

Artisans Quarterly Review

H A N D C R A F T E D C U S T O M W O O D W O R K I N G

2009 Part II

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A CORNER FOR THE EDITOR

The first quarter of 2009 seems to have rapidly dissipated, meanwhile the economy has been sluggish. Even in this environment there are projects in progress and clients searching for the perfect products and services. Artisans is adjusting and acclimating as our economy evolves.

One of our key objectives is filling the needs of those seeking “green” products and services. In our last issue we mentioned restoration as a “green tactic” ... IE from an environmentally positive perspective. We’re working to certify that materials for our commissions are also green. There’s the obvious source of sustainable growth forests, but we also have locally harvested lumber sources. For example, every year local arborists and power companies remove countless trees, many of which make their way to small privately owned sawmills. Lets not forget the option of reclaimed or repurposed lumber.

Starting with this issue, we’ll be noting details about each project to illustrate its “green level.” We’ve also attached a “Green Notes” addendum on Page 11 to provide an overview of our current status. We’re all on this planet together, and it’s become quite obvious we need to tread just a bit lighter on our resources!

- Eric M. Saperstein Master Craftsman

T O D L T O U C H P O I N T

We’ve cast over 1,200 designer packages into the world, blanketing 49 states plus Washington, DC;. One package even venturing to the US Capital building! Based on the fact that no designers have reached out to us from Wyoming, logically, we’re assuming they all must have left this state. All we can do now is hope the last one out remembered to turn off the lights! Check out the outgoing airmail packages to the right.

On March 23rd we lit the email beacon again, sending a broadcast Showcase Email to TODL’s now 45,820 members. Each broadcast reinforces our presence to the entire designer population, allowing us to highlight a specific example of our work, and providing an overall description of Artisans outside of the normal search mechanisms.

Inquiries are starting to come in and we’re discussing details and preparing our proposals. Hopefully we’ll have some interesting new projects to report in 2009 Issue 3!

International Traffic

- Antigua & Barbuda
- Australia
- Bermuda
- Brazil
- Canada
- China
- Costa Rico
- India
- Italy
- Morocco
- Puerto Rico
- Saudi Arabia
- Taiwan
- Turkey
- UAE (Dubai)
- US Virgin Islands

E X T E N D E D E D I T I O N

At the onset of Artisans Quarterly, we decided to cap the length of each edition to ten pages. We figured that was enough; any longer we’d lose your interest, too short we can’t really convey a good story. Well, we made the rules here so we’re entitled to break them.

This issue includes a few of our affiliated cast of artisans, plus we’re blowing past the ten page mark with green notes, some worthy causes, and a special addendum introducing a new character to our family. This special feature is a story written by our cousin Desmond Price who, after completing a tour of Afghanistan and Iraq during his five years as a US Army Ranger, is now on a world tour of his own.



Desmond Price in Indonesia

WOODSHOP NEWS - STANLEY'S STICKS

DIAMOND IN THE WILLOW

Now retired having put the shop in Eric's hands, Stanley is enjoying his free time, and is often found whittling. This artist feature appeared in the Jan/Feb 2009 issue of Woodshop News.

For more info and photos of Stanley's pet projects, visit our walking stick website:

www.customwalkingsticks.com

Sticking with it

Stanley Saperstein is a wood carver and furniture maker who runs Artisans of the Valley woodworking studio in Pennington, N.J. He pays the bills building period-style reproductions and custom built-ins, but fills his time on the side making custom wooden canes and walking staffs. Customers' favorites include historic icons and animals, but he will cater to all requests. A recent commission describes the fun he has with the niche line of work where his clients, many of them senior citizens, want to express themselves.

"My client wanted a Yoda from Star Wars put on a cane. Everyone calls him Yoda because he looks like Yoda. He's this little short guy with a very round face and kind of big ears."

Saperstein grew up on a farm in Columbia County, N.Y., and started whittling at age six. Much later, he apprenticed with a professional furniture maker and started his own furniture business in 1974. A historian at heart, he also did Revolutionary War reenactments and portrayed a camp carpenter where he would make period walking sticks.

"I would whittle these things during the reenactment for the amusement of the crowd, and then people started to ask me if I would sell them ... especially the other reenactors, because it was very common to have a walking stick that designated your army unit, the battles you fought in and what you did during the war."

In 1987, he was making dozens of walking sticks in styles representative of those made between the Revolutionary War and 1900, the peak of them designed like the walking sticks made right after the Civil War.

