

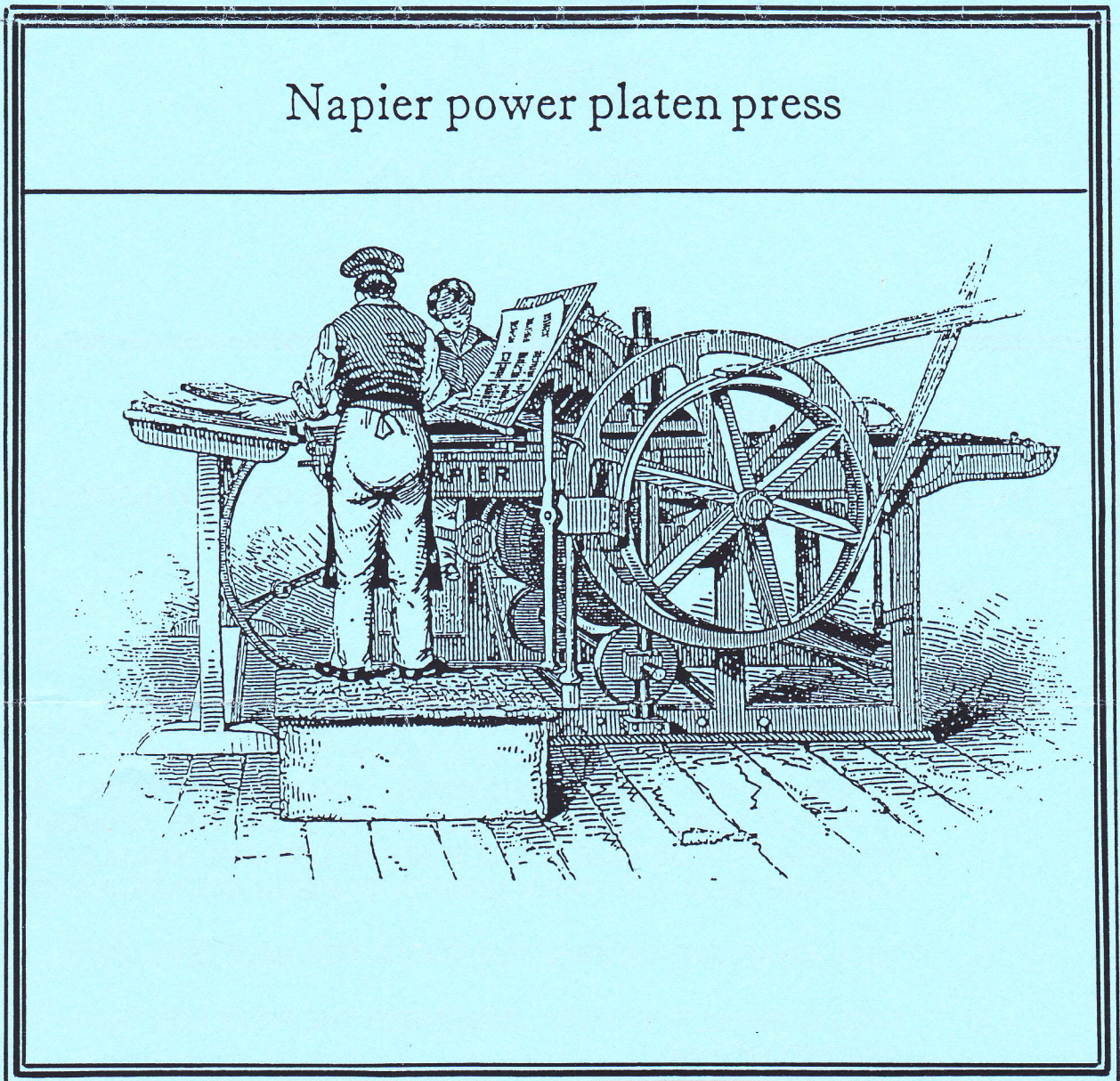


THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS GROUP INC.

