JULY MEETING by LEE RICHMOND

The July meeting will feature what promises to be a delightful presentation of the work of a little known cabinetmaker from the West Virginia mountains. The presenter, Betty Davison, is pursuing a masters degree in the History of American Decorative Arts at the Smithsonian Institution. She will be focusing on 18th and early 19th Century furniture with a special interest in Southern furniture. Ms. Davison attended the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA) Summer Institute last summer. She has been researching John Shearer, a cabinetmaker who worked in and around Martinsburg, West Virginia in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. While several signed and dated examples of Shearer's work exist, little is known about the man, himself. Examples of Shearer's work are in the collections of Colonial Williamsburg and MESDA, as well as in several private collections. Ms. Davison will discuss the distinct characteristics of Shearer's furniture and what it tells us about this little known but highly creative cabinetmaker.

The meeting will begin with the usual tool sale starting at 10:00am. Please don't commence selling/trading tools before 10:30am (new time) because of McLean's Sunday ordinances. The mini-auction will commence at 11:30, and the formal part of the meeting will follow, post haste! (For those among you who don't peruse the mailing page, the meeting will be on 10 JULY 2005 - Ed.)

DIRECTIONS/ MAP TO THE MEETING HALL

A. THE BELTWAY FROM MARYLAND. Take Exit 44 (VA 183; Georgetown Pike). Cross over I-495 to the first light (Balls Hill Road). Turn right, go 1.4 miles to the American Legion Post 270, 1385 Balls Hill Road, on your left. There is space for about 30 cars plus a couple of handicap spaces.

B. FROM INSIDE THE BELTWAY, GOING NORTH ON THE GW PARKWAY. Take the McLean Exit (Chain Bridge Road-/Dolley Madison Blvd, VA. 123). Proceed on the Del- ley Madison Blvd about 4 miles to Old Dominion. Right about 1/4 mile to Balls Hill Road. Turn left and go about 1/4 to 1385 Balls Hill Road which will be on the left.

C. THE BELTWAY FROM SPRINGFIELD, VA. Take Exit 46 (VA 123, Dolley Madison Blvd). Go about 1.5 miles to Lewistanville Road. Left to next light (about one block), right on Balls Hill Road to 1385 Balls Hill Road which will be on the right.

MAY MEETING by LEE RICHMOND
Roy Schaffer and Sam Pickens contributed to this report.

The program presented at the May meeting by William Robertson was an unqualified success. And for those of you who were unable to attend, you really missed something worth hearing about and seeing in three dimensions - namely the two spinning wheels he has crafted, one to 1/6 scale and one to 1/12 scale, from a full size spinning wheel which he had obtained in France.

Bob Rothen gave a stirring introduction to Bill's presentation featuring Bill's background, expertise, and past affiliation with PATINA. Bill, a long time PATINA member and world renouned craftsman and scholar, gave one of the best attended (about 34 souls) PATINA lectures in some time. Bill divided his talk into three distinct segments, each of which would have made an impressive presentation on its own. Supported by First
The right part of Bill's talk focused on his research into the workshop of an 18th Century French nobleman, Bonnaire de la Moscon, who had amassed one of the greatest tool collections of his time. As a young man, Mosson inherited a fortune from his father and created a town house in Paris with a suite of rooms to house his workshop and collection. The collection was at the time well documented, and Bill has managed to unearth a good deal of this original documentation, including the original 1745 auction catalog for the dispersal of this collection after the owner met an untimely demise in an equestrian accident. Bill has done the first translation from French into English. Subsequently, the bulk of the collection was obtained by the King of Sweden. It is still extant, but not open to the public. This research alone on the collection could easily become the basis of a book. In fact, so valuable is this information to the advancement of our knowledge of tools of this period that we must hope that ultimately Bill does publish his research findings.

The second part of Bill's work took us through the steps for which he is best known, creating a working miniature version of a full sized device of some kind. In this case, it was an 18th Century French lady's spining wheel. Not to be confused with a utilitarian spining wheel, French lady's of leisure often owned fancy spinning wheels that they operated as a hobby. An original version of such a spinning wheel is a valuable antique. Bill obtained such a wheel from a dealer flea market on the Left Bank in Paris, and it is still resident in his own collection. Using this spinning wheel as a model, he created miniatures in the two scales given above (the 1/12 scale model would almost fit into a thimble, and the 1/6 scale model was not exactly huge). In his lecture, Bill took us through every step along the way in creating these modern masterpieces of craftsmanship. This included how he measured the original parts from which to make the miniature parts, and a description of special tools and techniques he had to perfect in the process of miniaturization of the wheels such as making his own taps and screws as small as 0.3 mm. He had to work for 3 months at 12 to 22 hours/day to produce 12 of the 1/12 scale and 5 of the 1/6 scale miniatures. Unfortunately, Bill did not have any photographs of these miniatures! To say in was amusing is to underestimate the reaction of the audience.

