Gesso to the twig.** Using a stiff-bristled brush, mix a couple drops of Gesso with water to the consistency of skim milk. Mix thoroughly. Prevent overlap marks by being stingy with the paint and scrubbing the entire surface of the twig. If, after drying, the twig appears evenly coated with no overlaps, one coat is enough. Clean the brush.



**11**

**Apply a base coat of Payne's Gray.** Mix a small amount of Payne's Gray with water to the consistency of skim milk. Evenly coat the bark areas of the twig, avoiding the ends and splits. Cover the paint in the well with a wet sponge. Mixing paint is an inconsistent process. The necessity to re-coat and retouch is also inconsistent and should be done as the artist deems necessary. Whenever in doubt, resort to reference material.



**12**

**Apply a coat of Burnt Umber.** Mix a small amount of Burnt Umber with water, to the consistency of skim milk. Paint over the Payne's Gray, keeping the adjacent areas clean. Stir the Payne's Gray, and repaint the bark. Washes will color the grooves without filling in the details, and cover less on the high areas, so highlights are automatic. When this coat is dry, re-coat with Burnt Umber. Repeated washes build the color evenly.





13

**Highlight the details.** Mix a small amount of Raw Sienna with water to the consistency of skim milk. Paint the exposed cambium layer on the perimeter of the ends. Use the Raw Sienna wash to paint the small details on the bark. Not only are the details this color, the difference in color further highlights them and makes them more noticeable. Add a couple of drops of water to the Raw Sienna, and paint the splits and splinters on the ends. Also re-coat the cambium layer.



15

**Enhance the darker areas.** After the previous coat has dried, continue to retouch the darker areas with the Payne's Gray. After determining how the twig will be placed in the habitat, darken the areas that will be on the bottom, enhancing the natural shading.

## materials & tools

### MATERIALS:

3/8" x 1" x 1 1/2" tupelo or wood of choice  
Liquitex tube paints: Raw Sienna, Burnt Umber, Payne's Gray  
Gesso  
Interior/Exterior spray lacquer  
Palette of choice (I use a Tupperware egg container)  
Sponges (to place over palette wells to keep paint from drying)  
Three cups of water (one each for mixing paint, initial brush cleaning, and final brush cleaning)  
Paper towels (to clean brush)  
Windex (To clean dry acrylic paint)

### TOOLS:

Rotary power carver of choice  
Stump cutters: pear-shaped, cylinder-shaped, tapered-cylinder-shaped  
Stones: Ball-shaped, pointed  
Diamond burs: round, tapered point, pointed  
Stiff-bristled, camel-hair brush  
Short-bristle nylon brush (to mix paint)  
Old carving knife or painting spatula (to measure paint)  
Eyedropper (to measure water to add to the acrylic paint)



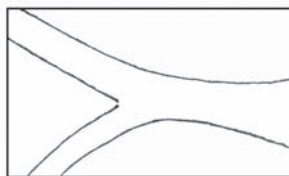
14

**Re-coat the bark.** Stir the Payne's Gray, and re-coat all of the bark. Avoid the highlighted details.

## A CARVING WORK LIGHT

## tips

*I do all of my work under a 60 watt adjustable arm lamp. Keep the light low and well in front to cast a shadow from the back. This defines contours and depth as opposed to flooding it with light which eliminates shadows.*



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Wood Carving Illustrated  
Designer: Kenny Vermillion



## further reading

For more painting and carving information and tips, see *Kenny's Maple Leaf Earrings* article, which appeared in *Fall 2005 (Issue 32)*.

Copies available for \$5.99 plus \$3.50 S&H from Fox Chapel Publishing, 800-457-9112.



