From earliest times, surface decoration through the ages has occupied mankind. Cave painting, carving, tile, fabrics, etc.; all have been employed to enhance surfaces around us. We even decorate the surface of our bodies with paints, pigments, and piercings. Likewise tools invented and developed with specialized uses for various materials have paralleled these pursuits.

Wood has played a prominent role in surface decoration with evidence from early Egyptian tombs showing the application of varying patterns, colors, and textures of this readily available source. Egyptian wood workers are shown here utilizing adz, splitting saws, smoothing stones, & heated glue pots along with stones for flattening and processing veneers.

This veneer enabled a better yield of material that even today continues to allow greater surface coverage and decoration utilizing wood from around the globe.

These woodworking tools discovered from an Egyptian tomb demonstrate early development. Dating places these tools around 1450 BC During the Dark ages, creativity becomes more dormant. Raids, conquests, tribal conflicts, and territorial wars dominate history. Woodworking becomes relatively primitive and more strictly functional. The Italian Renaissance—15 th/16 th C --signals the beginning of European Modernity with the rise of Da Vinci, Michel Angelo, and the Medici family opening new creative and artistic opportunities. Coupled with increased global exploration, the introduction of exotic fabrics, art, and woods from the East Indies, Africa, and the Far East provided new creative impetus for the courts and churches.

Advances in metallurgy led to tool advances that allowed more precision in the manufacturing of veneer along with new techniques for cutting processes.
President’s Message

First and foremost; a hearty "Thank You" from everyone in the RMTC to Steve Gosselin for his four years as President. We are also grateful that his tool knowledge, enthusiasm and energy will continue for the club through his work with Steve Scruggs and the auction team. The first 2 meetings for 2019 in Colorado have been well attended and the tool and craft programs are always fun and educational. Every member has something of their own collecting experience to add to the understanding of early tools, trades and crafts that is the main purpose for our club's meetings. If you can contribute a demonstration or talk, sign up with Dennis Scheel, our Club Secretary. If you prefer to write an article instead, get in touch with our Newsletter Editor Don Burd. Chris Gomez, Club Treasurer, would appreciate getting all the member’s dues for this year settled. Please remember that without your club payment your membership will lapse. With our growing numbers of members and guests, the local Colorado meeting hosts will be providing donuts and drinks only, to keep the job from being such a major project each time, and from going over our limited budget. Our tool raffle ticket sale is being discontinued, we will place all of our donated items into the club auction itself. We always appreciate your donations of good tools to help pay for the meeting costs and they add to the fun of Steve Scruggs' famous auctions. The next RMTC Colorado meeting is on June 9th at the historical Rock Creek Farm in Broomfield, hosted by Don Burd, with Steve Gosselin, Tom Wiersema, and the esteemed Dr. Charles Aumiller.

The July 14th CO meeting will be at Al Nelson’s farm - near Longmont - always a great meeting in that setting. Make your plans for the Annual meeting in Albuquerque on Labor Day weekend. Vice President Ken Burris and Director Jason Fink and crew are already preparing for the New Mexico classic. The one great regret that I hope you never have as an RMTC member is not attending an annual meeting there.

Springtime in the Rockies, go find some tools.

Leo Stambaugh

Editor’s Ramblings

Went to my first yard sale, of the spring, in ‘yuppieville’ (Boulder) and what do you think I found? Not one but two Stanley #1’s! $5 apiece so I thought I would buy them both... (one has a 'sweetheart' logo & the other a 'vee' logo). SO, at the next club meeting I will be selling both of them and will be trying to double my money - $10 apiece. If you believe that then I say: "Happy April Fools" to you! I mean, who would give $10 for a Stanley #1 anyway...2019 is off to a good start - we've already had 2 good meeting up here in Colorado as well as in New Mexico. I hear good things about the planning for the Annual Meet already (remember it’s in fabulous Albuquerque this September) and it seems that we get several new members every meeting. I'm also pleased to see more displays during meetings - let's show off our tools (they aren't doing anyone any good packed away in boxes...) I will be headed back east/New England, for the whole month of May, and plan to hit several of the big Flea markets back there looking for (you guessed it!) tools- sorry, but I'm not telling you where & when the flea markets are but will be more than happy to sell you most of the tools I find. Two other good things to report: Fred Freimuth is coordinating a two day sale of Gene Palen's tool collection. The sale will be on April 26th & 27th in Cheyenne. Please see the announcement elsewhere in this newsletter for more info & Fred's phone #. Also, you should have gotten an email from Fred Mares with all the info as well. My talented daughter (and co-editor) has come up with an idea to supply links to interesting websites and videos of our meeting talks/demos in future newsletters. Hopefully we'll have something in the July issue. And, speaking of the newsletter - if you have not paid your dues yet this year this will be the last issue you will receive until they are up to date.

