

WOODEN CANOE BUILDERS' GUILD Established 1997  
<http://www.wcbguild.com/> <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wcbguild>

HAPPY PADDLING



## President's Message

By President Doug Long

Hello everyone. Here we are at the end of another summer season and about to start a busy winter in the shop. And here I am again in the President's chair. What was old is new again - just like a restored wooden canoe which is functionally new again but still showing the signs of its age.

We had a great AGM a few weeks ago and what we accomplished made up for the lack of a meeting last year - thanks to our Chairman and now Past President Pat Smith. We met at Dave Alguire's cottage (really three rustic cabins) which has neither electricity nor running water but is in a beautiful setting that Dave and his family have retained in a totally natural state. With the enthusiasm of the meeting and the camaraderie of the informal shop-talk during breaks the physical deficiencies meant nothing. Thanks for being a great host Dave.

I would like to really encourage Guild members to attend these meetings. From time to time someone will ask: "What are the benefits of membership in the Guild"? Well, as far as I'm concerned, one of the most important benefits is the opportunity to meet and talk to other canoe builders about issues of common concern - and the Annual General Meeting is the only regular opportunity for this to happen. In my opinion, those who don't attend are missing one of the best things about the Guild. I find that I always feel re-energized, more committed and more in touch following these meetings.

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Among the things accomplished at the AGM was a renewed commitment to our semi-annual newsletter. Lynne Case has generously agreed to continue as editor but only after she was given assurances of support by the membership. To accomplish this, Lynne was asked to distribute a schedule which will name two members per issue who will be asked to submit articles. I hope that those named will respect the spirit of what we are trying to do and help Lynne out in this very important way.

Anita and I send you all our best wishes.

Regards  
Doug Long

"Take everything as it comes; the wave passes, deal with the next one."  
Tom Thomson, 1877-1917

## Some Things I Learned at the 2010 AGM

By Lynne Case

**How to rescue a worn pad on a random orbital sander.**

We all know how easy it is to replace the worn out sanding disks on a random orbital sander; just peel the old one off and attach a new one to the Velcro-covered pad on the sander... but what do you do when the Velcro on the pad wears out or gets gummed up? Roger Foster brought along a neat solution; a repair kit from Home Hardware that allows you to remove the Velcro part of the pad and replace it with a new one. Voila! Your random orbital sander will now hold your new sanding disk securely, again.

**How to avoid those annoying teeth marks from your bench vise jaws.**

Dave Alguire uses two-sided tape to secure heavy-duty corrugated cardboard to the insides of his vise jaws. You can replace them as often as necessary plus it's a good fix and the price is certainly right!

**How to make custom-made water-slip decals from your home computer.**

Dave Alguire has found a place online that sells water-slip paper, allowing you to turn any



What Is It?

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graphic or text from your computer into water-slip decals you print out right from your computer's printer.

**How to keep the wood from tearing out when you back out an old screw.**

Those old gunwales might be OK and you won't have any wood repairs to do around the screw-holes if you make this minor adjustment to a spring clamp and attach it to your gunwales before taking out the screws... just drill a hole slightly bigger than the screw-head right through your spring clamp jaw. Thanks, Pam, it works great!

These tips and more were discussed at this year's AGM. Usually those not attending the meeting miss out on the shared information that is just general shop-talk (and many of us agree that this is one of the best benefits of attending the AGM). Be sure not to miss anything that happens next year and plan NOW to attend the 2011 AGM (date tentatively set as Sept. 29, 2011) which will be hosted by Pam Wedd. Pam says she has plenty of space for trailers and campers and some limited accommodations in her home. Watch your e-mail for updates and directions.



Pam's modified spring clamp is a gunwale saver

"Why should a craftsman not make use of all his tools if they will promote a greater communication and expressiveness? This is not to deny that beautiful things can be fashioned out of very modest means, but what possible objection can there be towards an artist trying to be more resourceful?" Don Ellis

# 2010 AGM

By Lynne Case



Dale, Bruce, Pat, Dave, Pam, Roger & Doug  
On the shore of Big Brother Lake.



Roger demonstrates boomerang theory and  
explains how it relates to canoes.



The 2010 AGM was hosted by Dave Alguire at his family cottage. The weather was great and the conversation was lively, making for a successful gathering. In addition to general Guild business, members discussed shop techniques, compared notes on sales and marketing and brought interesting items for a show-and-tell session.

The mind  
boggles at the  
thought of using  
this technique  
on multiple  
canoes!



