

TGT



**Newsletter Number 89. June 2006.**

**The Traditional Tools Group (Inc.) [www.tttg.org.au](http://www.tttg.org.au)**

# THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS GROUP (Inc.)

TTTG Newsletter Number 90.  
June 2006.



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<b>Subscription Rates:</b>	

Sydney \$30. Overseas \$30.

Out of Sydney, Other States and Australian Pensioners \$25.

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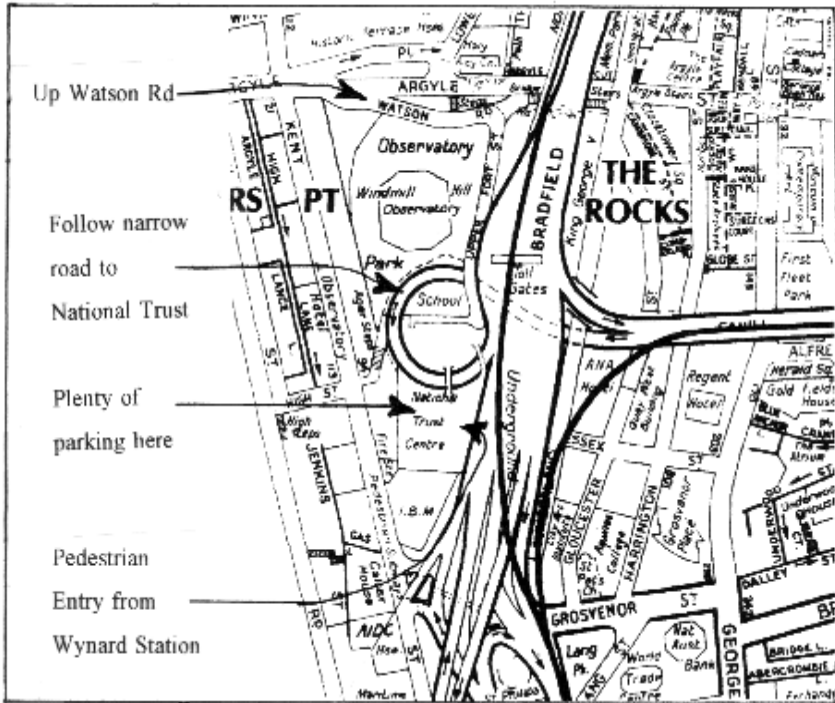
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## Next Meeting

Tuesday June 13, 2006. 7pm.

National Trust Centre,  
Observatory Hill.

Annie Wyatt Room  
Commencing at 7:00pm



## Programme

1) The Trading Hour.

“TTTG members only” tools for sale.

2) Presentation.

The TTTG Joiner’s Tool Chest.

3) TTTG Auction.

No reserves, everything must be sold.

Catering by Mario Dato.

## Next Meeting.

**Tuesday June 13, 2006. 7pm.**

### **The TTTG Joiner's Tool Chest.**

TTTG has purchased the Joiner's Tool Chest illustrated on the back of News 86. The tool box has been displayed at the recent Sydney Timber and Wood Show. This display generated a great deal of interest.

At this meeting Bob Crosbie will discuss the contents of the box.

We will find out what is in the box and then deduce what is missing.

The presenter and the audience will address issues of conservation and documentation.

This tool box has a history and came with a "pencilled in" Tool Catalogue.

TTTG is planning a publication devoted to this acquisition, another TTTG first.

## Previous Meeting.

**Wednesday April 12, 2006. 7pm. STANLEY SCREW THREADS.**

Another successful TTTG Meeting displaying good attendance and engaged debate.

**Jack**, "the hammer", displayed an extensive array of rare Stanley planes.

**John Bates** did an excellent job of explaining the terminology of screw threads.

As predicted the serious Stanley collectors were impressed by the display.

For once Fred's tools were second best.

**The Audience** posed the questions! **Bob Crosbie** managed to maintain order.

**Jim Davey** asked some hard questions and also answered some from the audience.

**John's** Stanley Threads Part 1 was well received.

A future TTTG meeting will be devoted to a discussion of Stanley Threads Part 2.

## The Trading Hour.

This is usually set up by 6.30pm. Minimum price is \$20 per tool. Quality only.

"Members only prices". For the serious buyer but there are always bargains.

## The Auction.

This has become an institution. Trainee Auctioneer still wanted! Throw away prices.

Somehow we manage to sell everything. Usually there are no reserves. Stupid prices.

Planes to Play Stations, Rules to Rusty bolts. Anything could be under the hammer.

## Paying after the Auction.

Two TTTG Committee members record the takings. The Treasurer is also on hand.

Purchases can assist by trying to have the exact money ready.

If say you owe \$4 but only have a \$5 note please consider "rounding up"

The prices are so low we can all afford to be generous.

## BUY SELL SWAP

Entries are free to TTTG members.



## WANTED

- Anvil 70 kg to 200 kg with any available tools.  
David Hire. email [dhire@zip.com.au](mailto:dhire@zip.com.au) 0412 969596 after hours 9552 3636
- Heavy Firmer Chisels. Square edge chisels all sizes 1" and above.  
Mick Dowling. 03 93863481 or 0407 544338. [itshimselfthen@bigpond.com](mailto:itshimselfthen@bigpond.com)
- Wanted to buy (or swap): Farm / Implement Spanners and Wrenches.  
Railway and large Engineering concerns.  
George Radion -03 95571178, email [radion@iprimus.com.au](mailto:radion@iprimus.com.au)
- Emmert pattern makers vice or lend of one to copy.  
Contact Guido 02 93196190 [info@wroughtartworks](mailto:info@wroughtartworks).
- Blacksmiths Post and Bench Drills, hand or power, any condition.  
Buffalo, Champion, Silver, Globe, Dawn, Goodall Pratt, Union.  
Rick Mitchell. 02 47514762 or 02 47519797.
- Parts for 1937 Driver Circular Saw.  
Riving Knife and Crown Guard. Any attachments. Contact the Editor.
- Big Saw sets. I am looking for a decent "Inshave".  
Stan Ceglinski email [biliwood@bigpond.net.au](mailto:biliwood@bigpond.net.au)

# PLANES TUNED AND SHARP

- Fully Fettle Stanleys
- "User" Bedrocks
- Fettle Service
- Agent for Academy  
HSS Plane Irons and  
Straight Edges

**Jim Davey**  
02 4447 8822  
[jdavey@bigpond.com](mailto:jdavey@bigpond.com)  
Fax: 02 4447 8820  
PO Box 967  
Nowra NSW 2541

**Trade Prices on:**

- King /Ice Bear  
Waterstones 
- DMT Duo  
Diamond Plates 
- DiaSharp  
Diamond Plates 

**Super Special Trade Price on:**

- DMT Duo-Plus  
Diamond Plates 

WHILE STOCKS LAST

## Forthcoming TTTG 2006 Workshops.

### **Plane Tuning & Sharpening. Sunday 25 June 2006.**

Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided. Bring your own lunch.