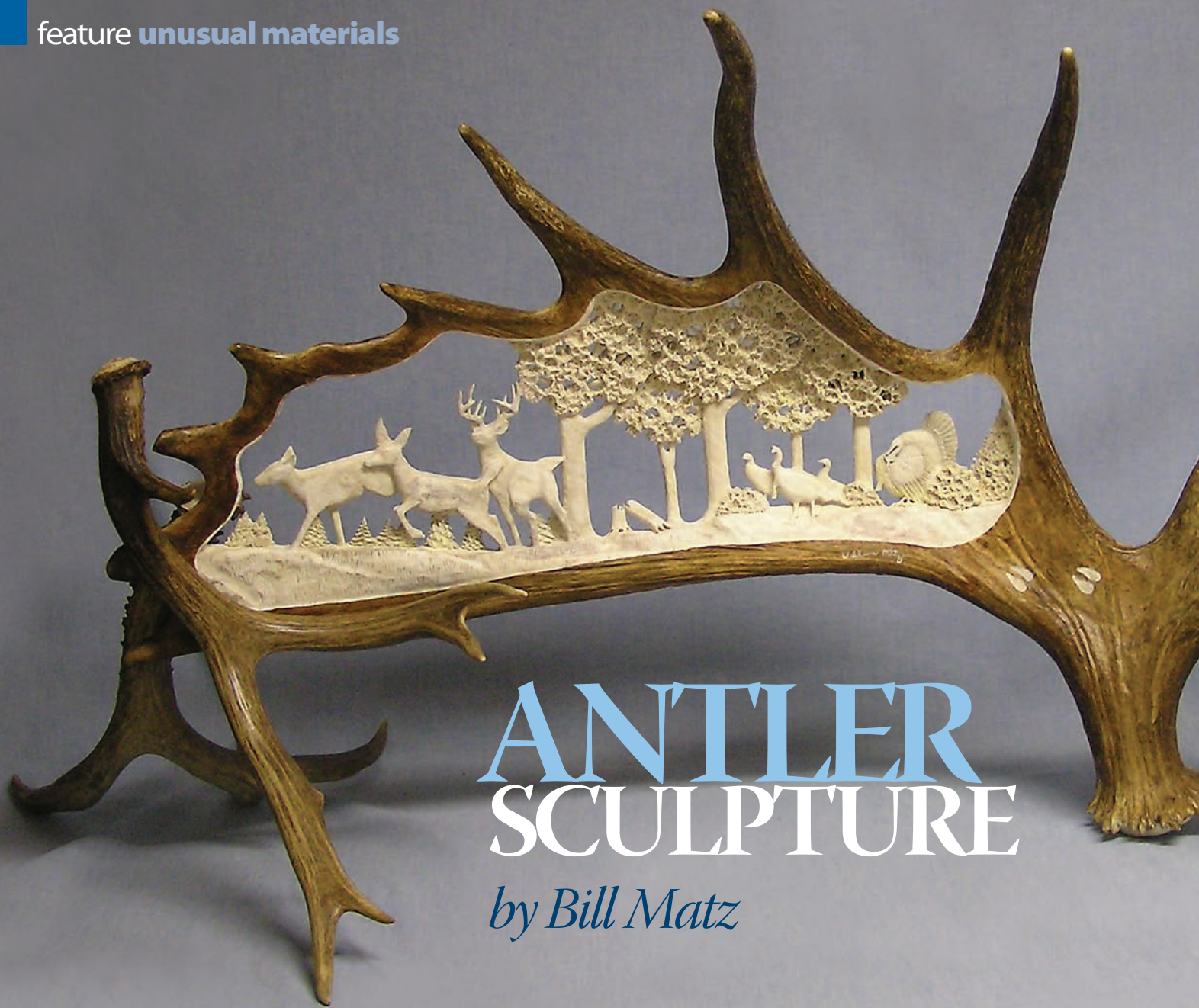
### About the Author

*Kenny Vermillion has been carving wildlife subjects professionally since 1983. Believably real and featured in its natural habitat, the character and dignity of each subject is projected with the highest principles of good art. To contact Kenny: 9301 E. Margaret Drive,*

*Terre Haute, IN 47803, 812-894-2300, [kennyvermillion@aol.com](mailto:kennyvermillion@aol.com), [KennyVermillion.com](http://KennyVermillion.com).*

*To contact Carl: 804 N. Morton St., Fairmount, IN 46928, 765-948-4422, [www.portrayalstudios.com](http://www.portrayalstudios.com).*





# ANTLER SCULPTURE

*by Bill Matz*

**Fascinating  
medium  
produces  
unique  
carvings**

Bill Matz is no stranger to carving, but he found what he believes to be his true calling in 1997 when he was introduced to carving in moose antlers. His realistic scenes of wildlife are highly detailed and have become his trademark style. Prior to working with moose antlers, Bill carved in wood with chisels and knives, and also did some power carving. He carved figures in the round as well as scenes in deep relief. Then he met a carver who showed him his moose antler carvings. Bill found the process to be fascinating and challenging. He put his wood carving aside and has forged a name for himself by creating beautiful sculptures in this unusual medium.

His finished work is available at several galleries and on the internet.

One of Bill's biggest challenges is communicating that the carvings are made from real moose antlers. Admirers usually think the piece is made from plastic or is painted. Bill patiently explains that the artwork is carved from one piece with nothing added, and that the white is the natural interior of the antler. This unique medium does come with its own artistic challenges. Bill offers some great tips for carvers interested in trying their hand at carving in moose antler. For the serious antler carver, Bill offers hands-on classes.



A realistic woodland scene carved in two sections of the same moose antler.



This eagle swooping in for a meal is carved in a smaller antler.

### Planning your carving

Before beginning to carve, you may be intimidated by what appears to be a very complex and difficult undertaking. This does not need to be. By setting a plan of action, proceeding one step at a time, and taking your time, the process can be very enjoyable and rewarding. The power-carving tools that I use are the same or similar to those used for wood.

The planning and layout stages are very important and should be thought out carefully. After laying out the scene, study the layout, and consider the what if's: what if this subject was moved here, or what if this subject was larger, smaller, reversed, or removed completely? The size and shape of the antler may have a bearing on the subject or scene that you plan to carve. No two antlers are alike, and subsequently, no two carvings will be alike.

### Health and Safety

Proper precautions should be taken to prevent antler dust from getting into your lungs. Wear a dust mask and use a dust collector. Also, carve in an area that is well lit and where you are relaxed. Take your time carving, and do not concentrate too long in one specific area; move around on your carving.

### Antler Selection

Select an antler that is suited for carving. The shape and size sometimes dictate what type of scene will work best. The antler should not have any surface cracks, nor be bleached by the sun, and should have a fairly flat palm (the wide, flat part of the antler). Old antlers that have been lying around for several years are often pithy inside, and difficult to carve.

### Tool Selection

I use a flexible-shaft rotary tool. Roughing out is done with various sizes and shapes of carbide burs. The rest of the work is done with various sizes and shapes of steel bits and burs. Carbide and diamond bits and burs also work, but they are not necessary. Try using bits and burs that you already have. They may work just as well.



### Repairing mistakes or damaged areas

Broken pieces can be reattached using a cyanoacrylate glue. Damaged areas can be filled using fine antler dust and a cyanoacrylate glue. Some glues work better than others and are less noticeable. Experiment with some scrap antler material first to find out which works best for you.

### Discolored areas

The brown color can be restored to the exterior surface of an antler using antler stain or a solution of potassium permanganate. Interior areas that are discolored can be treated using a wash of matching latex or acrylic paints. Wood bleach can also be used. Take proper precautions when using any chemical.

### Finishing

Apply a paste wax to the brown exterior surfaces of the antler. No finish is needed for the carved, white areas. Sign your masterpiece and display it proudly.



Bill demonstrates the versatility of this unique medium by using antler cut offs to create a base and using a sculpture to create a functional lamp.



#### About the Author

Bill Matz has been carving seriously since 1991, and in 1997 he began to concentrate on carving in moose antlers. He is known for his detailed and realistic approach to carving in moose antlers. Bill teaches at carving seminars throughout the country and is the author of the book *Carving In Moose Antlers* (\$16.95+\$3.50 S&H), the only book available on the subject. Contact him at 302-856-9807 or visit his website at [www.matzsculptures.com](http://www.matzsculptures.com).

#### special sources

Antlers are available from a number of sources:

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Claw, Antler & Hide Co, 605-673-4345, [www.clawantlerhide.com](http://www.clawantlerhide.com)

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# Relief Carve a Whimsical House

**Power tools speed up the carving process and add unique texture**

*By Jim Cline*

I love to carve whimsical scenes in wood, but hate the time it takes to prepare a relief carving for the detail stage using traditional methods. To solve this problem, I devised a way to block out the levels quickly using a Dremel rotary power carver equipped with a router attachment and spiral saw cutters to do most of the work. I discovered that if I use the cutters free-hand, I can create a unique texture that I have not been able to duplicate with any other tool.

Most of my carvings are made using construction-grade spruce and pine (2 x 12, 2 x 10, and 2 x 8 lumber). Since I'm not worried about messing up an expensive piece of wood, I experiment more and just carve away. I sell these pieces, which take me anywhere from 12-20 hours to carve, for up to \$180. I can then turn around and spend that income on more wood and tools.