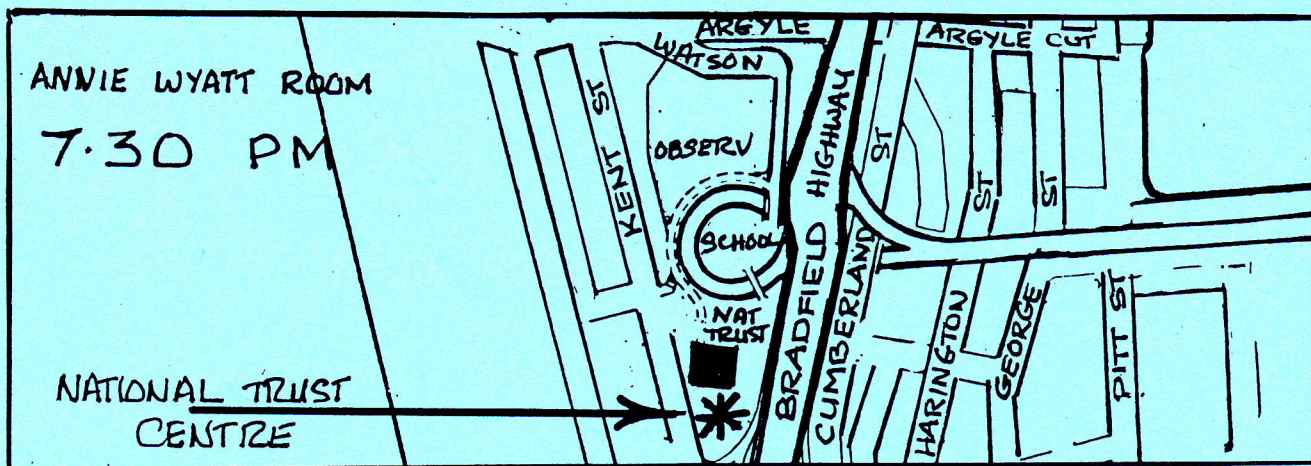


TTTG NEWSLETTER NO. 24
AUGUST 1995

Napier power platen press



'The History of Tools is the History of Man'



POSTAL ADDRESS

The Secretary
T.T.T.G. Inc.
P.O. Box 240
GROSVENOR PLACE
SYDNEY NSW 2000

NEXT MEETING- TUESDAY 8th AUGUST

AT THE ANNIE WYATT ROOM, NATIONAL TRUST CENTRE, OBSERVATORY HILL
COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM SHARP.

PROGRAMME.

1. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.
2. **AVAILABILITY OF TRADITIONAL TOOLS.** HENRY BLACK WILL HOST THIS SESSION WHICH LOOKS AT SOME OF THE TRADITIONAL HAND TOOLS WHICH ARE BECOMING AVAILABLE AGAIN AS REPRODUCTIONS OR AS IMPROVEMENTS ON THE ORIGINAL. MEMBERS WILL BE ABLE TO LOOK AT THE ORIGINAL MODELS AND COMPARE THEM WITH THEIR MODERN COPIES & COUNTERPARTS.
3. TOOL SWAP. ANY INTERESTING TOOLS FOR SALE OR SWAP?
4. FRED MURRELL'S "WOTSIT". REMEMBER THE PRIZE FOR THE BEST "WOTSIT" OF 1995.
5. SID BAILEY'S LIBRARY TABLE.
6. SUPPER BY MARIO DATO.

TTTG Inc.

THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS GROUP

TTTG NEWSLETTER NO.24
AUGUST 1995

CONTENTS

REGULAR FEATURES:

Editor's Notes

Bob Crosbie

Favourite Tools

Previous Meeting

ARTICLES:

French Polishing Part 2

Fred Murrell

Wooden Screw Threads

SPECIAL NOTICE:

Annual General Election

Cover: *Napier power platen press
from A History of Wonderful Inventions 1849*

© Copyright. 1995

Any opinions expressed are those of the contributor.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Election time again. Thanks to everyone for helping to produce this newsletter. Especially to Ian Goldsmith for the layout and to Henry Black for distribution. Any mistakes, shortcoming or whatever were the responsibility of the editor.

If you want to be editor contact me and I will nominate you.

I am willing to stand for re-election but it would be nice if someone else brought some fresh ideas to the Newsletter.

In this issue we continue Fred Murrell's article on French Polishing. Part One was well received and I am confident Part Two is even better.

The regular feature "Trade Mark" will resume in the next newsletter. For this issue it has been held over to make room for the Annual General Election Notice.

FAVOURITE TOOLS

A member told me about a plane he had recently acquired. He thinks it is American as it is "stuffed" or lined with Cherry. The iron, or blade, is stamped Norwood. So far I have not seen the plane.

Even so it is something to speculate about. Norwood did make at least one "patent" plane. This was a block plane with an early Bailey type adjustment mechanism. Norwood seems to have been in production around about 1869.

The owner of the plane observed on the fineness of the plane's mouth. This may mean that the blade doesn't belong to the plane. It could be a thick wood plane iron replacing an original thinner iron. In this case Norwood would be a plane iron maker. I have an idea that there was an American iron maker named Norwood.

When I get to see the plane it will be interesting to see how wide off the mark is my speculation. Of course idle curiosity like this is bread and butter to the old tool buff.

One thing is certain, whatever this Norwood plane turns out to be it will definitely become one of its owner's favourite tools.

PREVIOUS MEETING

Our last meeting's talk was, in Fred Murrell's words "one of the best ever".