Asquith Boys High School, Jersey Street Asquith 2077. 9.30am to 3.30pm

TTTG Members \$20. Non-members \$40

To be sure of a place it is advisable to enroll in advance.

*Details of all the Workshops are on the Web Site.*

*A Workshop Leaflet is also available.*

### Why TTTG Workshops?

TTTG workshops are arguably the best available. They are not available elsewhere.

Our workshops offer the lowest cost, quality teaching and excellent facilities.

**TTTG can arrange workshops to suit your needs.**

But only if you tell the Committee what you want!

### 2006 TTTG Open Day.

On Sunday 23 April 2006 TTTG held the first TTTG Open Day.

The theme was **Sharpening and Tool Repair**. The venue was Asquith BHS.

Members did bring tools to the Open Day for **Sale and Swap**.

A car load of members from the South Coast and one new member from Maitland.

*Jim Davey was there with a selection of “fettled” planes and sharpening and tool care products for sale. Jim’s presence is much appreciated by the TTTG Committee.*

**There will be another TTTG Open Day in 2007.**

### Selling Old Tools.

TTTG can arrange the sale of second hand tools. Old tools are sold by TTTG:

- a) By private treaty. We offer to get a good price for quality tools.
- b) By Auction at TTTG Meetings.
- c) At Henry’s Annual Tool Sale on the TTTG Stand.
- d) At The Timber and Working With Wood Show on the TTTG Stand.
- e) By advertising in TTTG News.

The advertisements are free but the other services are subject to a fee.

News 89 Cover .



TTTG CDs.

TTTG CD Number 1 has been released.

The CD reproduces the following rare Australia Tool Catalogues:

Anthony Horden's, Sydney "Tools for Tradesmen" Catalogue, 1913.

W S Friend, Sydney. Catalogue. Undated, circa 1920.

Ironmongeries Ltd. Brisbane. Catalogue. June 1930. (See News 89 Cover).

TTTG Publications.

-Nock&Kirby Catalogue.

-Carter Tools Leaflet.

-Benns' Hardware.

\$5 each plus postage.

-1932 Record Tools Catalogue. \$8 plus postage

This Ironmongeries Catalogue is available on TTTG CD Number 1.

-Stanley Planes and Screw Threads. John Bates.

Part One. Metal Screw Threads. Origins and Technology clearly explained.

Part Two. Stanley Plane Threads. What they are and why they were used.

\$10 each plus postage.

-Johns' Pages. SOLD OUT.

*More Reprints are planned for 2006. TTTG has also ventured into CDs!*

With the Proof Reader.

Peter Evans has prepared a TTTG booklet on sharpening.

The working title is "The Practical Tool Sharpener. Part 1". Size will be 36 A5 pages.

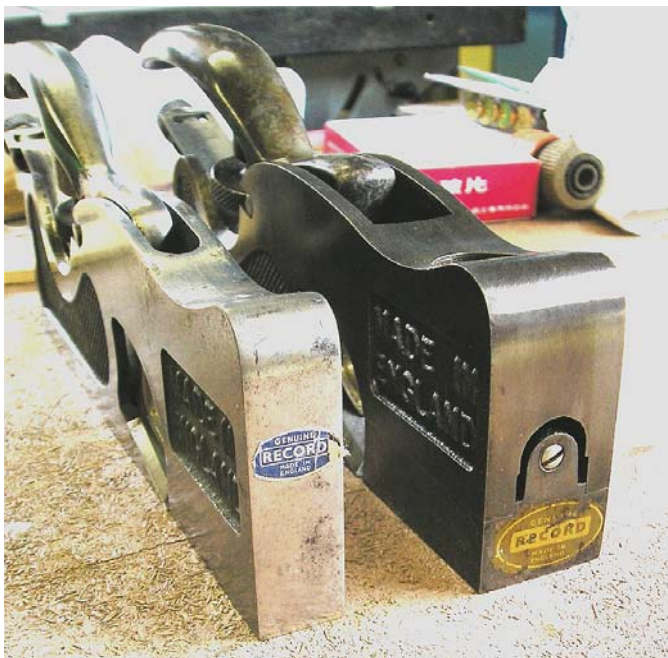
It is a comprehensive treatise on sharpening theory and practice for Wood Workers.

Part 1 will be followed by a series of publications on sharpening methods. Such as:

Hand & Power Grinders. Oilstones. Waterstones &Diamond Plates.

The publications will complement the TTTG Sharpening Workshops.

## Correspondence.



Regular correspondent Stephen Richardson has joined TTTG and has a question about Record planes for the consideration of readers.

“Incidentally, would you know if there was anyone in the TTTG who could offer assistance in dating the Record shoulder planes. I have a #073 and a #042 shoulder planes and would be interested to know of their vintage”.

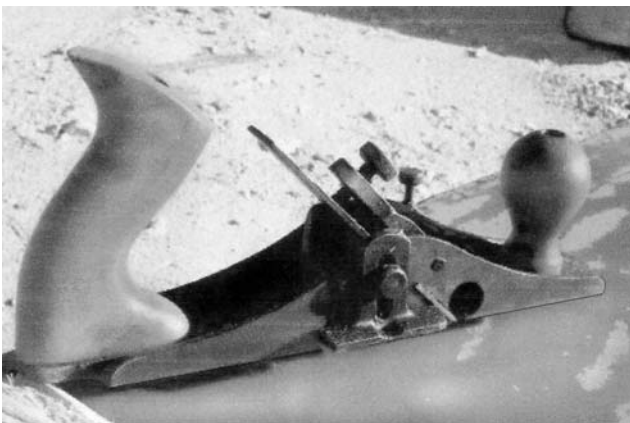
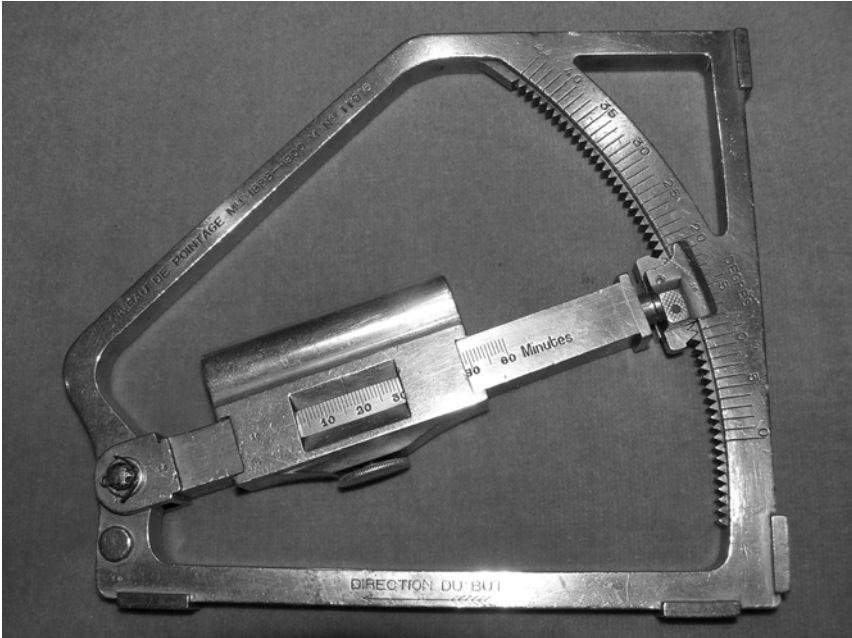
The editor requested additional information and Stephen emailed some pictures and described the planes.

