



Minnesota Landscape
ARBORETUM

Friends of
ANDERSEN
HORTICULTURAL
LIBRARY

NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LIBRARIES • MINNESOTA LANDSCAPE ARBORETUM • VOLUME 8, NUMBER 2 • SUMMER 2003



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**FRIENDS OF
ANDERSEN HORTICULTURAL
LIBRARY NEWS**

Andersen Horticultural Library
Minnesota Landscape Arboretum
3675 Arboretum Blvd.
Chaska MN 55318 (new address)
Subscription only: \$10.00 per year
Membership in AHL Friends
(includes Newsletter): \$10.00
individual; \$15.00 household

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Calendar of Friends Events

July 28th-Monday. 1:00 p.m.
Friends regular meeting.
Program: Jeffrey L. Johnson. *My
Favorite Fragrant Trees & Shrubs.*
see page 7.

October 16th-Thursday. 9:00 a.m.
to 3:00 p.m. Friends folder
making. see below.

October 2nd-Thursday. 5:30
p.m. Friends Preview of Book
Sale. see page 8.

October 27th-Monday. 1:00
p.m. Friends regular meeting.
Program: Donna Whitman. *From
Plant to Watercolor to Artistic
Product.* see page 7.

October 3-4-5. Friday-Saturday-
Sunday. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Friends Annual Book Sale.

Friends Folder Making Workshop

Thursday, October 16th

Again this year, the Friends are donating their time to make acid-free folders for the Library. These folders are used to permanently house the Library's historic seed and nursery catalogs. As these catalogs were generally printed very cheaply on acidic paper, the Library is trying its best to preserve and house them for the future. By making them ourselves, the Library can make three folders for \$1.00 instead of having to purchase them for about \$3.00 each. The Library has recently received a gift of about 8,000 catalogs from the Sterling Morton Library of The Morton Arboretum. Please consider volunteering this day to help the Library and its special collections. We will be working from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with lunch provided. Please call the Library to inform us you are joining us.

Message from Bob

Bob Torkelson, President

Dear Members:

We are off to a good year as the Friends of the Library continue to assist the Library in so many ways. I am proud to serve as your President. The Board of Directors of the Friends is optimistic about our role in supporting the Library programs.

Our June 25th annual dinner meeting was a great success. Wendy Pradt Lougee, University Librarian and McKnight Presidential Scholar, spoke on the subject "*Seeds of Change in Research Libraries*". Wendy outlined the importance of libraries in education and their role in assisting life long learners. The weather prevented us from enjoying our social hour on the Morgan Terrace, but the Fire-

place Room in the Snyder Building was a great place for conversation and socializing. The dinner in the Auditorium was wonderful. All enjoyed a great and informative evening.

Now is the time to support our annual used book sale. As you know this is our major fund raising project of the year. Helen King and her volunteers sort and organize the thousands of donated books. They sort each Wednesday morning (if enough books are donated.)

They need all of us to donate used books and recommend to all our friends and associates that the Friends of Andersen Horticultural Library book sale is a great place to give unused and unwanted books that are taking up space in their homes. If you hear of anyone considering downsizing their libraries, recommend that they consider giving the excess books to our sale. The book sale will take place on Friday to Sunday,

October 3rd to 5th. Friends members can shop early for the best selection on Thursday evening, October 2nd.

I want to thank retiring President Susan Cross for her organization of the Friends affairs and the clear orientation she provided me. Her leadership and energy allowed the Friends to move forward in our support of the Library. She isn't going away and will continue to be a valued advisor and strong Friends volunteer. THANK YOU SUSAN!

Please help me as President by calling or e-mailing me with all your suggestions for improving the Friends as we support the Library with new equipment, project funds, and our volunteering for many tasks. My phone number is 952-470-6738 and my e-mail address is ARTORKELSON@worldnet.att.net.

I look forward to seeing you at our next regular meeting on Monday, July 28th.

Cover:

Tilia americana

basswood

Michaux, F. Andrew.

The North American Sylva (1854)

vol 3 Pl. 131

See lecture on fragrant trees & shrubs

An Appreciation of an Artist

Richard T. Isaacson
Bibliographer and Head Librarian

Review Material:

Nakashima, George. *The Soul of a Tree*. New York: Kodansha International, 1981, 1988.

Ostergard, Derek E. *George Nakashima: Full Circle*. New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson/American Craft Museum, 1989.

Archive materials in the collection of Andersen Horticultural Library.

One of the daily pleasures of working in Andersen Horticultural Library is the opportunity of "using" the Nakashima furnishings and to begin to understand what an artist's work can mean in daily life. One comes to have an appreciation of the beauty of an object: fine craftsmanship, the supreme understanding of materials, and an artistic sensibility that transcends the ordinary.

The Nakashima furnishings have been in public use in our Library for 30 years but one could argue are still as beautiful as when they arrived from New Hope. (Of course, they have had great care and custodialship under the leadership of Susan Cross and the dedicated crew that comes yearly to clean and maintain, on a day we call "miserable day".)