"You don't have to make them look like exact sculptures — they're sup-



Stan Saperstein of Pennington, N.J., has made more than 1,000 walking sticks and canes.

posed to be kind of on the crude side. I was reproducing what a soldier would do, not a professional carver. Reenactors are very particular about playing an authentic role."

Popular designs include animal heads such as raccoons, dogs, horses and dragons, as well historic icons, the most popular being George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee.

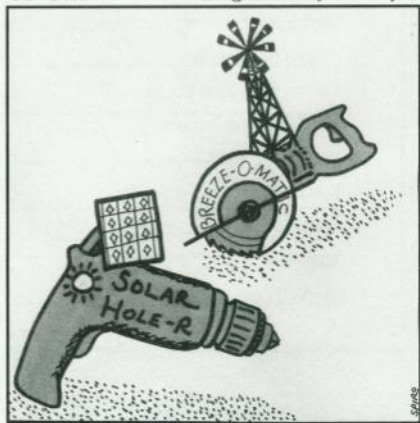
Saperstein launched his Web site, www.customwalkingsticks.com, in 2000 and has since attracted clients from all over the U.S. and throughout the world. His prices start at \$250 and can exceed \$500 per item.

Contact: Artisans of the Valley, 103 Corrine Dr., Pennington, NJ 08534. Tel: 609-737-9364.

— Jennifer Hicks

60 Grit

Rough humor by Steve Spiro



The next generation of cordless tools.

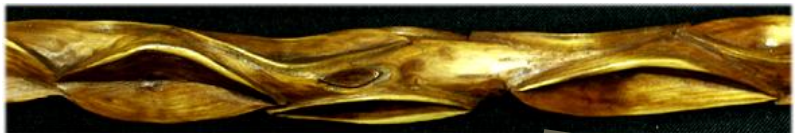
One of our favorite walking stick materials is known as "diamond willow." This unique abnormality of nature forms on several species of willow, a bi-product from what is commonly believed to be a fungal infection known as *Valsa Sordida*. The tree reacts to the fungus much like an oyster reacts to sand, it causes an irritation that results in the tree growing around the root of the fungus. The natural growth pattern consistently forms an elongated "diamond like" shape with a topography that is deepest in the center.

Diamond willow formations are most common in colder northern climates ranging from Alaska into Canada and certain areas of Minnesota and Michigan. Harvest requires trekking into swamps, bogs, and riverbeds; our scouts have told us these remote places are only accessible for a short period each year.

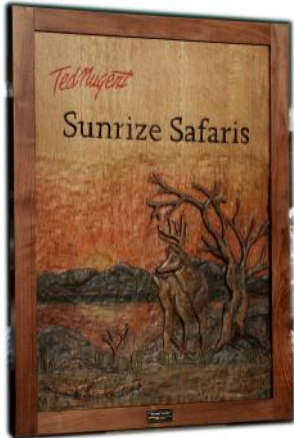
The shapes and placement of the anomalies vary; some are widely spaced, while others are more closely clumped. The more diamonds on the shaft, the more valuable that piece is considered. However, for the purposes of walking stick carving, too many diamonds can crowd the shaft space and prevent introduction of other details. The perfect diamond density is a matter of opinion.

When the bark is removed and the staff is carefully sanded and prepped, making sure not to remove the reddish layers under the bark; this is especially important around the diamond areas, the true beauty of the piece appears. It is a personal preference whether to undercut around the diamonds creating further contrast and depth or to leave the natural flow of the wood intact. Finishing with tung oil or shellac provides for the most outstanding natural grain patterns.

Combined, the work of nature's fungus and an artistic carver's skills amount to a unique piece of wood - depending on the size and shape diamond willow is useful for lamps, table bases, coat racks, chair frames, and railings, and a host of other creative projects. Stanley Saperstein carves these "freaks of nature" to produce one-of-a-kind walking sticks and canes.



CHIP CHATS FEATURES
WHITETAIL SUNRIZE



We are always proud to submit our work to Chip Chats, published by the National Woodcarver's Association. The Jan/Feb 2009 Issue featured our "[Whitetail Sunrize](#)" carving completed in December of 2006.

[View the Article Online Now!](#)

Game Table Green Notes:
Locally Harvested & Processed Solid Black Walnut
Source: Willard Brothers Lumber



PUZZLES & GAMES

This is not a new project but it's a noteworthy one, and we've been meaning to feature it in Artisans Quarterly since the first issue. The commission began as a [coffee table configured for playing chess](#). A cabinet style coffee table that basically resembles the construction of a large trunk without a lid. The piece is solid American black walnut with tung and groove faces with interlocking (finger) joints where each corner allows an opposing overlap, secured by contrasting oak pegs.