What Is It?  
Answers on page 16




A

B



Dale chats with guest speaker, Mike Ormsby.



## Canoe Swap

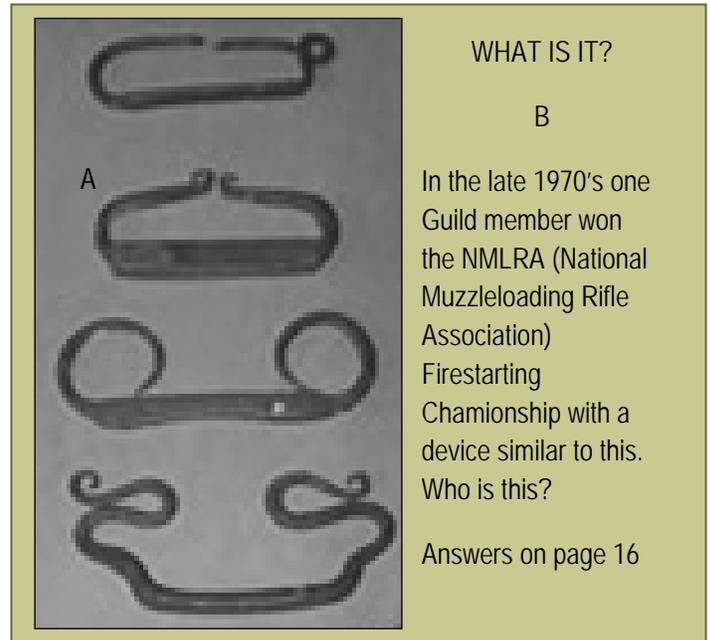
By Doug Long

No one can say that canoe building is boring. Between the canoes themselves and their owners there is no end of interesting experiences - some happy and some unhappy. I recently had one of the happy ones but it didn't start out looking that way.

Last fall I had a fellow bring a canoe to me to look at for restoration. It was about 14' long, with the canvas rotting off at the ends and the interior finish in poor shape and peeling off. However, the most notable problem it had was a series of 8 broken ribs. While it was not a happy looking prospect, I agreed to do my usual detailed proposal for its restoration.

When I removed the canvas I found that not only was it soaking wet but the ribs and planks in the center half of the canoe were also saturated - hence the peeling varnish. Needless to say, my repair proposal wasn't cheap and, since the owner obviously wasn't a really keen canoeist (based on my impression that the canoe hadn't been very well looked after), I really didn't expect him to go ahead with it. However, after a long delay, he did give me the green light.

When I took the canoe down to begin work on it, it wasn't with a lot of enthusiasm. Not only was it in poor condition but it had been poorly



WHAT IS IT?

B

In the late 1970's one Guild member won the NMLRA (National Muzzleloading Rifle Association) Firestarting Chamionship with a device similar to this. Who is this?

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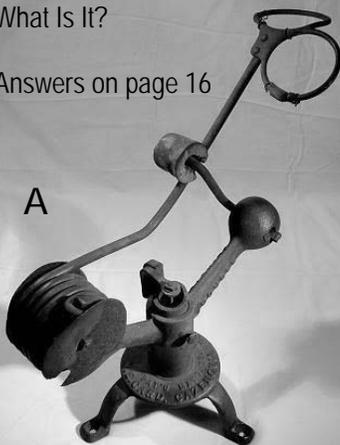
designed and poorly built. All in all it was a crappy little canoe and would still be so when I was finished. Then I had an idea.

A few years ago I did a restoration proposal for a canoe which the owner didn't proceed with because he felt he wouldn't be using the canoe much for health reasons. Instead, he told me he would just like to find a good home for it and, in the end, he gave it to me. While it was of indeterminate manufacture, it was well built and had a very pleasing shape. It was also about 14' long. I had always liked this canoe and told the owner that I would eventually restore it. Maybe my strange idea would give me this chance. I called the owner of the 'crappy' canoe and told him I had a rather strange proposal to make to him. I proposed to restore the other canoe for him for the same price that I had quoted for the work on his - and he could keep his old canoe. As it happened, the two proposals were within a couple of hundred dollars of each other. He came and looked at the two canoes and, somewhat to my surprise, agreed to the swap - which, in my mind, seemed to confirm his rather lax relationship with his canoe. It was a win-win situation. He got a better canoe and I had the satisfaction of working on a canoe that I thought was worth the effort. Never a dull moment - except when sanding that is.

What Is It?