Don
Sawyers were an independent profession. Exotic logs such as mahogany, ebony, and rosewood, were clamped and cut freehand into leaves of veneer as thin as 1/10” starting from the outside in to allow for the veneer to be peeled away. No guide lines were marked. The two-man saws were designed to cut on the pull stroke as can be seen from the tooth detail and the apprentice lifted the saw for the return stroke. 4” wide blades were hollow ground and made from clock spring material. There was no set on the blade to minimize kerf and maximize yield.

J.A. Roubo 1772

The artistic concept of “painting with wood”, or marquetry, gave rise to the development of tools specifically designed to cut curved & irregular shapes. Early trammels and the shoulder knife allowed 15th C. marquetry artists freedom of expression and exploration of surface decoration with veneer utilizing the natural properties of wood coloring and figure.

J.A. Roubo 1772
This wood self portrait of Antonio Barili, a prominent, 16th C. Italian Renaissance marquetry artist, shows the use of the shoulder knife that allowed leveraged firm, detailed, cutting control of veneer. The inscription that is cut into the picture is Latin and translates, “This work, I, Antonio Barili, made with the knife, not the brush, in the year of our Lord 1502”. In Plate #6, we see a work where Barili has depicted the tools of the marquetry trade in a 34” x 22” 2-D work. On the upper shelf, he shows a bow saw, block plane, and layout squares. On the lower shelf are more layout tools, glue pot, and another plane. These remind us of the Egyptian tools from the tomb depicted in Plate 2 apart from the shoulder knife protruding through the door on the lower right. Plate 5 & 6 also show the Italian use of the perspective motif utilizing the partially open window/door to establish depth & perspective. This is further enhanced by attention to the values and hues of the woods used to represent the lighting.

Continued page 10

This issue’s whatsit comes from member Tom Wiersma of Wyoming. He is seeking information on a handsaw labeled "ECONOMY". The saw is 22" long and is 8tpi. Around the name is cast steel, made in USA, warranted. What is eye catching is the fact there are no nuts, just brass wood screws to hold the blade to the handle (see photos). If you have any info on this saw, we would appreciate hearing from you.
New Mexico Area Meetings

December 8th 2018 at Tony & Ruth Moon’s

Mining Display

The December RMTC meeting was held at Tony Moon’s Albuquerque abode. Eight tool club members attended, and this was last meeting before we begin a new year. Most club members know Tony primarily collects Miners tools, and his collection is always an inspiring sight! No pictures do it justice, and we are thankful that Tony and Ruth open up their house for us during a very busy time of year.

Scott A and Tony M surrounded by Candlesticks
The hallway tables had a decent selection of hand tools for sale, and people cluster around examining the items. Eventually, folks disperse, and move on to the other tool displays or become engrossed in conversation. We talked of current tool prices, war era metal drives and also had a tale about the ivory rule in a $1 sewing basket! In the meantime, I pressured everyone to pay 2019 dues, and managed to collect from most.

We had a few ‘whatzit’ items and Tony showed us a patented “Powdernans Pal”, a fuse splitter and cutter crimper as well as a Schrade patented Fuse knife.