Rereading *The Soul of a Tree* is a pleasure and makes us appreciate his art all the more. This personal book is a combination of artist's creed, autobiography, and musings on nature, art and the totality of life.

In his introduction, Mr. Nakashima says "A tree provides perhaps our most intimate contact with nature. A tree sits like an avatar, an embodiment of the immutable, far beyond the pains of man... We woodworkers have the

Imagine my pleasure when at a recent conference in New York while visiting the Isamu Noguchi Museum, I found a stack of paperback copies of George Nakashima's *The Soul of a Tree*. It is a book I have been looking for to add to my own collection for many years. It has always been reported out-of-print and very expensive in book dealer catalogs. (1)

(1) The paperback is dated 1988 and retails for \$48.00. It is excellently reprinted.

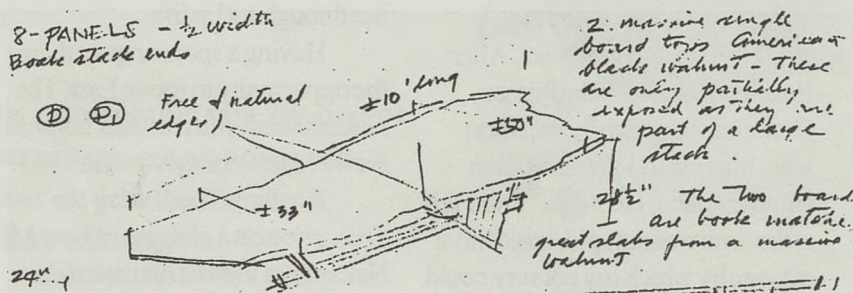
audacity to shape timber from these noble trees... The woodworker, applying a thousand skills, must find that ideal use and then shape the wood to realize its true potential. The result is our ultimate object, plain and simple". (2)

The autobiographical material tells of his early years: "As a boy, I enjoyed roaming the mountains of the Pacific Northwest. Higher and higher I climbed, passing the great Douglas firs which punctured the heavens. Exploring along the way, I would follow the river beds or the railway tracks until the trees ended at the timberline... It is a land where a young heart may search out the meaning of existence."

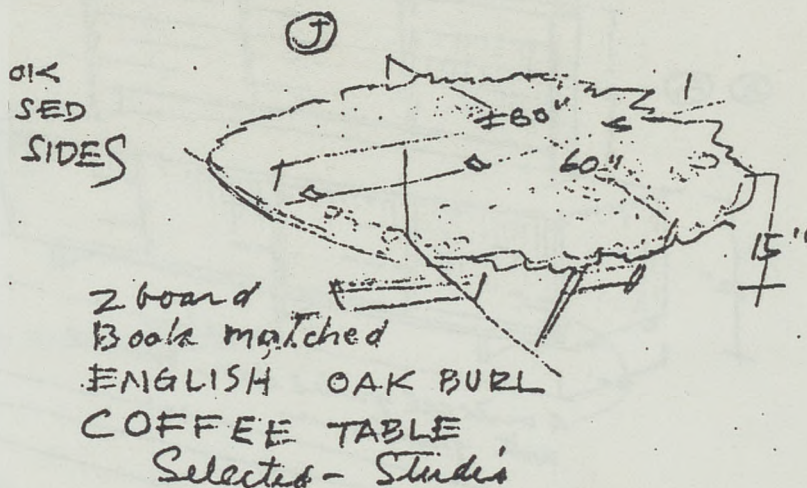
We follow his enjoyment of the hard work years, working on the railroad, in canneries and other "menial" jobs to work his way through college. He received his degree in architecture at the University of Washington and then continued graduate studies at MIT. His positive outlook takes him through the lean years of the 1930's, making it seem like an adventure.

After a year in Paris, Nakashima traveled to Japan where he lived with relatives, and started working for an architectural

(next page)



PROPOSED FURNITURE FOR ARBORETUM UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



Original George Nakashima drawings executed for the Library
Andersen Hort. Library Archives

(2). Nakashima. *Soul of a Tree*. p xxi.

firm in Japan. He spent 7 years in Asia also working at an Ashram in India. One sees the artist absorbing the influences that helped him develop as an artist.

Returning to the U.S. with his wife who he had met in Tokyo, the Nakashimas soon faced the challenges of the war years. After Pearl Harbor, the Nakashimas (including the newly born, Mira) were interred in a concentration camp in Idaho. He states "This I felt at the time was a stupid, insensitive act, one by which my country could only hurt itself. It was a policy of unthinking racism. Even Eskimos with only a small percentage of

Japanese blood were sent to the Western desert to die."(3)

But even in these conditions Mr. Nakashima found the positive, meeting a skilled Japanese carpenter from whom he learned many basic woodworking skills he would use throughout his life.

Having a sponsor gave them the opportunity to move East. The Nakashimas settled in their home in New Hope, Pennsylvania in 1943.

