

NEWS & INFO FOR
BOAT BUILDERS
CONTRACTORS
WOODWORKERS

BIRDSEYE VIEW

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- NHLA'S CHIEF INSPECTOR
- MEET DAN LAMPMAN
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FROM MARK'S DESK

A little over a year ago, in May of 2008 the United States became the first in the world to outlaw 'illegal wood' through passage of amendments to the Lacey Act. This legislation has historical promise as it prevents the trade of illegally harvested timber or products made from that timber. Because the United States is the largest consumer of wood products, our Lacey Act amendments will illustrate we practice and encourage responsible sustainable forestry to be implemented worldwide and insist deforestation to stop.

Sustainability of our resources and Global warming are serious matters we have been addressing at home. What we have learned in the U.S.



about our natural resources now needs to be shared with other countries.

The World Resources Institute estimates 15 to 20% of global warming is caused by deforestation today. Whatever the truth is, sustainable forests on a global level will have positive effects, and our Company supports efforts toward this end.

Mark Johnson



CRITICAL INFORMATION FOR BETTER DECK INSTALLATION

Today, there is a mountain of information for every new deck owner or installer to read. From step-by-step guidelines, to fancy sketches and designs, all promising you'll install a deck like a pro. Despite these lofty claims, however, let's get you started on the right foot with what you need to know about exotic hardwood decking; specifically, Ipé, Massaranduba, Cumaru, and Garapa.

Ipé decking is clearly the finest natural wood decking available today. Resistant to rot, infestation, fungal attacks, and fire, Ipé promises to deliver strength and resiliency for many years. Ipé is partially air dried to 16-20 percent moisture content (MC), a drying process that drives down the MC gradually, over an extended period of time, helping the wood retain some of its natural elasticity to adapt (shrink or expand) to various changes in humidity. Over time, when installed as part of a deck, air dried lumber will continue to gradually dry, or shrink in size, as the boards lose more moisture. Much of this change is revealed in the spacing between installed deck boards. Therefore, when installing

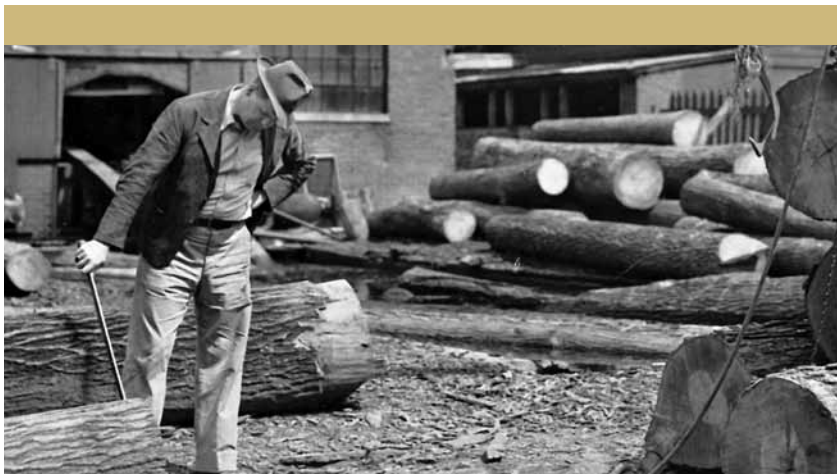
Ipé, allow for a 1/8" gap between the boards since they will continue to lose moisture, or shrink, as they dry over time.

Massaranduba, Garapa, and Cumaru on the other hand, are partially kiln dried to 12-16 percent MC. Kiln drying is unique to air drying because the MC is driven-down or lowered faster by using heat. Kiln dried lumber is usually associated with lumber for making furniture, intended for use inside a home, where the humidity is controlled compared to outdoors. When wood is kiln dried and installed as outdoor decking, however, certain precautions need to be taken. Since the boards are usually drier, kiln dried boards will likely expand in humid conditions, necessitating a wider gap when spacing the deck boards. For that reason, install Massaranduba, Garapa, and Cumaru material with a minimum 3/16" space between 4" planks and 1/4" space between 6" planks. This wider spacing promotes air circulation, allows drainage, and leaves room between the boards for shrinkage and expansion.

(Continued on page 3)

Proper board spacing is dependent on the amount of moisture content and the lumber specie.

INDUSTRY NEWS



Darrel Johnson grading lumber, circa 1947.

AN INTERVIEW WITH NHLA CHIEF INSPECTOR MARK HORNE

Q: In today's market why would a company, or individual want to go through the expense of NHLA's grade certification process?