Bede Dwyer gave an erudite and entertaining introduction to the history of Bows and Arrows. To illustrate his discussion Bede showed the audience an impressive collection of implements. His succinct analysis of culture, history and technology held the audiences attention.

Hopefully Bede will agree to make a repeat appearance in the future. Is Bede our only Bowyer and Fletcher?

Ray Gurney brought back some interesting tools from his expedition to the exotic East. These included several Chinese pattern spokeshaves. One of the spokeshaves was fabricated by folding and soldering sheet metal (particularly galvanised sheet).

Fred Murrell's "wots it" again uncovered some intriguing items. The "gasket punch" which looked very like a large olive stoner comes immediately to mind.

Despite the General Election the next meeting promises to be equally enjoyable.

In the last article I described the procedure for preparing shellac. This article deals with the filtration of the prepared polish and in some depth in respect of the preparation of a rubber.

FILTRATION

For those jobs requiring the highest grade finish, the polish is sometimes filtered to remove any trace of insoluble wax. This is done through a paper filter folded to fit inside a funnel. In the absence of filter paper, blotting paper may be used with the same result, although the process is somewhat tedious. Polish made from orange or flake shellac may not filter easily. In such a case, the wax may be separated from the polish by standing the container in a warm place. The heat causes the wax to settle, leaving a clear wax-free polish at the top.

The wax free polish, so obtained is referred to as "tops" or, (don't laugh) "tiddly", and is clear and free from the turbid effects of wax. Tops from orange or button shellac varies in colour from orange to iodine. The colour variations are caused from the basic differences in colour of the raw material itself. As with the coloured shellac, the topps from white shellac varies from cream to very pale amber.

Wax free polish produces a more brilliant finish as it does not cloud on the surface of the job. and is more resistant to the action of heat and water. If a synthetic lacquer is to be applied, a coating of tops, as a base coat, is often applied because of its freedom from wax.

CONTAINERS

Polish stored in a metal container will rapidly darken. The acidity of the shellac causes strong colour compounds to be formed with the metal. It is better stored in glass, and kept away from strong light and heat.

MOISTURE

You are aware that it is not advisable to have your car spray painted in damp weather. The reason is that the finish will bloom, because it absorbs moisture. The same thing happens with French Polish - the job will bloom. If the job is urgent, i.e. the customer will not survive if it is not finished today, a trial run with a dilution of 5% butyl cellusolve in the polish is sometimes successful. If bloom occurs and sets in the polish, it can be removed when the atmospheric conditions improve, by applying a rubber (this tool will be described later) charged with methylated spirits. The surface will be softened and the moisture released. A warm iron held at a safe distance from the surface has also been found to be successful, depending on how long after application the method is applied.

POLISHING RUBBERS

The most important tools of the French polisher are his polishing rubbers. A good craftsman zealously cares for his rubbers, and is as loath to lend them to another as a cabinet maker, who

may well be the same craftsman, is to lend his favourite smoothing plane. In general practice, skilled craftsmen have a variety of rubbers, each prepared for some particular phase of polishing and each stored in a separate jar, when not in use.

The making and wrapping of rubbers is part of the polisher's craft. The failure of beginners is usually due, to a material extent, to faulty rubbers.

MATERIALS FOR MAKING RUBBERS

The materials required for making a rubber are cotton wool, (we all know that), a piece of knitwear (very few of us knew that), and a square of open mesh material, such as dowlas (what the hell is that?) - Webster says "A kind of coarse linen cloth much used in southern Scotland and Yorkshire in the eighteenth century.", in other words, a piece of linen). Or a piece of forfar!!!

The cotton wool forms the core of the rubber after being needed into the accepted half pear shape. It requires a piece of cotton wool about 5" or 125mm square, depending on the area to be polished. The cotton wool is more easily shaped if it has been charged with polish first, and for this reason, swooges make excellent rubbers. What are swooges? This will be dealt with in some detail later, but at this stage, it might be said to be a piece of cotton wool used to "mop on" a base coat of polish.

The knitwear is used to cover the cotton wool core, and to hold pumice powder when it is used in the rubber as an abrasive. At the preparatory stages of polishing, coarser knit fabric is preferable. The piece of knitwear should be about as wide as the core and about twice as long to allow for wrapping and to prevent slipping. Care must be taken to ensure that the material does not extend beyond the point of the core when it is wrapped around it, or difficulty will be encountered in getting a good point to the rubber when it is finally covered with dowlas. Incidentally, osnaberg is as good as dowlas or forfar if you do not have either of these, and it seems that linen is the best, and provides a good cover for the "skinning-in rubber". The cover fabric does not need to be of the first quality, but the mesh must be open enough to allow the polish to flow through to the job. A closely woven fabric will quickly become congested. About an 8" square of this material, washed free of dressing, is an appropriate size.