Somewhere in the design phase we determined that a nice glass of wine during a game of chess sounded like a good plan; thus a wine and glass rack was incorporated into the project scope. General storage drawers, and compartments in the surface to store the chess set were already set as requirements. Then things got interesting; Teri's innocent suggestion mushroomed the original spec for a four-inch space under the table into opening two holes in the bottom panel and creating a channel behind the drawers and cabinet sections. This allowed a small feline creature a full fledged fortress in which to seek solace from his K-9 nemesis.

The next upgrade engaged a new level of evolution for the project; we decided we could develop a sequence chest. The various compartments were redesigned to be self-contained, removable structures. Interlocking mechanisms intertwined the chassis and the components creating a one-of-a-kind large-scale puzzle. Not only are there a series of steps required to access some of the obvious compartments, a safe cracker or would be thief, is left to discover the secrete compartments, within the depths of the chassis.

The net result is a complex work of art that appears unassuming by displaying clean simple lines and a rustic design; yet inside is a labyrinth of hidden realms for both man and beast. These pieces take a lot of time to plan and assemble, (not to mention a little insanity) so if you're thinking about a Christmas gift put your order in for one now!



SO, WHO'S HENRY?



Some of you notice photo credits, some even click on the links, others glance at the images and move right along with their life. Anyway, this time we're going to make you stop for a moment and take notice!

Henry Schweber and his wife Lynn have been long time family friends. The couple retired within the past few years and have turned to the pursuit of their hobbies and personal interests. Along with boating and travel, Henry has revitalized his lifetime love for the art of photography, embarking on world-wide photographic expeditions and incorporating frequent photo opportunities into his daily routine.

Henry's past life, (his career) was in mechanical engineering. Although he experienced a wide spectrum of detailed and tedious tasks, a few of which tested his creative talents and provided an assortment of challenging calculations and mental exercises, curtailed his artistic cravings. The final product of his engineering tenure did provide the means for a comfortable retirement, and Henry can now engage in the full time pursuit of his passions.

Retirement equals independence; Henry is now a free range artist or, as he describes himself, "an independent spirit." With the exception of the occasional call from Eric requesting yet another product shot, Henry clicks freely through the world of wildlife, landscapes, seascapes, historic reenactments, and wherever the camera lens focuses on anything else he finds interesting.

Henry took advantage of his available time to learn web development, creating www.henry8photo.com as one portion of his transition into the digital age. He is now armed with an assortment of digital cameras, allowing his work to evolve from straight 35mm film and darkroom tricks into the world of digital photo enhancement. His personal studio now features array of computer equipment and the latest software from Adobe.

Henry's resume includes publications with the Coast Guard Auxiliary magazine the "Navigator," winning him a Photographer of the Year award. His work has been published in "The Trenton Magazine." He's won second place at the Burlington Juried Art Fair, and his work has appeared at the Ellarslie Trenton City Museum and Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton Township, NJ. Henry's images are on display throughout Artisans marketing materials and our website, various articles we've published, and in our TODL profiles. What we're featuring in this article is his truly artistic work.

[Visit Henry's website](#) for his complete gallery and information on ordering a signed and titled photo.



Photos by Henry Schweber

AMAZING TRANSITIONS BEFORE / AFTER

This is a restoration flashback; a few pieces where the photography worked in our favor. It just so happened the before shots look really disheveled and the after shots have a rich warm glow. We have several restoration projects running in the shop now, you'll see a few of those in the next issue. (IE We haven't gotten much past the "before" photos yet on those projects.) All the pieces shown here are not overly valuable antiques, they are collectable pieces that are fully restored and functional, a status that regained their prominence in our clients' homes. Visit our [Restoration Gallery](#) to study dozens of examples covering decades of extensive and eclectic restorations.



THE BIRTH OF ARTEMIS (PART I OF II)

Around May of 2007 Eric decided to indulge one of his crazy ideas, this time it was to find the ultimate chef's knife. Those of you who know how this process generally ends, already anticipate that something extraordinary is about to be born. Google is the obvious starting point for Eric's generation, and so the search began with a series of queries to find a knife maker with the appropriate skills and personality to achieve his objective. In only a few hours www.jayfisher.com was providing the majority of the right results. Jay's tendency for robust honesty in the presentation of his work, his obvious masters level skills, and a mindset paralleling Eric's obviously warranted further research.



Within a few weeks of email discussions with New Mexico knife maker [Jay Fisher](http://www.jayfisher.com), the technical specifications and initial design concepts were established. They defined what we can very confidently claim is the ultimate chef's knife. Jay's life has been focused on the art of knife making and metal sculpture since he was nineteen when he first began his quest to learn the secrets of steel; this is the man for the job!

