

Carleton-North York's Master Woodworker

James Page



Who is this individual who loves to see a rough piece of wood transformed into something unique and beautiful? None other than **James Page**, a retired teacher and administrator from Carleton County.

James grew up with his six siblings and parents on a farm near Centreville, New Brunswick. He is the son who followed in his mother's footsteps to become a teacher. After graduating from Centreville High School in 1962, he entered Teachers' College in Fredericton from where he graduated in 1964. He began teaching that fall at the Southern Carleton School in Woodstock. He completed two Bachelors degrees (BA and BEd) from UNB before moving his family, his wife, his young son and daughter to Alberta where he completed a Master of Education degree at the University of Alberta. Upon his return to New Brunswick, James resumed teaching in Woodstock and spent one year as principal in Centreville. His career as a teacher and administrator spanned three decades plus. He retired in 1997 from Woodstock Middle School as its vice-principal.

Even before his retirement, James was spending many nonworking hours building or working with wood. Upon retirement, he continued to devote numerous hours to complete many different wood working projects in his shop, a building that he constructed a stone's throw from his house that he had also built. Currently, he spends much time in the shop at the apartment complex where he and his wife now live.

Among the projects that James has taken on, several have been major pieces of work. Two of these projects are the refurbishing of a grand piano and the construction of a harp.

A story lies behind the refurbishing of the piano. Several years ago, James' wife discovered online that a grand piano was for sale. In Boston, no less! Without hesitation, a trip to Boston ensued. Their car towing a U-Haul rental trailer was how the piano was to be transported to Woodstock.

The piano arrived at the Page home intact whereupon its transformation began. Over the next two years, James, with assistance from his wife, refinished the exterior, repaired or replaced keys, replaced interior strings and anything else that needed attention. The piano which was badly in need of repair was bought for next to nothing. Today the piano, once tuned after the careful refurbishing, sits in the Page living room and it is in use frequently.





The construction of a harp is a more recent project that James undertook when his wife, an accomplished musician, had suggested to him that she had a keen desire to play a harp and would love to have one. James procured the materials and the instructions of how to construct a harp. The result is a lovely piece that graces the Page living room. It, too, is in frequent use.

Large projects or small projects, James rarely, if ever, hesitates to construct them. He has recently built a large dining room table for his granddaughter in Moncton. He has constructed a “Murphy bed” for one of the bedrooms in the apartment where he and his wife live. From the photo of the foyer bench (below), one can see the precision and beauty of a smaller wood working project. Another photo shows yet a smaller piece, a letter holder (below). Now, James is beginning the construction of the “Ark”, which will be a toy for a child, he says.

James can often be found in his workshop transforming rough pieces of wood into items of beauty.



If you have an idea for a *SPOT Light Feature*, contact Larry Farrell: farell@rogers.com