MAKING THE SKINNING - IN RUBBER

The corners and edges of the cotton wool are folded towards the centre, care being taken to avoid lumpiness on what is to be the sole. The cotton wool is kneaded to form what is generally described as a half pear, split vertically. The piece of knitwear is placed under the cotton wool and brought up the sides as shown in figure (i). The linen is held at one corner, in the left hand, and the core, with the sole facing upwards and point facing the right, is placed behind the rag and diagonally across the corner, as shown in figure (ii).

The rag is released from the left hand and allowed to drape over the core. It is then eased down firmly and held in position as shown in figure (iii), with the left hand.

The toe of the rubber is shaped to a point with the right hand, per figure (iv) and then the index finger of the right hand is placed against the rubber near its point and at right angles to the sole, pointing downwards. The rag is gathered with the remaining fingers of the right hand, as if to

tie the index finger in the rag at the point of the rubber. As the rubber is rotated with the left hand, the index finger is slipped along the side of the rubber while the other fingers and thumb draw the rag into a fold - see figure (v). The point now faces left. The second and third fingers of the right hand are moved across the sole of the rubber to grip it firmly at the heel - see figure (vi), letting go with the left hand. The left hand is brought over the rubber to grip the sole and first fold of cover cloth as shown in figure (vii). The right hand is released. The loose ends of the rag are gathered up with the right hand and brought over the first fold - see figure (viii). The ends of the rag are then twisted and the rubber is ready for use, as shown in figure (ix).

The size of the rubber is often governed by the size of the surface to be polished, however, a small rubber on a very small surface invariably leads to trouble. Very small rubbers that require frequent charging should be used only in difficult corners. Generally a rubber should be as large as can comfortably be held and controlled.

When not in use, a rubber should be stored in an airtight glass jar. Occasionally a few drops of methylated spirits might be added to the jar to keep it moist.

