

WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern
Woodworkers
Association

September 2013, Vol. 22, Number 7

September Meeting

*Thursday, September 12, 7:00 pm
Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House
Heritage Lane, Albany NY*

Plywood, MDF, MDO, A-B, CDX, ETC.

By Charlie Goddard

Many projects made by woodworkers incorporate sheet materials. But, it is not always clear which one should be used for a given application, and the selection far exceeds what may be available from the big box stores.

To help remove some of the mystery of sheet goods, Ken Stefanik, founder and president of Premium Plywood Products has agreed to meet with us to discuss the various materials that are available and to indicate how each one is best used. For over 20 years Premium Plywood Products has been one of the largest wholesale distributors of hardwood plywoods and specialty wood products in upstate New York.

In 1975, Ken began work in the plywood industry as a forklift operator and was promoted to specialize in both inside and outside sales. In 1986, Ken was recruited to launch and manage the upstate New York branch of a plywood wholesale company, based upon his knowledge of the industry and his strong relationships with customers.

In 1992, Ken Stefanik founded Premium Plywood Products to ensure that every customer received the very best service and product quality on a daily basis. Ken oversees all operations of the business.

Premium Plywood's extensive customer base includes commercial millwork companies, architectural woodworkers, sign companies, custom cabinet manufacturers, cabinet refinishing companies, custom furniture makers, display manufacturers, scenic design studios, molding manufacturers, high end

mould manufacturers, custom closet manufacturers, specialty audio manufacturers, countertop manufacturers and construction and development companies.

As a family-owned and operated business since its inception, Premium Plywood prides itself on delivering the best service and product quality to each and every customer - big or small. More information may be found at www.PremiumPlywoodProducts.com.

A Home Grown Tool Test

By Tom Osborne

A Comparison of Chisels, their Design, and a touch of the Woodworking Cultures of both Japanese and Western Styles



Lie-Nielsen Chisels

Recently, thanks to Wally Carpenter, I had the opportunity to perform a tool test on an impressive set of Japanese chisels. They were compared with my western style chisels resulting in some interesting information. I included differences in the tools and blended the culture of the two differing wood working communities. Touching on the Japanese culture was based primarily from books and feedback from folks like Thomas Lie-Nielsen and Ernie Conover since we

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Lumber and Tool Auction

September 28, 2013, Shaker Heritage Barn

The next Lumber and Tool auction will be held at the Shaker barn on September 28. Doors will open at 10 am for inspection and the auction will start at noon.

There will be a large quantity of lumber, including hard maple, cherry, soft maple, butternut, walnut and red oak. There will also be some smaller selections of more exotic woods, including a very nice piece of pink ivory.

For tools there will be dust collectors, table saw, drill press, small jointer, chop saw and many smaller power tools and hand tools.

There is still time to donate to the auction. If you have woodworking items that you would like to donate please contact Dick Flanders, Warren Stoker or Charlie Goddard. Items may be donated outright or we can sell on a 50/50 basis. All donations are fully tax deductible.

Prior to and during the auction we will need volunteers. Starting on Wednesday, September 25, all of the lumber and tools that are in storage will need to be moved into the big barn, staged for sale and tagged. On auction day we will need help keeping records and displaying the items for sale.

If you are willing to help please contact Dick Flanders (rflander@nycap.rr.com, 393-5215), Warren Stoker (wstoker38@gmail.com, 439-6089) or Charlie Goddard (cgodd@aol.com, 370-0388).

The annual auction is the primary funding source for the Fiske Fund. Each year the Fund awards thousands of dollars in grants to those who want to attend woodworking courses.

The 2013/2014 Program Schedule

By Karen Arkison

The days are getting shorter and the nights cooler which can only mean one thing.

It's time to start the new NWA year. The meeting schedule for this year is below. As always, we will start each meeting off with announcements followed by coffee & donuts for our social break and top the evening off with the featured presentation. It's looking like another great year of educational fun at the Shaker Meeting Hall. Come join the fun and learn something new along the way. All meetings begin promptly (more or less) at 7:00 pm.

September 12, 2013

Ken Stefanik "Premium Plywood"

October 10, 2013

Norton Industries "Stone Sharpening"

November 14, 2013

Doug Stowe "Fiske Lecture" at the Clifton Park Senior Center

December 12, 2013

Family Night at the Clifton Park Senior Center

January 9, 2014

Carl Borst "Carving"

February 13, 2014

"Men with Musical Instruments who know how to make them"

Martin Maccica "Violins & Mandolins"

Michael Zagorski "Electric Guitars"

Paul Busman "Penny Whistles"

March 13, 2014

Tom Osborne "Machine Applications"

April 10, 2014

Garrett Hack "TBA"

May 8, 2014

Mid Hudson "TBA"

Election of Officers



A Home Grown Tool Test

Continued from Cover

didn't know a Japanese carpenter that could help us with the subject. This article's genesis came out of a home-grown NWA discussion about some chisels, how they work, and how one feels and performs in comparison to the another.