Answers on page 16

A



Hint:

This was used with it.  
What is it?

B



## Youth Canoe Building Program

By Mike Ormsby

My idea is to create a program for youth based on canoe building. Such programs exist, in Canada and the USA. Most are only one shot programs such as might be carried out at a high school. But some are long term and very much ongoing. So what would the proposed program look like?

The canoe building programs would be with groups like First Nations youth or even inner city youth. Such programs could build in skill development...on traditions and culture...and add to self-esteem. The canoe is a great building tool to also teach about Canadian history, culture and identity. This is especially true for new Canadians or those in urban centres without much exposure to the outdoors.

There is interest to develop a program that could be based somewhere in southern Ontario, possibly in centres such as Toronto, Hamilton, Kitchener/Waterloo, Brantford, Peterborough, Parry Sound, and Ottawa. The plan would be to include (rather than exclude) all youth...with definite emphasis on involving Native youth. Hopefully, it might also be possible to develop a network of boat builders across Ontario to work with such a program through the Wooden Canoe Heritage Association and/or the Wood Canoe Builders' Guild. I met with Guild members at the recent Annual Meeting held in Haliburton and was warmly welcomed. Those present were supportive and I was encouraged to pursue this idea further.

Such a program for youth really couldn't work without the involvement of the Guild. First many Guild members currently run building programs, so have experience with teaching others how to build canoes. Some have even worked with other such programs involving youth. So Guild involvement is important since the Guild represents the best wood canoe

builders available...with the knowledge and experience...and access to materials, building spaces and tools. But more than anything a youth canoe building program addresses a very important part of the Wood Canoe Builders Guild' Mission:

1. to pass on the skills of wooden canoe building through workshops, courses and apprenticeship programs
2. to preserve the heritage and history of wooden canoes through education and restoration

Funding for this type of program is available, through various government, public, and non-profit agencies. I have even posted an idea, <http://www.avivacommunityfund.org/ideas/acf6683>, for the Aviva Community Fund (the Aviva Community Fund competition was created to help make a positive impact in Canadian communities - whether that's through providing education, youth programs, helping the environment, or cultural activities - by funding local and national initiatives for change). The program funding would cover all costs of materials, transportation, and services of builders involved. The canoes built could be used by the youth groups involved, or sold or raffled off to create further funds for the program. Liability can be addressed through the partnering youth organization's coverage, as well as other possible options. The WCHA has seed money available for just such programs which could be used for start-up. It might be possible to set up a specific canoe shop for the youth (such as might be based at a youth camp), complete with tools and forms so that the Guild canoe builders wouldn't have to involve their own shops and tools. There is a possibility to tie in with the Canadian Canoe Museum. Such a program could even further develop to include paddle making and tripping programs (including winter months), using

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*Youth Canoe building Program* continued from page 5

traditional techniques (like wood canvas canoes, etc.) that the youth would have built. Various youth organizations could be involved including Boy Scouts/Girl Guides, Boys & Girls Clubs, Big Brothers/Sisters, YMCA camps, Project CANOE, or Trails Youth Initiatives. I have spoken with Project CANOE and there is definite interest.

Just an idea....but worth "building" on.

As background, I did an online search of canoe building programs that are geared to youth, including inner city youth. Here are examples of youth oriented programs:

Vermont: Greenmont Farms,  
[http://greenmontfarms.com/canoe\\_project.shtml](http://greenmontfarms.com/canoe_project.shtml)

Toronto: With paddles in hand, youth take to the water in their hand-crafted canoe  
<http://wx.toronto.ca/inter/it/newsrel.nsf/9da959222128b9e885256618006646d3/f900400c65f1c7858525731b006c6b29?OpenDocument>

Sprague College,  
<http://www.stlawu.edu/news/spraguecanoe.html>

Minnesota: Urban Boatbuilders,  
<http://urbanboatbuilders.org/>

Philadelphia: The Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory Program,  
[http://woodenboatfactory.org/PWBF/Canoe\\_Build.html](http://woodenboatfactory.org/PWBF/Canoe_Build.html).

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## G8 Spouses' Canoe

By Pam Wedd

It all started with a phone call in mid-March.

A woman, named Carol, wondered if we would do a canoe building program for women. Of course, I replied, and who are the women? Carole then became very vague, and kept insisting that she would explain everything when we met next week at the shop. When I got off the phone, Jane thought that we should just call her right back and tell her no thanks. By this time I was intrigued with all the mystery and we decided to wait and see what it was all about.

