

November 2008 Woodworking Shed Tour:

note: Most of the pictures in this tour are new, but some are the same as shown in an earlier tour.

New Tour:

I last took my internet friends on a tour of my woodworking shed in December of 2006. A lot has changed since then, so I thought that it was time for a new tour.

Introduction:

My workshed/shop (*called Shed 2*) was the first major project after my retirement in early 2003 and I am relying upon it to serve as the home base for most my projects for at least the next twenty five years. I designed and built the shed almost entirely by myself, and it was very satisfying project. I hope that some of my future projects will be as rewording.

The shop fits well into my city suburban lot, leaving room for a good sized vegetable/herb garden, decks, patios, flowers, shrubs, and even some grass. The building blends into the neighborhood, and I liked the roof and colour scheme so much that, in the autumn of 2005, I re-shingled and re-painted the house to match the shingles and paint on the shop.

One constraint was that the wall close to our neighbour's house had to be low and could have no windows. The restriction was turned into a feature by having a large roof overhand protecting storage racks on the 40 foot wall (*33 foot workshop and 7 foot adjacent garden storage shed*).

The interior space of the shed is 431 square feet which sounds like a lot to non-woodworking folks, but when you have to fit a lot of benches, machines, supplies, and tools into that space, it fills up quickly. The main way to combat this is to make almost everything in the place mobile. The building's outline makes the best possible use of the limited space and, furthermore it fits our odd-shaped lot well. The shape of the shop is what I call a "squat T" having a squarish middle section with wings protruding to either side at the top.

The middle area is approximately 16 feet by 16 feet with a cathedral ceiling that peaks at 10 feet. This section, coupled with the double doors at the front, provides sufficient space for the manipulation and processing of sheet goods and lumber.

The "relaxation" alcove contains, a wood stove, some easy chairs, a chalk board, bookcase, and a fold-down table. It feels quite different than the rest of the shed and is a great place to relax. My grandchildren and I particularly like reading stories here in front of a roaring fire.

The remaining wing contains benches, parts storage bins/drawers, and hand tool storage.

The shed was designed so that two people can work together on projects. Mobility and distinct work areas are the keys to this. I want my shed to be a place where friends and relatives feel welcome and I very much enjoy working with others. As a child, I was always welcome in the worksheds/shops of my Dad, my Granddad, two of my Uncles, and one of my Aunts. Together, they instilled a love of woodworking in me that I, in turn, passed on to my two daughters, and now am starting to pass on to my grandchildren. From some of the photos of the interior, you can see that little children have already been contributing art to the walls. Several joint projects with friends, children, and grandchildren have been completed, others are underway, and more are in the planning stage.

I have had a workshed/shop or access to someone else's forever. The first one I could call my own was a distributed shop occupying the closet, storage locker, and balcony in the apartment we rented after Margaret and I were married in 1966. Since then, we have

moved many times and lived in three different countries. Each of our homes has always had some sort of woodworking facility. All these places had good aspects and bad, but the worst thing was always inadequate tools and lack of good organization. The later meant that, even when I had the right tool or part, I often could not find it. Finally, I have the woodworking shed of my dreams, with all the tools that I need (*well there is always something new that I want but that is not the same as "need"*) and, even better than that, everything has a home and I know where everything is!

So, with a good layout, good tools, good organization, and good friends and relatives to share it, my woodworking shed is perfect for me. May I continue to have the good health to enjoy it for many years to come!

Site Plan:

Below is the site plan of our lot as it appears in the building permit for my new shed. I subsequently got permission to expand the shed with a wing to the north-west (*the top left in the diagram*), but the building remains in the spot that it occupies in the original diagram.



