



The Black Walnut from Playwicki Farm

As you walk along the paved path at Playwicki Farm, near where the playground is now located, there stood a massive black walnut tree. It was very old, in danger of falling down and needed to be removed for safety reasons before the playground could be installed. Removal would have cost the township thousands of dollars. In the spring of 2005, Landscape Architect Nancy Minich, who was working for the township at that time contacted the world renowned George Nakashima,

Woodworker, S.A., a New Hope firm whose name was synonymous with the best of 20th Century American Art furniture and told them they could have the tree if they took it down. They agreed and removed the tree. We were told that harvesting and processing the wood takes about four years. In the summer of 2008, Nancy along with Playwicki Farm Foundation members June Olson and Sandy Stout were invited to visit the Nakashima studio and were given a tour and a lesson in their wood working philosophy.

George Nakashima was an internationally acclaimed Japanese-American woodworker whose exquisite furniture creations merged traditional woodworking techniques with innovative design, resulting in work that demonstrates a high level of craftsmanship coupled with a reinterpretation of modernist design. His works are represented in the most important collections in the world, including the New York Metropolitan Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum of Fine Arts in London and the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo.

Mira Nakashima has followed her father's path by becoming a woodworker. She worked with her father for many years as a colleague and designer in his workshop. Since his death in 1990, she has been the creative director of the Nakashima studio, where she continues to produce her father's classic furniture and to design and produce her own work as well.

During the tour we had a chance to see some of the beautiful Nakashima furniture and learn how it is made. Later we got to meet Mira. She is a very dynamic woman who loved hearing the story of Playwicki Farm. We asked for a small piece of the tree as a remembrance of our black walnut. Mira said she could do much better than that and after much discussion she proposed a Minguren I End Table, which she called a mini Peace Table.

The table was delivered to Playwicki Farm on Friday, January 29, 2010 and was signed by Mira Nakashima. The table features two inlaid East Indian Rosewood butterflies and has overall dimensions of approximately 25 ½" x 27" x 21" high. It truly is a thing of beauty to behold. Stop by the Playwicki Farm Flea Market on Saturday, June 19th the farm house will be open and the table on display.