“I have also attached a couple of pics of the shoulder planes. The 73 has come out a little darker in the photos than when actually looking at it. Both have a decal on the front, the 73 is yellowy/tarnish coloured and the 42 blue and white "Genuine Record made in England" Not sure if blade wording is any help - the 42 has "Record" while the 73 has "Record Made in England"

Let me know if you need any other info about them, just by looking at them the 73 looks to be the older of the two. I'd also appreciate some pointers on how to date them if you are willing to share your knowledge”.

**Correspondence.**

Well known TTTG member Horacio Rodrigues asks if any members know the exact use of the tool illustrated. His brother found it in an unlikely location, more details when someone identifies the instrument.



Jim Davey sent this photograph of a Russian plane.

Has any other TTTG member seen one of these?

If there is any interest the pictures of the other side and the blade will appear in New 90.

## **Correspondence.**

The editor has received news from two well-known interstate TTTG members.

Sid Carey attended the TTTG Meetings until he moved to Western Australia. Sid seems to be doing well in his new domicile and has compiled some information on the Sydney School of Arts which will be published in a future issue of TTTG News.

From Tasmania Terry Butcher sends a long letter to the Editor. Beginning with, "My congratulations for a first class production of News 87, lots of good reading in this issue. I love the cartoon on the cover. Also well done to John Bates on the booklet on Stanley planes screw threads, a valuable addition to all Stanley collectors."

Terry also clarified the experience Reg Eaton had during his visit to Tasmania. "Yes he was disappointed that I didn't have the coffin built and finished." There will be more correspondence on Terry's coffin in a future issue of News.

In another letter Terry has sent some photographs of an interesting wooden plane. The pictures are so good they will be published in News 90 under *Bridle Plough Plane*.

## **STANLEY SCREW THREADS.**

*"Test the theory" measuring project.*

The Stanley No.2 plane Reg Eaton donated to TTTG will be the starting point for a TTTG project. The plane will be disassembled and John Bates will measure the screw threads. The measurements will be published in News.

TTTG owns other Stanley planes and the threads in these will also be measured. For example there is a Stanley No. 5 in the Railway cabinetmaker's tool chest.

Eventually a range of Stanley planes will be measured. John Bates is confident that his hypothesis will be substantiated by this project.

## **SCREW THREADS IN OTHER PLANES.**

Record planes copied the screw threads in Stanley planes as did Turner planes. Other planes used other threads. For example Carter used Whitworth threads.

*Has a TTTG member measured the threads in planes by other plane manufacturers?*

If someone does the work TTTG will publish the results.

## Start 'em Young



“I can do it too”, says Matthew with a thumbs-up for a sharp plane. Matthew is the younger brother of Ben, featured in Newsletter No. 53.

One love the brothers have in common is the “smell of Grandpa’s shed” and space to “work” and they usually add “good old tools to work with”.

Talking of “good old tools”, don’t overlook the old wooden planes so often delegated to catch dust at the back of a cupboard, too often discarded due to a lack of understanding of their maintenance.

It is pleasing to see a growing number of craftspeople appreciating the connection to their craft through the “hands-on” feel of the traditional tools, not missing the noise and dust from their power tool replacements and the rediscovering of the subtle curves of the old mouldings that cannot be imitated. The true edges and flat surfaces that can be achieved with friction free effort as the wooden sole of the plane glides over the timber is enough to inspire the most ardent objector to the use of technically disadvantaged tools from a by-gone era.

Sad to say, back in the mid 1960’s when the wooden bench planes were phased out of the High Schools and written-off the stock books, the MANUAL ARTS MASTER pulled rank and stood over me while he counted them off as they went through the bandsaw – what a waste.

It’s pleasing to see a growing appreciation of these fine old workhorses. True, there are many “recent” planes that cannot be surpassed in quality, workmanship and performance, however, it’s nice to step back and reflect.

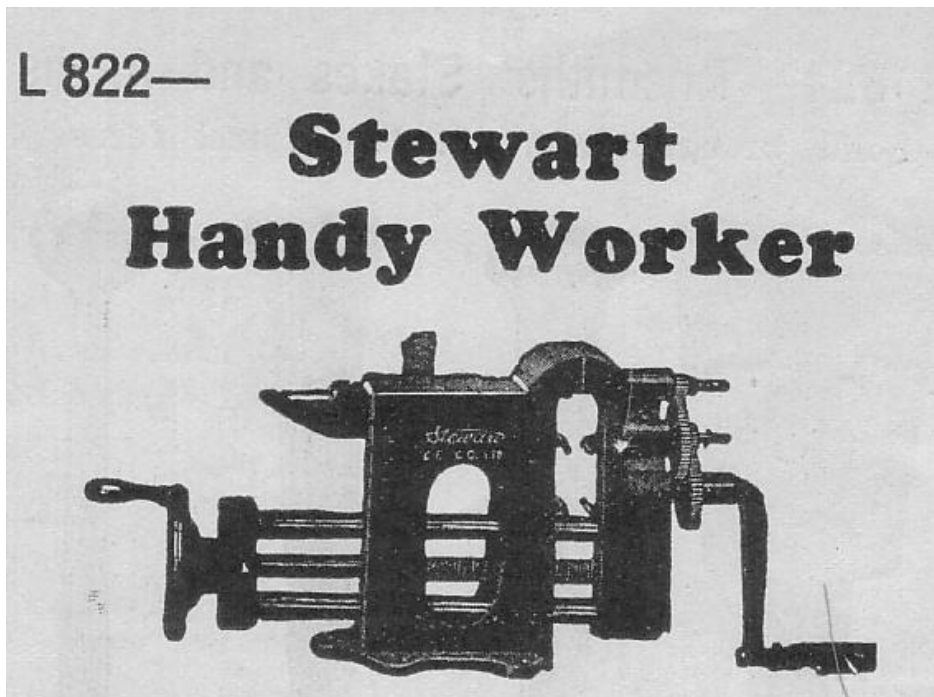
“Start’em young”, I say and lets hope the next generation will slow down and “take time to smell the roses” or at least “smell the shavings”.

## Stewart Handy Worker.

### **Made by M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's, Invented in the U S of A?**

A few days before I received the latest TATHS Newsletter (92 Spring 2006) I was reading some back copies of the Chronicle of the Early American Industries Association, purchased from Hans Brunner.

In TATHS Newsletter 92 there is a query about the Stewart Handy Worker. This device has featured in TTTG News in the past. The assumption has been that it was an Australian invention manufactured in Australia. This can now be reconsidered.