Jay's knives range from work horses, to collector's pieces, military combat knives to high art sculpture. Boasting a piece in the Tower of London, his clients include collectors, police, bomb squads, and the military. His knives withstand combat with the US Army, 101st Airborne, Special Forces, and United States Air Force Pararescue; serve with SWAT and emergency response teams; go on safari with hunters and trappers; and cook with chefs around the world.

The overall length of 18" provides for a full twelve-inch edge. The blade style is a modified Hamburg pattern butcher, with an extended front bolster positioned so a pinch around the spine area between the fingertips allows greater dexterity for lighter work. A light curve in the straight section of the blade provides for even sharpening and improved capability for the severing of fibers. The sub-hilt center bolster adds a nice touch, and the front finger groove is very deep for security. A heavy rear bolster will help balance the beast, a thumb rise provides for pushing, and a slightly canted angle on the handle for comfort complete the concept.



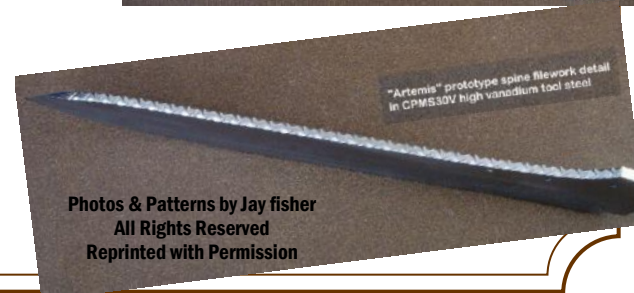
"Artemis," ©1976 photo by Robert Avalon

The design and file work specs were all in place so the next decision was to finalize the selection of steel and the material for the handle. CPM S30V is a martensitic stainless steel; a "designed steel," blending the best characteristics of toughness, wear and corrosion resistance. Designing steel for the formation of vanadium carbides develops a harder and more effective structure than chromium carbides, superior in wear and rust resistance. Those familiar with stainless steel such as 440C and D2 are aware of the benefits and the weaknesses of these alloys. CPM S30V is designed to overcome faults of these materials while maintaining and even improving upon the benefits. The steel we selected for Eric's chef's knife is a homogeneous, high quality steel characterized by superior dimensional stability, grindability, and toughness which is best finished in a satin or bead blasted surface. Literally born in a crucible, this steel is the unquestioned state of the art in modern metallurgy.

([Jay's Blades & Steel Page](#))

This is a prototype, illustrating the application of Jay's lifetime of skills to forge the most modern of steels into a true functional work of art. As the blank yielded to his will and the blades form emerged, Jay designated Eric's knife "Artemis." Having already exchanged stories and backgrounds. (Anyone notice Eric babbles?) Jay already understood the destiny of this knife would include preparation of an array of wild game. Artemis is the goddess of the hunt and of all wild animals, she roamed the wilderness, forests, and uncultivated land, with her nymphs in attendance, hunting for lions, panthers, hinds, and stags.

This story will be continued in Vol. 2 Issue 3.



Photos & Patterns by Jay fisher
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CARVED IN GLASS



We've only mentioned glass carving in [Eric's custom bar](#), and a few other general references. Artisans is long past due in recognizing glass artist Randy Mardrus with a feature in our newsletter. Randy's work is a reflection of his natural talent and lifelong devotion to art inspired by the mountainous northeast countryside.

Randy's interest in glass drove him to pursue his dreams of achieving the skills and mastering the techniques of this unforgiving medium to establish a lifetime career. His initial efforts and instinct guided him to pursue a technique to carve glass using sandblasting. The intrigue of light, texture, and depth became irresistible as his hand and mind together created works worthy of marketing in 1987. Taking the leap in 1993 that most artists never risk, Randy became a full-time artist, a decision that elevated him permanently into the ranks of accomplished professionals.

[Randy Mardrus's](#) work is prized in private and corporate collections. His signature style takes a unique approach to familiar tools and materials resulting in mesmerizingly precise detail and stunningly seductive depth. With carefully planned lighting, utilizing an assortment of fiber optics, LED's, and other creative options, Randy's carvings come alive with an amazing presence. The glass radiates a realism of depth that cannot be truly captured in a photograph; in person experience is an absolute must.



Randy is among an elite class of artists who create individually hand-made original works, derived from patterns he personally develops. His greatest inspiration has been wildlife & the awesome beauty of nature. Custom commissions reside in luxury homes, mega-yachts, and private aircraft. (Rumor has it Randy's art has even reached the mile high club in a privately owned 747 wide-body.) Commercial venues include the New Yorker Hotel, Foxwoods Casino, the US Senate Building, and dozens of other famous locations.



