

When Last We Met

by Steve Hansen

Next Meeting:

- Tuesday, June 17th

After chewing the fat with our fellow members, **Phil Laliberte** got the meeting off and running around 7 P.M. Phil welcomed one guest, John, a carving enthusiast, and then handed the meeting over to **Derek Yee** to introduce **Bill Gier**, our guest speaker. Accompanying Bill was his wife, Miranda – I love to see that support! Bill is a hand plane collector and user and displayed a small sample of his hand plane collection – several dozen lovely specimens! Bill took time to explain about the different types of plane construction. They are: wooden, metal and transitional planes. Bill introduced the wooden plane, explaining that its body is made entirely of wood and the plane blade (traditionally referred to as the iron) is held in place with a wooden wedge, a very simple tool. This type has been used for millennia and was popular well into the twentieth century. Most wooden planes you see are made from beech, probably 90% according to Bill. To secure the iron in place, the wedge is driven home with a wooden mallet. To lower the blade, the woodworker raps the toe (front of plane), which forces the iron downward. To loosen the blade, rap the heel (back end). Around the late 1800's, both the metal plane and the transitional plane came into use. The metal plane was a total departure from the wooden plane in several ways. The body is all metal and the blade is held in place with an all metal contraption that allowed (arguably) easier adjustment of the blade. The iron is held in place with a cap, which in turn is activated with a screw or more commonly a small lever. This plane also, generally, came with an adjustment screw to feed and retract the blade – no need for rapping the toe and heel. The transitional plane combined the body of the wooden plane and holding mechanism of the metal plane. Although these planes did not remain in vogue very long, they are an excellent for-use woodworking tool. Bill pointed out some of the performance dif-

ferences amongst these planes. One of the drawbacks with the wooden planes is that they wear rather quickly during use and every now and then the sole needs to be re-trued. This process opens the mouth of the plane ever wider and changes the way the plane performs. In a nutshell, a smaller opening is best for fine and thin shavings and a larger opening is better suited for removal of bigger shavings. On a positive note, he mentioned that wooden planes perform very well and are not difficult to adjust. Steel planes tend to bite the wood easier and glide better because of their heft and smoother sole. Bill explained that various woods need differing blade (iron) pitches to make the best cut. A lower angle (45 degrees) is best for softwoods; 50-55 degrees is best for hardwoods and 60 degrees for snarly, curly woods. Bill's preference for wood finishing is: 1st – smoothing plane; 2nd – cabinet scraper; last - abrasives. For sharpening his irons, Bill places sandpaper on thick plate glass and lubricates with kerosene. He uses grits in the 100-400 range and hones with a felt wheel, running in reverse, and green compound. For a fascinating look into the Stanley line of planes, Bill suggested to check out Patrick's Blood and Gore at <http://www.supertool.com/index.htm>. For our gratitude, Phil Laliberte presented Bill with a pen and pencil set. A big thank you to Derek Yee for coordinating a wonderful guest speaker.

Onto other stuff. We did some last minute coordination for the Richmond Carvers show. The president's challenge was "something for the garden" – **Phil Laliberte** brought in a dibble (or dibbler). It's a probe that pierces a hole into soil to assist bulb planting. For show and tell, the editor-guy demonstrated his dining chair prototype. The kind membership offered their input on ways to improve the prototype. The editor-guy thanks them very much.



Pacific Woodworkers Guild

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Please direct
newsletter
submissions to the
newsletter editor,

The Pacific Woodworkers Guild is a non-profit association of British Columbia Craftspeople dedicated to excellence in woodworking. Guild members meet on the third Tuesday of each month (except July and August) in Richmond, B.C.

The newsletter is published monthly, ten times per year, and distributed free to members and associate members. Membership is available to anyone interested in any form of fine woodworking. Membership fees are \$25 for twelve months; Associate membership fees (newsletter only) are \$15 for ten issues.

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Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Pacific Woodworkers Guild will be held on Tuesday, June 17th starting at 7:15pm. Pre-meeting demo at 6:30.

Guest Speaker—For the June entertainment, we will entertain ourselves! The focus of the evening will be a discussion based on your questions, regarding any aspect of woodworking.

President's Challenge—Something for the kitchen



Hand-Tools Class Proves Labor-intensive Exercise

By Jay Geisel

The following article is reprinted with kind permission from the Northwest Corner Woodworkers Association (NCWA), a group that we exchange newsletters with. This group had a pleasant visit with Bill Gier and his collection of planes during a recent visit to the Vancouver LV store as well as KMS Tools and Granville Island.

