



# The Journal

Summer 2011 • Volume 3 Number 3

## features

- 2 Mike Whalley Memorial Bench
- 5 The Comfort Zone
- 5 My SawStop Story
- 6 Making a Traditional Chest of Drawers
- 12 Variable Frequency Drives
- 14 Steady Rests
- 20 Woodworking in the Third World
- 24 A Basic Joinery Marking Set
- 27 Color TouchUp & Repair
- 29 Book Review
- 31 Tool Review
- 32 Member Gallery

Jon Siegel's

## Mike Whalley Memorial Bench

*"Over the years, this place has become my second family ~ because friendship goes beyond party lines." ~ Mike Whalley*

A ceremony unveiling a memorial bench crafted in the memory of former NH Representative Mike Whalley of Alton, NH was held April 21, 2011 at the state capitol building in Representatives Hall in Concord, NH where it will permanently reside. The craftsman of the bench, Jon Siegel, was on hand for the unveiling along with members of the Whalley family. Mike Whalley was a House Minority Leader and a mentor to all, no matter the party affiliation. The ceremony was open to the public, including those members of the House who worked alongside Mike during his tenure as a state representative.







*Representatives Hall*



*Governor John Lynch*

Crafted by Jon Siegel of Wilmot, the seven-foot bench was unveiled by Whalley's father, George, and his son, John, during ceremonies attended by Governor John Lynch.

The former Republican House Leader was remembered by his colleagues and fellow lawmakers as a principled statesman whose presence, in the form of the memorial bench, will live on in

Representatives Hall. He was an extremely articulate legislator who carried himself with dignity, cared deeply for the House of Representatives as an institution and was passionate with regard to the causes he espoused and the principles for which he stood. He was highly respected by his colleagues for his expertise in many areas of legislative policy and process.

Mike was also highly regarded among his peers for his leadership skills. He held positions of trust and leadership as Majority Whip, and two terms as Deputy Speaker. At the time of his passing, he was serving as the House Republican Leader.

The project to craft a bench in memory of Mike Whalley was spearheaded by Rep. Janet Allen, a friend and colleague who served with him in the House. Jon Siegel, a craftsman who has been turning wood for nearly 50 years, was commissioned to build the

bench. The project was made possible through private donations and, with the approval of the Joint Historical Committee, will reside permanently in Representatives Hall under the portrait of President Franklin Pierce—**excerpts from the Concord Monitor, The Citizen of Laconia & the NH House Republicans.**



*Left to right—Jon's wife Patrice, Jon Siegel and Jon's brother, Jeremy*

Jon Siegel's design was chosen for this commission among several submitted to the Joint NH Historical Commission. The extensive turned spindle work mirrors the balusters of the visitors gallery and fits perfectly with the style of this most beautiful space. The seven foot bench resides adjacent to one of two speaking podiums and will serve as a seating area for representatives and others waiting

their turn at the podium. The design choice, meticulous construction, rich walnut wood and natural oil finish, fit perfectly with the podium and dais. This bench looks as though it belongs and has always been part of this space from the beginning. I can think of no greater compliment—**Jim Seroskie.**





## Remarks by the Artist—April 21, 2011

**T**hank you for having me up here to say a few words about how I designed the bench. But first of all, I want to thank Representative Janet Allen and Doug Dolcino for their infinite patience throughout this process. I want to thank the New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association for giving me the exposure that brought me here; and especially the Artist Laureate of New

Hampshire, David Lamb; and Jere Osgood, who gave me advice in the early stages of design. Also there were several people who helped me with assembly: Bob Gagne and Kurt Wenchell—and when it came down to the final glue-up—George Emeny and Peter James. The greatest thanks goes to my wife Patrice who doesn't do woodworking, but as always, provided the encouragement that I cannot do without.

When I first met with Representative Allen and Mr. Dolcino in this great hall, we sat about there [pointing] and stared at the spot where the bench was to reside. As I looked at this space, I was at first dismayed that there were no turned architectural details to be seen. How could I design something that tied into the architecture? Then I faced the back and saw the wonderful balusters that made up the railing of the visitor's gallery.

At that moment the design for the bench came to me. I knew I could duplicate the exact form of these balusters into the back of the bench, and create a piece that was obviously made for this room. Now all I had to do was figure out how to stretch a conventional banister-back chair into a seven-foot bench.

The solution involved the fitting of four additional intermediate legs; a scroll-form crest rail with horizontal finials; and a seat like a church pew. The bench contains 52 turnings, and the walnut is from Pennsylvania.

Many people have asked how I turned the back legs. I learned how to do it from a 100 year-old book. The wood is not bent after turning—it is cut to that shape first and put on the lathe with special jigs. This is too technical to describe here, but I documented the entire process and wrote an article for the Guild Journal [see *The Journal Vol 2 No 2—Turning Chair Back Legs*].

I feel very fortunate to live in a state where we have organizations like the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers, the New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association, the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen, and other groups and supporters of the arts that together are a powerful force promoting fine woodworking and a vibrant community of woodworkers in our state where the Artist Laureate is a furnituremaker—**Jon Siegel.** ■



*A plaque records the dedication of a bench to former representative Mike Whalley—Concord Monitor*

*To see how Jon turns bent legs, see The Journal Vol 2 No 2—Turning Chair Back Legs*

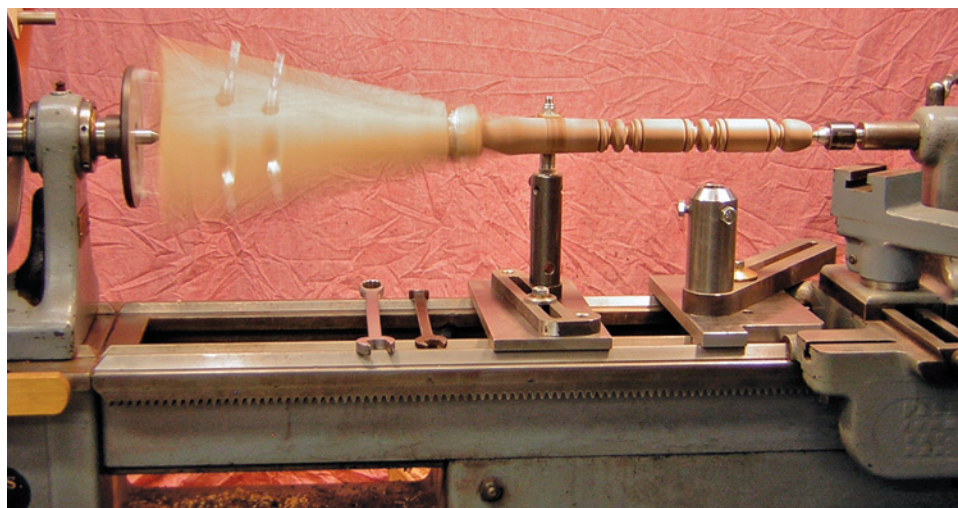


PHOTO BY ALEXANDER COHN—CONCORD MONITOR