I prefer using power, because the construction-grade lumber I use is hard to carve with hand tools. If you use basswood or something similar, you will get better results with hand tools. To carve in the different levels, I set my router attachment to the depth desired and block out the area with spiral saw cutters.

Alternately, you can use the spiral cutter to make a stop cut, and clear the area out with a chisel.

*NOTE: Spiral saw cutters are very aggressive. Using a Dremel with a router attachment instead of a router will help you gain some control. Practice this technique on a piece of scrapwood before beginning your carving.*



**High speed rotary power carvers and a router attachment.**







**1**

**Transfer the pattern to the work piece.** I slip a piece of carbon paper under the pattern and trace it onto the wood. Darken the perimeter of the pattern with a felt-tip marker to make it easier to rough out.



**2**

**Clamp the blank securely.** Attach a hardwood stick to the back of the blank to clamp it with. The stick also gets the carving up and off the bench. Screw the stick to the carving in the two places marked with an "X" on the pattern.



**3**

**Cut the perimeter and negative spaces.** I use a rotary saw tool. It takes a few passes to remove all of the waste wood. Don't forget the four small areas inside the outer perimeter. Clean up the sawdust with a shop vac.



**4**

**Rough out the back side of the carving.** Temporarily remove the clamping stick from the back and attach it to the front. The area marked in black is to be removed. Take the area behind the smoke down  $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Remove  $\frac{3}{4}$ " of wood from behind the tree and the bottom left corner. Then remove 1" of wood from behind the bush.



**5**

**Rough out the lowest levels on the front of the carving.** Reattach the hardwood stick to the back of the carving. Make several passes across the door, window, and moon. You want to carve away  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " of wood in the parts marked in black on the project.



**6**

**Carve down the walls of the house.** Use the spiral cutter to take  $\frac{3}{4}$ " off the areas marked in black on the project. Leave the area at the tip of the smoke there to support the base of the cutter and remove the tip with a chisel afterwards.





**7**

**Block in the next levels.** Use the spiral cutter to carve the doorstep and the rear tree leaves down  $\frac{7}{16}$ ". I find it helpful to shade the entire section I am working on as a guide.



**8**

**Shape the roof and the tree trunk.** Take these areas down  $\frac{5}{16}$ " with the spiral cutter.



**9**

**Texture the leaves.** Use the spiral cutter freehand in the rotary power carver to add short jagged lines for the leaves. Work from the outer edges in, and keep both hands on the tool.



**10**

**Undercut the window and door.** The window is undercut on all four sides, but don't undercut the bottom of the door. Use a  $\frac{1}{4}$ "-diameter ball-shaped carbide bur. Leave the wood about  $\frac{1}{8}$ "-thick after undercutting.



**11**

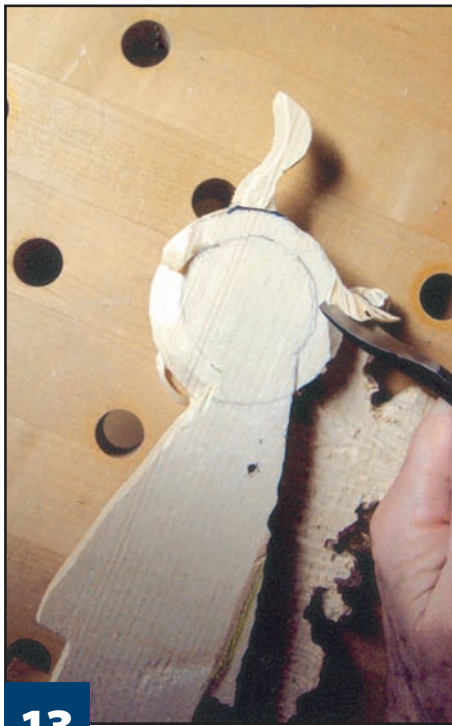
**Undercut the tree and leaves.** Use a  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-diameter by  $\frac{1}{8}$ "-thick disc-shaped carbide bur. Use this same bur to undercut between the chimney and the smoke and between the tree and the moon.



**12**

**Shape the chimney and roof.** Round the front face of the chimney and smoke. Use a knife or chisel. Then round the outer edge of the roof and a small amount of the tree trunk.





**13**

**Shape the moon.** Angle off the back side of the moon. Use a chisel.



**14**

**Make the door and window.** Trace the pattern for the window and door onto a piece of 1/8"-thick scrap. Make the window oversized so it overlaps the window frame and you can glue it in place. Carve out the window panes in the window and door with a cone-shaped carbide bur. Trim the door to fit, and glue it in place. You can also add trim around the door if you want.



**16**

**Attach a hanger to the back of the carving.** Choose a place where the screws won't damage the front surface of the carving. Then apply your finish of choice. I finish some of my carvings with a clear, satin, acrylic spray finish. If you use hardwood for your carving, boiled linseed oil mixed with turpentine is another option.



**15**

**Sand the carving.** Use a sanding mandrel loaded with Swiss sandpaper to remove any burrs and to smooth the surfaces. Start with 80-grit and use progressively finer grits up to 220-grit. Swiss sandpaper is more flexible and resists loading up when sanding the soft wood.

## Carving safety

The rotary tool used most in this type of carving is a 1/8" wood-cutting bit. It can be used freehand, but I suggest using it with an adjustable depth control or a router attachment.

If you do use it freehand, the bit cuts very aggressively and may act like it has a mind of its own. It cuts best and is most controllable between 30,000 to 35,000 rpm. Just be cautious when using this tool. Keep the carving securely clamped down so you can use both hands on the tool. Replace the bit when it gets dull, and keep your body parts away from the moving bit.