Is Tony Konovaloff an anachronism? Is he, Frank Klausz, and other hand-tool devotees barking up the wrong tree?

During Tony's all-day class (May 14th at Gary Holloman's Shop) I found distinct comfort in the fact that Delta, Makita, Jet, Milwaukee, and DeWalt are familiar household names. Tony espouses the use of hand tools only. He is "old school." Way back from when Black met Decker or even before the birth of Thomas Alva Edison. Tony and others of this genre believe the importance of working wood lies in the Journey, not the finished piece. They get their kicks from the manual energy expended in turning rough stock into fine woodworking. When finished to Tony's satisfaction, a piece of furniture is forever his memory of the trip.

Tony is young, strong, and dogmatic. He's had woodworking training at The University of the Redwoods in California, lots of working experience, and a woodworker's mission to excel. He's opinionated, makes his own decisions, and knows what works and what will not. He has used his talents to write articles for *Fine Woodworking* and to author a book of woodcraft ideas. The Oak Harbor resident's home workshop is 12x18 and library-quiet. Only the *swish, swish, swish* of his plane can be heard as he takes hundreds of strokes with sharp planes to reduce a 13/16th board down to half its original thickness. So quiet, in fact, that his three young sons fall asleep on the workbench. He has the pictures!

There is no denying that Tony is a master craftsman. He has a deep love for his tools, many passed down from earlier generations (some before Edison's time) and he keeps them sharp and in good working order. Tony can put a fine edge on any chisel or plane blade and his working tool chest is filled with tools not ordinarily found in other tool boxes: brace and bits, bow saw, draw knife, back

saw, and dozens of assorted chisels and planes. All are hand tools, and not a cord or battery in sight.

Tony and Klausz would have you believe that hand-cut dovetails are attractive, quick and easy to make. Unfortunately, Tony's demonstration proved none of that. He's out of practice, he admitted, as he fashioned little wedges to close up some of the gaps. Tony uses a backsaw, coping saw, and chisels; Klausz uses chisels in place of the coping saw. Both echo the freestyle approach to cutting dovetails and state their belief that it's faster to cut a few dovetails by hand than to dig out and set up a commercial dovetail jig. Klausz has spent an entire lifetime building a reputation for speed in hand-cutting dovetails and has a *Fine Woodworking* video on the subject.

Some of Tony's aphorisms are shocking. He never uses plywood backing on his cabinets. It's ugly. Instead, he takes standard 13/16th inch solid wood and planes it down by hand to 1/4 or 3/8th's of an inch in thickness. He usually uses clamps to hold panels during glue-up, but occasionally for smaller ones he holds them together by hand until the glue binds. Yellow glue sets up sufficiently in a few minutes' time. And he doesn't alternate boards according to grain orientation when gluing up a panel. Select the face that appeals to you and is right for the neighboring boards, he says. Tony uses a metal vise on his workbench, but he has "little use for a tail vise."

He also advises against using sandpaper which only puts scratches on the wood. A sharp plane blade slicing the wood will give a mirror-like finish to the surface, unmatched by sanding or wood scrapers, he adds. Tony demonstrated how to achieve that mirrored finish by using three planes, a scrub, jointer, and smoothing type. The finishes on maple and alder were outstanding. At this point the thought ran through my mind that if we hadn't employed electrical tools today the cost of furniture would be prohibitive.

If Tony is part anachronism then the other part must be realist. To make a living and provide for his wife and children, he works in

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Hand-Tools Class (con't)

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today's world where power tools are the norm and the necessity to be competitive. A ship's carpenter, Tony works on repairing boats in a marina where he must wear a lifejacket while he hauls around electrical cords and installs plywood panels. With a foot in both worlds Tony bides his time until he can return to his own shop and resume his "Journey."

Tony filled our day with tips and pointers on many aspects of wood and tool handling, useful woodworking techniques, and shortcuts to putting a fine edge on our tools. While Tony doesn't subscribe to formal design planning and the 1:1.4 ratio rule, he suggests we know the accepted parameters and standards for furniture dimensioning. "Do you know that the standard chair seat height is only 16 inches?" he asked. "If you are uncertain how a piece of furniture will look make a full-scale model out of cardboard." The class proved to be interesting, a valuable lesson in using hand tools. He is faithful in his beliefs of how to achieve the best work you can.

