All the News that fits

Lake Charles Woodworkers Club, Inc. May 2019

Mentoring Program - If you have a project, a problem in any woodworking area, these members have volenteered to help. Give them a call. Jeff Cormier: 582-3278; John Marcon: 478-0646; Eltee Thibodeaux: 436-1997; Dick Trouth: 583-2683. Each have years of experience and knowledge.

April Meeting Highlights

John Griffith could not attend the April meeting because of a prior committment, so Patrick LaPoint and Barry Humphus ran the meeting. John cannot be at the May meeting nor will Patrick, so Barry will take over fpr this meeting as well.

As John decided not to continue as the LCWWC President, Bill Fey has stepped up to fill that role. We must approve this as a Club at the May meeting so we can do the state paperwork.

We welcome new members: Mr. William "Bill" Kroll of Lake Charles and Ms. Stacy Murphey of Iowa to the LCWWCMs.

Members Jack Stegall reported that the flooding in March affected his property. Pie Sonnier has not done much work lately because of vision issues and Eltee Thibodeaux has been at the hospital on occasion. We wish them all well and keep these fine folks in our thoughts.

Given the article on electrical outlets in April's Newsletter, there was some discussion about electrical issues. As well was a discussion of doing Lictenburg wood burning to make decorative pieces and there will be an article next month in the Newsletter about this technique.

For Show and Tell, J.W. Anderson stepped up with a new wood sword made of maple and mahogany as well as a wood knife and a knapped knife all of which were finished in mineral oil.

Ray Kebodeaux showed off a great Japanese Tool Box in the traditional methode of no fasteners -- just careful joints. He used a poly spray for the finish. George Carr did a wonderful Bill Johnson pattern, basswood chip carved box. This was so precise that I accused him of doing this with a laser cutter. But no, his skill really shows as this carving was all hand done -- amazing work.

Joesph Dees brought us some preliminary work on some of his beautiful knives. The metal he used on these was interesting as well: O1 tool steel is a cold work steel and is one of the most forgiving for making knife blades. It's known as a low alloy steel due to the fact that it contains eight additives. The largest additive is Manganese at just 1.2%. The other minerals added are Carbon at 0.95%, Silicon at 0.4%, Chromium at 0.5%, Tungsten at 0.5%, Vanadium at 0.2%, Phosphorus at 0.3%, and Sulfur at 0.03%. Dees also used D2 steel but is less costly than S30V Dees said that it doesn't have quite the hardness or toughness of the latter. However, it doesn't lag by much in those categories. S30V is also considered true stainless steel; D2 only has enough Chromium to be "semi-stainless" with the other blade of nitro V steel. Nitro-V is a derivative of AEBL with Nitrogen and Vanadium added. This helps create a fine grained alloy with great edge holding and high corrosion resistance. Joe also had a nice little box made with box elder burl, quilted bubinga and cocobolo. He also showed some mule deer horn that will become a handle.

George Carr brought a neat chip carving so very precise in design that it looked as if he had used a laser cutter to create the item. Patrick LaPoint won the Show and Tell Stines gift card. More on Page 2 . . .

J.W. Anderson

George Carr

Joe Dees

Comming Up . . . Saturday, May 11 at 9:00 A.M. at Stines in Lake Charles. Coffee and donuts available.

Nominal Lumber Size Law Suit

Hard times indeed must have fallen upon the lawyers of the American mid-west, for news reaches us of a possible class-action lawsuit filed in Chicago that stretches the bounds of what people in more gainful employment might consider actionable. It seems the legal eagles have a concern over the insufficient dimensions of their wood, and this in turn has caused them to apply for a class action against Home Depot and Menards with respect to their use of so-called nominal sizing in the sale of lumber.

If you have ever bought commercial lumber you will no doubt understand where this is going. The sawmill takes a piece of green wood straight from the forest, and cuts it to a particular size. It is then seasoned, either left to dry out and mature in the open air or placed in a kiln to achieve the same effect at a more rapid pace. This renders it into the workable lumber you expect to use, but causes a shrinkage of the wood that since it depends on variables such as moisture can not be accurately quantified. Thus a piece of wood cut by the sawmill at 4 inches square could produce a piece of seasoned lumber somewhere near 3.5 inches square. It would thus be sold as having only a nominal size of 4 inches This has been the case as long as commercial lumber has been produced, we'd guess for something in the region of a couple of centuries, and is thus unlikely to be a surprise to anyone in the market for lumber.