The third part of this lecture shared with us how Bill was able to create for the US Park Service, a full size replica of the original drill press, that has now been loaned by the Wright Brothers in their shop. This is not the kind of commission that Bill normally accepts, but the historical importance of this assignment lead him to tackle the challenge. Andy challenging it proved to be as in some respects it was more difficult to do than the miniatures. For example, there was only one photograph of the press extant at the time, and that photograph only showed about 40% of the press. Furthermore, it may not have been a commercially available press, but, instead, shop made. And only one chuck could be found for the original press. Another problem was that only a small part (floor?) of the original building existed, and Bill had to figure out just where in the room the press originally stood when photographed. Bill shared with the PATINA members the many hurdles he had to overcome before bringing this important work to fruition. This involved making patterns in wood using a small shrink rule and having the iron parts cast in an iron foundry, then cleaned, machined, and assembled into the drill press. The finished press weighed 1500 pounds and stood 7 feet tall, a tad larger than the miniature spinning wheel described above. We can all be grateful to Bill for helping to preserve a very important piece of American technological history.

Addendum

After the program Bob Rothen and I (Sam) had time to have a sandwich with Bill before he caught his plane. We remembered the day Bill discovered PATINA; it was at our second auction, and I remember Bill bidding on a Rivette lathe and subsequently standing in line to check out. He got the lathe and then joined PATINA. That was about 30 years ago, and Bob and I were somewhat surprised at the accumulation of years. Bill was one of our members who quietly did what needed to be done. The fact that he moved to Kansas City, MO has kept us from seeing him on so much, but he is still doing good work in his tool world.

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THE CASE OF THE INVERTED PLOW

Several curious (and vocal) PATINA readers were quick to jump on your poor editor-with talons extended to the affair of the inverted plow plane on the PATINACRAM cover of the May issue. The issue in question was taken to the printer's, the orientation of the plow plane was correct (up was up and down was down). However, the picture your editor used was a grey-scale scan of the color original. To see if a better image could be obtained by the printer, the re-production of the plane, the editor took along the original. The printer used the supplied picture, and when he overlaid it on the submitted version, he got the plow upside down in the original book, and a picture full of lines. Your editor noticed the error immediately upon picking up the job, however he decided to let it go as an instant reflection on how to hone the heel to pour water out of the boot. Instead, they would know, intuitively, to invert the page to view the plow in its proper orientation.

2 Patinacram
**The remaining Live Free or Die Martin Donnelly tool auctions for 2005 will be held on Saturday, August 13, 5233 County Route 8, Avox, NY [Paul Witton/ Bill Baxter: auctioneers]. Friday, 8 September, Holiday Inn Evert Turnpike, Nashua, NH [Catalog auction Saturday 10 September] [Paul Willmot, auctioneer both days]; Friday 7 October, Sheraton Four Points Hotel, Indianapolis, IN [Catalog auction Saturday 8 October] [Bill Baxter, auctioneer both days]. For additional information call Martin J. Donnelly (960-888-0866). Plan to attend at least one of these affairs.**

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**Someone left a thermos coffee mug at the last meeting (How is your supply holding up, Tim?) 1 (Sam) will try to rectify this and bring it to the July meeting. If it isn’t claimed, it will go into one of the boxes that I am filling to go to the auction.**

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**What is it? An appropriate question, frequently uttered by people standing next to an exhibit table cluttered with unfamiliar implements at the Duvall Tool Museum in Crooks, Md. The tool in question...**
looks like a cartoon version of a two-handed corkscrew that refused to work. Two legs bow out and spiral inward, standing wide enough to completely miss the imaginary cork and bottle neck. "Actually, it's a sugar devil," museum staff member Jean Tierney informs the visitors looking blankly at the object. "It war," Tierney explains, "used in country stores to loosen brown sugar stored and solidified in bulk containers."

Henry Duvall was a tobacco farmer by birth and a University of Maryland electrical engineer by trade. Growing up near Crooks, Duvall observed agricultural life, farm practices, and the tools of the trade made obsolete by new technologies, and he began collecting tools at an early age. Over a 50-year period, Duvall's collection of hand tools and farm implements grew to include more than a thousand 19th Century pieces.

Now housed in a barn-like structure on the grounds of Patuxent River Park, Duvall's tools are grouped according to their original use. Felling axes, crosscut saws, adzes, augers, and chisels used to raise barns in Southern Maryland cover one wall. Nearby, the "Horse and Buggy Dentist" exhibit features a country dentist's tools, including a folding chair with a tilting back panel, and a portable drill stand with a drill at the end of an articulated arm and a foot-treadle for power.