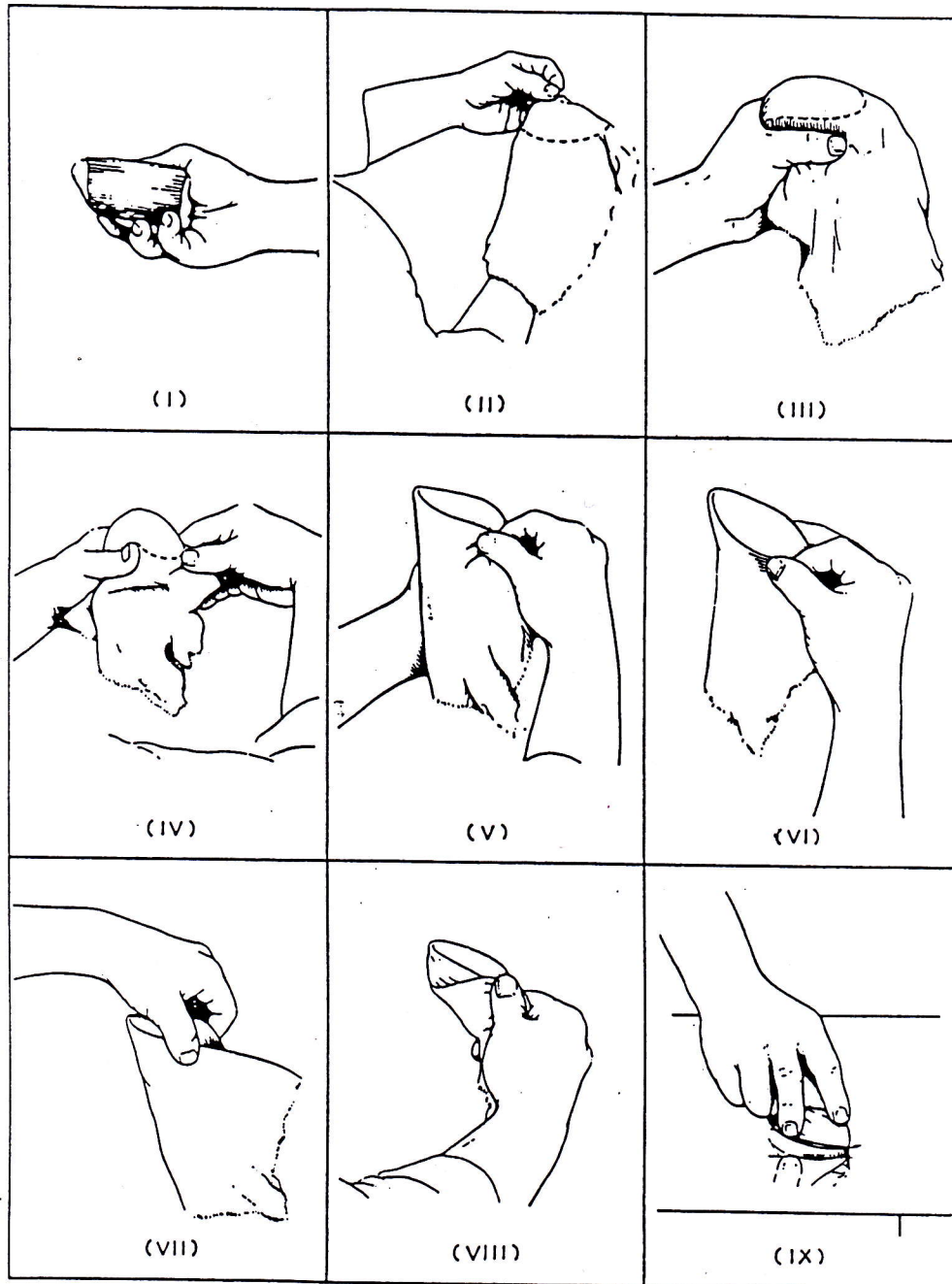


Fig.1 Making a Skinning-in Rubber.

WOODEN SCREW THREADS

Screw Threads in wood require

- a suitable timber species
- to be of V form
- to be of course pitch

if they are to prove efficient in use. Traditionally timbers used included beech and horn beam. For occasional use mahogany or pine was also used. In North America maple was substituted for the European preferred species.

Screw Threads were produced by various methods.

(a) The Mandrel or Transversing Lathe

In this mechanism the head stock bearing transversed a predicable distance. In essence the motion of the mandrel moved the work piece in relation to the cutter. This was in effect the converse of the principal of the "lead screw" lathe developed in the early nineteenth century.

The Mandrel lathe is described by Moxon as being for "swash" turning, e.g. twists. The final development of the Mandrel lathe was the Rose Engine. Such machines could cut coarse threads but it is doubtful as they were commonly used for such an application. They were too time consuming to set up for such a simple task.

(b) Chasing

Threads could be quickly formed in the lathe by using a chasing tool. This technique has a current following with turners of lidded boxes. The use of the chase produced accurate threads rapidly. One advantage was the ease with which any diameter could be threaded.

Methods (a) and (b) rely on the use of a lathe. Often, however, the workplace could not be lathe mounted. This was especially so with female threads.

In such cases threads were produced with "screw boxes and taps".

(c) Screw boxes

These were used to produce male or external threads. As the diameter was not adjustable a number of screw boxes were made. The common sizes ranged from ¼" to 2½".

In essence the screw box was merely a V cutter mounted inside the internal thread so as to cut the male thread. The box was bored and taped and the cutter when set reproduced the thread on the workpiece.

Later developments of the screwbox were made in metal but the principle of the cutting action was identical.

(d) Taps

Taps were made in three forms:

i) The solid tap

This was largely used for threads over 2" in diameter. A wooden cylinder was turned to the diameter of the thread. A helix matching the pitch was cut around the circumference of the cylinder. The cylinder was mounted in a frame where a guide set at the pitch engaged the cut in the circumference. A V cutter was set into the cylinder on the helix. The workpiece was fixed to the frame and the cylinder advanced by the engaged guide moved the V cutter through the bore in the workpiece thus reproducing the thread. Several progressively deeper cuts were necessary.

ii) The fluted tap

A steel tap was forged, or machined. The tap was threaded with the specified thread form. The tap tapered and had three flutes cut along the circumference of the cylinder. The female thread was largely formed by the deforming action of the tap as it was turned through the bore in the workpiece.

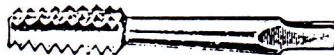
iii) The hollow tap

To provide a true cutting action the hollow tap was developed. A regular cylinder was threaded with the specified thread form. The bottom of the thread, for approximately twice the length of the diameter, was turned down to the root diameter of the thread. This bottom section was bored out along the tap. The helix was terminated by drilling into the circumference of the tap. This provided a cutting action to the tap. Such taps produced clean internal threads.

Mechanically produced wood threads:

With the development of the lead screw lathe the principle was applied to producing wood threads. In essence the cutter was fixed in position and the work piece advanced by a lead screw thus producing the desired pitch. The principle is currently used in "router threading devices".

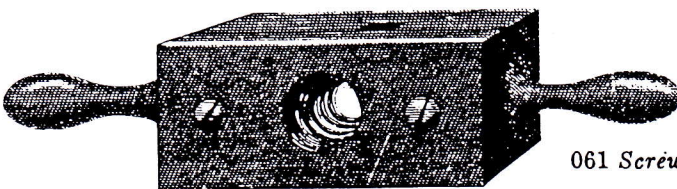
The lead screw lathe can be used to produce wood threads provided the cutter is suitable. It sounds simple but only an "ornamental lathe" will be found to be capable of obtaining the slow feed necessary.



