
LAKE CHARLES WOODWORKERS CLUB

John Perry, President

John Marcon, President Elect

Bob Ferguson, Treas. & Newsletter Editor

OCTOBER 1996

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The September meeting was held in **Bob Schmitt's** new shop with 27 persons attending. Our appreciation goes to Bob for his hospitality.

Bob gave us a tour of his shop which has 780 sq. ft. of space and contains a table saw, DeWalt radial saw, planer and thickness planer, Makita resaw, shaper, lathe, drillpress, scroll saw, and spindle sander plus many other features. Bob also demonstrated his Makita resaw which has a 3" wide blade: an awesome piece of machinery which has tremendous practical value. Bob indicated that he needs a dust collection system and a lengthy discussion of desired features ensued. Bob plans to contact a company which specializes in this process.

Another discussion of shapers vs. routers held many member's attention. Generally, the shapers are valuable for doing heavy work (larger pieces of stock) requiring higher horsepower motors. It is much quieter than a router but the shaper bits are pretty expensive. Routers are generally more versatile with less expensive bits. It was pointed out that some router tables (the homemade variety) frequently have inadequate router supports which is a function of the polycarbonate plate. **Russell Tritico** reported that he has a router built into a table saw extension; a way of saving space in a small shop.

Art Simmons reported that he was able to take advantage of the continuing Shopsmith opportunity: he bought his own Joint-Matic and is looking forward to using it soon.

IT'S NOW OFFICIAL - NEW OFFICERS ELECTED

After the appropriate nominations, the following officers were elected for the 1996-1997 season beginning in October:

John Marcon, President
Whitney Derise, President Elect
Bob Ferguson, Treasurer & Newsletter Editor
Norman Robinson, Advisory Committee

Continuing to serve on the Advisory committee are:
John Perry, Outgoing president
Dudley Harvey

LIABILITY RELEASE

There was a third reading and discussion of the proposal to make signing a liability release a condition of membership in the Lake Charles Woodworkers Club. All members voted unanimously for its approval. This is the last time you will hear of this issue. **Your membership renewal for next year may not be accepted unless there is a copy on file or you submit a copy with your dues payment..**

So far, eleven members have not signed a release.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to thank the members of the Lake Charles Woodworkers Club for the privilege of serving you this past year.

It has been a good year and, that with the steering committee's help, a great number of things have taken place. Hopefully, for the betterment of the club.

The membership has steadily increased, the program has expanded, and membership interest has grown with leaps and bounds. All thanks go to you, each and every member, for your input. The club cannot function without this input and new ideas.

Thanks again for the cooperation extended to me and to the other officers this past year.

John Perry

NEXT MEETING

October 12, 1996, 9:00 am in the shop of

**Mike Kent
215 Orchard Drive
Lake Charles, LA**

FUTURE MEETINGS

Nov. 9 Lawrence Walker
Dec. 14 Norman Robinson

SHOW AND TELL

John Perry showed an example of bevel jointery made with his Joint-Matic device. A table leg was fastened to the siderails with the bevel joint and the whole corner was supported by a bevel brace: an extremely strong joint combination. John also mentioned a recent magazine article which discussed tuning up power saws. (Ed. note: the recent issues of Better Homes and Gardens Wood magazine have some good articles on adjustment and calibration of a range of woodworking machines.)

Mack Gafford showed a Whale of a Bank which he carved following a pattern in WOOD magazine. Of course, he made some changes which definitely improved on the original.

Leo Parker introduced us to his surprise package: an exploding house. He made a small house (similar in size and shape to a bird house) which is spring loaded (a mousetrap) and flies apart at the slightest touch. Obviously, it was designed to get back at that person who just can leave his(or her) hands off something.

Bill Tolin showed his recent generation of turned bracelets and **Nemo Robinson** showed some pens turned from two new resin-impregnated woods available from Woodcraft. Known as Wildwood there are called Burl and Fiddleback.

CHRISTMAS NOTICE

Have you made your small giveaway gift for the Christmas party? It's later than you think. Don't wait too long.

NEW MEMBER

We are pleased to announce that the following individual has become member:

Frank D. Willson
3928 Turtle Creek Drive
Port Arthur, TX 77642

SNIPE (NOT THE BIRD) HUNTING

Last year at one of our meetings someone asked about a technique to avoid sniping when thickness planing a board. In the current issue of Better Homes & Gardens WOOD magazine there is a lengthy article on 12" portable planers which contains the following comments on sniping.

"For years we've heard from readers wanting to know how to cure the "snipe" produced by their portable planers. Snipe refers to the slightly deeper cuts on both the infeed and outfeed ends of a planed surface. The sniped area is

typically about 2" long, the distance between the centers of the cutterhead and the feed rollers.