## materials & tools

### MATERIALS:

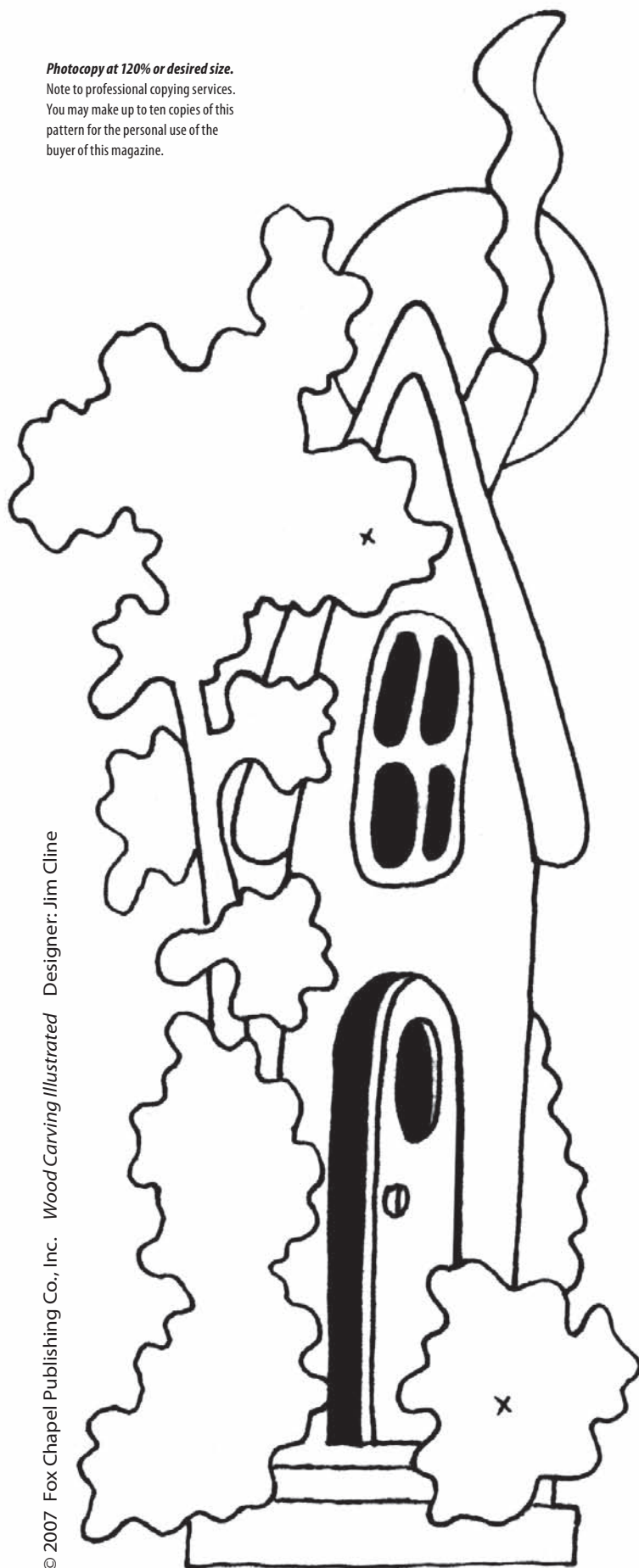
1 1/2" x 8" x 12" pine or wood of choice  
1" x 1" x 10" scrap of hardwood (To screw to the carving for clamping purposes)  
1/8" x 1 1/2" x 7" pine or wood of choice (window and door)  
Saw-tooth hanger  
Swiss sandpaper, assorted grits between 80 and 220 grit  
Finish of choice  
Carbon paper  
Wood glue

### TOOLS:

Rotary power carver equipped with router attachment  
Assorted spiral saw cutters for the power carver  
Carbide burs: 1/4"-diameter ball, small cone, and 1/2"-diameter by 1/8"-thick disc  
Sanding mandrel  
Chisel of choice  
Carving knife of choice



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**"For Sale"** is another variation on the design  
 illustrated in this article.



#### **About the Author**

*Jim Cline was born and raised on a farm in the middle of Saskatchewan, Canada. He spent his free time making tractors and trucks from scrap wood. He took up woodcarving when he retired in 1987 and has taken home a number of ribbons. He also draws woodcarving and woodworking-related cartoons. Jim lives in Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada. He is a member of the Northern Alberta Wood Carvers Association and the National Wood Carvers Association of America and has taught wood carving at the Naramata Center.*



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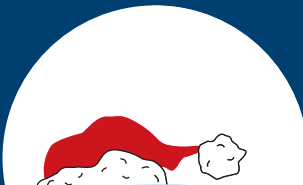
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Photos of all carvings will be posted on the WCI website where viewers can vote for People's Choice Award.



### CONTEST RULES:

- Carvings will be judged on overall presentation, technical execution, and originality.
- Carvings cannot have been entered in a previous WCI sponsored contest.
- Carvers may submit more than one piece.
- Submit photos of your carving from all four sides. DO NOT send your actual carving. NOTE: Digital photos must be high resolution (at least 300 dpi). Traditional prints are acceptable, but prints made on a home printer cannot be used. Photos must be clear and in focus.
- Photos become the property of WCI and will not be returned.
- Winners may be asked to ship their Santas to East Petersburg for studio photography. Artists retain ownership of all carvings.
- Submit your entry (include your name, address, phone number and email) to: Santa Carving Contest c/o Wood Carving Illustrated 1970 Broad St., East Petersburg, PA 17520 or email to: [Editors@WoodCarvingIllustrated.com](mailto:Editors@WoodCarvingIllustrated.com)

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**Wood Carving Illustrated** publishes a general listing of carving shows in each issue. If you would like your show listed in our Calendar of Events, please send the following information to [Duncan@FoxChapelPublishing.com](mailto:Duncan@FoxChapelPublishing.com):

- Name of event
  - Date(s)
  - Location (including city, state, address and building name if applicable)
  - Hours for each day of show
  - Admission
  - Contact information
- Submission deadline for the Summer Issue is March 1, 2007.

## ■ FEBRUARY

**Feb 3-4.** 15th Annual "The Art of Woodcarving" show sponsored by Cedar Valley Woodcarvers, CEDAR RAPIDS, IA (Longbranch Hotel & Convention Center, 90 Twixt Town Road NE). Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4pm. Free adm. Contact Don Lund and Maurie Vandewalle, 319-377-6520, [vanlobo32@aol.com](mailto:vanlobo32@aol.com).

**Feb 3-4.** The World Animal Carving Championships held in conjunction with the Treasure Coast Woodcarvers Show & Competition, PORT ST. LUCIE, FL (Port St. Lucie Community Center, Port St. Lucie & Airoso Blvds.). Sat. & Sun. 10am-4pm. Contact Ed Jettinghoff, Treasure Coast Woodcarvers, PO Box 342, Hobe Sound, FL 33455, 772-220-3523, [edjetting@earthlink.net](mailto:edjetting@earthlink.net).