Tx 1019

Cabinetmakers' Screw Boxes and Taps (Tx 1019)—

$\frac{1}{4}$	5-16	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{7}{16}$	$\frac{1}{2}$ in.
19/-	19/-	19/-	19/-	19/-
$\frac{5}{8}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{7}{8}$	1	$1\frac{1}{4}$ in.
19/-	21/-	24/6	26/-	32/6



061 Screw Box and Tap

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

ROGER SMITH, Author of PATENTED AND TRADITIONAL PLANES OF AMERICA is visiting Australia towards the end of the year. Roger has agreed to give a special address to The Traditional Tools Group on November 1st. so keep this date free! It is not often that we get to listen to international experts on their specialist topic so make sure that you don't miss this event. Venue to be announced in the next newsletter.

SYDNEY TOOL SALE AND SWAP

The tenth tool sale will be held at Burwood on Saturday the 30th of September. This is the second sale for 1995 and the first **SATURDAY sale**. We will be having a stall if you can help man it please contact one of the committee.

COMPUTER WANTED

Your committee is looking for someone who might have or know the whereabouts of an IBM 286 Personal Computer (or clone) which is no longer required. The Group would like to purchase one so that we can have one machine which has all the newsletter on it and which can read floppy disk versions of newsletter contributions. Also it would be nice to be able to get the mailing database onto the same machine. Do you know of any surplus machines? Please contact Ray Gurney or Mike Williams.

GENERAL ELECTION AT THE NEXT GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY, 8th AUGUST 1995

At the next meeting on Tuesday, elections for the 1995/96 office bearers will be held.

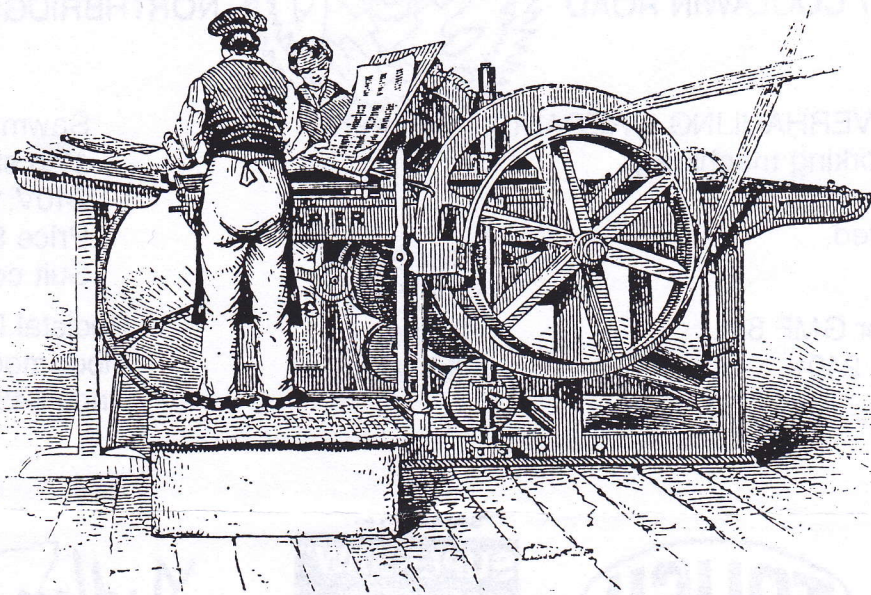
Members should note the following:-

1. Existing office bearers will indicate whether they are willing to be nominated for re-election.
2. Nominations for positions must be seconded and have the agreement of the nominee concerned.
3. The assistant editor of the newsletter is not seeking re-election.

The present committee is: Fred Murrell-President,
Henry Black & Terry Butcher-Vice Presidents,
Mike Williams-Secretary, Treasurer & Librarian-Sid Bailey,
Membership-Ray Gurney, Editor-Bob Crosbie,
Asst.Editor-Ian Goldsmith, Catering-Mario Dato.

Cover:

Napier power platen press.



The commercial exploitation of printing processes is dependent on its machinery—the press itself. The first breakthrough was the Stanhope press, with its iron platen the same size as the bed; by cutting out one of the two pulls necessary to print every page on the common press this must have increased productivity considerably. It is probable that most books were printed on flat-bed machines, either the two revolution or stop cylinder types, particularly after 1858 when the Wharfedale became available. The Miehle was first offered to the trade in 1887 and contributed to the development of three-colour work, combining considerable power with good register.¹

Power-platen presses were in use from the early 1830s, when the Hopkinson & Cope double-platen machine became available, the first one being built in 1830 for Spottiswoode.² A much better machine was built by Napier slightly later—in its single-platen form it is mentioned in *A History of Wonderful Inventions* (Chapman & Hall, 1849) as having been ‘recently constructed’ (Plate 1). The Oxford University Press still had some similar machines in use as late as 1894,³ having bought three in 1887. There is occasional evidence for the use of platen presses where the bolts of a book have not been cut and the pinholes can be seen.