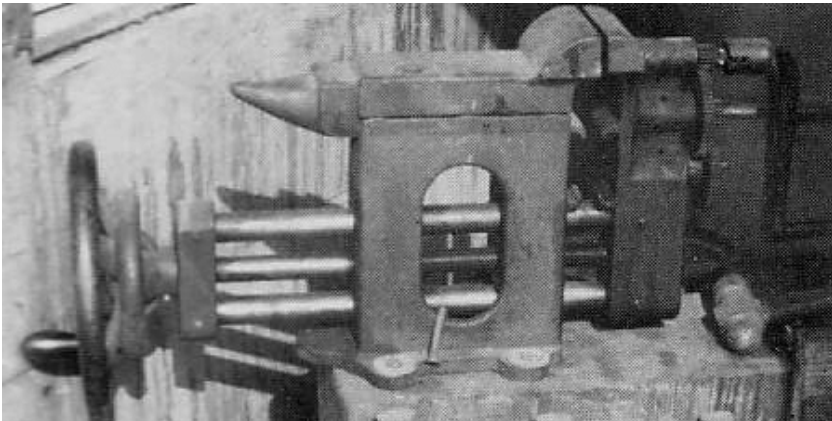
The illustration is from M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's Catalogue N<sup>o</sup>. 34. The catalogue is undated but it probably was printed in the early 1930s, perhaps 1920s.

M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's Pty. Ltd. was a large Tool Merchant with the head office in Sydney and branches in Melbourne, Adelaide & Perth. McPherson's also made machinery. In catalogue N<sup>o</sup>. 34 "Macson" machine tools are illustrated, the range is quite extensive. M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's Pty. Ltd. also had a bolt manufacturing plant and probably manufactured HYCO woodworking machines.

In M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's catalogues are a number of unnamed tools. Probably M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's manufactured these tools. Given the fact that M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's gave the machines they made a name with a Scots association, "Macson", it is reasonable to assume that "Stewart" may also have been an in-house brand name for a M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's made tool.

The key question is **"Who invented the Handy Worker?"**

The Chronicle March 1987 Vol. 40 No.1 in the Whatsits column has a photo of an identical tool to the Stewart Handy Worker. When I saw it I didn't give it much thought save for "so one of those damned things found it's way to the states".



But when I read the Chronicle June 1987 Vol. 40 No.2 the full story began to emerge.

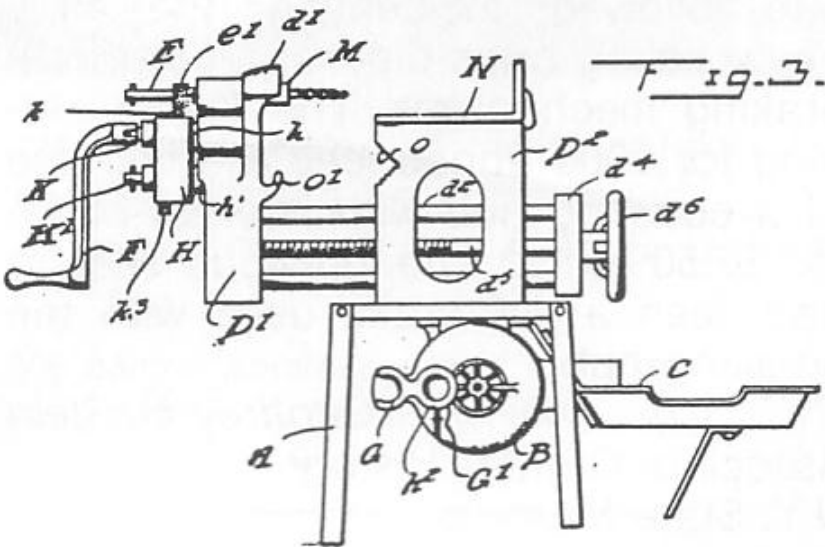
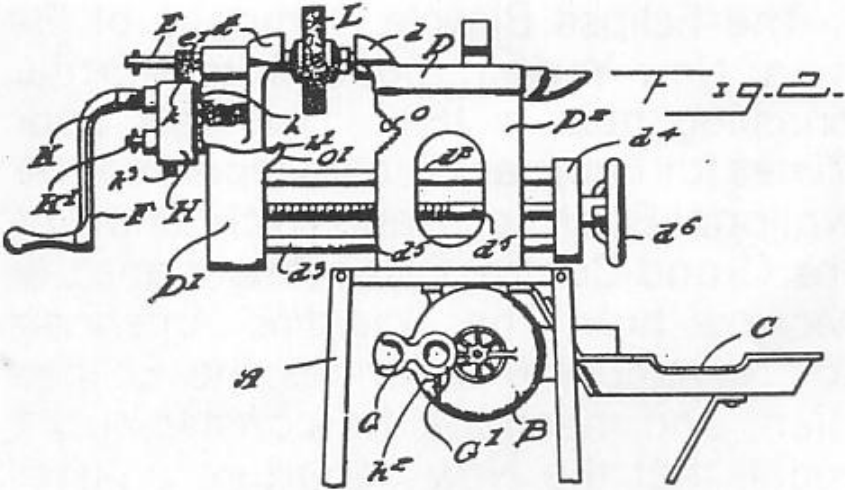
The Whatsits column has a patent of the Handy Worker. Two patents were taken out in 1920 by H.B.Keiper. In all essentials the patent is identical to McPherson's Stewart Handy Worker. Any differences are those to be expected when a patent drawing is refined by the process of developing a manufactured product.

H.B.Keiper's invention was put into production, by the Champion Blower & Forge Co. An editorial note in the June Whatsit points out that the June issue of M-WTCA's Gristmill has an article about a variety the Keiper tool being offered by the Rock Island Manufacturing Co.

In all probability McPherson's Pty. Ltd. manufactured the Handy Worker under an agreement with the Champion Blower & Forge Co.

Were the Australian made "Rapid"Forges also in the M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's Catalogue N<sup>o</sup>. 34 made by M<sup>c</sup>Pherson's under an agreement with the Champion Blower & Forge Co.? H.B.Keiper's patent drawing is reproduced on the next page.

H.B.Keiper's "Handy Worker" patent drawing.



# TOOLS, TANGS AND HANDLES

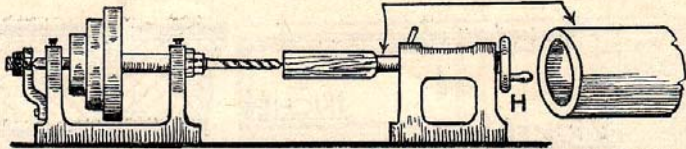


FIG. 3. MANDREL OF LATHE FITTED WITH MACHINE TWIST BIT.



FIG. 1. THE CHISEL AND ITS TANG.



FIG. 2. STEPPING HOLES FOR TANG OF CHISEL.

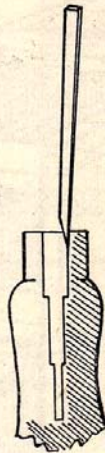


FIG. 4. HOLE TAPERED WITH  $\frac{1}{8}$  IN. CHISEL.