**Feb 3-4.** 15th Woodcarvers Den Exhibition, BELLEVUE, OH (VFW Hall). Sat. & Sun. 10am-5pm. Free adm. Al & Juanita Clark, 6615 County Rd. 191, Bellevue, OH 44811, 419-483-7495.

**Feb 9-10.** Chip-O-Tex Woodcarvers Show, HARLINGEN, TX (Casa de Amistad, 1204 Fair Park Blvd.). Fri. & Sat. 9am-4pm. \$1 adm., children under 12 free. Contact Henry Mossman, [mossman363@charter.net](mailto:mossman363@charter.net).

**Feb 16-17.** 17th Annual Desert Woodcarving Show & Sale, MESA, AZ (Mesa Centennial Hall, 210 N. Center St.). Sat. 9am-5pm & Sun. 10am-4pm. \$4 donation requested, children under 14 free. Contact Lupe Cavanaugh at [lupecavanaugh@hotmail.com](mailto:lupecavanaugh@hotmail.com), or Sid Smith, 480-951-6175, [sid\\_mary@msn.com](mailto:sid_mary@msn.com).

**Feb 16-18.** Showcase of Woodcarvings, Charlotte Woodcarver's Club, CHARLOTTE, NC. (St Ann's Catholic Church, 3635 Park Rd.). Sat 9am-5pm & Sun 10am-4pm. Donation adm. Contact Charlotte Woodcarvers Club, PO Box 11894, Charlotte, NC 28220, [showcase@charlottewoodcarvers.org](mailto:showcase@charlottewoodcarvers.org), [www.charlottewoodcarvers.com](http://www.charlottewoodcarvers.com).

**Feb 17.** Peace River Woodcarving Show, ARCADIA, FL (Turner Center). 9am-3pm, Donation adm. Contact Jane Burgess 863-494-6235, [janieb1000@yahoo.com](mailto:janieb1000@yahoo.com).

**Feb 24.** Harbor Lakes Woodcarvers 1st Annual Show, PORT CHARLOTTE, FL (Encore RV Resort, 3737 ElJobean Rd). 10am-5pm. Free adm. Contact Armand Morin, 941-624-0539, [morinj12803@msn.com](mailto:morinj12803@msn.com).

**Feb 24.** Highlands Wood Carvers Show, SEBRING, FL (Sebring Civic Center, off NE Lakewood Dr., behind Sebring Public Library, next to Highlands Art League on Lake Jackson). Sat. 9am-4pm. Donation adm. Contact John Fitts, 531 Barbados Dr., Lake Wales, FL 33859, 863-676-9740.

**Feb 24-25.** Southcoast Woodcarvers 16th Annual Show and Sale, NORTH BEND, OR (North Bend Community Center, 2222 Broadway). Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-4pm. Contact Bill Hanna, 541-348-2371, [Cedarwinds@harborside.com](mailto:Cedarwinds@harborside.com).

## ■ MARCH

**Mar 3.** Pearl River Woodcarvers 14th Show & Championships, JACKSON, MS (Agriculture & Forestry Museum, Forestry Building, 1150 Lakeland Drive). Sat. 10am-5pm. \$4 adm., \$2 children under 12, children under 6 free. Contact Patty Fultz, 601-924-4850, [prwc@hotmail.com](mailto:prwc@hotmail.com).

**Mar 3-4.** Miami Valley Woodcarvers 26th Annual Carving Show, MIDDLETOWN, OH (Christ United Methodist Church, 700 S. Marshall at Grand Ave.). Sat. 10am-5pm & Sun. 12:30-5pm. \$3 adm., children under 12 free when accompanied by adult. Contact Kim McClinchy, 937-428-0547, [home.earthlink.net/~mvwa](http://home.earthlink.net/~mvwa).

**Mar 3-4.** 26th Annual Calusa Wood Carvers Show & Sale, HUDSON, FL (Veterans Memorial Park, 14333 Hicks Rd.). Sat. 10am-4pm & Sun. 10am-3pm. \$2 donation. Contact Wynett Scott, 727-842-3233, [calusawoodcarvers@verizon.net](mailto:calusawoodcarvers@verizon.net).

**Mar 3-4.** Great Southern Carvers Festival Carver's Show and Sale. RAYNE, LA (Rayne Civic Center). Contact G L Management, 888-451-0270, [glm@cricket.net](mailto:glm@cricket.net).

**Mar 10.** Appalachian Woodworking Expo presented by Woodcarvers Connection of Johnson City, TN. GRAY, TN (Gray Fairgrounds). Contact Sharon Chase, 423-282-5092, or Mike Whetsell, [MBWHETSELL@earthlink.net](mailto:MBWHETSELL@earthlink.net).

**Mar 10-11.** The Great Salt Lake Woodcarvers Show & Competition, SALT LAKE CITY, UT (Wheeler Historical Farm, 6351 S. 900 E). Sat. 9am-7pm & Sun. 9am-5pm. \$4 adm., seniors \$3, children \$2. Contact Don Carpenter, 801-968-3974, [admscarpenters@aol.com](mailto:admscarpenters@aol.com).

**Mar 10-11.** Gulf Coast Carvers Guild 29th Annual Woodcarving Show, SARASOTA, FL (Boys & Girls Club, 3200 Fruitville Rd.). Contact Carl Bordner, [traveler212@verizon.net](mailto:traveler212@verizon.net).

**Mar 10-11.** Kitsap County Woodcarvers 21st Annual Juried Show & Exhibit, BREMERTON, WA (West Side Improvement Club, National Ave. & E St.). Sat. 11am-6pm & Sun. 10am-5pm. Contact Gordon O. Day, 360-681-7032, 83 Raven Hill Road, Sequim, WA 98382, [goday@usintouch.com](mailto:goday@usintouch.com).

**Mar 10-11.** Ramona-Country Carvers' Annual Show, SAN JACINTO, CA (Valley Wide Sports Center, 901 W. Esplanade Ave). Sat. & Sun. 9am-4pm. \$2 donation. Contact Lee Walden, 951-654-5669, [lee@pollybutte.net](mailto:lee@pollybutte.net).

**Mar 10-11.** Viking Woodcarvers, Spring Show and Sale, 'Artistry in Wood', ROSEVILLE, MN (Har Mar Mall, Snelling & County Rd. B). Contact Russell Scott, 651-917-2125, [rsctt56@netzero.com](mailto:rsctt56@netzero.com).