Exterior:

Here are some pictures of the exterior from different perspectives:

From the back yard gate:



From the East:



From the north-east:



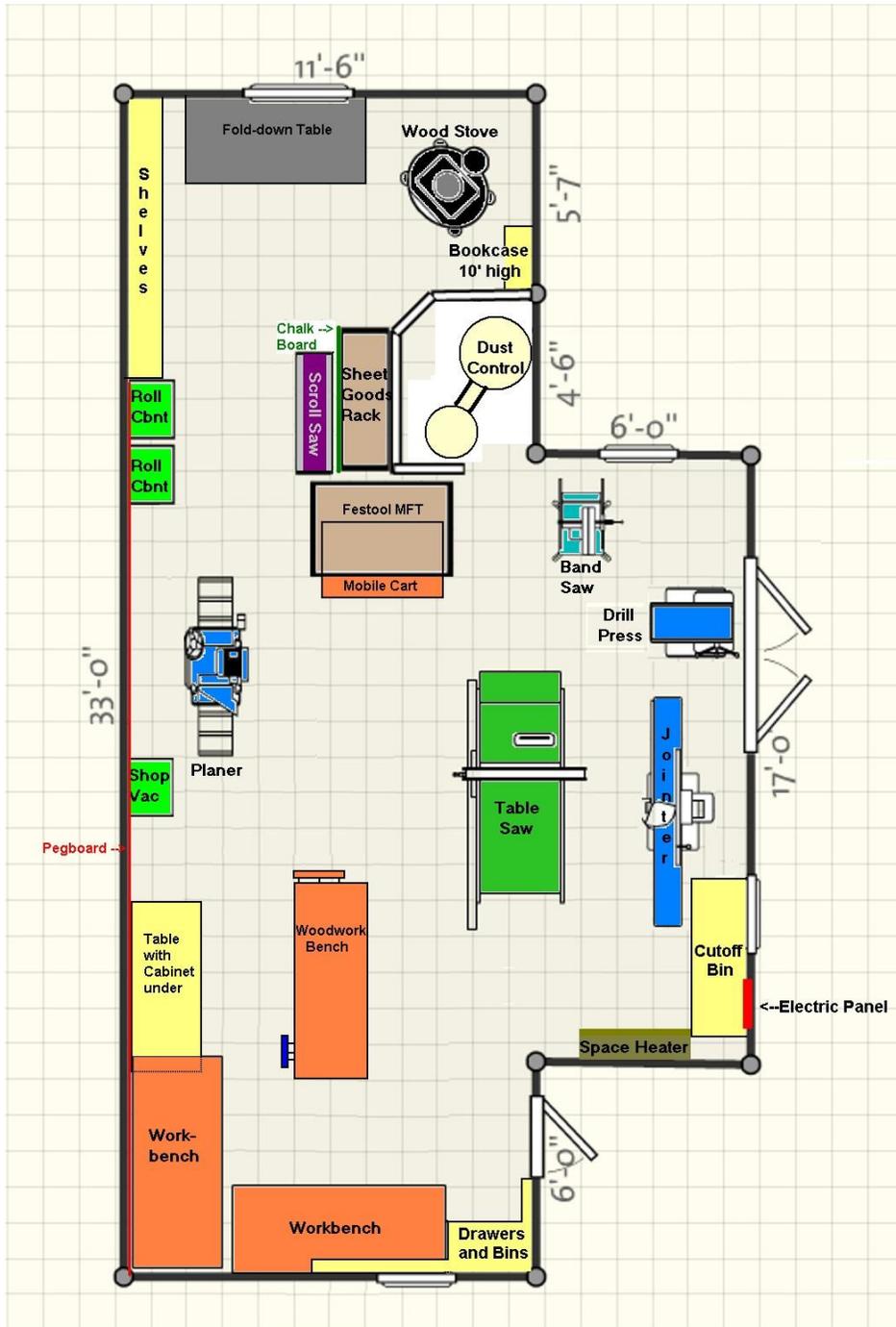
From the north-west looking over our neighbour's fences:



And here are the ramps that fit over the steps to move large stuff in and out of the shed:

The funky art on the inside of the double doors (and throughout the shed) is courtesy of my granddaughter Isla who was 4 when she decorated the place.

