Another stellar show on the horizon
The 2014 Prairie Canada Carving Championship will be held at Canad Inns Polo Park April 5 & 6 bringing together some of the best carvings on the continent under one roof. Glenn McMurdo will be the competition’s feature workshop instructor— one of the continents most accomplished bird carvers and instructors. Glenn has graced our show on two other occasions and we are pleased to bring him back to run a three day workshop painting a casting of a bufflehead hen and to judge competition waterfowl. The workshop will be held at Lee valley Tools and registration details can be found in the Rules booklet posted at www.prairiecanadacarvers.com. If you need to speak to a warm body about the rules contact Don Young (Rules Chairman) at 489-0149 or e-mail bdyoung@mymts.net.

While many carving competitions struggle and fold, Prairie Canada Carvers’ Association Inc. continues to thrive thanks to its committed board of directors and a supportive carving community. Last year alone 32 individuals and organizations graced our list of sponsors and scads more folks volunteered to make the show a resounding success. The 2013/14 roster of Prairie Canada directors is listed in this newsletter so be sure to pat any one of them on the back next time you cross paths. Like all volunteer organizations we are always on the lookout for new members to keep us fresh and relevant. More importantly we need new blood to carry the show forward as a number of the old guard-me included- will be stepping down soon. If you know of anyone who can sponsor the show (cash or product) or join the board please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Ted Muir, Chairperson PCCA: (204-237-1385 or tedmuir@shaw.ca)

Carving Raffle Tickets Available
Once again we are seeking your help in selling books of raffle tickets on three original handmade carvings— a life-sized white throated sparrow by Harvey Welch of Saskatoon— the winner of the 2013 Razertip Industries Purchase Award, a miniature natural finish butternut great gray owl by Murray Watson of Winnipeg and a western red juniper weed pot by Ted Muir of Winnipeg. Prizes are awarded by enabling winning ticket holders to pick a carving of their choice in the order in which they were drawn (first drawn gets first choice, etc). Books of tickets sell for $40 and go for $2 each or 3 for $5.00. Raffles are a necessary evil given the $13,000 to $14,000 required to host a competition. Contact Ted Muir for tickets— we will mail them out along with a photograph of the carvings. Once again if you enjoy the show you need to get involved. If the selling of tickets is not your cup of tea buy the book yourself and support Prairie Canada. You might even win a carving.

Canad Inn Polo Park Room Reservations
Carvers attending the 2014 show and wanting a room to stay at Canad Inns Polo Park will receive a discounted daily rate of $115 (plus taxes) if booked before March 24 (reference #211091). Canad Inns Polo Park is located at 1405 St Mathews Avenue, Winnipeg (204) 775-8791 www.canadinns.com.

Prairie Canada Carvers’ Association Inc: www.prairiecanadacarvers.com
Remembering Robert R. Taylor & Don Phalen

Within the last year the carving community lost two stalwart supporters of the Prairie Canada Carvers’ Association— Robert R. Taylor and Don Phalen. Both men hailed from other provinces and took very different paths in influencing the Association. Prairie Canada was fortunate to receive carving materials from both men some of which will be used in their memory in the offering of carving workshops. A supply of donated wood will be sold to carvers at discounted prices (see below) in support of the competition. A number of their carving books will be available for sale at the show.

Robert R. Taylor: Bob was wired to love wildlife and made the photography of wild things in wild places a life-long passion. At an early age he was one with owls and if he believed in reincarnation would in all likelihood come back as an owl—most certainly a great gray. As a youngster growing up in Toronto he banded owls and later in life would make a name for himself in publishing a striking hard cover book *The Great Gray Owl on Silent Wings*. He also shot all the images for the definitive Smithsonian book *The Great Gray Owl-Phantom of the Northern Forest* by Dr. Robert W. Nero. Bob spent a large chunk of his adult life in Winnipeg where he established himself as one of Canada’s foremost wildlife photographers, wildlife tour guides, naturalist and nature book publisher—producing an impressive collection of wonderful coffee table books. Along the way he received several prestigious national awards and Manitoba’s Order of the Buffalo Hunt.

