

NORTH ARKANSAS WOODCARVERS, INC.

History – 1989 through 1994

Compiled by James Lehmkuhl

Thursday carving sessions continued at the V.F.W. Hall. Business meetings continued to be held the third Friday of each month (except June, July and August) at the First Presbyterian Church until 1993.

A new church was built in 1990 on Spring Street with the NAWC meeting in the Fellowship Hall which was a beautiful meeting area.

NAWC continued to have well-known interesting out-of-town carvers to speak and demonstrate at monthly business meetings, some of which were:

Jack Todd - fish

Ron & Eva Miller - bird carving

The **Chisholms** - caricature carving

Bill Spratt - bronze casting

Jim Beilmeir - bells & katchina dolls

Harold Enlow - various subjects

Frank Elam - women's faces

Violet Hensley - making and playing fiddles

Wally Lueth - pretty faces

Ron Wells - caricatures

Andrew Zupka - sanding dust box

Sam Alexander - feathering birds

Jerry Phillip - tricks of woodcarving

We have had members who have also presented programs, demonstrations and showed videos. Some of these were;

Bob Draznik - carousel carving

Len Dillon and **Ernest Hunt** - antiques

Len Dillon - carousel horses

Dick Dulaney - pattern making and pattern layout

Bob McCurdy - relief carving

Dale Burke - bird carving

Dwayn Hewson - power carving

Rudy Mrva - videos

Tom Webster - finishing of carvings

Gordon Webb - ducks & short birds

Les Giger - horses & riders

In an effort to get more members to carve, classes were scheduled for more out-of-town carvers to hold classes at the V.F.W. Some of these were:

Jack Bryant - bottle stoppers

Jim Beilmira - bells

Frank Elam - woman's face

Don Frazer - cigar store Indian

Ron Wells - Silver Dollar city resident carver

Harold Enlow - classes are ongoing

Many members have never carved prior to joining the NAWC and have gone on to help teach newer members. Also, many members enter carvings in the Baxter County Fair each year and are awarded ribbons. Also several carvers travel to other states and enter carving competitions there. We also have members who travel out of state attending carving seminars and promoting wood carving.

Some eventful highlights starting in 1989 were:

- **1989** - Changed the members dues from an April to March fiscal year to a January to December calendar year.

Rudy Mrva and **John Sigrist** conducted carving classes at Good Samaritan Village.

Thirty-three members carved mushrooms for judging. Ribbons were awarded. An article with photos was published in the May/June 1989 issue of "*Chip Chats*".

- **1990** - To show appreciation to the First Presbyterian Church for the use of its facilities a large carving of Praying Hands was presented to the Church (carved by **Len Dillon**).

In an effort to raise money for the club, **Len Dillon** promoted our first wood auction which was held at the September business meeting \$277 was raised for the club treasury.

There was a club table displaying wood carvings at the April Dogwood Festival in Lakeview and we also had a booth at the Village Mall October Craft Show.

- **1991** - NAWC published its first newsletter in January. The temporary editors were **Len Dillon** and **Ray Herres**. **Mariam Herres** was the publisher.

After members accepted the newsletter it was named "*Chip Pile*". The members voted on the name which was selected by **Bernie Helgeson**. The yearly dues were increased from \$5 to \$10 (\$15 for family) in order to afford the cost of the newsletter.

Started Sweet Treats at monthly business meetings which was handled by **Charlotte Wiles** and assisted by **Lola Fisher** when necessary.

Started scheduled Thursday workshop carving sessions which were headed by **Yates Holland**.

Started 50/50 drawing on Thursdays, the money to be used to improve the library (books and teaching aids), wood, patterns for club projects, and Thursday parties. Also later to pay V.F.W. for the use of their hall.

Participation in Wildwood Park International Children's Festival. Members cut-out and rough carved over 1200 birds and critters to pass out to young children in Little Rock. Six members paid their own expense to go to Little Rock to work the event.

We traded a September business meeting for a party boat outing on Lake Norfolk.

Changed our Annual Woodcarving Show from a Thursday afternoon to a Sunday 10 to 3 event which proved most successful.

Club project was to carve Christmas tree ornaments for the First Presbyterian church, which turned out having a beautifully decorated Christmas tree with 282 carved wood ornaments presented to the Church.

Held first and only Workers party which was held to honor all members and non-members who promoted our club and wood carving during the year.

Started Name Badge Drawing at business meetings in an effort to improve turnout at business meetings.

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V.F.W. started charging NAWC \$10 each time the hall was used by our organization.

Club started sending "Chip Chats", the NWCA publication to Baxter county Library in an effort to educate people in our area that wood carving is an art.