Next week, while I was down in the shop, chatting away to my old hockey buddies, Merv and Leonard (complete with coveralls and rubber boots on the way to their sugar bush), down the hill to the shop came the "Mystery Ladies" in their business suits. As I ushered the guys out the door, the three women came in, and promptly offered a business card with Government of Canada emblazoned on the bottom. Yikes, was this a GST audit, heaven

forbid?! Thankfully, not. Instead it was an invitation to provide a canoe building demonstration for the spouses of the G8 leaders at the end of June. Oh, and by the way did I have two new canoes that could be ready for the spouses to sign and then donate to two summer camps.

Well, as you can imagine I was quite taken aback, but with my mind racing, I tried to coolly reassure them that it was all quite feasible. They checked out the shop, and work in progress, took pictures and then were gone, saying they would get back to me.

A couple weeks later, I got a phone call, setting up a second appointment - it looked like we were in!! We were to do a short demonstration of rib bending on a form, some planking and seat caning - and all down at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto!! The spouses weren't to join the G8 leaders up in Huntsville, but they were to stay in Toronto and await the

*G8 Spouses' Canoe* continued on page 7

*G8 Spouses' Canoe* continued from page 6

bigger G20 gathering. In the meantime, we were to show them a bit of Muskoka flavour, and what could be more Muskoka than a wooden canoe! I promptly invited Edie Hentcy, a friend and previous Bearwood canoe employee and first class chair caner, to join in. She jumped at the chance, and with both she and Jane helping, we had our work cut out for us.

The next two and a half months were busy, dealing with our normal canoe work load with spring fast approaching. And then there was G8 work-prepping a canoe form and bending all but 6 ribs, and finishing up two 15 ft Bearwood canoes, new display cradles, spiffier horses to go under the form, new steamer pipe, new logo t-shirts and shop aprons.... on and on it went. The new canoes were fitted with larger decks, thwart and seat frames, to allow for the spouses to all sign them. The canoes couldn't be painted red!! Security checks and then rechecks after they realized we would be in the same room as the leaders' wives, while carrying hammers and knives.

In the end, we were finally ready. An extra trip, early in the week, to the Royal York in Toronto was needed to deliver canoes and form and tools before the hotel was shut down mid-week for security checks. It was quite exciting driving downtown Toronto with a canoe trailer. Unloading everything and heaving it all up onto a high loading dock normally used by transport trucks was a bit unnerving, but we managed to not drop the form (just). And the elevator for the hotel was huge - and could have handled a half-dozen canoes at least!

Back home for last minute scrambling around and then back to Toronto Wednesday night. First thing Thursday morning found us at Exhibition Place having truck and trailer gone over by sniffer dogs and then an RCMP escort to the Royal York, much waiting around, chatting with police from all across the country, and finally through security and into the hotel to set up in a mezzanine level board room. Along with our canoes, two aboriginal women from Montreal set

up a display of baby moccasins. Thursday afternoon saw us having a dress rehearsal. We were pretty nervous as you can imagine. That night we stayed at the Royal York, wandered the almost empty streets of downtown Toronto, both inside and outside the "fence", watched the horse patrols, chatted with police and marvelled at the whole affair.

Friday morning saw us up early to make final preparations- we definitely had some butterflies. Mrs. Harper arrived at the "Muskoka Room" a bit early to get briefed, and met us all. She was warm and friendly, and very down to earth, and set us all at ease immediately. She apologized for being a kayak paddler, and started telling canoe jokes!!!

And then the show was on. The spouses arrived one at a time, were greeted by Mrs. Harper, and then milled around visiting with both the moccasin folks and us. Mrs. Russia and Mrs. Japan had interpreters. Also in attendance were Mrs. Nigeria, Mrs. Malawi, two women from the UN, and one woman from the EU. Some of the big name countries were not there - US, Britain, Germany - a bit disappointing, but much less nerve wracking in the end. I gave a short talk about wooden canoes and their direct lineage from the native birch bark canoe.



Pam talking to the spouses.

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Then on to bending some ribs, with Mrs. Harper jumping right in and the others following suit.



Mrs. Harper (dotted dress) helps Pam show the others how to bend a rib.



The two African wives, Mrs. Nigeria and Mrs. Malawi, getting ready to bend a rib.



Mrs. Russia nailing a rib.

They all took turns doing some seat caning and Mrs. Japan had great fun nailing in some planking. (The CP photographer later told us that this was the best event that he had photographed in his 25 years!)



Mrs. Harper and Mrs. Japan cane seats with Edie.



