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THEIR FAVORITE THINGS

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By Adrienne Perron,
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A Few of Their Favorite Things



In Maine, our tradition of handmade
craftsmanship runs deep. Here in the season of
giving, we asked a few of the state's
talented artisans to tell us
about their most treasured heritage items,
the heirlooms and objects of art that have
inspired them, shaped their lives,
and informed their craft.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY CLAYTON SIMONCIG



AARON MOSER, Thos. Moser

The object: Joseph Moser was 21 years old when he built this simple cherry bookshelf in 1925. He was a stereotyper by trade, says his grandson Aaron Moser, and as far as any of Joseph's descendants know, he never built another thing out of wood. But Joseph's bookshelf made a lasting impression on his younger son, Thomas, Aaron's father and the self-taught woodworker who, in 1972, founded Freeport's handmade-furniture company Thos. Moser. Aaron, today the chairman of the board, says the only other objects his dad has hung onto as long are small enough to fit in a dresser-top "treasure box." A couple of years ago, Aaron's parents built nine replicas of the spartan little shelf, one for each of their grandchildren.

On value beyond craftsmanship: "It's a very simple bookcase, very primitive. From a woodworking and design standpoint, there's not a lot of substance there. It's really about the story it symbolizes, how it spans this almost 100-year trajectory, and the idea that an object can be a vessel of meaning, no matter what it is or what the quality is."

On serendipity: "It's interesting how cherry, which is the wood that Thos. Moser ended up really specializing in, was the wood my grandfather chose to build his bookcase. I don't think everything is an accident. I think there's some destiny in everything we do."

If you're gifting: The design of Thos. Moser's Windward Bookcase, which starts at \$1,760, is inspired by the Arts and Crafts style of Joseph's piece.
▶ thosmoser.com

An Inherited Bookshelf