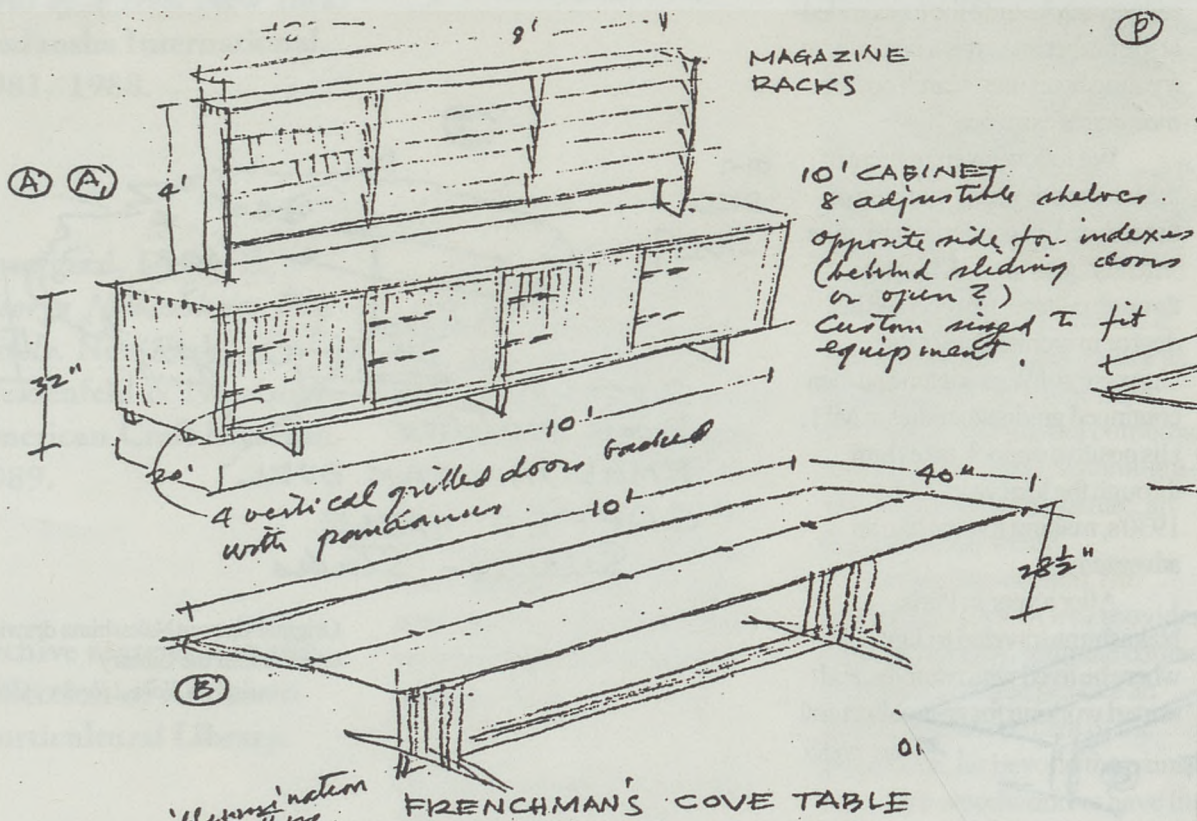
Reading *The Soul of the Tree*, one gets a glimpse of how Mr. Nakashima viewed his materials and approached his art. He believed it was necessary to remove

the desire to promote one's ego from the creative process, but to devote work to the divine.

The Friends who were privileged to hear Mira Nakashima-Yarnall at a Friends event two years ago, will be interested that her book, *Nature, Form, and Spirit: The Life and Legacy of George Nakashima*, will be published by Harry Abrams in September.

Andersen Horticultural Library is supremely fortunate to have such a legacy in their furnishings. They are some of the treasures of the University.

(3) *Ibid.* p 69



July Meeting

Jeffrey L. Johnson
Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Horticulturist

My Favorite Fragrant Trees and Shrubs

Monday, July 28th
1:00 p.m., Fireplace Room

Please join the Friends for this informative talk by one of the Arboretum's horticulturists. Fragrant woodies can add much to the landscape, but as Jeff says is often overlooked when selecting plant material.

Jeff has served as horticulturist in many capacities at the Arboretum and Horticultural Research Center. He is interested in native plants, landscaping for wildlife, sustainability and stewardship in our landscape, environmental protection, and controlling urban sprawl among many other interests.



Tilia americana basswood

Browne, D.J. *The Sylva Americana*.
Boston: William Hyde, 1832.
p 305

October Meeting

Donna Whitman

From Plant to Watercolor to Artistic Product

Monday, October 27th
1:00 p.m., Fireplace Room

Donna Whitman, a local artist, will present a program on using watercolors to produce functional art and products, a special interest of this artist. Mrs. Whitman has taught classes at the Arboretum, The Minnetonka Center of the Arts and elsewhere in watercolor and collage.



Amelanchier sp. Juneberry
Edward's Botanical Register. (1833)
vol 19 Pl. 1589.

Friends 14th Annual Book Sale and Friends Preview

The Friends members book sale preview will be Thursday night, October 2nd from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Please join us for this popular Friends event. Friends members can buy at regular sale prices before the hords come to the sale the next day. Friends that want to help set up for the sale or work Friday, Saturday or Sunday during the sale can call Helen King at 952-545-5356.