So, back to the prospective lawsuit. Once the hoots of laughter from the entire lumber, building, and woodworking industries have died down, is their contention that a customer being sold a material of dimension 3.5 inches as 4 inches is being defrauded a valid one? I'm not a lawyer, but we'd expect the long-established nature of nominal lumber sizing to present a tough obstacle to their claim, as well as the existence of other nominally sized products in the building industry such as rolled steel joists. Is it uncharitable of us to characterise the whole escapade as a frivolous fishing exercise with the sole purpose of securing cash payouts? Probably not, and we hope the judges in front of whom this is likely to land agree with us.

Core Hand Tools

Setting up a hand-tool-oriented shop is a fraction of the investment of setting up a power tool shop. For the price of one large quality piece of power machinery, you can buy all of the hand tools you need to build things – from rough lumber all the way to assembly and final surface finishing. And that is if you are buying the best-quality new tools available.

To do the same work with power tools, you'd need three to four machines, a bunch of small powered hand tools, plus good dust collection to deal with all the small particles. On top of that, you need the space to put everything. For the home woodworker, hand tools can be just as fast as power tools. Woodworking as a craft was fully formed long before the advent of machinery and electricity, and people did not work slowly or inefficiently.

It may take some time to develop the skills to be proficient with hand tools, but it is actually easier to get started with them than it is with machines. As long as your tools are sharp they will give you results, and the more you use them the better you will become at controlling them.

One reason people have turned so readily to power tools is that they've been convinced it's much easier to learn how to set up a machine to do a task that it can then repeat over and over than it is to learn the hand skills to be proficient at that same task. Nothing could be further from the truth – even your earliest attempts with a hand tool will give you better results than the first attempts to do the same thing with machines. It comes at a much lower initial cost and is very satisfying. For example, I built my first small walnut table with only hand tools and I still use it every day.

Continues on Page 3 . . .

Hand Tools continues . . .

The list of hand tools you need for efficient work is nowhere near as daunting as you might think. As you build your kit, it is important to understand that the individual tools do not matter as much – the key is that you have the right group of tools.

The tools you get to fill out this group are completely dependent on which ones work best for you, and there may be specialty tools such as scrapers, rasps or moulding planes that you'll want to acquire as the need arises. Plus, you'll need some measuring and marking tools for layout. I recommend a couple of combination squares – at least a 12" and 6" (it's also nice to have a 2" or 4" one), and an awl. A bevel gauge and protractor will let you work with angles.

Two sets of dividers, and a compass allow for curves, and also let you lay out proportions and transfer points onto your stock. Two marking gauges allow you to transfer multiple dimensions without needing to measure. With a folding rule and tape measure, you can take specific measurements. The blade from your 12" combo square can be a straightedge when needed.

Unless you only use all-wood joinery such as mortise and tenons or dovetails, you'll also need a drill (eggbeater style or a brace) and a hammer, as well as some screwdrivers. The basic tools for stock preparation, shaping and joinery can be broken into five groups: bench planes, detail and joinery tools, saws, tools for curved work and sharpening tools.

Bench planes – the jack, jointer and smoother – allow you to handle dimensioning and finishing of stock. The jack plane is between 14"-15" long, making it ideal for rough surfacing. As a medium-size tool, it is large enough to get things reasonably flat and short enough to get there quickly. A roughing cut is the thickest, heaviest shaving, and is typically between .004"-.010" thick, depending on how cooperative the piece of wood is. (As a reference, a piece of printer paper is typically about .004" thick.) To use this plane for heavy roughing, sharpen the blade with an 8"-10" radius; this will make it perform more like a scrub plane.

A jointer plane has the large bearing surface (22"-24") required for flattening. It does not matter if the board you are working on is large or small; if you want it fl at, grab your jointer. A flattening cut is a medium thickness, between .002"-.004".