Here is a sampling of Tony Konovaloff's suggestions, some that de-bunk a lot of what we have been led to believe:

1. Stainless steel tools can be sharpened, but not to as fine of an edge as carbon steel.
2. Always allow for wood movement. Alder and maple can move 1/4 inch a season.
3. If you use fir, be sure it is kiln dried or you'll wind up with sap that never dries.
4. Maple and birch do not plane easily.
5. Watch out for green to dark mineral spots in alder, birch, and maple. They should be removed or by-passed as they can nick a plane blade as easily as a nail.
6. When you order lumber from the yard (he prefers Edensaw in Port Townsend) have it finished on both faces but not on the edges where you might lose some lumber in the board straightening process.
7. Build your workbench with a thick, laminated top out of air-dried, non-green lumber for minimum wood movement. A good width is 27 inches.
8. Chamfering an edge is difficult to do with sandpaper. It never looks right. Use a plane.
9. Block plane bevels face up. Low-angle planes are not needed to shoot grain ends.
10. A bench hook is essential. (Tony's measures about 9 by 12 inches.)
11. Tony's method for setting a plane blade: Hold the plane upright near the chest with the bottom facing out. Cup your other hand over the blade to shade the light and sight along the plane bottom to view "The Black Line." Wear a dark shirt and you will see the dark edge of the blade for easy adjustment.
12. Some good carpenter's rip and crosscut saws are available at flea markets and yard sales. Diston is a good brand. Saws can be re-sharpened for as little as \$10.
13. You must always pay attention to the possibility of wood movement in your project. All wood expands and contracts as the seasons change and you must allow for it. With drawers, allow 1/8th of an inch at the top for clearance and wood movement. Movement occurs across the grain.
14. Shops don't need to be large. "For years my shop was really small; today it's an adequate 12x18 feet."
15. Use wafer board (oriented strand board) for shop floors. Concrete sucks the energy out of your feet and legs.
16. When sharpening mortise chisels don't create a secondary bevel. Hone the leading edge, but not the entire bevel. The tip does all the work.
17. When grinding the edge of a plane blade (except for a jointing plane/blade) give it a slight curvature to reduce the corner points. This will prevent digging, scratching and marking your panels.
18. Use a scratch awl and marking gauge to lay out your lines rather than a marking knife. It's difficult to hide or remove the knife lines from the finished project.
19. When sharpening a scraper you don't have to first square it up to 90% with a file. Just burnish it enough to raise a burr.
20. When grinding a tool edge don't over-heat it until it turns blue. Hold the tool in your bare hands and you will know when it gets too hot. Set it aside to cool while you work another blade.
21. Flatten oil stones and lap plane bottoms with a little water and carborundum powder sprinkled on a half-inch thick piece of plate glass. Glass flexes.

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"If you are uncertain how a piece of furniture will look make a full-scale model out of cardboard."

Hand-Tools Class (con't)

(Continued from page 4)

22. Tony prefers oilstones because they last longer and can be re-flattened. Diamond stones are expensive, won't last, and can't be restored.
23. The drawknife is a safe tool to use. The handles will hit you in the chest before the blade does.
24. Tony uses a nickled cast iron Stanley #90 rabbet plane (4 inches long with a 1-inch blade) for rabbets and to chamfer door panels where a larger plane won't work. Don't use sandpaper to chamfer, he warns.

Tony showed the class a handsome example of a paneled cabinet door and described the procedure he used to make the bridal joints. Students had been asked to bring their own tools and wood for the session, but none were needed. This NCWA class marked the first in a series of day-long instructional

courses planned for Club members during the year by Education Chairman Val Matthews. Those participating included Val, Nick Van, Ed Pysker, Ray McInnis, Jay Geisel, Tom Chartier, Julian Lee, Mike Larvia, John Rutter, Steve Intveld, Herman Erlich, and Dave Sophusson.

Is Tony trying to lure us back to the woods, stripping the cords from our cutting instruments, asking us to spend precious shaving time on our boards? I, for one, am resisting. My planes see little action, maybe because they have no cords. Tony chants a fine tune that the Journey, however challenging and laborious, is sweet and rewarding. Like a pilgrimage.

Editors note: Tom Chartier of the NCWA says: Edensaw has one terrific selection of hardwoods with good prices and delivery to Bellingham (used to be \$20).



New Addition To The Library

by Derek Yee

As mentioned at the last meeting, the library has acquired a CDROM published by Fine Woodworking. My guess is that this is probably one of the most expensive acquisitions in the PWG library. It is a great reference, and essentially contains the best articles that have been published in their magazine over the last 26 years or so. The articles are arranged by category and subcategory. For example under the category joinery, there was a subcategory called dovetails, which contained 17 articles. I am pretty confident, that if you had a question on dovetailing, you would find the answer in one of those articles.