Shed Layout Plan:

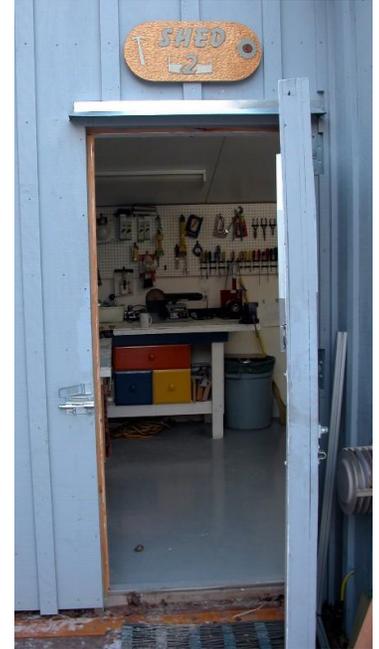


Interior Tour:

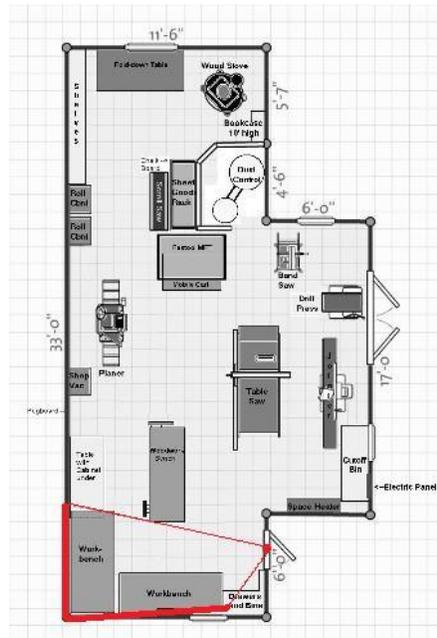
The tour starts by entering the main door:

This door is about four metres away from the back door of the house and the house, deck, and shed are all at the same level. There is no running water in the shed, but both a loo and a laundry room sink are located just inside the house.

Along with each interior picture there is a map with a red dot demarking where the photo was taken and red lines showing the area covered.



Inside the main door looking straight ahead:

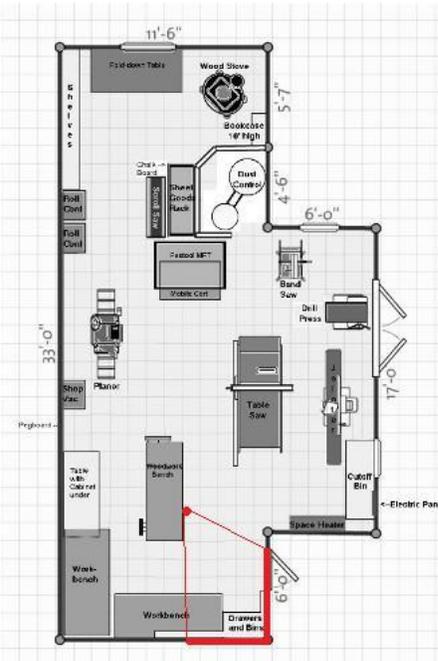


I built these benches many many years ago out of spruce and plywood, one of them (*the closest one*) moved to Seattle and back. They (*and their sibling in the basement*) are still serving me well. I am forever making modifications to the benches such as adding drawers

and drilling $\frac{3}{4}$ inch holes for hold downs. They take it all in stride. Behind the back bench is the start of a 24 foot by 2 foot run of pegboard. I was not a big fan of pegboard and was not planning to put much into the shed, and then part way through the construction, I discovered Talon hooks that can be installed and removed quickly but which stay in place when in use. My plans changed quickly. Here I a photo showing a 16 foot long section of the pegboard:



Inside the main door looking back into the hardware storage corner:



Colourful isn't it!

There are about 100 removable plastic bins that hook to plastic supports screwed into the wall.