"Mrs. Japan had great fun nailing in some planking."

Our hands-on segment was short-lived, unfortunately, as the women seemed to really enjoy themselves.

**"The CP photographer later told us that this was the best event that he had photographed in his 25 years!"**

*G8 Spouses' Canoe* continued on page 9

*G8 Spouses' Canoe* continued from page 7



Mrs. Harper and Pam shake hands.

They were quickly moved on to signing the two finished canoes for a press photo op.



The spouses sign the canoe...

*(From L to R) Callista Mutharika (Malawi), Svetlana Medvedeva (Russia), Ban Soon-taek (UN), Laureen Harper (Canada), Nabuko Kan (Japan), Geertrui Van Rompuy (European Council) and Patience Goodluck Jonathan (Nigeria) sign on a canoe in Toronto on June 25, 2010. The woman signing the stern deck is not named.*



And we were quietly hustled out the back door while they had lunch.

Later that afternoon we packed up and escaped from the downtown, before all the marches and vandalism took place. A flat tire on the canoe trailer was a bit exciting for a while, but friendly (yes friendly!) Toronto folks helped us out.

The canoes came home with us, were given several more varnish coats over top of the signatures, and then delivered to two summer camps.

Throughout the whole time, from March right on through to the actual day of the program we were sworn to secrecy - for security purposes? Or for press releases?? We never really could figure it out. It was very odd as we continually found ourselves in the middle of conversations that were always negative about the whole G8 event, and yet here we were actually benefiting from it. It was difficult to hold our tongues. It certainly was a once in a lifetime opportunity - to actually be on the receiving end of one of these lavish events paid for by our tax dollars (you will be happy to know that we were in no way lavish with our expenses/billing). We certainly were a better deal for them than the thousands of dollars of snack food....!

We are still waiting for a new canoe order from Mrs. Russia for her husband, or perhaps from Mrs. Japan. You just never know...

*G8 spouses give new canoe to Camp Ooch. Pam Wedd, left, and Jane Liddell helped the spouses of G8 leaders build an artisan canoe that was later transferred and donated to Camp Oochigeas on Wednesday, Aug. 25. Photo by Cameron Ginn/Beacon Star*

[www.cottagecountrynow.ca/news/article/866740--g8-spouses-give-new-canoe-to-camp-ooch](http://www.cottagecountrynow.ca/news/article/866740--g8-spouses-give-new-canoe-to-camp-ooch)

## 2010 AGM Guest Speaker Mike Ormsby

By Lynne Case

Contributing writer for Canoeroots Magazine and blogger extraordinaire Mike Ormsby was the featured speaker at this year's AGM.



Mike says about himself, "I love to canoe....to trip....just go out for a paddle....read and write about....talk about (sometimes talk too much about LOL LOL)....and I especially love wood canoes, especially wood canvas canoes ....just about anything to do with canoes will grab my attention. I love to reflect on things about canoes and the outdoors in general."

You can check out Mike's articles in Canoeroots magazine online by directing your browser to <http://www.canoerootsmag.com> where Mike discusses things like paddle sizing, winter canoe storage, canoe trips and his latest endeavour, a canoe-building program for (mostly) at-risk, inner-city youth of First Nations heritage.

Mike approached the Guild seeking support for his proposed program whereby interested

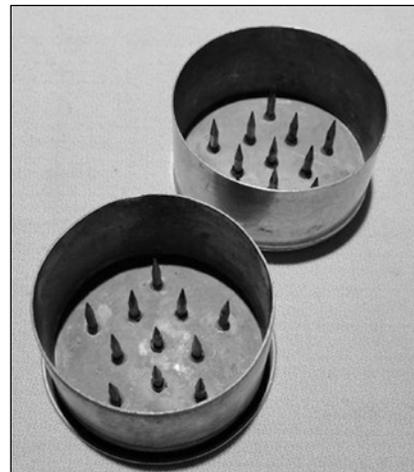
canoe makers could work with youths showing them how to build as well as how to repair and restore canoes and thereby giving them new, life-long, job skills. The program could be held at individual shops or at camps where there would be funding to provide the tools and materials on-site that would be necessary for canoe work.

Aviva Insurance Company has set up a community funding contest with \$1,000,000 to award to winners. Winning proposals will be decided in part by votes from the public sector. To read Mike's proposal and to vote for him to be awarded funding, direct your web browser to

[www.avivacommunityfund.org/ideas/acf6683](http://www.avivacommunityfund.org/ideas/acf6683).