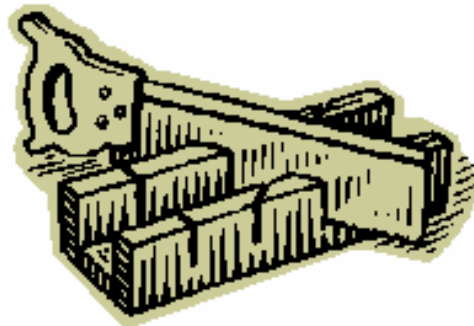
The rental fee is \$5.00 for the CDROM. Unless you print out the article, you will have to read the article at your computer. However, for those of you who need reading glasses to read the newspaper, the good news is that since you are viewing the articles with Acrobat, you can adjust the size of the text. Of course you always have the option to print out the article.

If you like reading Fine Woodworking, I suggest you consider borrowing the CDROM so you can read the articles from those past issues that you have not purchased.

June Entertainment - Forum

For the June entertainment, we will entertain ourselves! The focus of the evening will be a discussion based on your questions, regarding any aspect of woodworking. Please try to bring at least one question, even a little one and we'll talk about it around the stove. We hope that someone in the club will be able to provide an answer or point you in the right direction. As a seed to stimulate you, try these questions/topics and if you have an answer, please bring it along.

- How to chemically remove rust.
- Best shop fire extinguisher (wood/electrical)
- Matching finishes. How to make the new piece or repair look like the old?
- Places to rent a spray booth or ways to install one at my own shop
- Places to purchase lumber in quantities of 200 to 2000 board feet (rough).
- Matching type of glue for type of application. Outdoors, marine, furniture, veneer, non-permanent, etc.
- How to remove glue from clamps and jigs. How to remove squeeze out. How to remove dry glue that mars a finish.
- Methods for edge-gluing: dowels, biscuits, just glue, joinery.
- Where can I attend classes on woodworking?
- Hazards of joining cross grain.
- Materials for making templates. How to accessorize your templates.
- Getting rid of wood scraps.
- Places to scrounge for raw materials.
- Is it worth having a professional to sharpen router bits/planer blades/jointer knives? Who provides this service?
- Air gun staples/pins: are there any with more holding power i.e.-spiral
- Best ways to square up large carcasses and keep them square during assembly.
- Water content in storing wood in garages semi heated versus outside (sheltered) would you use sticks under each row for air currents
- cutting the ends off 16" boards glued up (6' lengths) best methods without using a radial saw
- Best woods for rails and stiles. Would mdf hold up for the long term, also for using screws, painting, putty, etc.
- Best methods for squaring/building cupboard doors in face frames (inside fit)
- Best putty for its ability to stain properly in pine
- Talks on insurance/legal liabilities of home based businesses
- Finishing techniques for pine



Pacific Woodworkers Guild Summer Picnic

All members and their families are invited to the **Pacific Woodworkers Guild Summer Picnic**, which will be held on Sunday, August 17th. In the event of inclement weather, the picnic will be postponed to the following Sunday, August 24th.



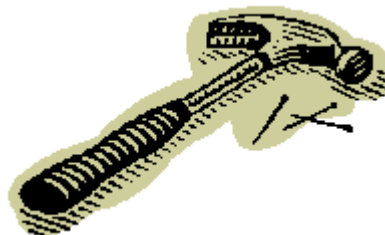
Activities planned are:

- **Belt Sander Racing** - For those who missed the fun last summer, Robert Prinse has kindly offered to bring out his 70-foot belt sander racetrack again this year. If you've never seen a belt sander race, you are in for a treat. All members are encouraged to bring along their belt sanders and participate in the fun. More details about belt sander racing will be coming in the July newsletter.
- **Tool Swap Meet** - This is your opportunity to clean out your shop and get rid of all your old tools, machinery, hardware, wood, etc by selling or trading them to other members.
- **Nail Pounding Contest** - Not necessarily a mere test of strength! More details at the June meeting and in the July newsletter.
- **BBQ** - Of course, what kind of picnic would it be without food? Bring along something to

toss on the grill!

There will be a special *July Picnic Edition Newsletter* sent out with more details about the picnic, activities, driving directions, contact numbers, what to bring, etc.