Snipe occurs because the infeed roller and cutterhead combine to lift the infeed end of the workpiece, causing the cutterhead to remove more stock until the outfeed roller presses the piece flat against the planer bed. Similarly, as the piece exits the machine, the infeed roller loses contact with the workpiece, and the cutterhead and the outfeed roller combine to lift the exiting end into the cutterhead. All portable planers produce some snipe because their construction just isn't rigid enough to completely withstand the forces of their own feed rollers and cutterheads

QUICK WAYS TO MINIMIZE SNIPIING

If you've made all the necessary adjustments to your planer, and you're still getting snipe, don't give up hope!. Here are some things you can do to win the war against snipe:

- *As much as possible, plane your rough boards to final thickness before you cut individual workpieces to finished length. Then, the snipe may possibly fall on a checked or split end that you would remove as waste anyway.*
- *Take light cuts. the deeper the cut, the deeper the snipe, so take light finishing cuts as you near final thickness.*
- *Raise the outside ends of your extensoin tables just a few thousandths of an inch above the main table. You'll have to experiment to find the height that best minimizes snipe.*
- *Butt your boards end-to-end as you plane them. then, the snipe will occur only on the front end of the first piece and the back end of the last piece. If you want no snipe whatsoever, or if you're planing only one board, butt scrap pieces of the same thickness and at least 10" long against the board ends. The scrap pieces will be sniped. not your good board.."*

(Editor's note: On a single board, an alternative may to place a narrow scrap board on either side of the good board, and extending several inches ahead of and behind it. The scrap pieces are sacrificed for the sake of a choice board.)

Ron Stowe and **Bill Tolin** announced that they are planning a special wood turners workshop at Ron's shop for Sep. 21.

Ron also indicated that he is planning a special visit to Oberlin to see a blacksmith who is a master bladesmith. Ron can take 8 persons: first come-first to go. Contact Ron, if you're interested.

Ornamental Turning: A Short History

Ornamental turning (OT) has been practiced for over 400 years. The art of plain turning is known to have been practiced for at least 3500 years, with gradually increasing improvement from simple woodturning devices to modern engineering. 1500 years before the birth of Christ, Egyptians were using simple lathes. The wood lathe is without question the oldest machine. Interestingly it is the only machine capable of reproducing itself, although modern computers are beginning to approach that capability.

Egyptian tombs contain turned artifacts, and some turners in today's third-world countries still use techniques practiced in the dim dawn of woodturning history. This technique is essentially pulling a cord wrapped around work (supported between two fixed centers) back and forth, thereby rotating the work so a sharp-edged cutter could be applied. This was often a two-man operation.

From Egypt, woodturning spread to other Mediterranean countries, where the geometric symmetry of turned work was truly appealing. The art of turning spread to other European countries, and somewhere along the line the turners tired of sitting on the ground to get their work done. They decided to raise the work off the ground so that they could stand as they turned. In addition, the standing position leaves both hands free to control the cutter. Before 1700, pole lathes and tree lathes were in use throughout Europe. The word lathe derives from the word lath, or pole. As far back as the time of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) turners experimented with several lathe forms, progressing beyond the pole lathe to try flywheel, crank, and treadle lathes. In France, turners began to see the great energy storage potential of the flywheel (or great wheel) and by 1771, even American turners had come round to using the great wheel. Much of this plain turned work was, and current work still is, decorated by hand carving. This, while very decorative, is not OT, since it is not carried out entirely on a machine. Before the 18th century cutting tools were generally hand-held, the slide rest being a later invention.

It is approximately 1525 that OT begins to emerge on the scene. Starting most probably in Augsburg or Nuremberg in Bavaria, it then consisted of what is called **rosework**, being done by bringing into play a template or cam (called a rosette) mounted on the lathe spindle. By allowing the headstock to rock, under tension of a spring, the spindle could follow the template and create patterns reminiscent of rose petals. Also, by allowing the spindle to move to and fro along the lathe axis, oblique or wavy lines were produced on the work, and this is known as **swashwork**. It is clear from the few surviving examples of early work that the skill of some turners of this era was highly developed, particularly in rose-engine and swashwork.

The earliest trade manual to describe in English the art of rose and swash turning was *Mechanick Exercises* by Joseph Moxon, published in England in 1678, and was revealed in greater detail in the two great French inspirational works of the 18th century, *L'Art de Tourneur*, by Plumier (1701) and *Manual de Tourner* by Bergeron (1796). Meanwhile, turning technology was being developed in England; the practice of arresting the work from point to point by a division plate (indexing) and applying a revolving cutter to it was the first technique to be described as ornamental turning, and is referred to by Bergeron, in his 3rd edition of 1843 as *La tour Anglaise* (English turning).

The craft of OT thrived in some German territories, reaching high levels before the Frenchman Plumier completed his seminal work on the subject in 1701. This is in no small part due to the labors and imaginations of the great Holtzapffel family, manufacturers of OT lathes extraordinaire, among the finest the world has ever seen. Towards the end of the 18th century, John Jacob Holtzapffel left Strasbourg, Alsace (France) to set up a lathe manufactory in London in 1794. He soon acquired the reputation of a maker of high class lathes and tools, and his lathes enjoyed a great prominence.

Today only a relative handful of these mechanical wonders still exist. However, the hobby is kept alive by a small band of enthusiasts who try to carry on both the machines and the knowledge of their use by forming clubs, such as England's SOT, dedicated to the furtherment of the grand art and craft. A few are even bringing the hobby into the 21st century by building computer-controlled OT lathes.

(Article is a condensation of the same recovered by Barry Humphus from the Internet at <http://www.tooltimer.com/OT.htm>.)