



Art from Artifacts--the JFK Summer White House project by [Robin McIntyre](#)

May 30 marked what would have been the 100th birthday of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. On Cape Cod, Massachusetts, JFK is revered not only as our 35th President, former Congressman, world/national/state leader, but also as a neighbor.



JFK and his family used the family home in Hyannisport, MA as their summer White House. The home, built in 1919, was renovated in 2013 by the then-current owners, Ted Kennedy, Jr. and his wife, Kiki. They had the foresight to save all of the materials that were taken out of the house, from fixtures to

wood to wallpaper, even down to the square-headed nails. The materials were donated to the JFK Museum. The JFK Museum in Hyannis, with the assistance of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, looked to partner with a variety of Cape artists in different mediums to make pieces which are artistic or keepsake in nature with the various materials. The project would serve to celebrate the life of JFK, raise funds for the museum, and engage local artists in the community in re-purposing the artifacts.

Thirty various artists were invited to participate in using the materials. On the recommendation of staff from the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, Cape Cod Woodturners (CCW) was invited to participate in the project. Several members of the CCW Board of Directors (Dave Arnone, Clarke Buchanan, Robin McIntyre, and Mike Grady) met with Museum and Chamber staff in January 2017 to discuss the project. The logistics of the project were reviewed with club members in February and the club voted to participate. CCW utilized fir or mahogany balusters (2 1/4" x 20") that were on the widow's walk of the home. Several wider boards and pieces of southern yellow pine flooring were also taken.



Thirteen club members volunteered to participate and were busy creating a variety of turnings over the next several months in anticipation of the opening promoting the project in May. The balusters were painted with a lead-based paint which needed to be removed or preserved with caution. A club member and safety engineer, Ron Reif, who has expertise in lead exposure, offered his advice to club members on protecting themselves. Due to the age of the wood, much caution needed to be used because of the extreme dust that the turning created. Turnings of the artist's choosing included wine chalices, boxes, a lighthouse lamp, pens, trees, lighthouses, candle holders, candlestick holders, pepper shakers, a belay pin display, and even a Washington Monument. Turners were inspired by the Kennedys' support of local art, their love of boating, their love of Cape Cod, and their gifts to our nation and world.



**Baluster Forest by Clarke Buchanan,
CCW president**



Lidded Box by Dave Arnone

The Cape Cod Times featured the project in a front page, three-page article in early April. The art opening, held in late May at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, was a success with an overwhelming turnout from the community.



Wine Chalice by Dave Arnone

Ornament with Finial by Mike Grady



Lighthouse by Jim Caiazzi

Lighthouse by Art Jalbert

The turnings are being sold through the gift shop in the JFK Museum in Hyannis, through an auction in August on the Cape, or via an on-line auction (jfkhyannismuseum.org). Contributions by artists will be on-going over several months with additional pieces added to the auction art.



Belay Pins by Don Chase



Lighthouse Lamp by Marc Sitkin

Note: All of the photos of the turned objects were photographed by Marc Sitkin and he owns the copyright on these photos. To learn more about Marc Sitkin Photography visit his web site at <http://marcsitkinphotography.zenfolio.com/>