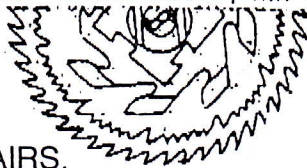
VICTORIAN
BOOK
ILLUSTRATION
The Technical Revolution
GEOFFREY WAKEMAN

CHAS. E. SKINNER PTY. LTD.

WOODWORKING MACHINERY MERCHANTS, IMPORTERS AND ENGINEERS

17 COOLAWIN ROAD

NORTHBRIDGE, 2063



MACHINERY OVERHAULING & REPAIRS.

To light woodworking machinery.

Service work.

Bearings renewed.

Pedestal Grinder GMF 8in.

Reconditioned 240V.

Price \$250.

Phone/Fax.

958-7336.

Phone.

958-5170.

Sawmaster radial arm saw.

12in.saw, 24in travel.

240V.1HP. 3000RPM.

Price \$450. Recon. \$680.

Suit contracting job.

Pedestal Drill [Richardson type]

Floor model [heavy duty].

Price \$450. Recon. \$850.



Woodies Books.

Woodies Books. Suppliers of the Finest Woodworking Books available. Send self-addressed stamped business size envelope for 1994 Catalogue. 21 Merrylands Road, Merrylands. 637 2932

Tools of Trade

John McDonald B.Sc.(Forestry).

P.O. Box 13 Duffy A.C.T. 2611 Telephone: 062-886142

Books and catalogue reprints about collecting and using old tools

- free list from John McDonald TOOLS OF TRADE, PO Box 13, Duffy ACT 2611
phone 06-2886142 5% discount to TTTG members.

Current specials

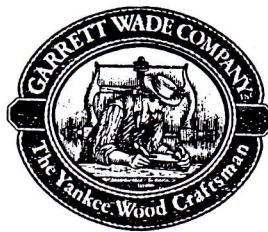
"The Ultimate Brace" - by Reg Eaton \$55.

"1994 International Auction Catalogue" Tony Murland & Gail Parker,
The Tool Shop, UK, \$20. This is an excellent reference and price guide.

July 1995 Tool Shop International Auction catalogue available soon -
forward your \$35 cheque to reserve a copy.

Members might be interested to know the current status of
the book by John Walter "Antique and Collectible Stanley Tools" which is
currently out of print. John Walter had hoped to have a revised edition out
early this year, but now does not expect to have the book to the printer
before August. We will advise as soon as we receive copies. The previous
edition was an essential reference for the serious collector of Stanley
tools, and the new one promises to be even better.

Garrett Wade



SYDNEY MELBOURNE

The best traditional tools and more for the collector & craftsman.

Garrett Wade wishes to announce that we have greatly expanded our range of
BOOKS and CATALOGUE REPRINTS.

As you may realise if you read the book reviews in the "Australian Woodworker" we stock amongst other titles of interest to the tool enthusiast,

" Patented and Transitional Metallic Planes in America"

Volumes 1 & 11 by Roger Smith.

We have also taken over the entire stock of Ray Ingold's mail order business
Inglewood Books & Tools formerly the "Bowsaw Tool Co".

Please drop in to our Sydney or Melbourne shops to browse before you buy.

We offer 10% discount to TTTG members

**Upstairs at Queens Rd & William St. Five Dock. Phone. 744-3458.
105 Denmark St Kew 852-8555 Free Call 1-800-337736 for orders.**

A select range of old tools from Reg Eaton and local sources is usually on display for your perusal. Ring in advance if you are after a particular item.

SYDNEY SECONDHAND MARKET

Specialists in Secondhand Tools
Machinery, Ladders, Wheelbarrows

HUGE RANGE

New Stock arrives Daily

: Cash paid for your tools, ladders, wheelbarrows, machinery :

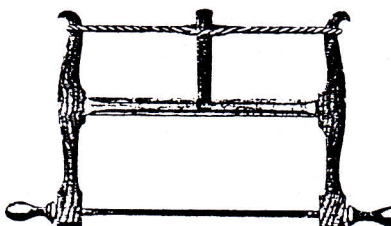
Trading: Monday - Friday 8am - 5pm
Saturday morning 8am - 12noon