"I'm a perfectionist and glass carving is a medium that is very unforgiving and will always challenge me... Depth and motion are my primary goals while creating the mood in my visual dramas... I love the challenges and rewards of achieving the effects in glass that I'm looking for, and definitely get my biggest rewards from the overwhelming satisfaction expressed by my clients." --Randy Mardrus

Wildlife art created a common ground between Randy & Eric, who remained friends after the completion of Eric's bar. Working together on this project gave them the opportunity to challenge each other, and develop a synergy between glass and wood. We're looking forward to our next collaboration; now it's up to one of you to request such a commission!



Visit www.permanentreflections.com for more of Randy's work.
 Images of Randy Mardrus's work are protected by Copyright Laws.
 They are represented here with permission for mutual marketing purposes.

A WINNING PINWOOD THEME

Since Eric & Teri are not planning to replicate, they figure their best bet to corrupt (err ah, help mold) the next generation is to impart their ways of thinking onto the offspring of their friends. Kyle Sinclair (shown left), son of Burke & Amy Sinclair, made his second annual pilgrimage to Artisans shop this February to prepare his entry into the annual Cub Scout pinewood derby.

For those of you who are not familiar (unlikely that head count is very high!) the pinewood derby requires each scout to build their own wooden vehicle using a small block of pine. Set guidelines for dimensions and weight, using a few common components, ensures it's a fair race. Beyond that, creativity takes over and each kid gets to embellish their car with their theme of choice.

This year Kyle's entry is a four wheeled armored assault vehicle complete with rotating turret, scale cannon with muzzle brake, troop insignias, and custom urban camo (below left). This miniature tank didn't win the race, coming in at fourth, but it blew away the competition for theme taking the 2009 Troop 71 Pack 104 best of show! Perhaps Kyle's next shop project will be a trophy shelf!



REBUILDING BARRISTERS



All that remained of this stackable bookcase unit was three barely stable sections, two doors, and one piece of glass. No top, no base, no hardware. The units had been in the family for a while and unfortunately, after a few moves, were missing some major components. This is obviously nothing super fancy, nor extremely valuable; it's just a great example of recovering something that would otherwise be wasted and turning it back into a functional piece of furniture. Remember, restoration requires far less new lumber than replacing!

A BOX OF MUSIC

This solid walnut and cherry music box holds a precision made 72 note Swiss movement that plays "Memories," made famous by the musical Cats. Stan and Cindy obtained the movement on their [woodcarving tour of Switzerland in 2005](#). Stan found himself inspired by the amazing works of art they viewed on their trip, and decided to take on the challenge of making a box worthy of such an intricate device.



FRAMING PAPERS

Last year Eric got his papers, masters papers that is. We've already written a feature article about the parchment, the illumination, and calligraphy work. Now it's Eric's turn to start his phase of the project, designing and carving a frame to house this prized artwork. As Eric starts this project, the "plan" is to move forward at a reasonable pace and not repeat the near 10-year process of carving a frame for his Sharps rifle. How long this project will take all depends on what commissions you, the readers, kick off!

The frame will be solid quarter sawn white oak, featuring an array of our signature rope carvings, and perhaps a few other accents. Since this is a project for ourselves, we're designing as we go and making the artistic decisions along the way. The frame will consist of a mortis and tenon construction using heavy solid corner blocks to anchor the joints. Even though its already becoming apparent that this is way overkill for a frame, Eric can't overcome the tendency to overbuild so we're going ahead with a very solid structure. We'll be posting periodic status reports as this project progresses!



ARE YOUR PIES SAFE?

When you need something with a little more character than a storage closet for your kitchen dining room, why not go with a creative accent? Pie safes were a critical asset for hundreds of years; no self respecting homemaker, bakery, tavern, or inn would dream of operating a kitchen without one. They literally kept pies and baked goods free from flies and other insects while allowing circulation to prevent mold growth. So what has changed? Nothing, they still function perfectly today!

Country style pie safes, cupboards, hutches, corner units, or servers can all feature punched metal panels. The metal panels provide a medium for an artistic display; thousands of patterns have been developed in countless themes. Besides the artwork, the panels act as a simple machine. The metal is "punched" using a pointed awl, which penetrates the plate by stretching the metal until it bursts. The result is a sharp protruding ring of metal around each hole. The holes vary in size, but are never large enough to allow a house fly to pass through. Even a fly is smart enough not to vivisect itself! The barrier allows a convection created by the cooling baked goods, ensuring proper airflow.