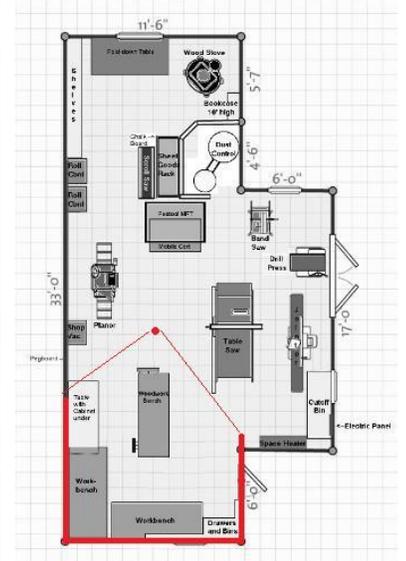
The unit with 15 wooden drawers just below the plastic bins is the sole item that I inherited from my Dad's hardware store. My Dad made all these drawers and there were at least 300 of them of this size in the store plus maybe another 200 of larger sizes. I can remember

serving customers out of them when I was about 10 years old. All 500 drawers were orange then.

The red drawers at the bottom and on the right side of the work bench are the ubiquitous Veritas metal tool trays made and sold by Lee Valley.

Above the door are some wood storage racks currently filled with rough sawn cherry.

The Southern Wing:



One thing to note here, are the two 20 amp cords hanging down from the ceiling, one 240 volt and one 120 volt. Four more such receptacles dangle in other parts of the shed and installing these was one of best things I did when building the ship; because of these, there are seldom cords running along the floor, getting in the way and tripping folks.

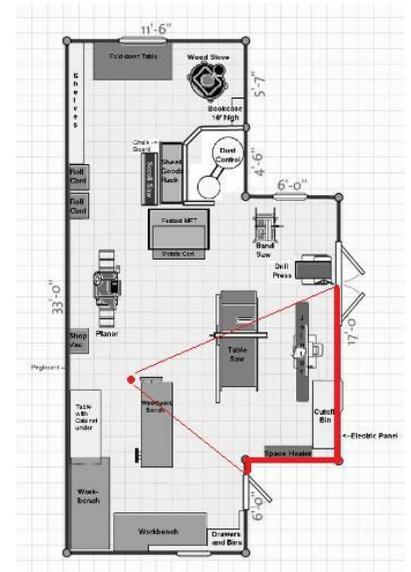
My home-made woodworking bench is in the foreground. Here are a couple of pictures of the bench alone:



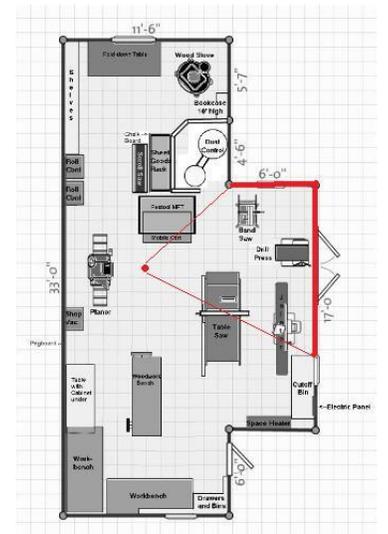
Like almost everything else in the workshop, the bench is mobile.

The Eastern Jut:

South Portion:



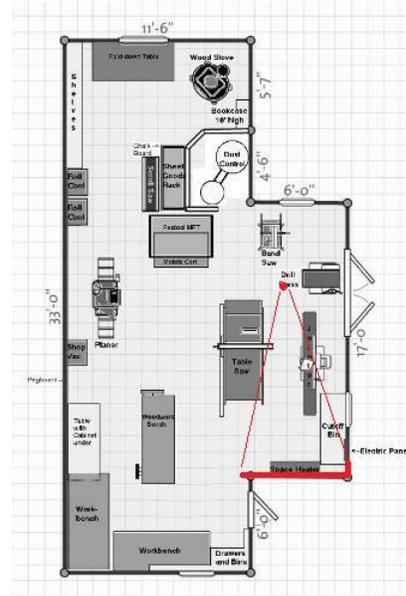
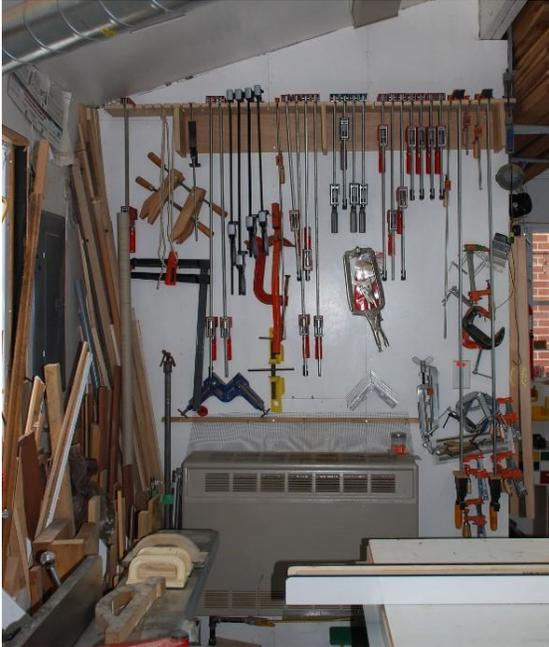
North Portion:



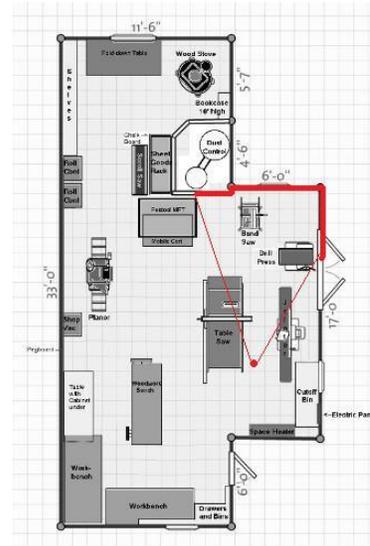
This is the area that houses most (*that is, four out of five*) of the large woodworking machines in the shed. It has the most natural light and the most overhead space. Of course, all the machines are on mobile bases.

Two more views of the Eastern Jut:

The South Wall:



The North Wall:

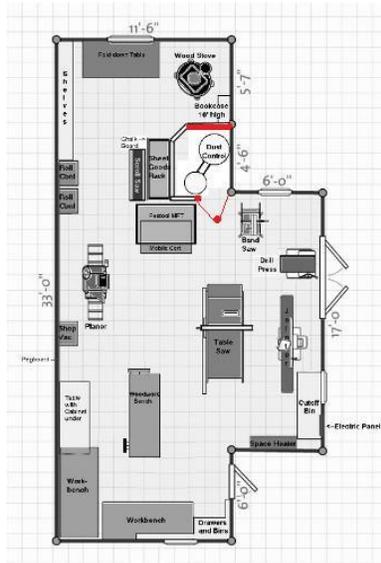


The space on the south wall above the propane space heater, which can't be used for anything wooden, is a great place for clamps. Notice the metal mesh extending up at a 45 degree angle from the edge of the space heater –that's to prevent me from leaving anything burnable on the top (as I did with a plastic dustpan three years ago). On the north wall, a shelf high up above the window is used to store Baltic birch plywood remnants.

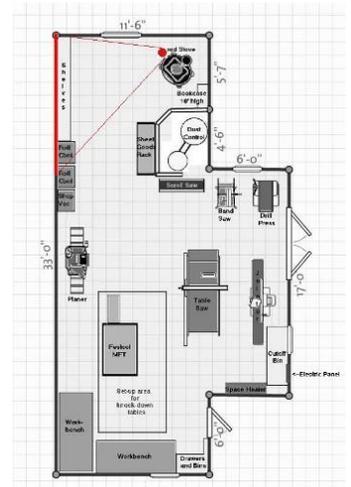
Looking into the Dust Controller Closet:

The closet is insulated to cut down on the noise and it is well ventilated.

As you can see, I have some other stuff crammed into the closet as well.