**Mar 10-11.** 34th Woodcarving & Wildlife Art Festival & Competition, Lancaster County Woodcarvers, MILLERSVILLE, PA (Millersville University Student Memorial Center). Sat. 10am-5pm & Sun. 10am-4pm. \$4 adm., children under 15 free with adult. Contact Pete Kovarovic, 717-392-4814.

**Mar 10-11.** Lake Wood Carvers 10th Annual Competition & Show, TAVARES, FL (Lake Shrine Club, State Rte 19 at old 441). Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4pm. \$2 donation. Contact Gene Thomas, 10452 Lake Minneola Shores, Clermont, FL 34711, 352-394-0387, [ethomas6@cfl.rr.com](mailto:ethomas6@cfl.rr.com); or Ralph Rossignol, 352-385-0483.

**Mar 17.** North Carolina Woodcarving Festival, RALEIGH, NC (Klingspor's Woodworking Shop, 3141 Capital Blvd). Sat. 9am-5pm. Free Adm. Contact Paul Rolfe, Klingspor's Woodworking Shop, 919-876-0707, [prolfe@woodworkingshop.com](mailto:prolfe@woodworkingshop.com).

**Mar 17-18.** 21st Annual Prairie Canada Carving Championship, WINNIPEG, MB, CANADA (Victoria Inn). Sat. & Sun. 9am-4:30pm. \$3 adm., children under 12 free. Contact Bill Palmer, 428 Ash St., Winnipeg, MB R3N 0R2, 204-488-7619, [wingbang@mts.net](mailto:wingbang@mts.net), or [www.prairiecanadacarvers.com](http://www.prairiecanadacarvers.com).

**Mar 17-18.** Ridge Woodcarvers Show & Sale, LAKELAND, FL (Lake Mirror Auditorium, 121 S. Lake Ave., off E. Main St.). [www.ridgewoodcarvers.com](http://www.ridgewoodcarvers.com).

**Mar 17-18.** 41st Minnesota Carvers Association Show-Metro Chapter, BROOKLYN CENTER, MN (Brookdale Shopping Center). Sat. 10am-6pm & Sun. 11am-6pm. Free adm. Contact Roger McCullough, 1521 Pennsylvania Ave N., Champlin, MN 55316, 763-427-8822, [rogerm@iexposure.com](mailto:rogerm@iexposure.com).

(Continued on page 90)



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*Continued from page 88)*

**Mar 17-18.** The Wisconsin River Woodcarvers 7th Woodcarving Show, Sale & Competition, PLOVER, WI (Elizabeth Inn & Convention Center). Sat. 9am-4pm, Sun. 10am-4pm. \$2 adm., children under 12 free. Contact Bill Kubisiak, 715-344-2274, [ckuby@charter.net](mailto:ckuby@charter.net).

**Mar 23-24.** The Kansas City Wood Carvers Club 34th Woodcarving Show, LEE'S SUMMIT, MO (John Knox Pavilion, 520 NW Murray Rd.). Fri. 10am-6pm & Sat. 10am-5pm. \$3 adm. Contact Ed Zinger, 913-631-0306, [zingo@comcast.net](mailto:zingo@comcast.net).

**Mar 24.** Weeki Wachee Woodcarvers Show & Sale, SPRING HILL, FL (Weeki Wachee Senior Citizen Center, Corner of Toucan Trail & Susan Dr.). Sat. 10am-4pm. \$1 donation. Contact George Lytle, 352-666-5092, [glytle@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:glytle@tampabay.rr.com).

**Mar 24-25.** Baltimore Area Wood Carving Show, BALTIMORE, MD (Catonsville Senior Center, 501 N. Rolling Rd.). Sat. 11am-4pm & Sun. 11-4pm. \$2 adm. Contact Helen Brontstein, 410-887-0900, [hbrontstein@co.ba.md.us](mailto:hbrontstein@co.ba.md.us), or Carolyn Maguire, [kerilyn@bcpl.net](mailto:kerilyn@bcpl.net).

**Mar 24-25.** Pikes Peak Whittlers 24th Spring Woodcarving Show, Competition & Sale, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO (Shrine Club, 6 South 33rd St.). Sat. 10am-5pm & Sun. 10am-4pm. \$2 adm., children under 12 free when accompanied by an adult. Contact Gary Fenton, 719-475-2139, [gary.fenton@juno.com](mailto:gary.fenton@juno.com).

**Mar 24-25.** Rochester Woodcarvers 31st Annual Woodcarving Show and Sale, ROCHESTER, MN. (Olmstead County Fairgrounds, 4-H Building, 1508 Aune Drive SE). Sat. 10am-4pm, Sun. 10am-4pm. Adm. free. Contact Wayne Hendrickson, 507-634-7047, or Tom Severson, 507-285-1620, or [webpages.charter.net/rochcarve](http://webpages.charter.net/rochcarve).

**Mar 25.** Flint Carvers 25th Woodcarving Show and Competition, SWARTZ CREEK, MI (American Legion Post #294, 3440 Morrish Rd.). Sun. 10am-4pm. \$2 adm., children under 12 free. Contact Ed, 810-266-4173, or Dick 810-655-2151.

**Mar 31.** 15th Annual Woodcarving Show and Competition, WHITBY, ON, CANADA. (Heydenshore Pavillion, 589 Water St.). Sat. 10am-4pm. Adm. free, plenty of parking. For further info <http://brooklinwoodcarvers.ne1.net/>.

**Mar 31-Apr 1.** 28th Annual Niagara Woodcarvers Show & Competition, NIAGARA FALLS, ON, CANADA (Optimist Recreation Centre, 4751 Dorchester Rd. at Morrison). Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 11am-5pm. Adm \$3. Contact Warren D'Amboise, 905-354-8854, [damboise2@yahoo.ca](mailto:damboise2@yahoo.ca); or Ray Pruden 905-871-9519; [www.niagarawoodcarvers.ca](http://www.niagarawoodcarvers.ca).

**Mar 31-Apr. 1.** 31st Mid-Atlantic Woodcarving Show & Competition, ABINGTON, PA (Penn State Abington Campus Gymnasium). Sat. 10am-5pm & Sun. 10am-4pm. \$5 donation, \$3 seniors, children under 12 free. Contact Mike Kagan 215-766-3707, [mtkagan@verizon.net](mailto:mtkagan@verizon.net).

#### ■ APRIL

**Apr 7.** Smoky Hollow's 11th Annual Woodcarving Show, GLENDALE, CA (Crescenta Valley Park. 9am - 5pm. Free adm. Contact: George Smith 818-353-1932, [smokygeorge@ca.rr.com](mailto:smokygeorge@ca.rr.com).