Born with a creative bent, Bob carved a downy woodpecker at age 10. He carved on and off throughout his life and had an influence on starting Cam Merkle of Razertip fame down his carving path. Bob along with Barry Verbiswi and Ted Muir conceived the idea of hosting a decoy carving show in Winnipeg 28 years ago. It quickly took hold and branched out to include all forms of traditional and bird carvings (wood, bone, stone and antler) along with wood turnings—now known as the Prairie Canada Carving Championship. Bob supported the show as a vendor, along with his companion Jennifer LaBella, and as a songbird judge for many years. Bob passed away from cancer June 16, 2013 at age 73.

Don Phalen: Don was drawn to wood at an early age, carving his initials in every available unprotected piece of fiber in his hometown of Louisbourg, Nova Scotia. His working life was spent with the YMCA, first in Toronto then Winnipeg where he kept up an interest in wood sculpturing—working mostly with chisels at the summer cottage. It was not until he turned 62 and retired that he took up bird carving after reading a piece about Pat Godin’s work. After that he was hooked, carving with a passion seven days a week, 12 to 14 hours every day. Coached by the likes of Pat Godin, Robert Guge, Jim Sprankle, Larry Barth and others, he quickly established himself as an accomplished carver, winning best of show ribbons at the Ward World Championship and many other major shows on the continent. His carvings are part of several corporate, government and private collections including those of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

Don competed at Prairie Canada since its inception and valued the friendships he struck in the carving community more than the awards he received. He was passionate about carving and like most accomplished carvers was free with his advice and support. He made the most of life, rebounding from quadruple bypass heart surgery in his mid 60s. Don passed away May 29, 2013 at age 90.

Wood for Sale

Prairie Canada is selling an array of carving wood from the collection of Bob Taylor and Don Phalen. The wood (basswood, tupelo, cherry and balsa) is ideal for carving classes and is being offered at discounted prices. A goodly number of hardwood boards (red oak, walnut and gumwood) are also available. All proceeds will go towards running the 2014 carving competition—contact Ted Muir for details at 237-1385 or tedmuir@shaw.ca. Wood is being sold first come first served.
2014 Purchase Awards

Prairie Canada thanks the sponsors of the 2014 purchase awards. The more entries we have under these categories the greater the likelihood of continuing support from our sponsors. Please see the rules brochure for full competition details. We are also very appreciative of the support of Les Gens de Bois Woodcarving Club and Adanac Carvers Association in sponsoring the People’s choice Award and Carvers’ Choice Award respectively.

Razertip Industries $500 Purchase Award: A carving of any material from any category that would be suitable as a 2014 raffle carving.

Jim Richardson Canadian Antique Decoy $500 Purchase Award: An antique style working duck decoy carved by a Canadian.

Morgan Whiteway Best of Show Slick $800 Purchase Award: This year’s piece is a drake northern shoveler.

Ted Muir Shorebird $300 Purchase Award Shorebird: This year’s shorebird is a killdeer.

Richard Whittom Duck Head $200 Purchase Award: Any duck species.

Workshops That Rock

Prairie Canada is offering a host of carving workshops at the Elmwood East Kildonan Active Living Centre in Winnipeg from November 2013 to May 2014. Workshops are offered for the most part on Sundays and Monday evenings. Workshop registration is through John Frye at jfrye@cc.umanitoba.ca or 204-888-8272. Registration is on a first come first served basis. Full workshop details are sent out to students in advance of the workshop. Prairie Canada can supply dust collectors for those who do not own one.

Prairie Canada is pleased to kick off the workshop season with two seasoned carvers both of whom have helped make the Association the resounding success it is. Bill Palmer is an accomplished bird carver and painter. He was profiled by the Association in Wildlife Carving Magazine Competition 2011 and received the Association’s Carver’s Award of Excellence in 2007. Ted Muir’s signature carving takes the form of rusty nail shorebirds that are regular items at annual fund-raising dinners for eight different Manitoba conservation organizations. Workshop instructors offer their time free of charge and all income (excluding material costs) goes towards hosting the carving competition. Workshop instructors offer extra blanks for cost. Workshops require a minimum number of students.

