

Couch Carved From 45,000-Year-Old Wood

The kauri wood couch of Bruce and Judy Anderson grabbed Pastor Jim Vargo's imagination when he visited their ranch in Colorado. The couch was carved out of an ancient and massive stump. The Andersons first saw it while visiting New Zealand. At the time, the couch shape was being roughed out by a chainsaw.

"The operator was standing on the huge stump end of a log that had to be 7 to 8 ft. in diameter," recalls Bruce. "The wood was spectacularly beautiful. It had natural curves that would provide arms for a couch. They said it would take months to finish. We said, when it's done, ship it to us."

The couch came from a company called the Ancient Kauri Kingdom. They extract 45,000-year old preserved kauri logs from bogs to create products for sale. Root stumps go for couches and coffee tables, trunk sections for table tops and crafts, and the

outside of the tree for natural edge bowls and boards. The company also supplies wood to an exclusive U.S. distributor, Ancientwood (see Vol. 36, No. 6), based in Wisconsin.

The couch is 9 ft. long and about 5 ft. high at the rear. Anderson estimates it weighs between 800 and 1,000 lbs. "I wasn't sure how we would get it inside, he says."

He built a ramp out of reinforced plywood sheets. The ramp ran over the double-door front entry and inside to the space designated for the couch.

Anderson says kauri trees still grow in New Zealand. However, they are protected, and none can be cut.

Contact: Paster Jim Vargo (ph 314 614-6039; backpacker55@att.net); Ancient Kauri Kingdom, Awanui, New Zealand (www.ancientkauri.co.nz); Ancientwood, La Pointe, Wis. (ph 715 685-0610 or www.ancientwood.com).



Giant couch, above, was carved out of a single piece of wood.

Pastor Jim Vargo also told us about the Gabrieli Tranquility Harp, made by Jerry Wares, Traverse City, Mich. Vargo got Wares to make one of his harps out of Kauri wood. The Tranquility harp has 22 strings and is tuned to the pentatonic scale so all notes harmonize. It's a meditative instrument that anyone can enjoy playing even if they don't have musical training. Wares, shown at left, is 86 and has made more than 400 harps over the past 15 years. They sell for about \$450 with a case, tuner and how-to video.



A few years ago Dan Peterman gave his wife this pink Massey Harris Pony tractor for Christmas. She liked it so much she let him put it in their living room.

They Keep This Little Pink Tractor In Their Living Room

Dan Peterman gave his wife the perfect present for Christmas a few years back. It was a pink Massey Harris Pony. She liked it so much she allowed him to put it in their living room.

"My wife loves it," says Peterman. "Her only regret is that she can't drive it."

Peterman restores about 10 tractors a year for clients all around the country. He started painting tractors for his father 29 years ago at the age of 13. He also collects Massey Harris tractors. When he bought a Pony from a man in Wisconsin, Jennifer rode along to get it.

"I just fell in love with it," she recalls. "I liked the size, and it was just an all-around cute tractor."

Busy with restoration work for others, Peterman never quite got around to fixing up the Pony. Whenever they talked about it, he always promised to paint it pink when he restored it.

Five years ago at Christmas he surprised her with the restored tractor...painted her favorite pink color. The only condition, he added, was that it be kept in the house.

Peterman "house-trained" the Pony by draining out all liquids as he restored the tractor. It also has no battery. He used minimal lubrication on seals and motor parts. Given its climate-controlled surroundings, he isn't worried about corrosion.

"Long story short, we have a pink Massey Harris Pony sitting in our living room," says Jennifer. "We can enjoy it while sitting on the couch watching TV."

The Pony has made a few trips out of the

house. Jennifer displayed it at the Iowa State Fair, and it has gone to several other shows. They installed a set of swinging patio doors in the house that makes it easy to move the tractor in and out.

"A local store asked to display it for Breast Cancer Awareness Month," says Dan. "It sat next to the produce section. That went over really big."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Rusty Acres Restoration, 1057 180th St., Webster City, Iowa 50595 (ph 515 543-8641; www.rustyacresrestoration.com).

Rooftop Farming Takes Off

With nearly 2 acres under cultivation, Gotham Greens' rooftop greenhouse is the world's largest. The 75,000-sq. ft. hydroponic system was built atop an existing office/warehouse building on Chicago's south side. With the aid of 50 employees from the neighborhood, the company is producing the equivalent of more than 50 acres of conventional fields with 10 percent less water.

The greenhouse is powered by renewable energy. All irrigation water is recycled through the soil-free system. A complex system of computer controls and sensors maintain optimum growing conditions. Natural pest controls are used for pesticide-free produce. The end result is a greenhouse operation that produces more than 50 percent more food with 25 percent less energy than conventional greenhouses.

Producing food within the densely populated city means produce is delivered to stores and restaurants the same day it is picked. In mid-February, the company was producing a wide variety of salad greens at the Chicago site. Gotham Greens' three New



Gotham Greens' rooftop greenhouse has nearly 2 acres under cultivation, making it the world's largest.

York City sites include a 20,000-sq. ft. unit built on the roof of a Whole Foods Market in Brooklyn.

"Our products are harvested before breakfast so they can be on your plate by lunch," is a company slogan.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gotham Green Farms, 151 E 3rd St., Suite 4G, New York, N.Y. 10009 (www.gothamgreens.com).

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