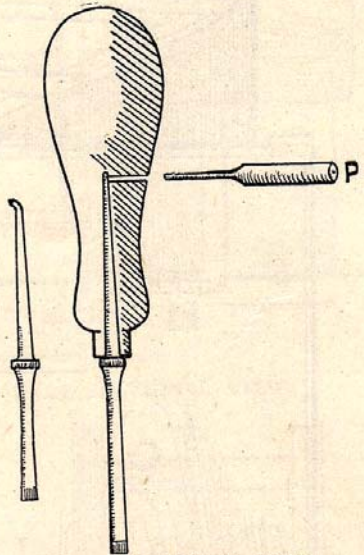


FIG. 5. BRADAWL TANG.

FIG. 6 (right). USE OF TAPERED ARBOR IN LATHE.



HOW CHISEL, FILE AND OTHER TOOL HANDLES ARE FIXED.

## Fred's Finds.

### Washstand Circle Cutters.

North Rocks market produced a couple of goodies last Sunday. Unfortunately the dealer must have sensed my anxiety because he charged me top dollar. They are craftsman made circle cutters used, to the most part, for cutting out the circle on a wash stand to facilitate fitting the basin. The smaller one required a pivot post, a cutter and a wedge which I had to provide. They are of mahogany and brass construction. The larger one is quite finely made, but both are very functional. The pivot post on the larger one is 3/8" diameter and is flanged out to 3/4" where it seats on the stock. The groove through the stock is 5/16" but the shaft through the stock is flat at 3/4" X 5/16" to fit neatly through the stock. This suggests that a considerable degree of brute force was used to operate the tool and that such a design would prevent the pivot post from moving along the slide.

The smaller one did not have the pivot post, but I noticed that the groove through the stock is tapered from 5/16" at the bottom to 1/4" at the top, suggesting that the maker of the tool went one step further than did the maker of the larger one, in that he would have tapered the flat sides of the shaft through the stock to wedge it firmly when the wing nut was tightened. The movement of the post must have been a real problem.





Jeweller's Tale/Hand Vice (Left).

Bought at Henry's tool sale is a 6" high table vice which converts to a hand vice. The maker is Billings & Spencer Co of Hartford Conn. USA. The patentee was C E Billings (patented Aug 28 1894). The smooth jaws are quite robust but are very finely made and are operated by a screw which is left hand for half its length and right hand the other half, so the jaws each move away from the centre so the work is always held in the centre of the vice.

Scribing Block (Right).

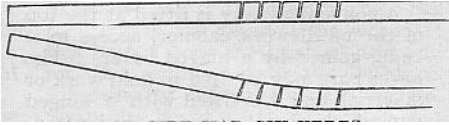
This gorgeous scribing block is only 5" high stamped T.N.C. in an arc - so neatly stamped as to suggest that the tool was commercially made. It has a cast iron base and a micro adjustment system typical of those made by Starrett and is of like quality.

Iron shave.

I bought this very ornate spokeshave through Ebay for only a few dollars. Probably because it was as rusty as an iron hoop. The blade clamp which is stamped only with Pat. Nov 17, 1863 is actually a wedge and is forced down beneath locking lugs on the side, much the same as some early panel and smoothing planes. The patentee was James Y. Simons. It is described in some detail in Roger Smith's book (PTAMPIA) which also mentions that the patent documents describe the tool as a boot and shoe shave. But it was also marketed to woodworkers. I have tried it on wood and it is an absolute brute. The old wooden shave leaves it for dead. The hole in the clamp/wedge is a mystery. I note that the one in Roger Smith's collection also has the hole and with nothing in it

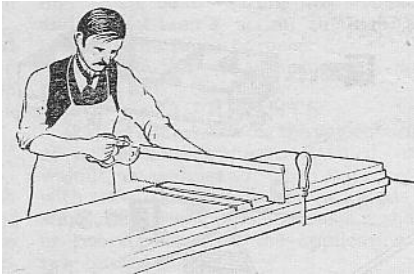


## Charles Hayward's Coffin Making.



The illustrations and text are from the February 1938 Woodworker magazine.

The unnamed author claimed fifty years or so of association with the trade.



A similar article was published in the June 1966 Woodworker magazine.

The author was C.H.Hayward.

Hayward came from a family of undertakers.

Compare the two drawings of Hayward's uncle carrying a coffin.

1966 Drawing.



1938 Drawing.



### SAWING THE KERFS

It is surprising what one can do, however, by a little system. When a load of timber came in I used to spend a whole day doing nothing but kerfing the sides. I had a saw specially made for this. It was like a long tenon saw, 2 ft. long in the blade and with a heavy back so that its own weight carried it through the wood. Each coffin side had six kerfs, and, with a large awl spiked into the bench to hold the wood still, I used to work my way through pile after pile of sides. At the top (this was kept forwards) the kerf went through to within about  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. of the thickness. At the bottom it all but ran right through. Sometimes oak was rather brittle, but a kettle of boiling water poured over the kerfs enabled it to bend easily enough. Pipping out the tops and bottoms

## Tool Names in Britain and America.

Clynt Sheehy

For some time now, I have been intrigued that the tool we in Australia (and in the U.K.) know as the "rebate plane" is (or was) known in the U.S.A. as a "rabbet plane". When British settlers colonized North America in the 17th and 18th Centuries, their craftsmen took their tools (and the names of those tools) with them to the New World.

I have been doing a spot of research into tool names and the English language. Before the 18th century, spelling and grammar were not yet set in concrete. (see Reference 1: *How people spelled when they could spell as they liked – before the 18th century*). Literate people spelled as they heard the words (i.e., phonetically).

On reading Bill Bryson's *Mother Tongue* (Reference 2), a book about the evolution of the English language, I was reminded that in the olden days, in England (and its colonies), "e" was often pronounced as an "a". Examples that come to mind are the first "e" in Derby, Jervis Bay, Berkshire, Berkley, etc. Now if you pronounce the first "e" in "rebate" as an "a", it sounds like "rabate" which is not too different from "rabbet". In the 17th and 18th Centuries, few craftsmen were literate and one can see how "rebate" and "rabbet" were interchangeable.

With reference to Joseph Moxon (1678, Reference 3), Alvin Sellens (1990, Reference 4), Ralph Salaman (1990, Reference 5) and W.L. Goodman (1964, Reference 6), I have prepared the following table showing that quite a few old English tool names have been retained in America. The spellings "ax" and "gage" have only "recently" (certainly within my lifetime) been supplanted in the U.S.A. by the modern English spellings "axe" and "gauge".

### References :

1. Steve Bett : *How people spelled when they could spell as they liked before the 18th century* (Type this into Google).
2. Bill Bryson : *Mother Tongue, The English Language*. Penguin Books, 1991.
3. Joseph Moxon : *Mechanick Exercises or the Doctrine of Handy-Works*, 1678, Third Edition 1703. Reprinted by The Astragal Press, Morristown, New Jersey, 1989.
4. Alvin Sellens : *Dictionary of American Hand Tools*, 1990 (Privately printed by Sellens, Augusta, KS).
5. Raphael Salaman : *Dictionary of Woodworking Tools c 1700 - 1970*, Revised Edition Reprinted 1990, The Taunton press, Allen & Unwin.
6. W. L. Goodman : *The History of Woodworking Tools*, 1964. G. Bell & Sons Ltd., London.
7. Witold Rybczynski : *One Good Turn : A Natural History of the Screwdriver and the Screw*. Simon & Schuster, Touchstone Books, 2001 (An excellent book; there's a copy in TTTG Library.)