Whether you're captivated by the story of life on the farm in the "Woman's Work is Never Done" exhibit, or fascinated by the curious objects on the "What Is It?" table, you never have to look far for interesting gizmos. For example, there's a snowball maker, looking a bit like an icem cream scoop, with a thumb-operated lid and a sharp slot at the bottom. Drag it across as block of ice and shaving collect in the scoop, a summer treat ready for freezing.

On an iron base, two pilings with wire mesh stretched between might seem to be some kind of strainer, but the object is actually a miniature model of a new type of fencing. In the days before catalogs and newspaper advertising, salesmen carried samples — miniatures of woodstoves, furniture, fencing, and other items — from farm to farm. Unhindered by the hardware-laden wagons common in the early 1800s, salesmen could move more quickly through a region and knock on more doors, thereby increasing their efficiency. There's one tool whose purpose is really obscure. A wooden base with a metal top surface of pencil-thin slots holds a semicircularvales of itself, the upper end of a metal rung with a wooden handle. It's a pleater, a heating iron designed to make pleats and ruffles on collars and sleeves, a fashion must during the latter portion of the 19th Century.

Your editor has visited this museum on several occasions, and he can highly recommend it to PATINA members. Description of the other offbeat museums will appear in future PATINACAMS.

Taken from Wooden Planes in 19th Century by Kenneth D. Roberts

Fig. 161. Complex Moulding Planes of American Manufacture, 1800 - 1825.
Milestones in the growth of Stanley Tools

1853 — Thomas S. Hall and Francis Knoop organize firm and set up operation of try squares, gnomes, and levels in two-story building on west side of Elm Street north of what is now Church Street.

1854 — August and Timothy Stanley establish partnership with Thomas Conklin, formerly a rule manufacturer in Bristol, and begin production of rules under the firm name of A. Stanley and Company.


1869 — The Stanley Rule and Level Company purchases Bailey, Cheney and Co., Boston, manufacturer of the Bailey Plane, and moves it to New Britain.

1885 — The Stanley Rule and Level Company introduces varieties of planes of notable success.

1892 — Metal gauge and scrips are added to product line and introduced.

1900 — The Stanley Rule and Level Company becomes one of the largest manufacturers of artisans’ woodworking tools in the world.

1902 — Company expands hand tools line through purchase of three small firms which manufacture bit braces.

1903 — "Zig Zag" wood rules introduced.

1904 — Screwdrivers added to the product line through acquisition of Hurley and Wood Factory in Plantsville, Connecticut.

1906 — Miter boxes added to product line.

1907 — Company enters profitting Canadian market for hand tools by purchasing Boston Tool and Mill Company, Boston, Quebec.

1908 — Product line expanded by introduction of neck sets, axes and ice picks.

1912 — New Britain firm of Humason and Beckley, manufacturers of hammers, purchased by the Company.

1913 — To bolster hammer business, Company purchases Alfa Tool Company, Newark, New Jersey. Alfa presently a branch plant of Stanley Tools.

1914 — Wood chisels, cold chisels and puncher introduced.

1916 — Eagle Square Manufacturing Company, shafts and Vermont, purchased to supplement hand tools production particularly in regard to carpenters’ squares and rigging sticks. This Company is presently a branch plant of Stanley Tools.

1918 — Combination squares added to product line.

1920 — Assets of The Stanley Rule and Level Company purchased by The Stanley Works.

1924 — "Stanley — "Tools for the Handyman" introduced. Aluminum levels also added to product line.

1926 — Electric drills developed and introduced by Stanley Rule and Level.

1929 — About this date Stanley purchased the Union Mfr. Co. of New Britain. Union planes are offered in the dealer's catalogs until the inventory is depleted.


1949 — Plastic-handle screwdrivers, utility knives and blades put on the market.

1955 — Stanley Rule and Level Division renamed Stanley Tools Division.

1958 — Phillips screwdriver line introduced.

1943 — Stanley offers a line of "Two-Tone" planes in observance of National Hardware Week. They include No. 0, 0H, OH, & OHD.

1946 — Stanley purchases North Brothers Manufacturing Company, Philadelphia, manufacturers of "Yankee" tools and other products.

1956 — "Steelmaster" hammer and "Surform" tools added to Division’s product line.

1957 — Stanley garden tools line introduced.


1966 — Fiberglass Hammer introduced.

1971 — New Eagle Square Manufacturing plant completed and in operation.

1872 Stanley R&L Co. Invoice

[Image of invoice with various dates and signatures]

5 Pastgram

[Address: New Britain, CONN.]