This year's picnic will be once again held in Steve Fairbairn's spacious backyard in rural East Richmond. The address and directions will be available at the June meeting and in the July newsletter. You can also contact Steve at sgfmail@shaw.ca if you have any questions.

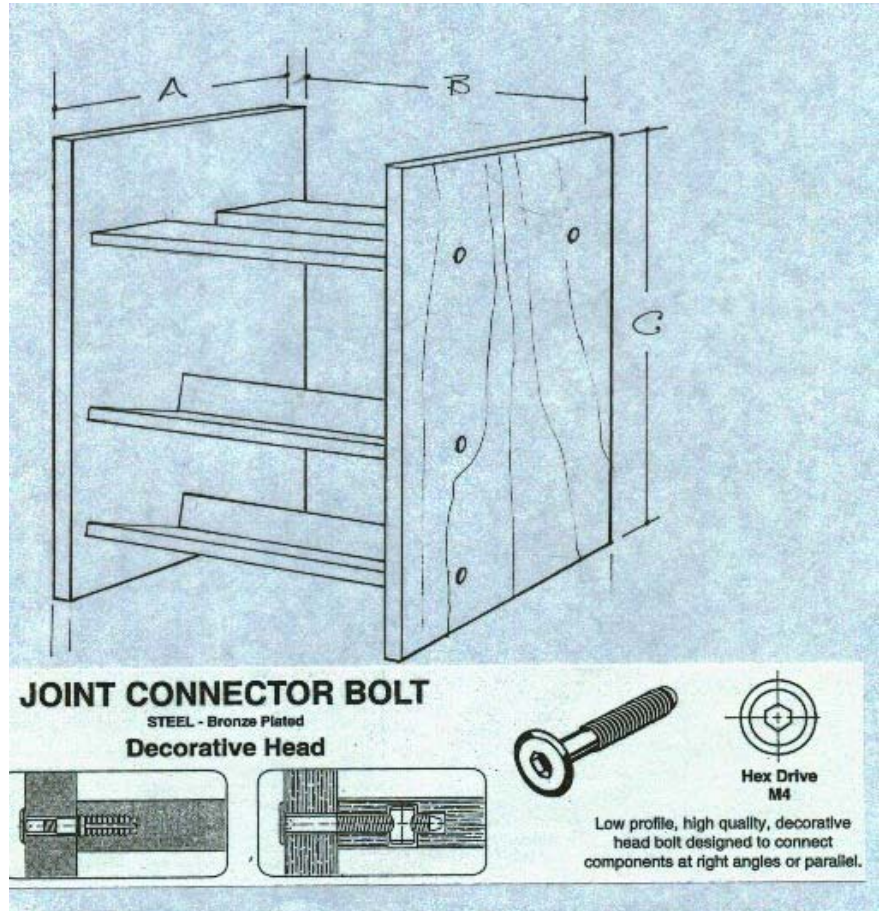


Designer's Corner—KD for CDs

By George Radke

Our son received a turntable-CD player for Christmas and realized he had nowhere to put it; his CDs; or the mile of wires that went with it. With a leftover $\frac{3}{4}$ oak ply sheet, I came up with this simple KD stand. It hides the amplifier and CD player on top, as well as storing most of his CDs.

I had found some decorative head KD bolts at our local hardware store, and thought I would give them a try. The four bolts on each side worked like a charm. I also pinned the shelves with wood dowels so they wouldn't turn. The sides were cut two inches longer (A) than the depth of the player to accommodate the wires and jacks in the back. The two supports (4" wide) and shelves - angled down and with a back stop - also cut two inches longer (B) than the width of the player. The overall height was such that I could only put in two shelves (C). Unfortunately, he now could use twice the space. Always the way! (KD = knock-down furniture, CD = compact disc)



Calendar Of Events

- **June 17, 2003**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild June meeting.
- **August 17, 2003**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild Picnic
- **September 16, 2003**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild September meeting.
- **October 21, 2003**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild October meeting.
- **October 24 to 26, 2003**—Cloverdale Wood & Woodworking Show.
- **November 18, 2003**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild November meeting.
- **December 2003**—Christmas Toy Workshop
- **December 16, 2003**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild December meeting.
- **January 20, 2004**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild January meeting.
- **February 17, 2004**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild February meeting.
- **March 16, 2004**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild March meeting.
- **April 20, 2004**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild April meeting.
- **May 2004**—Richmond Carver's Show
- **May 18, 2004**—Pacific Woodworkers Guild May meeting.