TABLE: "ANCIENT" AND "RECENT" TOOL NAMES

<b>G.B. 17th &amp; 18th Centuries</b>	<b>U.S. "Recent"</b>	<b>U.K. Recent</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Ax	Ax	Axe	
Calipers ( ? )	Calipers	Callipers	
Clamp	Clamp	Cramp	
Dado Plane ( ? )	Dado Plane	Trenching Plane Housing Plane Grooving Plane	Scotland: Raglet Plane
Filletster Plane ( ? )	Filletster Plane	Fillister Plane	Scotland: Filletster Plane
Fore-Plane	Foreplane	Jack Plane (large)	Stanley No. 6  Scotland: Panel Plane (e.g., Spiers)
Gage	Gage	Gauge	
Joynter and Jointer	Jointer	Trying Plane	Stanley No. 7
Miter Plane	Miter Plane	Mitre Plane	And Miter / Mitre Square, etc.
Molding Plane	Molding Plane ( ? )	Moulding Plane	
Plow Plane	Plow Plane	Plough Plane	
Razee Plane ( ? )	Razee Plane	Technical School Jack Plane	
Twybil	Twybil	(A type of) Mortising Axe	"Twybil" making a comeback in U.K.
Wrench ( ? ) Note: "spanner" was a tool for winding- up the spring on a matchlock firearm (See Reference 7)	Wrench	Spanner	

Notes : For tools marked with a ( ? ) in Column 1, I have not been able to find an old English reference to this spelling. If anyone finds a reference to this spelling from Great Britain or elsewhere, please let me know.

Some old English spellings which did not survive the transition to modern America are : turnscrew (screwdriver), gimblet (gimlet), plyers (pliers), tennant saw (tenon saw).

## Really Olde Tools.

Clynt Sheehy.

Like many TTTG members, my interest in the use of tools began by "helping" my dad with home repairs and other handyman work. I was later fortunate to be placed in the bottom (technical) class at Randwick Boys' High School where I studied woodwork, metalwork and tech drawing. The consequence of this is that I know the difference between a marking gauge and a pair of vernier callipers but I can't read Latin.

My step-grandfather, T.K. Smith, died before I was born and we subsequently used his Disston handsaw as a general purpose saw up until I joined TTTG and learned to treasure such things. From Michael Dunbar's book "Restoring, Tuning & Using Classic(al) Woodworking Tools" I was awakened to the difference between this late 19th or early 20th Century Disston saw the family had been using for pruning, etc, and a "modern" handsaw. The Disston saw has a smooth, rounded, comfortable handle which could be used all day by a carpenter without raising blisters; a "modern" saw (if it has a wooden handle) has a handle with flat sides with sharp edges which would soon become uncomfortable if used continuously. (The several other differences in the quality of the early Disston saws over "modern" saws are discussed at TTTG's Saw Sharpening Workshops.)

My interest in old things in general began to focus on the history and development of tools from over the eons. The late Ken Roberts book "Some 19th Century English Woodworking Tools" illustrates tools from the 19th Century and his "Tools from the Trades and Crafts", those from the late 18th century and early 19th century. Note: Ken was a long-time member of TTTG and visited and addressed us on two occasions. The Illustration (Fig. 1) on the following page showing the contents of a Gentleman's Tool Chest, circa 1837, is from the latter of these two books.

It may be seen that the tools in this illustration are not markedly different from those available to-day; so I delved deeper into the past.

Joseph Moxon's book "Mechanick Exercises or the Doctrine of Handy-Works" was published in 1678 and was the first English book to describe and illustrate the tools of the various trades and explain their use from the point of view of the practitioner. Fig. 2 shows woodworking tools from Moxon's book.

Once again, the tools shown are not that different from those available to-day. I therefore took what I thought would be a quantum leap backwards to biblical times. Jesus Christ was, no doubt, the most noted carpenter in history; so I attempted to research the tools Jesus would have used.



