

Bill Brown, Jr.

I met Doug Sigler in the summer of 1964 in front of Penland's old wood shop. Doug had driven a red convertible car, I mean bright red, and I believe he had three other people with him. I was ten years old and he seemed very large in height with the same size mouth to go with it. He was friendly and outgoing, always kind and had time to give to anyone who needed it. He loved to play gags on grown-ups with us boys; he was basically just a big kid himself. He was the uncle I never had.

A fairly well known story is that when Doug left the first summer from Penland, he and his compadres needed to pull a U-Haul trailer back to Buffalo, New York. Some time later the story came back that as he was going down the Marion Hill, a very steep hill, in the new convertible with trailer loaded, the car lost its brakes and one of the other instructors riding with him lost control of his bowels. Since no one was killed, everyone thought it was very amusing, especially Doug who got years of enjoyment out of that experience.

My dad, Bill Brown Sr., and Doug truly loved each other and had an inseparable bond. They were extremely loyal to each other, gave each other hell, and worked extremely hard. Along with his big personality his great attribute was his passion and love of teaching woodworking and design. There was nobody better and my dad knew that!

When I was about to go to high school in my freshman year. I knew I was going to take a wood class at the high school. So I thought what a better preparation than to take a wood class with Doug Sigler. I didn't realize what an undertaking this would be. He decided I should make a music stand. He didn't care that I didn't play an instrument—that had nothing to do with it. The exercise was about the clean lines of the music stand and learning how to use every tool in the wood shop correctly. And also not the least, was to totally complete the job correctly, sanding little square rectangle pieces of wood down to a glass finish. And you would not stop until he said stop. There were many times when I wanted to sneak out of the wood shop and go do anything else, but that was not going to happen on Doug's watch.

Doug Sigler gave me many, many gifts. These are the most important ones that come to mind: always a strict loyalty to your family and friends, work as hard as you possibly can, and, most importantly, never give up! My son Gamble was born after my father died, and as time went on Doug became an important friend and grandfather figure to my son. What a wonderful gift of shared experience, friendship and family that continued through the generations.

I miss him every day, and will always love him!