**Apr 7-8.** Texas Woodcarving Show & Sale, GLEN ROSE, TX (Oakdale Park). 10am-4pm. Free adm. Classes will be held the week before and the week after. Contact Gail Fruehling 817-559-9131, [gail@fruehling.cc](mailto:gail@fruehling.cc), or George Vaughn, 432-522-2399, [thetoolbox@grandecom.net](mailto:thetoolbox@grandecom.net).

**Apr 14.** Kettle Karvers Klub's 17th Annual Artistry in Wood Show Sale and Competition, SHEBOGAN FALLS, WI (Sheboygan Falls Municipal Building). Sat. 10am-4pm. Contact Bob Lawrence, 920-458-4947.

**Apr 14-15.** Santa Clara Valley Wood Carvers 40th Annual Carvers and Woodturners Show, SARATOGA, CA (Prospect High School Gymnasium, 18900 Prospect Rd.). Contact Ron Richards, 408-255-3391.

**Apr 14-15.** Red River Valley Woodcarvers 32th Woodcarving Show & Sale, FARGO, ND (Doublewood Inn, 3333 13th Ave. So.). Contact Bob Lawrence, 701-280-1038, [rclawre@aol.com](mailto:rclawre@aol.com).

**Apr 14-15.** Duneland Woodcarvers 31st Annual Woodcarving Show, PORTAGE, IN (Woodland Park, 2100 Willowcreek Rd.). Sat. 10am-5pm & Sun. 10am-4pm. \$4 adm., children under 12 free. Contact David Kings, 219-988-5610, [www.dunelandwoodcarvers.com](http://www.dunelandwoodcarvers.com).

**Apr 14-15.** 34th Annual Iowa State Woodcarvers Show & Competition, Northeast Iowa Woodcarving Club, WATERLOO, IA (Waterloo Center for the Arts, 225 Commercial St.). Sat. 1-5pm & Sun. 11am-4:30pm. Free adm. Carving demonstrations. Contact Richard Hanson, 319-266-7009 or Mary Lou Snyder, 319-277-2213, [NEIWC@aol.com](mailto:NEIWC@aol.com).

**Apr 23-28.** Texas Woodcarvers Guild Rally, FREDERICKSBURG, TX. For more information, visit [www.texaswoodcarversguild.com](http://www.texaswoodcarversguild.com) or call Bill Bang, 830-367-3304.

**Apr 27-29.** 37th Annual Ward World Championship Wildfowl Carving Competition. OCEAN CITY, MD (Roland E. Powell Convention Center) Fri. 10am-6pm, Sat. 9am-6pm, Sun 10am-4pm. 3-day pass \$18, adults \$10, seniors & students \$8, children under 12 free if accompanied by adult. [www.wardmuseum.org](http://www.wardmuseum.org).

#### ■ MAY

**May 5-6.** Pittsburgh Fantasy in wood, CASTLE SHANNON, PA (Castle Shannon Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall, Route 88). Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4pm. \$3 adm. adults, under 12 free. Contact Walt Niedziela, 527 Lebanon Manor Dr., West Mifflin, PA 15122, 412-469-2903, [pawaca@verizon.net](mailto:pawaca@verizon.net).

**May 5-6.** 10th Western Montana Wood Show/Competition and Sale, MISSOULA, MT (Western Montana Fairgrounds). Sat. 9am-4:30pm & Sun. 12pm-4pm. \$3 adm., children under 12 free. Call 406-251-4197 or 406-626-5278.

**May 5-6.** 2nd Artisans in Wood Decoy and Bird Carving Show, CHATHAM, MA (Creative Arts Center, 154 Crowell Rd.). Sat. & Sun. 10am-4pm. Free adm. Contact Dr. Joe Ruff, 508-790-7824.

**May 5-6.** North Arkansas Wood Carvers' 28th Show & Sale, MOUNTAIN HOME, AR (Baxter Co. Fairgrounds on Wade St.). Sat. 10am-5pm & Sun. 10am-4pm. Free adm. Contact Bonnie Davis, [dbd12@cox.net](mailto:dbd12@cox.net), or Sandy Smith, [typesmith@cox-internet.com](mailto:typesmith@cox-internet.com), [www.northarkansaswoodcarvers.org](http://www.northarkansaswoodcarvers.org).

**May 6.** Huron Chippers Annual Show, MARYSVILLE, MI (American Legion Post # 449, 299 E. Huron Blvd.). Sun. 10am-4pm. Contact Ron Gaskill, 810-765-1562, [rongee12@hotmail.com](mailto:rongee12@hotmail.com).

**May 12.** Capitol Woodcarvers' 18th Annual Show, OLYMPIA, WA (Olympia Community Center, 222 N. Columbia St.). Sat. 9am-5:30pm. Free adm. Contact Paul Kressin, 360-352-5411.

**May 12.** Art of the Carver Woodcarving and Wood Sculpting Show and Competition, ABBOTSFORD, BC, CANADA (Columbia Bible College, 2049 Clearbrook Rd.). Sat. 11am-5pm. \$2 adm., children under 12 free. Contact Rick DeBraber, 604-824-9891.

**May 18-20.** Annual Atlantic Wildlife Carving Competition, sponsored by Nova Scotia Wildlife Carvers and Artists (NSWCA). TURO, NS, CANADA (Nova Scotia Community College, McCarthy Gallery, 36 Arthur St.). Sat. 9am-5pm & Sun 1-4pm. Contact NSWCA at 15 Mount Pleasant Ave., Dartmouth, N.S. B3A 3T3; or [nswcaa.ednet.ns.ca](http://nswcaa.ednet.ns.ca).

*(Continued on page 92)*





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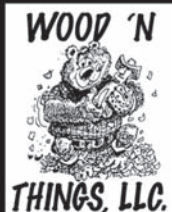
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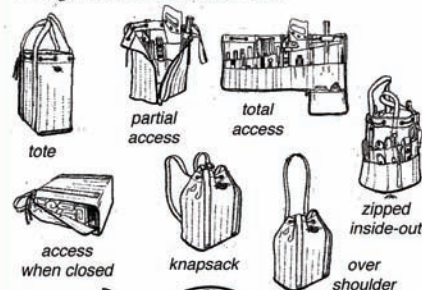
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(Continued from page 90)

## JUNE

**Jun 2-3.** 8th Annual Johnny Appleseed Wood Carvers Show, MANSFIELD, OH (Richland County Fairgrounds). Contact Steven Laser 419-347-4329, [mansfieldcarvers@hotmail.com](mailto:mansfieldcarvers@hotmail.com) or Tony Fox, 419-564-0727.