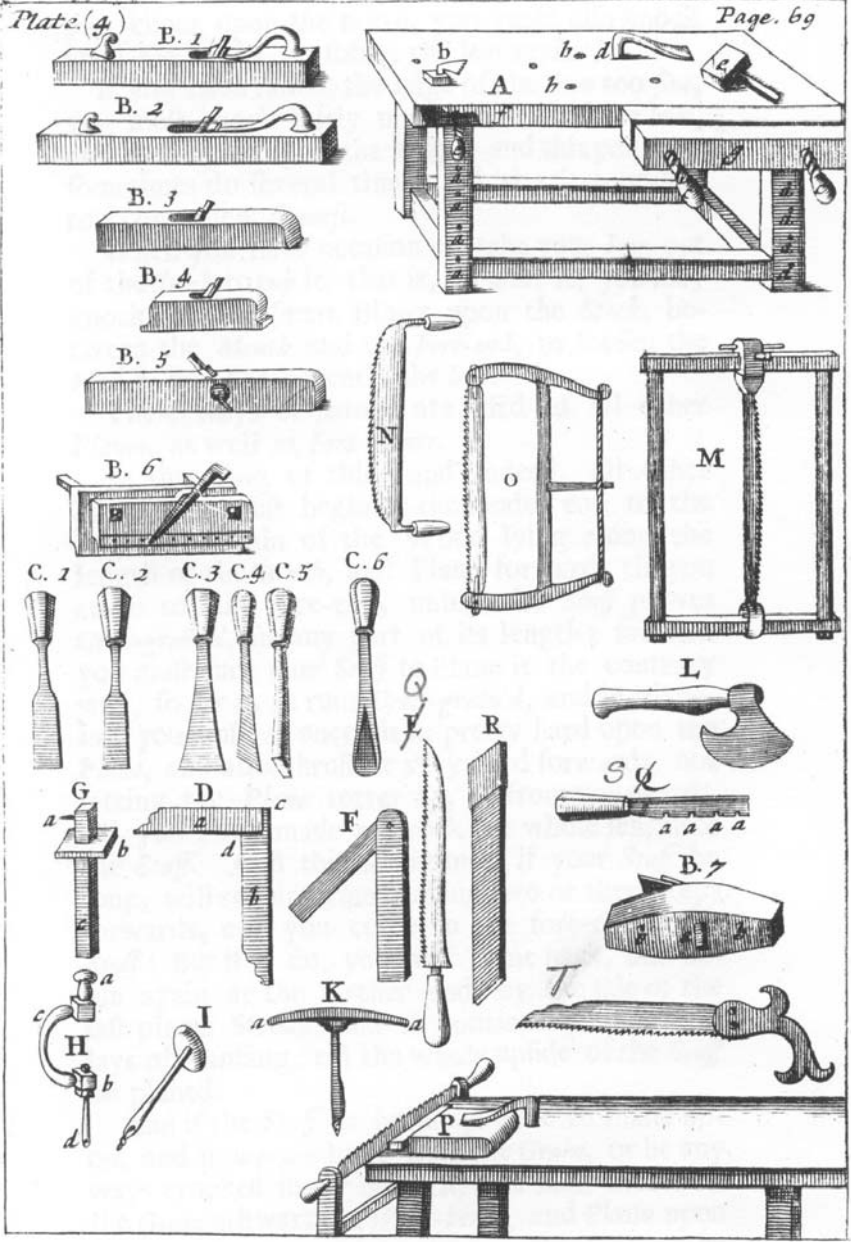


Fig. 2 Tools from Moxon's book (1678) – (Reference 4)  
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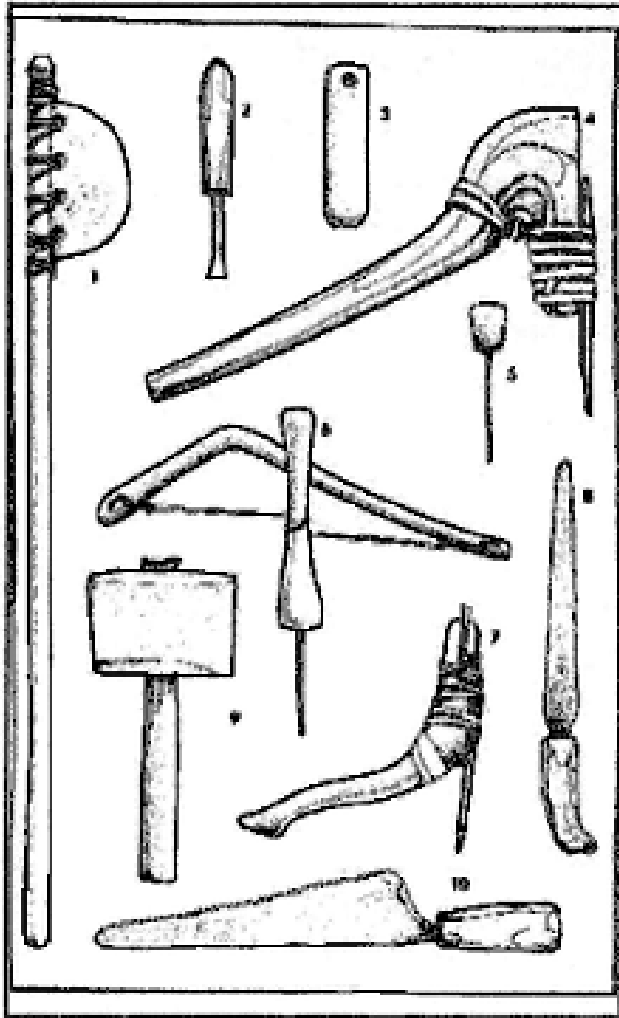


Fig. 3 Tools from the Rev. Jack Barr's "The Biblical Wood Shop" (Reference 6) .

The BC-AD transition was well into the Iron Age which Haedeke (Reference 5) suggests started before 3000 BC on the basis that colossal statues carved by the ancient Egyptians which were hewn out of granite, basalt and syenite have markings which indicate that iron or steel tools were used. In fact, a broken piece of iron was actually found in a crack in Cheops' pyramid, erected circa 3000 BC.

The Reverend Jack Barr is a minister with a keen interest in carpentry. Quoting Rev. Barr (See Reference 6): "Jesus was a carpenter (Mark 6:3), and as a result, the work of a carpenter in Bible times has been somewhat idealized. Carpentry was a rough, tough job that demanded a great deal of physical strength and endurance." On his website, the Reverend Barr gives an illustration of the following biblical age tools: axe, chisel, hone, two adzes, awl, bowdrill, small saw, mallet and handsaw. These tools are shown in Fig. 3.

Notwithstanding that tools from Israel, circa 20 AD, may not have been as sophisticated as those from Europe, notably Roman tools (see Reference 7), I believe that the tools in Fig. 3 would represent those from well back into the BC era.

Goodman, Reference 7, gives evidence that the Romans, at about the beginning of the Christian era, were in possession of the plane and that the plane already had a long history behind it. (The earliest surviving planes were preserved in the ash from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, 79 AD.)

Nevertheless, the tools in Rev. Jack Barr's illustration (Fig. 3) are easily recognizable as not being dramatically different from modern-day hand tools. My discovery that hand tools have changed little in well over 2000 years left me somewhat frustrated, disappointed, disillusioned or nonplussed (what is the word?) but at the same time demonstrated to me that the evolution of hand tools has been one of gradual improvement since the Stone Age rather than change in quantum leaps.

Hand tool improvement occurred to meet the needs of the professional user and, in my opinion, reached its zenith in the first quarter of the 20th Century after which power tools have been used for an increasing number of operations.

There are, of course, excellent but expensive hand tools still made for the discerning user (some of which are based on the designs of yesteryear) but anyone who doubts that handyman hand tool quality is not what it used to be should visit their nearest hardware store.

## References and Bibliography

1. Michael Dunbar: "Restoring, Tuning & Using Classic Woodworking Tools"; Sterling Publishing Co. Inc, New York, 1989
2. Kenneth D. Roberts: "Some 19th Century English Woodworking Tools"; Kenneth D. Roberts Publishing Co., Fitzwilliam, N.H., 1980.
3. Kenneth D. Roberts: "Tools for the Trades and Crafts, An 18th Century Pattern Book, R. Timmins & Sons, Birmingham"; Kenneth D. Roberts Publishing Co., Fitzwilliam, N.H., 1976.
4. Joseph Moxon: "Mechanick Exercises or the Doctrine of Handy-Works", 1678, Reprinted from the 1703 edition; Reprinted by The Astragal Press, Morristown, New Jersey, 1989.
5. Hanns-Ulrich Haedeke: "Metalwork", U.S. Edition: The Universe Social History of the Decorative Arts; Universe Books, New York City, 1969.
6. Rev. Jack Barr: "The Biblical Wood Shop"; <http://www.barr-family.com/godsword/wood.htm>
7. W.L. Goodman: "The History of Woodworking Tools"; G. Bell and Sons, Ltd, London, 1964.
8. Clynt Sheehy: "Thomas K. Smith (1855-1940) A brief biography"; The Traditional Tools Group Newsletter No. 80 December 2004, pages 16-19.

## Henry's Sydney Tool Sale

Henry's Sydney Tool Sale is on again!

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> August

Concord High School (same venue as last year)

Stanley Street Concord 9am to 2pm

## **THE LEDGER.**

### **New Members**

On behalf of the TTTG Executive and Members, a welcome is extended to new Members :-

**Peter Stower (M419)                      Stephen Richardson (M420)**

### **Our Post Office Box**

Due to an error by Australia Post, our address quoted in the subscription renewal notice in the April, 2006 TTTG Newsletter was PO Box N240, Royal Exchange, NSW, 1225. Australia Post has since advised that we should revert to N240 Grosvenor Place, NSW, 1220. There is no need to panic; any mail sent to N240 Royal Exchange (provided that the 240 was preceded by "N") will automatically go to PO Box N240, Grosvenor Place, NSW, 1220. Future correspondence should, of course, be forwarded to PO Box N240, Grosvenor Place, NSW, 1220.