In addition to becoming a hero to inner-city youth and a proponent to "the canoe way of life" Mike also writes Reflections on the Outdoors Naturally, a WordPress.com Weblog, which you can read at

<http://reflectionsoutdoors.wordpress.com/>



What Is It?

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"Wilderness can be appreciated only by contrast, and solitude understood only when we have been without it. We cannot separate ourselves from society, comradeship, sharing and love. Unless we can contribute something from wilderness experience, derive some solace or peace to share with others, then the real purpose is defeated."

*Sigurd F. Olson*

## The Wood Lovers Weekend at Upper Canada Village

By Dave Alguire

On this past Thanksgiving weekend of Oct 8,9 and 10, Doug Long and myself had the opportunity to attend a special event at Upper Canada Village. The village is situated at Morrisburg along the St. Lawrence River and is a collection of historic buildings, machinery and artifacts representing pioneer life in the mid 1800's in Eastern Ontario (then Upper Canada).

The event was called 'The Wood Lovers Weekend' and was a special weekend activity intended to boost attendance at Upper Canada Village. This was the first year for this particular event. The village hosted about 30 different artisans and Doug and I were there with our own canoes and paddles and also with a display promoting the WCBG.



A view down the left of center of the barn showing our tables and Dave's canoe on the floor.

All of the artisans were displaying and working within the village at various locations and Doug and I were in a beautiful circa 1860's barn with

impressively huge hand hewn posts and beams and a rough-hewn wooden floor. The barn was called the Transportation barn and had a display of old carriages, penny farthing bikes and other antique modes of transportation. It was the perfect rustic venue for a display of canvas covered canoes.



Dave's canoe, the paddle display at the back and the poster display about canoe repair and restoration.

We occupied about 2/3 of the floor space and at the other end of the barn was a fellow working on hand made Windsor chairs. During the 3 days he pretty well made a complete chair, so that was an interesting thing to watch when we weren't busy ourselves talking to people.

Friday's attendance was a little disappointing, not because of lack of people but because of the demographics. The bulk of the adults were Chinese tourists. They would come through the barn door in groups of 5 or 6, make a line across the end of the barn and, in unison, take about 6 pictures on their digital cameras, turn as a group and disappear as quickly as they appeared.

*Wood Lovers Weekend continued on page 12*

**“Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.”**

**Anonymous**

*Wood Lovers Weekend* continued from page 6

When I mentioned this peculiar behaviour to one of the village employees he said that the Chinese come in bus tours and that most of them only get 45 minutes in the village and then they are off. Hence they just run around as quickly as they can, taking as many pictures as they can.

The other major component of Friday's visitors was school trips with kids in about the 9 or 10 year old range. I had a display set up showing how our canoes are made and a sample of ribs, planking and tacks along with a hunk of plate steel to act as a clenching iron. A lot of the kids had a good time trying to tack ribs and planking together. At that age the kids have very poor hand eye coordination and for most of them just driving a single track was a big challenge. It was quite entertaining just watching them.

Things hit full stride on Saturday and Sunday. It was a glorious weekend for weather and the attendance was pretty good, especially considering that this was the last weekend of the season for the Village. We had a pretty steady stream of visitors over the 2 days.



A close up of the Guild table with brochures and literature.

When you came through the barn door there was about a 12' passageway that you had to go

through to get into the main body of the barn. Doug's canoe was situated at the end of this passageway so that the canoe was in full view as people walked into the barn. He had one of his 'Pintail' models, a beautiful 15' canoe all decked out with black cherry trim, decks and gunwales displayed at waist height. Needless to say this attracted everyone's attention and sparked their interest in what we had to show them. I had my 16' tripping canoe down at floor level so people could stand around it and look in. I also had a display of paddles that showed the steps I use in making one of my laminated paddles. Both Doug and I had a selection of tools on display and we had a series of contact prints showing how the canoes are built over a form and another series of contact prints illustrating old canoes before restoration and after restoration. We had a table set up with Guild literature, membership forms and our Guild brochures for people to take. In addition to all this, Doug had an old chestnut canoe that he was taking apart in preparation for eventual restoration.



A view down the left side of the barn. Some tools and canoe seats on the front, the Guild table next and a display of paddles and canoe repair photos at the back.