A smoothing plane is 10? or less in length. It doesn't cut more smoothly than the other planes; it's simply a much shorter plane than a jack or jointer, so it allows you to take a thin finishing pass more quickly than the larger planes. Finishing cuts should be as thin as you can get, usually less than .002".

None of these numbers are set in stone, just know that your roughing cut will be the thickest shaving, the flattening cut will be about half of that and the finishing cut will be about half that again.

Detail and joinery planes are tools for putting things together, trimming and fitting. A block plane, shoulder plane, rabbet plane, router plane, plow plane and some chisels make up this group. Though there is less choice in the more specialized joinery and detail tools, the same principles apply as to the bench planes: Let the work dictate the tool.

A low-angle block plane, about 6" long (or shorter), allows you to trim and fit efficiently. It can even be used as a small smoothing plane if needed. A large shoulder plane is about 10" long and has a blade that goes out to each edge of the plane's body to allow cuts into corners – a necessity when you are creating or cleaning up rabbets, or cutting tenon shoulders. The mass and size of a large plane, such as the Stanley No. 073 (all of the numbers below are Stanley), gives you more control than you get with its smaller cousins.

The rabbet plane's blade, like the shoulder plane, extends to the edges of the sole; it is an essential tool for casework because you'll often cut rabbets for joinery. Frequently, these run across the grain, so a skewed blade is preferable. The best vintage option for a skewed rabbet is the No. 289 – but because it's not easy to find, a skewed wooden rabbet plane or a No. 140 skewed block plane would be good options.

A large router plane (such as the No. 71) can be fitted with a variety of sizes of blades to handle different tasks. It is ideal for creating an even depth for a dado, or trimming the cheek of a tenon. A plow plane allows you to set a groove in the face or edge of a piece (for a drawer bottom or a panel, for example). You'll want several widths of blades for a variety of grooves. Tools such as the No. 45 and No. 55 combination planes can serve, but a dedicated plow plane is a better choice for this application.

Chisels are relatively easy to figure out: Get the sizes and types that you need. Bevel-edge chisels are very versatile; you can use them for striking or paring. Get a range of sizes so you can handle a range of tasks (3/4", 1/2? and 1/4" tools would be a good start and I also have a 1/8", just in case). If you plan to chop mortises, get appropriately sized mortise chisels. Skewed or fishtail chisels are useful if you need to get inside angled areas, such as a half-blind dovetail socket, but are not strictly necessary.

In the next issue, we will cover saws, curved work and most importantly, sharpening. Stay tuned to these pages.

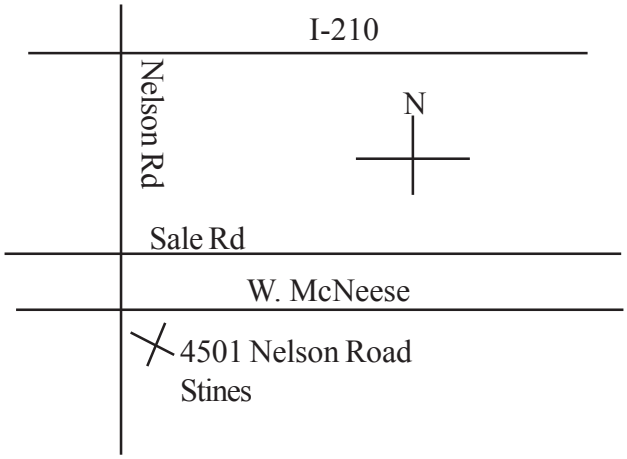
Barry Humphus

May Meeting Location

We have the wonderful opportunity to meet at the Stines Lake Charles kocation at 4501 Nelson Road Please enter the store and go to the back left in the store to the meeting room.

To get there go South on Nelson Road in Lake Charles going from I-10 or I-210 and tuen into the parking lot. Go to the back of the main entrance to the very back to the meeting room to find us.

Please take an opportunity to explore Stines before you leave to find the items for your shop or home that you may need. As always, thank the folks at Stines as you check out.



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