Shown in solid cherry, country commissions are also available in oak, walnut, maple, poplar, or pine. Stain and finishes can be customized as well as overall dimensions, shelf configuration, and drawer configurations.

These hand punched copper pineapples are an example of punch work by one of our affiliates. Panels are available in copper, brass, tin, or stainless steel. Patterns can be chosen from stock libraries or personalized with custom designs.



Pie Safe Green Notes:

Locally Harvested & Processed Solid Cherry, Source: Willard Brothers Lumber

Green Notes



Artisans of the Valley is conscious about sustaining our environment. Our work requires a constant supply of lumber, finishing supplies, supporting materials, equipment, and obviously an operational shop environment. Survival in the new economy, and on earth, requires a new mindset that considers a variety of factors most of us are just beginning to understand let alone bear in mind when we are making business decisions.

The transition from a wasteful consumption mentality into a sustainable one is creating new opportunities, new products, new materials, and even presenting cost savings. Some things can be changed overnight, others take a few years to get a foothold and make a difference.

Artisans is actively adjusting our purchasing procedures, methods, and overall business practices towards achieving the goal of eventually being entirely self-sufficient and environmentally sound. While we're not going to be able to go off-the-grid just yet, plans to relocate our shop to where this will be feasible are in their infancy.

In the meantime, we are actively implementing a variety of green business practices.

Artisans is currently

- Actively utilizing sustainable and locally harvested lumber in all possible circumstances.
- Offering our commissioned works in antique and reclaimed lumber.
- Restoring existing furniture for reuse and repurposing; this reduces land fill volume and the use of newly harvested lumber and the supporting processes.
- Using primarily VOC compliant finishing materials and supplies.
- Offering a water based "non-toxic" option for finishing on our custom commissions.
- Utilizing wood scraps for heating and cooking to reduce the use of fossil fuels.
- Composting sawdust byproducts to provide natural garden fertilizer for their properties and neighbors.
- Producing heirloom quality furniture, not the disposable stuff that's commercially available today.
- Reducing the use of paper by developing their new CD based portfolio and by publishing their quarterly newsletter as an online publication.
- Utilizing florescent high output/low wattage lighting in their shop spaces.
- Utilizing a diesel multi-purpose vehicle with a detachable cargo trailer to improve fuel economy, lower emissions, vehicle ware, and reduce maintenance when cargo space is not required.
- Utilizing our homes for our office and showroom space, we do not maintain separate single-purpose conditioned space for these purposes.
- Maintaining unconditioned storage space for non-temperature dependent supplies & materials.
- Utilizing their high efficiency rated heat and air conditioning systems upgraded in 2008.
- Using primarily solid wood products reducing the introduction of formaldehyde and other chemical contaminants into living spaces.
- Actively engaged in forestry management, wildlife habitat conservation, and open space initiatives.

103 Corrine Drive Pennington, NJ 08534 609-637-0450

website: www.artisansofthevalley.com email: woodworkers@artisansofthevalley.com

Please Call Ahead! Our studio is open by appointment only.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS DESMOND?

Stanley's family roots tie back to Hudson, NY where his mother, Millie, and her brother, Irving Price, were raised on a small farm. Stan and brother Robert spent summers on the farm with Irv's sons Michael and Stephen Price. We could tell a variety of tales from the past, but the main premise of this is to introduce Michael's son Desmond as one of the characters in our family story.

Desmond attended Valley Forge Military Academy, placing him about an hour by train from our shop, allowing him the occasional opportunity to visit for a home cooked meal and for the chance to get into some trouble with his older cousin Eric on a weekend pass. Desmond's life took a different path than most of our family, his lifelong goal was to become an Army Ranger. The last member of our family line to see hardcore combat was Irv, who served in the US Navy during WWII.

Des served his five years with the 75th Ranger Regiment, 2nd Battalion, Ft. Lewis, WA which took him directly to the front lines of Afghanistan and Iraq; a period when our entire family was torn between pride and always wondering in the back of our minds if he'd make it home OK. In our eyes he left as a young boy, we could only hope that the man who returned was whole. Well he made it through, with his adventurous spirit intact. After a short stay at his parents home in West Palm Beach, FL, Desmond decided this was his opportunity to explore the world and himself. This time on a peaceful mission without weapons, body armor, and IED's.

We've been following Des's exploits through periodic email updates each containing a few images and anecdotes. His trip has taken him through, among other places, Mexico, Cuba, Mongolia, China, Indonesia, and Myanmar. We'll link to Desmond's website once the whole story is assembled, but for now we think you'll enjoy this Cambodian adventure story we just received.



