

# The Guild

## Part 2

I'm sorry that it's taken me so long to get to Part two of this story. I had a bit of a problem come up, Prostate Cancer. But everything is going okay now, after forty-four radiation treatments. I've been drained of energy but I'm on my way back to health. I felt I needed to explain the lack of posts before I got right back into the story. And away we go.

After the original build for *Andre's Confiserie Suisse*, the Guild was flush with funds to begin the outfitting of our own shop. Our first problem was finding a space for our shop that could serve as a meeting place and a shop. That problem was answered when our sister organization, The Kansas City Woodturners' Club, approached us with an offer to sublet a portion of their space. We would finally have our space to put our shop. And so it began.

Our Board of Officers and Directors got down to business. With the proceeds from our Andre's project, a purchase was made of the first of our machinery for the shop. Thru our sponsor, Woodcraft, we purchased the following items from Steel City: a Cabinet Table Saw, an 18 inch Band Saw, an 8 inch jointer, and a Floor standing Drill Press. Steel City was brand new in the market and offered us some good deals. Those machines lasted us a good long while. Sadly, Steel city Tool Works went out of business March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015. My Steel City cabinet saw is still going strong. But I digress.

After that purchase we picked up other tools here and there. Some were new, some weren't. But the big thing was that other members started to put in their time to make the shop a success. Tool cabinets, outfeed tables, and the like were built. The whole shop began to come together. At this point we realized that we had to come up with rules for the shop and someone to watch over things during "Open Shop" times. So, a Safety Committee was formed to draft a safety policy that, despite some updates, still works today. And Shop Foremen were recruited to oversee those in the shop. This is a position I still hold today. The safety process became a standard and we were contacted by other guilds around the country for advice. Safety comes first, so we have always shared and will continue to.

Once we had the shop up and running it was time to start bringing in the celebrity woodworkers to teach to our masses. The first was Kelly Mehler from the Kelly Mehler School of Woodworking in Berea, Kentucky. Kelly taught us how to build a Shaker side table and gave us a nice slideshow presentation about his work. Next came Mark Adams, who covered 8 different topics over a weekend. Ralph Quick, of Hannibal, Missouri, came in and gave us a lesson in Windsor Chairs. Then came Christopher Schwarz, then of Popular Woodworking, to share with us his knowledge of working with hand tools. The learning never seemed to stop.

It wasn't all fun and games though. During our first year, in that location, we had a full-blown flood brought on by a burst pipe. Unfortunately, this resulted in the loss of mementoes from the early years of the Guild. A few were saved, but most were lost. The other big problem came when the Woodturners club lost their lease, which meant we lost ours, as well. This led to a mad scramble to find a new home. With the tireless work of our Vice-President and Treasurer at the time, Cliff Bell and Jack Gregg, a new location was found. It is our current location at 3189 Mercier St Kansas City, Missouri. That is when the members of the Guild really shined the brightest. Ron Lomax and Bud Schenke, retired Electrical engineers, handled our wiring needs. Jim Bany, a construction project manager, handled the drywall and other assorted items. There were so many people helping out that I don't think I could name them all if I tried. And believe me, I was right there with them all as this all took place in the middle of my two-year term as the Guild president. It was a time I don't think I'll ever forget.

But before we moved into the new shop we had one last event in the old shop, a memorial service for Vice- President Cliff Bell. Cliff had been the Energizer Bunny for the Guild all while fighting a cancer in his chest. Cliff was quite a negotiator and programmer. He could sell sun-tan lotion and Bermuda shorts to an Eskimo. Cliff was definitely an unique individual, but I can say with all certainty, he was my friend. He did so much for the Guild that we named our top annual award, The ***Clifford Bell Contributor of the Year***. Sometime, in the future, I may take the time to dedicate a post just to him.

Anyway, that was all 7 years ago. The Guild has continued to grow as new people find us and become a part of our group of woodworkers. We've gone from the 85 members, when I joined, to over 700 now. The education continues as well as some outstanding furniture and other items being made. If you're in Kansas City and need to hang with some great guys and gals and talk about woodworking, stop by. We meet the third Wednesday of every month. You'll be glad you did. That's all for now. I've got sawdust to make.

KT