**Jun 3-8.** 23rd Annual Woodcarving Rendezvous, BRANSON, MO (Compton Ridge Campground Convention Center). Contact Ed Zinger, 15222S. Greenwood Villa #2102, Olathe, KS, 66062, 913-397-6992, [zingo@comcast.net](mailto:zingo@comcast.net), [www.woodcarvingrendezvous.com](http://www.woodcarvingrendezvous.com).

**Jun 9-10.** 5th Annual North Platte Woodcarver's Club "Artistry in Wood" Show and Sale, NORTH PLATTE, NE (Quality Inn and the Sandhills Convention Center). Sat. 9am-6pm, Sun. 10am-4pm. \$2 adm., children free. Contact Ron Meyer, 308-534-5136 or Paul Jeske, 308-532-2599.

**Jun 13-16.** 9th Annual Wood Carvers Roundup, EVART, MI (Osceola County Fairgrounds, 101 Recreation Ave.). Wed.-Sat. 8am-4pm. Free adm.

Contact Sandy Holder, 231-734-5124, [roundup@netonecom.com](mailto:roundup@netonecom.com) or Virginia Huffman, [roselady@netonecom.net](mailto:roselady@netonecom.net), [www.evarroundup.com](http://www.evarroundup.com).

**Jun 15-17.** Spokane Carver's Annual Rendezvous, SPOKANE, WA (Spokane KOA campground). Contact Gloria Strandquist, 509-924-1186.

**Jun 21-24.** Davenport Iowa Affiliated Woodcarvers International Woodcarvers Congress Competition & Show, BETTENDORF, IA (Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds). Thurs.-Sat. 10am-5pm & Sun. 10am-4pm. Contact Carol or Larry Yudis, PO Box 104, Bettendorf, IA 52722, 563-359-9684 (days), 563-355-3787 (evenings) or [www.awcltd.org](http://www.awcltd.org).

**Jun 22-24.** Wahpeton Carving Weekend, WAHPETON, ND (North Dakota State College of Science). Contact Gary Paulsen, 1437 20th St, S. Fargo, ND 58103, 701-232-2196.

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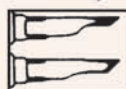
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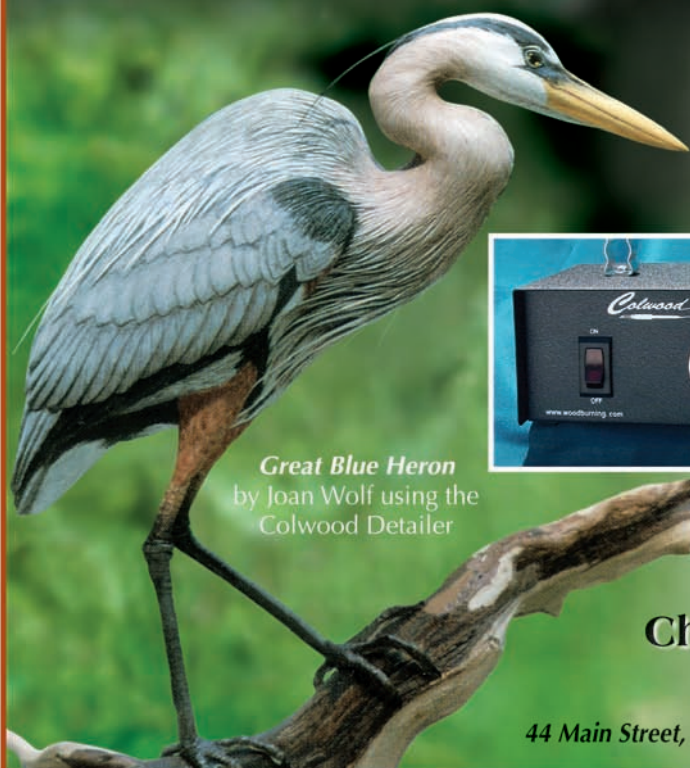
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# Clean joint lines for relief carvers

## Tips and tricks to clean up difficult areas in a relief carving

By Lora S. Irish

Clean joint lines are the first problem a budding relief carver runs into. If your joint lines are not sharp and clean, the whole relief carving, and illusion of depth you are trying to create, looks muddy and unfinished. Clean, crisp joints are not nearly as hard to achieve as they look, once you understand the basics.



### About the Author

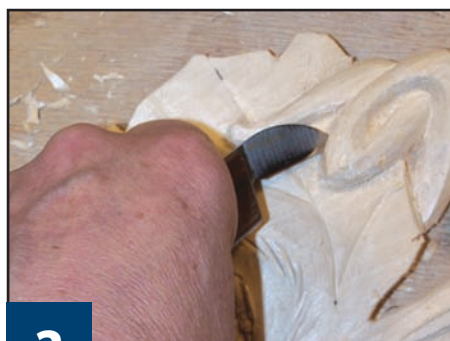
Lora S. Irish and her husband, Mike, operate a web-based carving pattern business. She contributes a regular relief column to Wood Carving

Illustrated and has written numerous books for Fox Chapel Publishing. For more of Lora's patterns, browse her website at [www.carvingpatterns.com](http://www.carvingpatterns.com).



**1**

**Make a stop cut along the joint line.** Hold your bench knife in an upright position. Pull the knife through the wood. Do not push it straight into the wood. Pushing can compress the fibers, which can uncompress over time and cause you problems.



**2**

**Remove the chip.** Slide the bench knife along the floor, or lower level, into the corner to remove the chip.



**3**

**Smooth the joint line using a veining tool.** When the joint lines or corner area is fairly open I will use a V-tool to start the joint. The V-tool will leave a softer joint line than a bench knife.



**4**

**Use a V-tool to establish the cut along the joint in easy-to-reach areas.** Hold the V-tool so the angle of the cut matches the slope of the surrounding areas.



**5**

**Smooth the surrounding areas into the V-gouge groove.** Use a wide sweep gouge or a bull nose chisel. Lay the tool down as close as comfortable to the surrounding areas so you just shave off the high areas.



**6**

**Re-cut the joint line if desired.** Once the area has been shaped, you can re-cut the joint line with the V-tool to deepen or sharpen the joint line.





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