

Sandy Smith



Sandy was inducted as a member of the CCA in 2011 and considers this her most revered woodcarving honor. She was introduced to woodcarving by a neighbor shortly after she and her husband, Gary, retired to the Ozarks in

northern Arkansas in 1999. The local carving club members encouraged her to become involved in their annual shows and attend nearby seminars where she met many wonderful carvers and learned from them all. Sandy's career was in typesetting and graphic arts, and although retired for the most part, still uses her desktop publishing skills to help out in any way she can.

Sandy is a member of the North Arkansas Woodcarvers Club, the National Wood Carvers Association, and the Affiliated Wood Carvers, Ltd. She is the NAWC webmaster and newsletter editor, and is co-chairman of the NAWC Show Committee.



MelonCollieBaby

Sometimes just coming up with a new and unique idea for a carving is tough, but getting the concept from an idea to a block of wood also can prove challenging. Words that have several meanings, especially those that are phonetically the same but can be interpreted different ways, are always fun. I chose "melancholy" with the intention of creating a "melon collie" but had conflicts as to how to design a dog that was part melon. My

husband, Gary, and I were discussing it one evening and we both blurted out "Melancholy Baby" at the same time, which added a new mental image. Furry legs and a tail extruding from a smooth melon would be tricky, but having furry legs and a tail coming out of a diaper would solve that dilemma. I then created a dog skeleton armature and positioned it into a sitting dog with one hind leg crossed beneath it. Using clay, I shaped the armature into a collie dog

with a watermelon for the torso, and applied a diaper around the hind legs and tail.

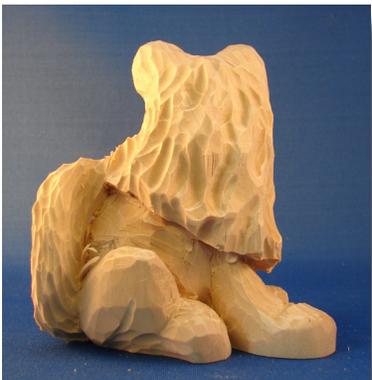
The carving that is in this book is the third "MelonCollieBaby", as I learned several lessons along the way. After the first two were completed, I realized that



neither carving photographed well. As an "in-the-round" carving that could be viewed from all sides it was obvious that it was a collie dog, its body was a watermelon, and it was wearing a baby diaper. But when I took photos, there was no view that showed all three features. So I modified the clay go-by, turned its head so it would be looking to the side



Sandy Smith, *continued*



and brought the collie's furry tail curling forward. These changes made the carving self-explanatory with just one photo taken from the front. Another lesson was making the carving look like a puppy (baby) instead of an adult dog. This I attempted to do by shortening the snoot and making the belly rounder. The base also has its name "MelonCollieBaby" clearly lettered on the front, which also proved to be another valuable (generation gap) lesson. Only people of a certain age understand it. I would venture to say that anyone that did not grow up with rotary dial phones and vinyl records will have no idea that "My Melancholy Baby" is a song written by Ernie Burnett (music) and George A. Norton (lyrics) back in the early 1900's.





Tips from Sandy

If you are creating a "go-by" to carve from, take a photo of it before you transfer its dimensions to your wood to determine if that viewpoint will "tell the story" you want to portray. This

way you will be able to see how your piece will, for the most part, be viewed by others. For "MelonCollieBaby", I used my clay go-by for the pattern. With the basswood cut to the carving's height, I traced around the go-by from the top.