Rusty nail peeps with Ted Muir

Sunday November 17: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm: Fee: $95

Details: power carve three natural finish peeps out of butternut; suitable for intermediate carvers; bases are not provided—so collect bark/drift wood/fence post or whatever else would be suitable

Textured ruddy turnstone with Bill Palmer

Sunday November 24: 9:30 am to 4:30pm, Monday evenings December 2 and 9 (if need be) Fee: $160

Details: shape a body with a power tool or knife (bodies will be rounded) and paint using a sponge and brush technique for a textured look that suits shorebirds; suitable for intermediate carvers.

Rusty nail fridge magnets with Ted Muir (ideal novice power carving workshop)

Sunday, December 1; 12:30 pm to 4:00pm; All carving materials and equipment supplied—with the exception of apron and safety glasses: Fee: $50

Details: an excellent introductory power carving course for novice carvers of all ages; learn the basic technique of power carving and finishing a natural finish fridge magnet.

Future Workshops—detail to be announced in mid December

Paint and carve a crappie; create habitat for carving bases; carve and paint a flower; carve a full–sized natural finish butternut drake hooded merganser, carve a natural finish butternut rusty nail shorebird and paint a songbird casting.
Call for Award Nominations

Members of the carving community are encouraged to nominate an individual or organization for recognition under the Carver’s Award of Excellence and the Service Award programs.

The Carver’s Award of Excellence was established by PCCA to acknowledge individuals, organizations and businesses for excellence and achievement in promoting and engendering the art of carving in North America. Recipients must be nominated by members of the carving community. They should have made a long term commitment to the advancement of the carving community.

The Service Award acknowledges individuals who have provided a valuable service to a local carving community over an extended period of time.

Submissions should be sent in writing to John Frye at 139 Lodge Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, R3J 0R6. John can also be reached at (204) 888-8272 or jfrye@cc.umanitoba.ca. Full details of the awards program and copies of nominations forms can be obtained from the PCCA website. Nominations must be submitted before January 28, 2014.

Awards are presented at the competition’s awards banquet.

Association Odds & Ends

Show Date Adjustments
Beginning in 2015 Prairie Canada will be hosting its annual competition towards the middle of April. The show has traditionally been held in late March or early April (careful to avoid the Easter weekend) to give us ample opportunity to bring in champion judges and instructors who usually like to compete at the World’s Championship in late April and keep the month free to finish pieces. We have avoided mid March as much as possible given the unreliable nature of prairie weather and accompanying harsh driving conditions for our competitors. And of course we need to avoid early May as it infringes on the opening of cottages and fishing season. The mid April date will hopefully enable us to capture the occasional snow bird carver returning home and avoid spring school break- that’s important as we enlist the services of high school students to help run the show. It also avoids any conflict with the Brant Festival which has overlapped with Prairie Canada more often than not. We’ll try it and see what happens.

PCCA Competition 2015– April 18 & 19
PCCA Competition 2016– April 16 & 17

Call for Ideas for Feature Competition Exhibits
For the last couple of years we have set room aside at the competition to showcase private carving collections or collections with a central theme. Last year we had the cocktail bird carvings owned by Ted Muir and previously we had a selection of pieces from the Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre. In 2014 we’d like to showcase the carvings of a club or individual as long as they are original and can fill a three step riser. If you’ve got an idea share it with Don Young.

Call for Ideas for Sunday Seminars:
Beginning in 2010 Prairie Canada began offering free one hour seminars in the foyer of the hotel competition area. We try to offer four to five seminars Sunday morning on a variety of topics. This year we are going to cover stone caring with Ron Jackson and the basics of wood turning with a representative from the Wood Turners Association of Manitoba. If you any suggestions for topics please pass them along to Don Young at bdyoung@mymts.net or 204-489-0149.