We each had an opportunity to visit some of the other artisans in the village and see what they were doing. We were both impressed by

Wood Lovers Weekend continued from page 12

the skill and quality of work produced by the bulk of the other artisans. I felt privileged to be able to display with artisans of this calibre. One of the guitar makers for example sells his work to musicians all over the world and his low end guitars started at \$5,000.00 to \$10,000. As he told me his better quality guitars started at \$10,000.00 and went up from there. There was another fellow who does water gilding with gold leaf and he had pictures of himself and the Pope with work he did for the Vatican. We were in with some pretty high powered artisans!



Doug standing at the end of his "pintail" canoe model. Guild banner above. Notice the huge beams and posts of the barn. Overall I think both Doug and myself found it to be a very interesting weekend. In general I would say that the bulk of the visitors who

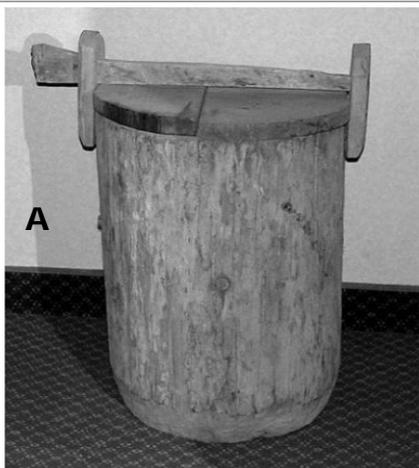
came by were quite attentive and interested in the process of building a cedar canvas canoe. It is hard to know at this point if either of us actually secured any work from this weekend but it was an enjoyable time and certainly allowed us to give some exposure to the Guild and cedar canvas canoes in general.



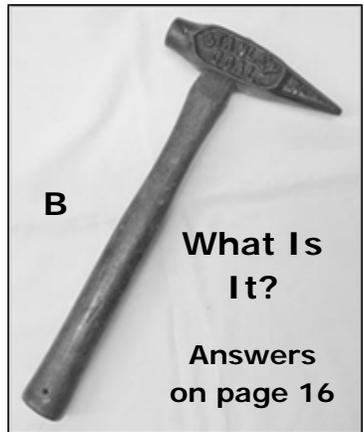
Doug working on the old chestnut that he was taking apart.



Editor's note: Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue of Fairlines! Watch your mailboxes for my "volunteer" letter... Lynne



"The expectations of life depend upon diligence; the mechanic that would perfect his work must first sharpen his tools."  
Confucius



## Tool Tales: The Dremel Multi-Max

By Doug Long

Everyone has had the experience of having a difficult task to do and wishing there was a tool that would make it easier or maybe even possible in some cases. I had such an experience recently with a canoe I was restoring. The stem tips had the usual rot problems but, more seriously, the faces of the stems were so narrow and torn apart by tacks that there was no way of repairing them. The stems had to be replaced almost down to the first rib. This wouldn't have been a big problem if I had been able to remove enough of the planking to get at the point at which I had to make the cut. However, the red cedar planking was in very good condition but would not remain so if I tried to remove it. The best I could do was to wedge the planking apart to give me about an inch on each side of the stem - not enough for any hand saw I have. It was then that I thought of the Dremel Multi-Max tool that I had recently bought to do some trim replacement in the house. This tool, as with those of other manufacturers, performs sawing functions by means of very rapid back and forth radial movements of a blade over just a few degrees in each direction from centre. By using the ¾" wide blade I was able to cut the stems cleanly and accurately in the confined space available - something that would have been almost impossible for me to do otherwise.

Later, while working on the same canoe, I had to splice several new tips onto the first two cant ribs at each end. These ribs were tapered in thickness and were about the thickness of plank stock at the gunwales.

Once again I thought of the Multi-Max as an easy way to cut the ribs without disturbing the planking unnecessarily. By using the semi-circular blade, which has very fine teeth, I was able to cut through the ribs very cleanly and accurately without damaging the planks even though the ribs and planks were in close contact.

Still later I used the Multi-Max again to do a job that is very difficult to do by other means. The inner gunwales of the canoe were in good condition except for the tips and were being left in place (besides, they were fastened to the ribs with steel nails which had done what steel nails do around water). As always, their rib sides had not been varnished and were quite black. Normally I would have cleaned them up somewhat and accepted their poor appearance. This time I decided to try something different. Using double-sided tape I adhered sandpaper to one surface of the ¾" blade and used the tool to sand the gunwale surface between the ribs. It worked like a charm and cleaned them up better than I could possibly have done otherwise. It is still a tedious job but infinitely better than the alternatives.

