



Thin-kerf technology important factor in sawing historic logs.

Precise Cut for Preserving the Past

William Jewell of Fredericksburg, Virginia saws lumber because that's his heart's passion. Under the names, Historic Woods of America, (HWA) Inc. and American Log Works, Inc., Jewell purposefully rescues lumber from historically important trees. Then he puts the natural beauty of the rescued wood on display through the creation of functional objects of art. While truly passionate about his calling, Jewell is also realistic about the need to profit from his ventures if he is to continue his life's work. That is where, he says, the thin kerf Wood-Mizer LT40 Super Hydraulic band sawmill has proven to be a treasure in its own right.

William Jewell discovered both a passion for wood and an artistic flair during twelve successful, but equally stressful, years owning his own construction company. In 1997, as a diversion from the burden of his work, he began crafting projects from wood. He soon realized his hobby was not only satisfying but also potentially profitable. "I just focused on the natural beauty of the wood and created something that was both functional and pleasing to the eye," he recalls. "It turned out people loved what I was making."

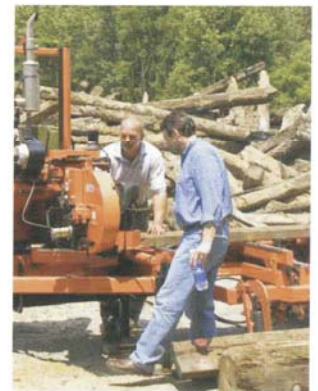


As his interest in special woods grew, William found himself more unhappy with the waste he witnessed. Unique old trees throughout New England, many of them planted in colonial times, were taken down and burned, ground up, or simply dumped in landfills. Wanting to do something about the waste, William stepped out in 2001 and bought a 42 hp diesel powered LT40 Wood-Mizer sawmill then began "saving trees and sawing lumber." Reflecting on his choice of machinery William recalls that, "I bought a Wood-Mizer because of its reputation for quality and the features it offered, especially the thin kerf technology. That meant more lumber and less waste from each unique log or timber."

By 2004, William had incorporated his business and his work was in demand at art shows where he was billed as "a refined rustic contemporary organic artist." He explains, "That means my pieces maintain natural edges and highlights the wood's inherent beauty in creative ways." Today, he says, that while the effort is sometimes challenging, he is able to make a full time living doing what he loves.

Jewell emphasizes that he saves rather than harvests trees. "I mill trees that are unsafe, diseased, damaged or are being removed for construction," he puts forward. "I also process timbers removed from historical sites. Recycling those timbers is not only a way to preserve a part of our history but an alternative to depleting natural resources as

*Rescuing
National
Treasures
with
a
Wood-Mizer*




Above: William Jewell saws to memorialize historic trees.
Left: Unique trees bring out artist's talents.

...Continued on page 26

well. Preserving environmental balance is an important part of everything we do at Historical Woods of America.”

As HWA's reputation grows, Jewell is increasingly sought out by individuals who share his passion for preserving history. As a result he's recently milled, “a reclaimed rind of wood 3 to 10 inches thick” from the last of 13 Horse Chestnut trees – one for each of the 13 colonies - George Washington planted on a street in downtown Fredericksburg, Virginia. In addition, he was called upon to saw a number of trees from Mt. Vernon, and a old, large pecan tree blown down by hurricane Isabel at the historic Andrews Tavern site in Spotsylvania, Virginia. The wood from these projects, and others, is then preserved in the products that William, and others, craft.

Because of the unique products he creates, William says he most values gnarly burls and the wood found in crotches where the tree forks. Those unique imperfections call out the artist in the woodworker. A favorite is a pattern William calls “opposing cathedral grain,” a look attained when a slightly curved log is cut just right. In addition to preserving more wood, William's Wood-Mizer is, he explains, a vital tool in getting those all important cuts made with precision. “The laser sighting system and hydraulic log turners enable assessing and flipping the log to produce unique lumber without having to measure or move from the saw's control panel,” he comments.

William Jewell is one of those rare people whose life work is also their passion. The work, he says, provides pleasure, fulfillment and pays the bills. “This business creates a win-win situation,” he says. “I purchase trees from clients who would otherwise have to pay for removal and I partner with historical organizations then share the proceeds from my finished products. Wood is saved and history is memorialized. How can it get better than this?” 



William's designs showcase natural beauty of wood.