#1 On the road to Sen Manroon

"World of Shit" - by Desmond Price

The following is a short story on how I got myself into a world of shit, which isn't hard for me. The recipe includes a 250 cc dirt bike, Cambodia's jungle, and an adventurous mind set. Also add the small detail of experience, or lack there of, but not fully accepting that. There is no reason to exaggerate this story because in itself is a story worth writing about, plus I have the pictures. As I Am writing this I am recovering in a hotel room across from my Vietnamese lumberjack buddy. Why am I sharing a room with a Vietnamese lumberjack? Well, that's the story.

I guess I'll start from the very beginning when I was in Phnom Pehn. I have wanted to have an authentic elephant experience for some time now. I passed in Thailand after figuring that the entire country is saturated with tourists and finding what I was looking for would be impossible. So, after reading about an elephant rehabilitation project in a small jungle town in North Eastern Cambodia I was hooked. "The Elephant River Valley Project" is in the town of Sen Maroon. On the way from PP I passed busses, pick-ups and the favorite Toyota Camry all stuck in deep mud (and this is the dry season). (See Picture 1) Soon after arriving in Sen Maron I found out I would have to wait a few days before I could go to see the project. I decide I would make use of my rental and ride around the area for the next few days.

#2 One of the first times I fell off in the beginning, thinking "wow this is fun"



#3 Some trees we carried the bike over, not far after this we found the trail ended and we had to come back the same way

The next morning I left to go see an easy to find waterfall. I set out with my camera, sunglasses, and 2 maps (one of which I lose and the other was useless). After seeing the waterfall (you see one you have seen them all) I decided to keep going further and "explore" a little. I rode for the next four hours in search of a place indicated on my map as Phnom Nam Liev. (See Picture 2) I planned to reach this place, have some food, a drink, a rest then return home. Come to find out, Phnom Nam Live isn't a town, but a mountain inside a protected wildlife area. (See Picture 3)



#4 Some trees we carried the bike over, not far after this we found the trail ended and we had to come back the same way.

After being stuck in yet another river crossing a man came rushing toward me out of nowhere to help. He helped push me across and with sign gestures I got him to come with me down the trail. He helped pick up the bike over huge trees and he cleared the large brush from the path. (See Picture 4)

We ended up back at his camp which reminded me of the time I went camping in the Amazon with Scott. (See picture 5) Upon arriving my buddy adamantly wanted to put toothpaste on my scrapes and burns but I politely declined. I needed water immediately, and I saw a pot of water with tea leaves. I drank the entire pot and gestured for more. My Buddy proceeded to the river to fill the pot and when he returned he offered me more. That was a bad sign, no boil. All I could do is hope for the best. He offered his hammock for the evening but after thinking about all my cuts embedded with mud and the threat of malaria, it would be better to go back. It was 4:30 and it gets dark at 6:00. After some painful stomach cramps and a half a dozen violent bouts of vomit, we were off.

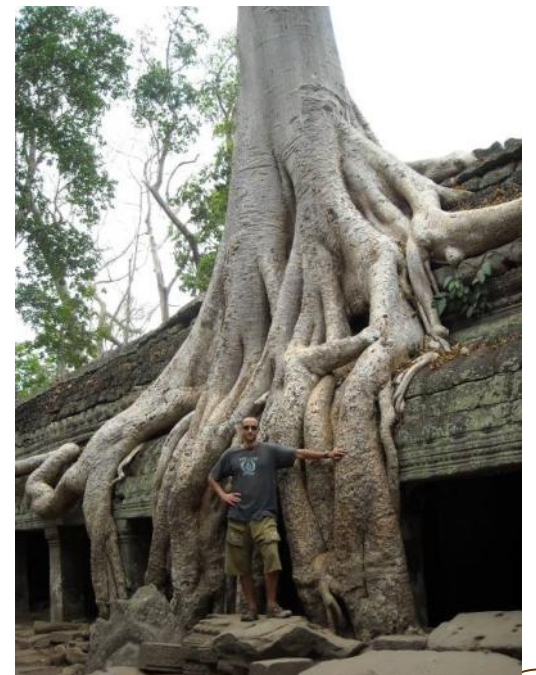
My new best friend and I made our way back to civilization with him pointing the way at every fork in the trail. (See picture 7) He pointed the way when it was unclear and pushed the bike up some huge inclines. He joined me in two falls, one of which was extremely painful. We made it back around 7:00, in time for some dinner and before the local pharmacy closed.