M.H.: Many shippers wish to promote the fact that they are unafraid of independent quality checks from a neutral third party organization, and want prospective customers to know that they are willing to have that independent verification of their shipping quality. Other companies join the program to have an independent verification of their shipping quality as an added layer in their internal quality control program. After the site inspection is complete, NHLA issues a pack-for-pack report of the accuracy of the footage, piece count, and grade found for each package inspected, and whenever possible, members may use this time to help train their inspectors if the NHLA inspector disagrees with their grade. We even see buyers enrolling in this program for a couple of reasons. They like the idea of an NHLA "national man" coming into their facility as part of their internal quality control program too, plus it lets potential suppliers of theirs know that they have competent inspectors at their facility when grading their incoming lumber.

Q: How many NHLA members are there and how many are currently grade certified?

M.H.: In Michigan, there are currently 33 NHLA members (includes all membership categories), and 3 are certified. In the Mid-west (Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa -- again includes all membership categories), there are 169 NHLA mem-

bers with 22 certified. As of March 1, 2009 there are 1,428 NHLA members worldwide with 138 certified.

Q: Of current NHLA members, what is the ratio of manufacturers and distributors to support industry members?

M.H.: Our largest category of membership is our Active membership category, and they are firms, corporations or individuals engaged in the manufacturing, custom kiln drying, wholesaling, or distribution of North American hardwood lumber and Cypress. NHLA currently has 699 Active members and an additional 364 Active member branches. Other corporate membership categories are the Associate membership category (consumers of North American hardwood lumber and Cypress), and the Sustaining membership category (companies who supply services, materials, or equipment to the other members).

Q: How has NHLA's membership been changed by the current world economic conditions?

M.H.: NHLA has seen a shrinking of our Active membership category because of a reduced hardwood lumber production demand worldwide. Not all hardwood lumber producers that have dropped membership in the last couple of years are permanently out of the hardwood lumber industry forever.

Some sawmills have stopped sawing grade hardwood lumber and are now just sawing pallet lumber for local markets, while others have switched to sawing railroad ties, etc. Many other

small sawmills have temporarily shut-down and are waiting for lumber demand to improve so that they can resume sawing grade hardwood lumber again. And there has also been quite a bit of consolidation of the US & Canadian hardwood lumber production base in the last couple of years.

Q: I understand previous Chief Inspector, Bob Sabistina, is in China offering lumber grading training. How much interest has been generated to date?

M.H.: Bob has been in China since January 2009 and his duties are split into three main categories. He is there to promote the North American hardwood lumber resource in China and Southeast Asia. He is also there to teach the NHLA lumber grades to buyers, distributors, and consumers of North American hardwood lumber by teaching short courses throughout the region, and Bob is also there to help resolve grade disputes if called upon by our members. NHLA has been pleased with the response of Bob's presence in that region, but realizes the promotion of NHLA's member interests, and the education of the people in that part of the world to our grading rules is a long process.

Q: Are there plans to offer services in additional countries or markets?

M.H.: There has been discussion about placing more NHLA representatives in other regions of the world, but for now we continue to review our experiences with Bob's placement in China and look for opportunities to expand NHLA member interests elsewhere in the future.

Q: Looking 5 years ahead, where do you feel U.S. hardwood lumber producers' markets will be?

M.H.: If governments continue to keep open trade policies regarding hardwood lumber, I think the export market will be very bright for years to come. The demand for temperate hardwood lumber from the US and Canada has not slowed because buyers are unhappy with our hardwood lumber products. The lower demand can be traced to the decline in the housing market worldwide, the bank failures and the tightening of credit, the increases in unemployment, the savings losses people have been experiencing with their retirement accounts, etc. so fewer people are spending what discretionary money they do have.

Continued top of next page.

There has been quite a bit of consolidation of the US & Canadian hardwood lumber production base in the last couple of years.

But there is hope. The one major message that cannot be ignored worldwide about the North American temperate hardwood lumber production base is that we have a “green” renewable resource, well managed and proven to be sustainable. We have an industry that can provide a consistently well manufactured product, we know how to dry lumber that is consistently tension free for ease of use during further manufacturing, our production base listens to its customers and buy-

ers can find just about anything they need. The North American temperate hardwood lumber production base can provide uninterrupted supplies of material year-round, all of the time.

When the demand for hardwood lumber increases again, and it will, there will also be a window of opportunity for the furniture, cabinet and flooring industry to start new facilities here in the US & Canada. These new production facilities will probably be much smaller (but much more efficient) than

the behemoths of the past, but the opportunity will be there.

Exporting lumber to developing countries is still hard work. With language and cultural barriers making trade difficult, and then to see many overseas buyers requesting “vague” quality grades, and making large complaints against their suppliers after receiving their product, many of our hardwood lumber producers will welcome the opportunity to sell more lumber “at home”. ■ *Contributed by Mark Johnson*

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

With almost 22 years in hardwood manufacturing and inspection, Dan Lampman is loaded with experience. Drawing on his many skills to fulfill orders, Dan ensures the best value for customers.

