

CARVING *Among* FRIENDS

The CCA's Friendship Cane

By Naomi Hulst, Assistant Editor at Wood Carving Illustrated; Photography by Roger Schroeder

Imagine selling a cane carved by Marv Kaisersatt, Harold Enlow, Desiree Hajny and other talented carvers. That's what some of the members of the Caricature Carver's of America (CCA) did when they collaborated to produce this unique friendship cane as a raffle item for the International Wood-Carvers congress (IWCC) in Davenport, Iowa.

As enthusiastic supporters of non-profit woodcarving organizations, the CCA will at times auction off its works as fundraisers for woodcarving shows. CCA member Randy Landen organized the group effort for the IWCC show. He sent 2-in. by 2-in. by 3-in. wooden blanks to the members who volunteered. Giving them creative freedom to carve, members had eight months to complete the segments with any type of caricature they wished.

Landen collected and assembled the segments one week before the show. This cane was of special interest to collectors because

Marv Kaisersatt's work is hard to come by. In this case, Landen gave Kaisersatt top billing, so to speak. His carving sits atop the cane. Made up of a dozen different wood segments, each is an original caricature. Truly a unique carving among friends.



NOTE: Sorry, prospective collectors! This friendship cane belongs to Amanda and Kaitlyn LeClair, granddaughters of CCA member Pete LeClair.

The collective CCA Friendship cane stands approximately 48 in. tall.





Section 1

MARV KAISERSATT

Marv Kaisersatt's musician tops the cane.



Section 2

DOUG RAINE

One view of Doug Raine's double-headed segment features an old man with a flowing beard. The "darker" side of Raine's segment shows a gruesome witch.



Section 3

PETE LECLAIR

Pete LeClair framed his cowboy caricature inside the segment.



Section 4

HAROLD ENLOW

Four faces are featured in Harold Enlow's low-relief segment.





Section 5

RANDY LANDEN

Randy Landen's whimsical Grinch face.



Section 6

DAVE DUNHAM

A forlorn face carved by Dave Dunham. The flip side of the Dunham's segment: a moustached cop.



Section 7

JOE WANNAMAKER

Joe Wannamaker's double-sided carving portrays Hillary Clinton as the President, and Bill Clinton as her husband.



Section 8

PETER ORTEL

Peter Ortel's green monster.





Section 9

KEITH MORRILL

Bushy sideburns highlight the face carved by Keith Morrill.



Section 10

DESIREE HAJNY

A cute black bear by Desiree Hajny.



Section 11

BOB TRAVIS

A puckered old man's face is on one side of Bob Travis' segment. On the other side is a winking mountain man.



Section 12

HARLEY SCHMITGEN

Harley Schmitgen's ghoulish face is at the base of the cane.



SECTION 9

SECTION 10

SECTION 11

SECTION 12

FRIENDSHIP CANE

Exchange

By Matt Kelley with Naomi Hulst

You've seen them as door prizes at woodcarving shows or as gifts to special friends. They're friendship canes that look more like diminutive totem poles than walking sticks.

If you don't want to purchase a stack of raffle tickets at the next carving show you attend or carve one yourself, you can always start a cane exchange in your local carving club or join the World Wide Woodcarver Exchange.

The World Wide Woodcarver Exchange

In March of 1998, I organized the first World Wide Woodcarver Exchange, also known as W3E. Nearly 40 carvers in the United States and Canada participated in the initial "secret pal" exchange. The success of W3E prompted me to start the W3E Friendship Cane Program two months later. Currently there are 96 carvers in six groups in the U.S. and Canada who will carve 1536 segments during the course of the program. Registrations are being accepted for additional groups.

In addition to the cane exchange, there is also the Cane Segment Round Robin, a good alternative for carvers who may not have the time to participate in the Cane Exchange. In the Round Robin, groups of four members each carve one quarter of a segment, then pass it on to the next person in the round.

To apply for any W3E activity, you need Internet access and e-mail. For complete information and registration forms, check out www.tir.com/~cmkelley/index.html. For those interested in starting an exchange in their local club, a blank roster is available at www.tir.com/~cmkelley/W3E_Cane_Form.html.

A filled-out sample of the roster can be obtained at www.tir.com/~cmkelley/W3E_Cane_Sample.html.

What is a Friendship Cane?

A friendship cane usually consists of segments, each carved by a different person. A segment consists of a block of wood with a hole drilled through its center. It typically measures 2 in. by 2 in. wide by 3 in.

high. The cane is assembled by stacking the drilled segments on a heavy dowel. Generally, the cane includes a turned tip and cap, which hold the segments on the dowel. A handle is often placed on the shaft to provide a place to hold the cane.

Limitless Possibilities

Some canes have caricature faces carved on each corner of a segment, or two on opposite corners, or a single head. But friendship canes are not limited to caricatures. Carvers also create animals, flowers, chip carvings, and even practice pyrography.

Sources of Material

Many carvers do not have the equipment to cut and drill segments, or turn a tip, handle, and cap. Check around with other club members who may have the power tools needed. Commercial sources include:

Diamond D Studios

Contact: Len Dillon
259 Leatherstocking Trail
Mountain Home, Arkansas 72653
870-425-9062
e-mail: diamondd@centuryinter.net
Oak, basswood, butternut, and cherry turnings available. Blanks and pre-drilled wood segments offered.

Mountain Heritage Crafters

Contact: Dwight Moore
601 Quail Drive
Bluefield, Virginia 24605
800-643-0995
Website: www.mhc-online.com
Bags of 18 pre-drilled segments available.

For more information on cane and woodcarving exchanges, as well as round-robin participation, check out Matt Kelley's website at: <http://www.tir.com/~cmkelley/index.html>. He may also be contacted at cmkelley@tir.com.



Matt Kelley shows off a friendship cane.

About the Authors

A carver from Flushing, Michigan, Matt Kelley works as a business manager at the University of Michigan. He is also coordinator of the World Wide Woodcarver Exchange Friendship Cane programs and a member of the Tri-City Carvers Club in Saginaw, Michigan. Naomi Hulst is an assistant editor at Wood Carving Illustrated.