#5 Campsite (Above Left)



#6 Long pants might have been smart (so would the idea of bringing water) (Middle)
#7 Back on the "main road" into town (Right)



Some Fun Shots from Cambodia

The [75th Ranger Regiment](#) (Airborne) is a military unit of the United States Army. The Regiment, headquartered in Fort Benning, Georgia, operates as an elite light infantry special operations force of the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC). The Regiment is composed of rapidly-deployable light infantry forces with specialized skills that enable them to perform a variety of conventional and special operations missions – airborne, air assault, and direct action operations, raids, infiltration and exfiltration by air, land or sea in addition to airfield seizure, recovery of personnel and special equipment, and support of general purpose forces (GPF), among other uses. Each Ranger battalion is expected to deploy anywhere in the world within 18 hours notice. - [75th Ranger Regiment \(United States\) From Wikipedia](#), the free encyclopedia



SUPPORTING OUR NATION'S ARMED FORCES

On any given day each of us wakes up and steps into our daily routine, which if you're anything like me takes you right into a non-stop barrage of issues with work, running a business, managing a household, and dealing with family, friends, and personal objectives. Add to the mix that many of you have kids to attend to, plus we're all trying to figure out how to cope with the current financial climate. Everyone's scrambling about often in a daze of petty aggravation.

We're not saying our problems are not important, but in the big picture we as Americans don't often face life and death; we open our eyes to freedom and stability on an unprecedented scale. The average person certainly doesn't sleep with an eye open listening for enemy recon, venture to the bathroom knowing there are snipers active in the area, we don't walk out the front door pondering if a suicide bomber will meet us at the first step, and we're not at the constant ready to take another human life.

Whether or not you as an individual are behind the wars our nation is currently engaged in doesn't matter, the individuals who are tasked with protecting our interests are in harms way. You and I only have the freedom to decide if we're for or against our nation's military objectives because we have people willing to carry them out.

Our cousin Desmond Price served our country, finishing his tenure with the US Rangers in January of 2008. Des's brothers in arms continue the tradition, carrying the burden of ensuring our freedom; the 75th is once again activated to continue operations in the Middle East. Help support the troops and their families; make a donation to [Freedom's Angels](#) or support former 75th Ranger [Rory Fanning's long walk for the Pat Tillman Foundation](#); click the images below for details about each organization.

We hope for a safe return and a successful mission for the 75th and all of the men and women of the US armed forces.



Take a moment to review this link, these lives were given for our freedom: [Casualties of the 75th INF 2nd BN](#)

ARTISANS OF THE VALLEY

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[Artisans of the Valley](http://www.artisansofthevalley.com) offers museum quality period reproductions, original designs by commission, and antique restoration/conservation services, hand carving, modern furniture refinishing, onsite furniture repair, hand made walking sticks, and educational programs. Our website is now over 225 pages, including galleries, feature articles, and educational sections, company background, and our new adventure album section. We extend an open invitation to explore our site, and contact us directly with any inquiries or questions you may have.

Eric M. Saperstein is Master of Artisans, Owner, Webmaster, Editor, Bookkeeper, Buyer, Office Manager, Legal Pit-bull, and he's in charge of vacuuming the shop: eric@artisansofthevalley.com



Theresa Tonte is the Owner of Smooth Finish by Artisans of the Valley. Teri provides onsite touchup & repair services for residential, corporate, and institutional clients as well as serving to fill a variety of roles in the shop including referee: terri@artisansofthevalley.com

Stanley D. Saperstein, Master Craftsmen, Author, & Historian founded Artisans of the Valley in 1973. Stanley offers historic presentations, impressions, and various lecture series ranging from Civil and Revolutionary War, American Folk Art, and Interactive Role Play of Characters ... sometimes trying to reenact American Chopper episodes in the shop: woodcarver@artisansofthevalley.com



RED TAIL HAWK

Our chainsaw carver, Bob Eigenrauch has remained busy producing a variety of new pieces. One feature creation is this Red Tail Hawk, destined to preside over a private backyard golf course in Santa Clara, CA. Life size sculpture carvings can make great additions to landscapes, store fronts, gardens, businesses, sporting venues, and a host of other great options.

Hawk Green Notes:

Locally Harvested Yellow Pine from Residential Sources
Carvings Completed on Green (non-kiln dried) Log Sections



2009 TAKE 3

Finishing Artemis

Supplier Profile: Horton Brasses

Slide Popularity

Green-sawing

A few Restorations

Continuing to Frame the Master's Papers

An Oak Flip Top Server / Storage Cabinet

Time to Blog!

What is Gunk?

Some blank space for whatever comes in between now and then!



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