Members carved 23 rabbits and entered in judging competition - ribbons were awarded.

Members honored:

Rudy Mrva was given a life membership because of his efforts for our club.

Lloyd Sidwell, due to health reasons was admitted to a nursing home and because of his efforts for the club was given an honorary membership.

Harold Enlow was given an honorary membership to the club.

Charlotte Wiles, Ray Herres and **Yates Holland** were presented plaques honoring them for their work and efforts for the NAWC for the year of 1991. They all worked above and beyond the call of duty.

- **1992** - NAWC donated \$50 to the Twin Lakes Senior Center.

Harold Enlow donated "Old Man Head" carved in driftwood which was donated to the Baxter County Public Library.

Dick Dulaney completed carving sculptures of the twelve disciples. A reception was held in his honor at the Holy Cross Lutheran Church. The carvings were then loaned to the United Methodist Church at Lone Valley, N.J. The carvings were 15 to 17 inches high and took two years to complete. Dick did research to develop his own original patterns for them.

NAWC donated a sign board for names to the V.F.W. This was made by **Dwight Wilson**.

The yearly show was moved to the Ramada III. This was not good, we had a poor turnout and parking problems.

Frank Fusco resigned as editor of the *Chip Pile* and **Margaret Beckman** assumed the responsibility.

- **1993** - Starting in the fall, business meetings were no longer held at the First Presbyterian Church but were moved to the V.F.W. and held on the third Thursday along with the regular carving session.

Carving a realistic buffalo for competition was held for all classes and ribbons were awarded.

Tri-County Woodcarving Club was formed by **Lore** and **Don Brett** in the Hardy-Cherokee Village-Ash Flat area. NAWC members **Joe Byrnes, Tom Nance** and **Yates Holland** helped them get started.

Glen Colley constructed a new club library box.

The club name was changed officially to North Arkansas Wood Carvers Club, Inc. We were incorporated as a non-profit organization and the bylaws were revised in November.

Our 1993 Annual Show was a great success with over 3,000 guests attending. Co-chairmen **Len Dillon** and **Neil Foster** were presented plaques in recognition of their efforts.

Dick Dulaney carved two 3'x8' solid oak doors for Holy Cross

Lutheran Church of Mountain Home. The doors hang at the entrance to the sanctuary. One door shows the baptism of Christ, the other shows the empty tomb after Christ has risen.

- **1994** - The number of directors was increased from 2 to 4 making a total of 10 officers and directors on the executive board. This was done in an effort to eliminate a lot of bickering and unnecessary discussion during the business meetings. Business decisions are discussed and acted upon by the board and presented to the members with the board recommendations, then voted on by the members.

Tom Webster held classes on carving a mountain man. These carvings were judged at the March meeting and ribbons awarded. **Stan Krawczyk** won Best of Show.

Dixie Wolf spearheaded that the club work on a cross project as a Christmas project to present to every resident in a nursing home in Mountain Home. This was a club project with over 400 crosses being cut out of walnut, carved, finished and a story enclosed and all were delivered to nursing home.

The V.F.W. has been getting members to buy new ceiling tile which needed to be replaced. At the December meeting the woodcarvers bought the tile to complete the job. Individuals donated and the club made up the difference.

During the past four years a lot of work and effort has been given by many of our members to help new and old members to improve their carving skills. The following are some who have taught classes and projects:

John Sigrest - beginning

Len Dillon - carousel horses, leprechauns, tool sharpening, buffalo skull bolo, fish toothpick holder, hummingbirds, bells, eggs, layout and sign carving, antiquing, Santa faces, golf balls, Santa icicles, snow man icicles

Yates Holland - fish letter opener, egret, hummingbirds, mouse, beginners

Ernest Hundt - antiquing, egg carving

Gordon Webb - feathering

Larry Cupp - cowboy/cowgirl pins, beginners

Bernie Helgeson - tool sharpening, eagle pins, egrets, beginners

Bob McCurdy - chip, relief, chain saw demonstration

Glen Colley - stylized chickadee

Joe Byrnes - beginners

Tom Nance - beginners

Fred Fritz - beginners

Tom Webster - mountain man, painting, antiquing, beginners

Gene Beckman - knife sharpening, beginners

Marilyn Osterhouse - chip carving

Jack Ryan - faces

Diane Grow - eggs

Lyle Wood - farmer Pat

Ray Herres - carousel horse

We are sorry if we have left members out that have taught or demonstrated.

This completes our club history through 1994. **James Lehmkuhl** has done an outstanding job of completing our club history and we thank him. We urge all members to look over the information that James has compiled.