Thanks to the Moons for another great year-end meeting. The home cooking was delicious, and the company can’t be beat. See everyone next year!
After the long Holiday season club members came out in force to the first meeting of 2019. The meeting was held in one of our favorite places - the wood working shop of Red Rocks Community College. Folks came with lots of stories to tell, new tools to show and sell but most importantly the need to add something new to their collections!

This also was the debut of our new president Leo Stambaugh (for those who don't remember Leo is a past president of 30 some years ago). Several of the topics he brought up were downsizing the snacks/lunches, the formation of a social media/advertising committee and eliminating the raffle.

Much discussion followed with decisions to be made by the next meeting in March. Brian Kent gave a very interesting talk on dating early Stanley bench planes. Brian's knowledge on the subject is quite vast and he fielded many questions, especially from several newer members (I think he may have burst a few bubbles...). One thing I took away was to not be fooled by 'marriages' of planes or by replacement parts when it comes to dating your plane. After all, the original user/owner was not overly concerned with 'purity', as a collector is, but use - so if he had to make a repair or buy a replacement part he would.

As usual the auction was fun with lots of great tools from members and estates to bid on and many deals to be had. Auctioneer Steve Scruggs and crews' commentaries are worth the price of admission!
March 2019

This month’s meeting was held in the Grace Community Church in Loveland. I'm not sure how others feel but this place is certainly becoming one of my favorite places to hold meeting - very roomy, easy access, plenty of parking and midway between Denver & Wyoming. The meeting was well attended, lots of tools for sale but it was really great to see an increase in displays - get those tools out, dust them off and show them, even if it's just one tool!

Prior to the members meeting there was a Board meeting in which several decisions were reached (please see the Presidents column) which outlines the way future member meetings will be held. One other point of discussion was the need to form a nominating committee & seek out nominations for officers in a more timely manner. Yours truly volunteered to head up this effort so if you are interested in being on the 'nominating' committee or wish to be considered for an office please contact me (Don Burd) or I may just have to call you!

I gave a talk on the 'Mysteries of the Union Manufacturing Company'. This company is often confused with the 'Union Tool Co', the 'Union Hardware Co.' and or the 'Washburn Tool Co'. Stanley also continued to produce Union Planes after they bought the Union Plane line from the Union Mfg Co in 1920. Union Mfg continued to make pumps, hinges and chucks until the 1950's. Don had many examples of their planes on display.

Once again we had a really great auction thanks to the efforts of several club members and the prodding of Steve Scruggs to bid ever more. Besides member’s tools for sale there were also parts of 3 estates auctioned off - exciting times indeed!

More pictures on next page!
Established Italian craftsmen were brought to France in the 17th C. for woodworking, furniture making, and stone work. The French court embraced the idea of veneering and marquetry surface decoration. Louis X IV’s influence on furniture and decorative styles led to furthering tool development for the craftsmen he employed due to the high demands placed upon them by the court.

The “mule” or “donkey” was a vise developed in the late 17th C to hold veneer vertically for cutting. By straddling the bench and operating the foot control, veneer could be easily manipulated for cutting irregular shapes.

J.A Roubo 1772
Fret saws, similar to present day coping saws but with deeper throats, were developed with fine, interchangeable blades. These saws coupled with the “donkey” greatly improved efficiency and accuracy. All of this reflects the detailed thought on the design and construction of tools. We see more moving parts and complex engineering. Increased complexity led to better durability, with standardized and replaceable parts.

J.A. Roubo 1772

Furniture maker with apprentice showing use of the “donkey” along with various tools including planes, chisels, mallets, glue pot, and fret saw. Notice the apprentice utilizing the foot pedal to activate the clamping mechanism.