### **Workshops**

TTTG's next workshops are the ever-popular Plane Tuning Workshop on Sunday, 25th June, 2006 and the Dovetailing Workshop on Sunday, 23rd July, 2006. Both these all-day workshops at Asquith Boys' High School commence at 9:30 am. For info on either workshop, 'phone TTTG Events Co-ordinator, Peter Evans, on 0419 245 699 or President, Bob Crosbie, on 9869 7487 or just turn up; Members \$20, non-members \$40. (Note: non-members may join on the day. By paying \$50 they get both the workshop and the enormous benefits of membership until 30/6/07 - What incredible value !)

### **Friends Interested in Tools ?**

Do you have friends interested in tools, their use or their history? If so, why not urge them to join The Traditional Tools Group? If they join now, they will receive for their very nominal \$30 annual subscription, membership up until 30th June, 2007.

### **2006 – 07 Memberships**

Please fill out the subscription renewal notice (loose with this issue of the Newsletter) and forward it to me (alternatively, see me at the next TTTG meeting). TTTG's new policy, similar to other clubs, is that if you haven't paid within a month of the due date, then you won't receive the subsequent Newsletter but the Hon. Secretary will send you a polite reminder. This doesn't necessarily mean that you'll get the missed Newsletter as print runs are limited.

Clynt Sheehy

Kiama Woodcraft Group Expo-2006.



John, on the right, and Michael, on the left, at the Expo.

Behind Michael can be seen the Cedar Gerstner Machinist's Chest made by Jim Davey.

## Kiama Woodcraft Group Expo-2006.

John Daniel.

It just gets better and better. The Kiama Woodcraft Group (Inc.) put on a great Expo in March, demonstrating their wide diversity of skills, including woodturning, carving, scroll sawing to name just a few. The understanding of their craft, aspects of design and use of traditional tools is to be commended.

Speaking of traditional tools, the TTTG Inc. stand was much appreciated by not only the Kiama members but locals and visitors alike. Many were return visitors from previous years who were not disappointed, while others couldn't believe their "luck" to see a display of tools, most unexpected in a "coastal village".



A simple display of boring and drilling tools.

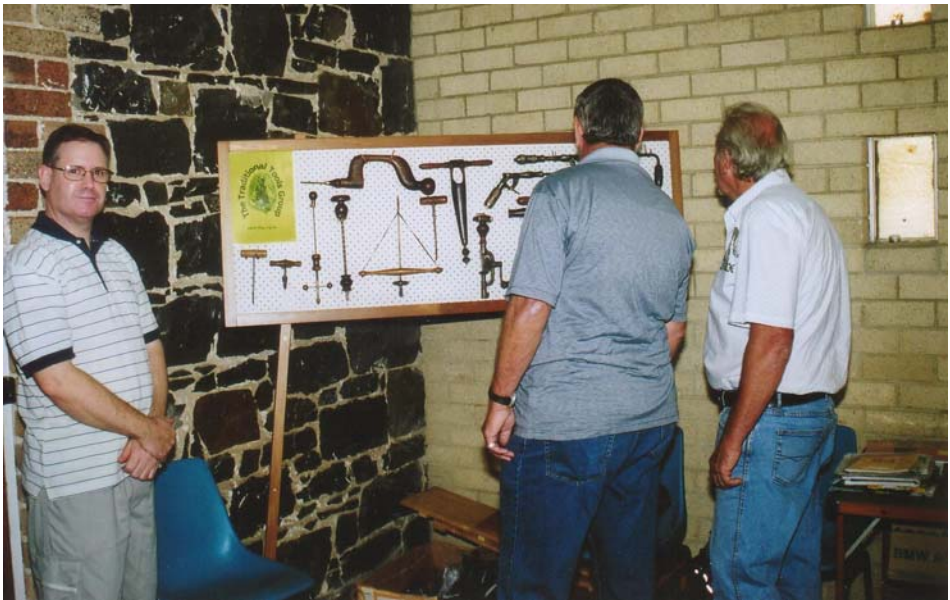
On the Saturday, Morris Brunton (a new TTTG member) was the first to arrive. It wasn't long before Morrie had his sleeves rolled up helping Malcolm Ward (timber man from up the coast) unload and sort out his planks, burls, boards and flitches. Morrie, a timber man himself, can't help himself when it comes to the smell of freshly milled timber.

Jim Davey set up his bench displaying his assortment of sharpening and tuning supplies. Jim's "Australian made" reproduction of a Gernster Machinist's Chest drew much attention with several offers to take it off his hands. The workmanship was acknowledged by our local craftspeople.

It was good to have Bob Sheehan and Michael Purcell as part of the team, their knowledge and wide experiences were readily shared, overall resulting in a very pleasant and informative day.

On the Sunday, Mike Purcell fronted up again for a second helping of "I have one of those at home" or "that Bailey shouldn't have a Stanley lever cap" However we coped.

Such comments were ably erased by “great display” or “Wow! it’s a pity they don’t make tools like that these days”.



Michael Purcell enjoying a quiet moment.

It was a great weekend, an opportunity afforded by the generosity of the Kiama Woodcraft Group. Our Tool Group got a plug at every opportunity and I feel confident that we had the occasional convert to the traditional way of doing things.

We are already planning for next year.

### **The 2006 Sydney Timber and Working With Wood Show.**

June 2-4, Sydney Show Ground.

News 89 was being printed while the Show was on. No time to write a report!

The outstanding events of the Show will be discussed in News 90.

The TTTG Committee put a lot into organising this year’s TTTG participation.

Those who attended will agree that the displays were excellent.

The TTTG Joiner’s Tool Chest generated much interest.

Jim’s sharpening demos “dragged them off the street”. The demos were great.

The Committees thanks all the volunteers.

If you can help at the 2007 Sydney Show, or the Canberra Show, sign up now!

## **Ebay Surfer.**

### **User made tools.**

Here is an interesting chamfer plane, made out of a piece of angle iron with a handle and “frog” welded on. The mouth looks a bit wide. The blade is presumably (judging by the hole in the top) made from a machine hacksaw blade. Wonder how well it worked? Is such ingenuity still around?



### **Editor's explanation.**

Only a few TTTG Committee members know the true identity of Ebay Tragic. His contributions to News arrive unsolicited by email. For the last few months Ebay Tragic had been silent and then the above contribution appeared on the screen. I can only assume that he is too busy surfing the net to devote time to his protected philosophical speculations in News. Such brief contributions are welcome and in way of encouraging more of the same the editor has renamed him Ebay Surfer.

### **Other Web News.**

Hans Brunner is back in business on his own. Hans has revamped his web site and it is now very user friendly. Lots of bargains. By the time this is published Auction 12 will be well underway. We look forward to seeing Hans in Sydney later in the year at Henry Blacks Tool Sale.

### **Henry's Sydney Tool Sale.**

See the notice on page 26.