In November 1987, he started in our lumber yard piling lumber. Soon after he moved to forklift operation, then



sawmill edger, sawmill trimmer, sawmill lumber inspector, and dry kiln operator, to now pulling lumber orders for shipments and assisting walk-in customers.

The NHLA certifies inspectors quarterly, their requirement being within 4% valuation of the NHLA Inspectors' valuation. Once, Dan had the opportunity to 'evaluate' current NHLA Chief Inspector, Mark Horne, determining he was less than 1% off from Dan's valuation. We're as proud of this as I'm sure Dan is.

Dan also spent considerable time in researching and evaluating pin-less moisture meters. Running over 1,000 samples, he compared pin-less moisture meter readings with oven dry results to verify accuracy of the new pin-less meters on the market today.

Living in Charlotte, Dan has five children, Mikaela, Erika, Dominik, Casie, and Derek. We're grateful to have Dan on our team. ■ *Contributed by Mark J.*

DECK INSTALLATION (Continued)

After you've made your choice between Ipé, Massaranduba, Cumaru, or Garapa, don't forget to follow these steps before installation: 1) Make sure you store the material out of direct sunlight, off the ground and in a cool dry place to help the decking equalize to the ambient MC of its new environment. 2) Design your deck to stand at least 24" above the ground and be open on at least 3 sides to promote adequate cross ventilation. 3) When you cut boards to length, reseal the newly cut end grain with Anchorseal, a wax end sealer that helps reduce end splitting. 4) Use stainless steel fasteners for their superior corrosion resistance, maximum holding power, and ease of use. Face screwing is one option; however, we recommend a hidden-type fastening system like those offered by Deckmaster or Eb-

Ty. In any case, pre-drill before driving any fastener.

After finishing your deck, clean the surface and allow it to dry for at least 2 days before applying a high quality penetrating oil-based sealer with UV inhibitors. We recommend using the Hardwood Exterior Formula from Penofin. Within 3-6 months, follow up by applying another coat. These applications help saturate the wood fibers, adding protection to preserve your deck and make “maintenance” coats less frequent. Over time, apply this finish periodically to maintain its rich natural color. Above all else, please don't hesitate to give us a call with any decking material or installation question. ■ *Contributed by Earl Breen, Bob Laurie, Emily Berghorn, Chris Fletcher*



PRODUCT REVIEW

Portable meters are nice to have available when you need a quick decision on the moisture content (MC) of a board. We never trust the meter completely, so if money is involved, the real test with oven samples for shell and core calculations always follow. This test requires specially cut samples, weighed, and dried in an oven for 3 hours, then weighed again so the difference can be used to calculate the MC. We will be happy to fax or email a page with instructions to those interested.

We have been selling Lignomat pin-type meters for over 26 years. About 6 years ago Lignomat introduced the Pinless Ligno-Scanner D. It became a favorite immediately with our employees because it was small, easy to use, and didn't leave holes. The obvious question – could we trust it? Dan Lampman, (see the employee profile), compared a Ligno-Scanner D to over 1,000 shell and core samples from incoming loads of lumber for 2 years. Included in the research were 2 pin-less meters costing 2 to 3 times as much. All performed well with some exceptions, just as an oven test can vary in accuracy. The different methods compliment each other when used together. Our yard foreman uses the Ligno-Scanner regularly, and we readily recommend it to customers. ■

Contributed by Ted Johnson

Sixty years ago, portable moisture meters were built inside a wooden box, with a rawhide handle, and were the size of a car battery.

L.L. Johnson Lumber Mfg. Co. & Johnson's Workbench

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CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

GOODRICH BROTHERS

There are few limitations to the moldings, stair parts, and cabinet doors Goodrich Brothers manufacture.



Goodrich Brothers' showroom is located in Pewamo, MI, on M21 between Lansing and Grand Rapids and has

been a molding and millwork fabricator since 1984. Along with hundreds of stock moldings in Oak, Poplar, and Pine they also carry a large selection of profiles and boards in Cherry, Maple, Hickory, and many other species including imports. There are few limitations to the moldings, stair parts, and cabinet doors they manufacture.

Complementing the millwork, Goodrich offers mantels, columns, and hand carved moldings. They are also the largest interior door hanger and door hardware supplier in Michigan. A recent program entails the replacement of existing doors and hardware in older houses with new prefinished and pre-machined doors. They also have added closet systems for both the home and garage. Sales and service for Andersen Windows and Doors rounds out their comprehensive trim package. Al Goodrich, their lumber



buyer, states that the relationship with L. L. Johnson Lumber, it's knowledgeable sales staff, and consistent material quality has allowed his company to fill hundreds of custom orders. Take some time to visit their website at www.goodrichbrothers.com. ■

Contributed by Chris Fletcher