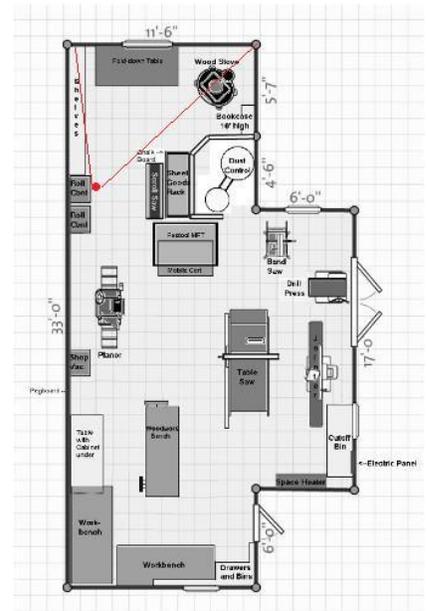


North End of the East Wall:



We see some more pegboard, some shelves for Festool systainers (*some of them in two mobile "sysports"*), a handy set of shelves, a Bosch Power Box, and fold down table.

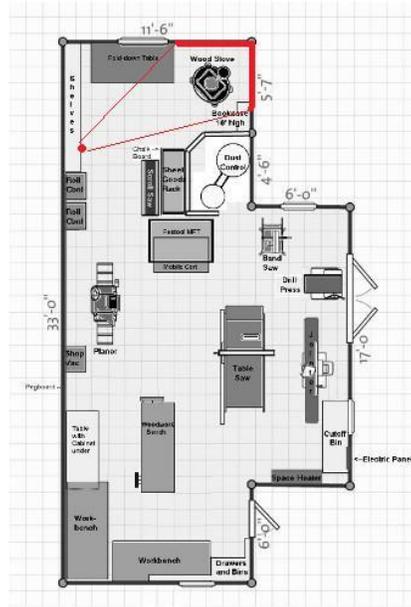
North Wall of the Relaxation Alcove:



As well as an extension of the house alarm system into the shed, the shed windows of are protected by bars. The table can be folded up in order to provide more floor space:



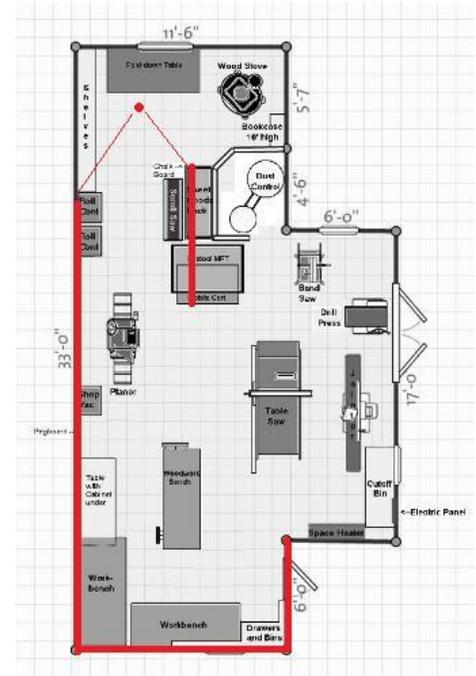
Woodstove Corner:



To the right of the stove is a floor to 10 foot ceiling
bookcase. There is a collage made from Lee Valley
catalogue covers on the wall behind the stove (*far enough
away to be safe*). The picture to the right shows the entire
bookcase:



Looking South from the Relaxation Alcove:



Notice the chalkboard that is painted on the side of the sheet goods storage rack. I do most of my rough plans on this board. Standing in front of the chalkboard is my Excalibur Scroll Saw. I don't use this as much as I would like (*and really do plan to do in the future*) to and, most of the time, the only notice that I take of the saw is to move it out of the way.

Planning to Accommodate Change:

Knowing me, there will always be some changes that I want to make to the shed. To this end:

- There are five two metre loops of #10 wire buried behind plate in the wall (*pointed to by the red arrow in the photo to the right*). This will allow me to locate a 240 volt receptacle almost anywhere in the shed.



- There is an unused wye to allow for possible future extension of the dust control duct work:



Also, it would not be hard to move any of the existing duct work.

- Almost everything big is mobile.

Exterior Storage:

Helping me to keep the shed as uncluttered as possible, there are several places outside the shed where I can store wood and other stuff.