Entrance via THE LADDER SHOP, 709 Canterbury Road, Belmore, Phone 787-2587



TEL (02) 326 1319
FAX (02) 327 2770

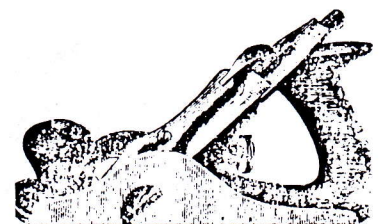
MOBILE 018-042 155



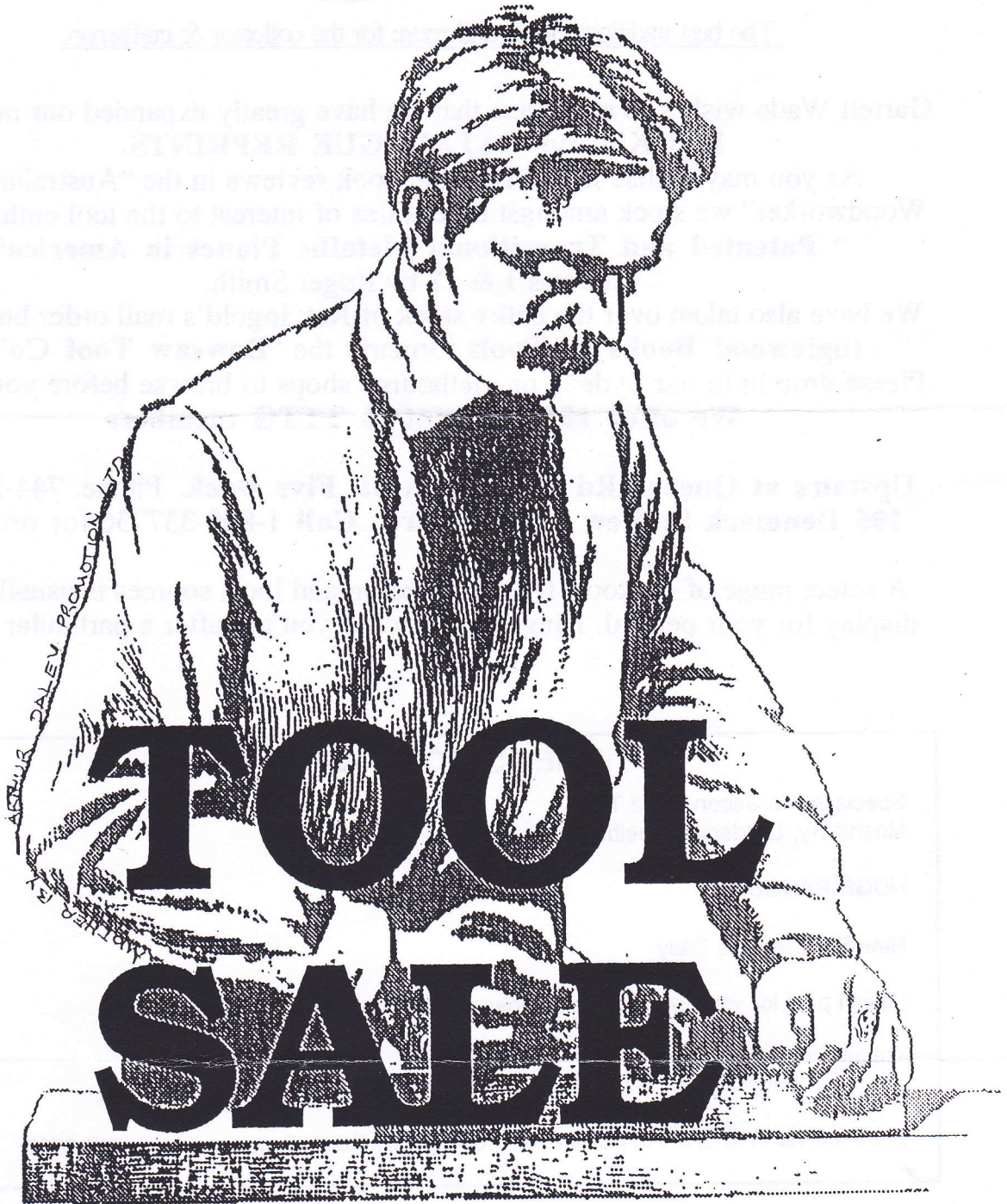
OLD WOOD WORKING TOOLS
JOLYON WARWICK JAMES

SHOP 36 ANTIQUE CENTRE
531 SOUTH DOWLING ST
SURRY HILLS, SYDNEY

SPIERS, NORRIS
STANLEY, RARITIES
MARPLES ULTIMATUM ETC.



SYDNEY TOOL SALE & SWAP



1995

SATURDAY 30th SEPTEMBER

BURWOOD GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

Queen Street Croydon.

Doors open 9 to 2.

Entry \$5, Door prize, large selection of old, new, user & collector tools for sale.

Sellers enquires please ring Henry on 744-7875.