I did the same operation later on another canoe, which had painted gunwales, to remove the paint that had dripped down between the ribs. Using the Multi-Max in this way was probably not foreseen by the manufacturer but it certainly was a life saver for me.

Happy sanding.  
Doug Long



*"When we come to add emotion to our paddling, we create a vision. Then our canoe can dance and almost seem to take on a life of its own. It is more than just mere paddling...almost as if that canoe becomes an extension of ourselves. Freeing ourselves."*

*- Mike Ormsby*

## Ken Solway

1954 – 2010

By Doug Long

Those members who visit the WCHA forums may have seen the announcement of the death of Ken Solway, a former Guild member, who died in April. The full announcement can be found in the 'Miscellaneous' category in the WCHA Forums <http://forums.wcha.org/showthread.php?t=5732>

Some of you will remember the Wagner/Solway incident some years ago that shook the Guild to its core and resulted in the only time a member was asked to leave the Guild. The gist of the incident was that Mr Wagner bought a canoe from Ken Solway and, when he was dissatisfied with the workmanship, wrote to all Guild members in the belief that the Guild 'guaranteed' the work of its members. This incident resulted in the disclaimers that now appear in our web site.

I never met Ken Solway and was interested to learn that his canoe work was only a sideline to his other endeavors.



*The Lady of Shalott* painted in 1888 by the British Pre-Raphaelite John William Waterhouse, now at the Tait Britain museum in London, England.

## An Interesting Book to Read

By Dave Alguire

Title: **Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work**

Author: Matthew B. Crawford  
The Penguin Press, 2009  
ISBN number: 978-1-59420-223-0

This is a very interesting book that I think a lot of Guild members would enjoy as winter reading curled up beside the wood stove or fireplace. It is an in depth inquiry into the nature of work in the modern world, and an attempt to understand the degradation of work in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The author outlines a bit of the history of work in North America over the last 150 years and the development of the concept of white collar vs. blue collar work with its accompanying prejudices and unfounded assumptions. He is interested in the separation of thinking and doing in the workplace and the deep dissatisfaction and lack of fulfillment that so many workers experience today in their unrewarding white collar jobs.

The author has done many types of jobs over the years but is presently working as a motor cycle mechanic, mainly on older bikes. Accordingly he makes a very strong argument for manual labour and the trades as being meaningful and satisfying modes of employment. As the title suggests he strongly advocates for the reinstatement of 'shop class' in high schools across North America. The book is not about fixing motorcycles or canoes *per se* but at the same time the book is entirely about fixing canoes or anything else for that matter and the deep and meaningful sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that it brings. The book is certainly very relevant to what we do and any artisan or person engaged in manual labour would find it very interesting reading.

"Intelligence is the faculty of making artificial objects, especially tools to make tools."

Henri Bergson

## What Is It Answers

From page 2:

This is a battery date marker; some old batteries had a lead bar on the top into which the date was stamped with this piece. The numbers on this particular one represent the 12 months of 1956, and the first three months of 1957.

From page 3:

A This is a can opener; it could likewise be used to close the openings it made by placing the points in the holes when putting the can in the refrigerator.

B This is an antique steak tenderizer and meat cleaver.

From page 4:

A These are antique fire-starting devices known as "steels" and usually made from cast-iron or hand-forged steel.

B Your Fairlines editor contributes that win to "a little skill, a lot of luck and a great piece of flint!"

Page 4:

A This is a target ball throwing device; before clay pigeons, glass target balls, like the one on the right (on page 4) were used for practice.



The glass ball  
balanced in the top  
hoop

B This is a glass target-practice ball like ones thrown from the device at the left.

From page 10:

An ice cube crusher. The patent states..."...it is proposed to arrange the containers telescopically relative to each other and to provide a plurality of pointed elements mounted on the top and base wall of the containers and directed towards each other for cracking a piece of ice placed within the containers when they are forced together."

From page 13:

A This is a bee hive or *bee gum*; the two notches are doors and the rods in the center are for support. Honey was not the only reward for cutting a bee tree. The hunter could also claim the bees. They were kept in home-made structures called gums, made by cutting 3-4 foot sections from hollow sweet-gum logs (or some other type of wood), burning the interior until the surface was slick, cutting one or two small inverted V's in the bottom as passageways for the bees, and covering the slanted top with a rough plank roof. A cross piece was nailed in the middle for the bees to fasten their comb to.

B A Coal hammer; given away when a whole truckload of coal was ordered.



"There doesn't seem to be any foul play. I think what we have here is a simple case of two ships passing in the night."