- Racks on the 40 foot long back wall:

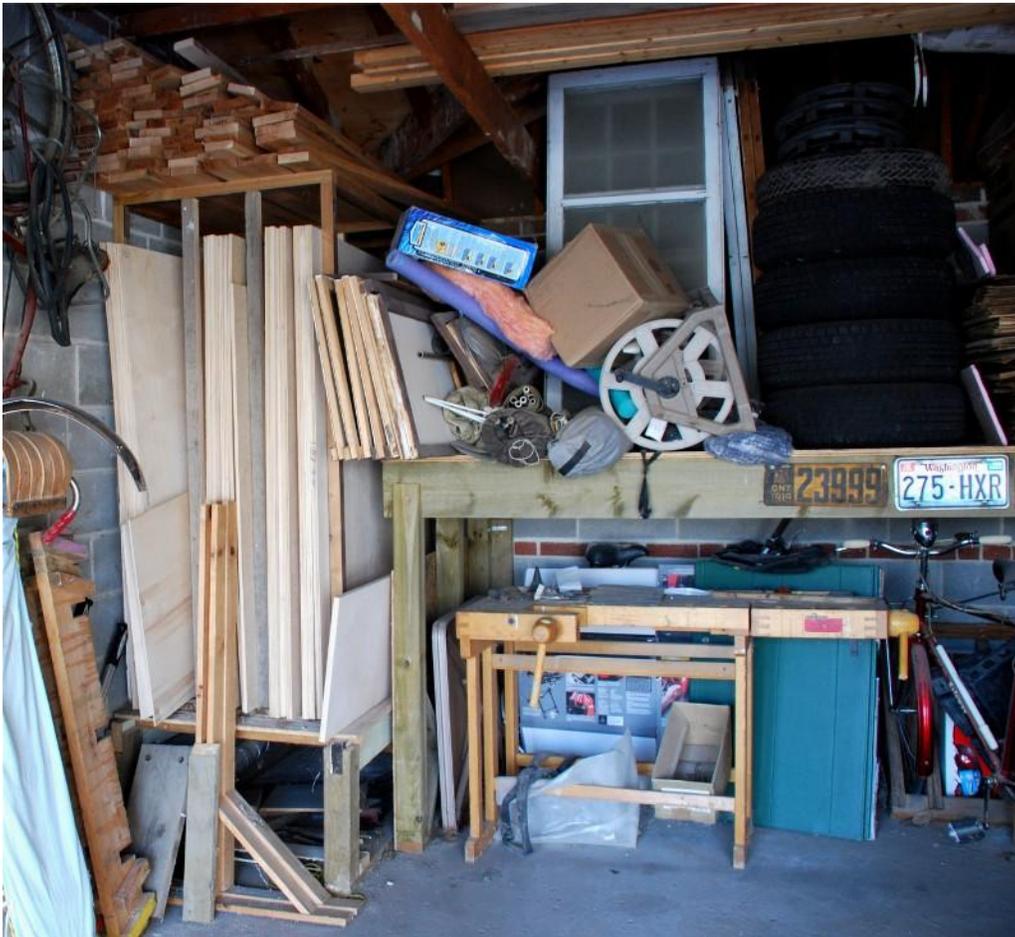


- Lumber storage rack in garage:



This can take boards up to 12 feet in length and is accessible from either end.

- Baltic Birch plywood storage rack in garage:



Also, above the rack, some cherry is currently stopred.

- The garage is now the place that I make most of the initial cuts on sheet goods. I use a pair of knock down saw horses, foam glued to a 4x8 sheet of plywood, Festool guide rails, and a Festool TS75 plunge circular saw.



- Garden Shed:



There is some space in here for large packages of fasteners.

- Shed #5



The main purpose of this shed is to hold firewood but I find that I am also storing, tools, wood, and some work-to-do in it.

- And there is always the old shop space in the basement, but I am slowly moving stuff out of there to other locations. There is still one bench down there and the bulk of my painting supplies are still in there. I'm not going to take a photo of the place.

End of Tour