As is the case with all tool development, limitations will lead to new advances and design. The fret saw is limited by the depth of the throat which allows a defined reach and therefore limits the size of a finished surface decoration. This requires a larger work (like a table top) to be broken down into smaller components for assembly. Also designs often involve repeated use the donkey and the fret saw into a single of the same element for differing areas of a furniture piece. To accommodate these manufacturing issues, the “chevalet de marqueterie” was developed in 18th C. France. The exact lineage is not known, but the idea of incorporating tool with the blade operating in a horizontal plane and the veneer being held vertical is easily traced. With the blade being supported by a large wishbone frame that moved horizontally as a unit, it allowed larger pieces to be cut and manipulated. This design also allowed finer adjustments to keep the blade precisely aligned in horizontal and vertical axes. In this way, multiple identical pieces could be cut from an assembled packet or stack of veneers held in the vise of the donkey. This packet would include veneers, but also could have shell, ivory, horn, and thin metals used for the design. This packet could be manipulated by the operator with one hand while the other hand operated the wishbone blade holder in a horizontal motion. The feet were used to open and close the vise similar to the early donkey pictured earlier. This lent to the design practice of interchanging design elements with differing backgrounds thereby creating duplicate but reversed contrasting elements of the same design. It was also an example of early mass production of design elements.

An important marquetry artist/cabinet maker to Louis XI was Andre Charles Boulle 1642-1732. He did not invent the reverse decoration process but perfected it with various materials.
The Industrial Revolution of the 19th C. brings generated power to the woodworking manufacturing sector. More powerful, more efficient, and more accurate machinery created environments for mass production along with new processes in factory settings. The veneering & surface decoration industry followed suit, but the fine details of marquetry continued to be manually performed. This fine furniture approach increased costs due to the need of skilled craftsmen.

Chevalet de Marqueterie

The machinery to handle these details remained hand & foot operated as can be seen with the overhead saw. The development of a spring mechanism to return the vertical blade certainly improves efficiency, but it is still foot powered. This allowed the creation of larger surface area decorations.

Further advancements by the French in the 20th C. are precursors to modern scroll saws. Modern 21st C. digital developments have produced computer driven CNC lasers that cut veneer. The repetition and accuracy are some of the most precise available. Is it fine craftsmanship? Is it impersonal interpretation and duplication of design? Is it art? The debate continues...

The early 20th C. sees the addition of power that led to saws being incorporated into the architecture of the surrounding building. Here, the size of the surface decoration is only limited by the physical space surrounding the equipment.
ANNOUNCEMENT

The Gene Palen Tool Collection Sale

April 26\textsuperscript{th} & 27\textsuperscript{th}, at East 22\textsuperscript{nd} Street in Cheyenne, WY.

\textbf{8:00AM To 3:00PM NO EARLY BIRDS}

(If bad weather, the dates will shift to May 3\textsuperscript{rd} & 4\textsuperscript{th})

CASH ONLY! No checks or credit cards accepted.

\textbf{For RMTC Members Only}

RMTC members are invited to an early sale, \textbf{Members only}, by making an appointment, \textbf{AFTER APRIL 1\textsuperscript{st}}, to come by any week day, between 10AM and 3PM, with at least \textbf{24HR. notice}. Arrangements can be made by contacting Fred Freimuth @307-287-3081. If there is no answer please leave a message. Please call when you hit Cheyenne, suggested exit off I-25 is \textbf{exit #11} to Pershing Blvd.

\textbf{Please your own containers.}
SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

As some of you may know, my father, Wes Stratman, was diagnosed about this time last year with colon cancer. He had a large tumor and a portion of his colon removed. Additional testing showed the cancer was stage 4. After spending more time in the hospital than anyone wanted, he was able to be discharged and go home. After getting a little stronger, his doctor started some cancer treatments which have now resulted in the cancer being in remission! There have been some side effects, but overall dad is doing okay. He was recently talking about the meeting at McGuireville that I attended with him last year.

Dad has heard the Rocky Mountain Tool Collectors are having a large auction and he is interested in participating. If you would like to call or write here is his contact information:

Wes Stratman
1506 29th Lane, Pueblo CO 81006, 719-250-5646.

- Steve Stratman

WANTED
Union X5AG
Jack Plane w/ Grooved Bottom
Condition: Good or Better
Email: Don Burd
historicdonburd@hotmail.com

2019 RMTC Officers

President – Leo Stambaugh
303-567-2171

Vice President - Dennis McCaigue
303-690-7447

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