Five different sets of chisels were included: Two western style - a set of Pfeil made in Switzerland and a set of Lie-Nielsen made in the U.S.A. I tested three sets of Japanese chisels. One was a set of three chisels made of blue steel by the blacksmith named Michio Tasai (son of Akoi Tasai). The next was a white steel set of five made by the blacksmith Masayoshi. I used Japanese style dovetail chisels: two Matsumura blue steel chisels and one with no name. I didn't include some of the other western brands that I had access to while quite good, they were not up to the ones that we used in the test. Again, remember this was not an all inclusive and finally decisive test.

Japanese chisels are a little different

For those of you not familiar with Japanese chisels, the following is a brief description of how they differ from the western type. They are not so different that you have to learn a new way to use them.

Japanese chisels are still made the same way the western style blades were produced in the seventeenth, eighteen and early nineteenth century. To make the cutting edge, the blacksmith would start with an iron billet, heat it to incandescent and fold it in half using a flux in between folds, then hammering them together forming a weld.

This is done ten times resulting in 1,024 layers of hard steel known as Damascus steel. The cost of hard steel was very high at that time and a solid hard blade would be cost prohibitive. The Japanese still make the blade and handle support, which is the bulk of the tool, out of mild steel. They then forge a piece of very hard steel to the bottom of the blade to form a good cutting edge, and cut a hollow area in the bottom of the hard steel to help with sharpening. The soft steel body helps absorb vibration allowing harder steel to be used as the cutting edge.

They use one of two types of steel to make the hard part of their blades, white steel or blue steel. Believe it or not, the steel used is designated by the color paper that the billet is wrapped in when it comes to the blacksmith. White steel wrapped in white paper is a pure carbon steel- very brittle, and can chip easily. It appears to be the traditional steel use for centuries, and was commonly used in soft woods.



Matsumura Chisels



Masayoshi Chisels

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WOODWORKERS NEWS

is published by the Northeastern Woodworkers Association for its members. The Association's aim is to provide a common meeting ground for lovers of woodworking who want to know more about wood and the techniques for forming it. The newsletter is published monthly. The newsletter is available online at www.woodworker.org



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A Home Grown Tool Test

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The blue steel wrapped in blue paper is an alloy, and can be used on hard woods that they started to work with after the advent of sawmills. The use of this alloy



Michio Tasai Chisels

steel cut down on chipping of the cutting edge, making it useable on hardwood. The Japanese chisel handles are made with a tang and bolster type construction. The wooden handle, typically made of Japanese oak has a hoop at the hammer end to keep the handle from splitting. The Japanese chisels tend to have a shorter blade than western bench chisels. You can see these chisels by going online to www.japanwoodworker.com, click on 'woodworking', and then click on 'chisels'. The Japanese, as with the western woodworker had a chisel designed for each need, such as low angle, paring chisels mortising chisels, the same assortment as the western craftsman and perhaps more.

The Western style chisel

The western, Pfeil chisels have white Beech handles with steel ferrules made of sheet metal. I have owned and used these chisels for over 30 years and the handles have not mushroomed



Pfeil Chisels

over or split, in fact the ferrules are glued in place or they would fall off. The handle is supported by a bolster, though not as substantial as the one on the Japanese tools. The blade is solid chrome vanadium ground to 25 degree bevel, with a long thin bevel edged blade that can be used rather well as a paring chisel. The steel is hard and will chip if forced too much in hardwood but the combination of using it as a paring chisel and being able to strike it lightly if needed is a benefit. The blade is one homogeneous solid piece of steel with no forged piece as a cutting edge.

The Lie-Nielsen chisels are made with A2 steel, hardened to Rockwell 60-62. They have a socket type handle rather than a tang and bolster- a plus for heavily used chisels. Hornbeam is their wood of choice for the handles and they do not use hoops or ferrules on the hammer end. My set is quite old and well-used. I purchased them the first year Lie-Nielsen came out with their chisels, and the handles are not in the least mushroomed over. They were ground to a 30 degree angle and, as with the Pfeil referred to above and all the western style chisels, the blades are one solid piece of homogeneous steel no hardened piece forged to make a cutting edge. The Lie-Nielson has beveled edges, blades as thick as the Japanese chisels and thicker than the Pfeil. The steel is tough and holds up well to use in hard woods. The A2 steel does not do well according to some at a lesser angle needed to make a good paring chisel so Lie-Nielsen offers the same set in A1 steel ground at 25 degrees, with an option of long handles to make a set of paring chisels. On a subjective note the western chisels don't seem to feel as balanced as their Japanese counterparts but the Lie-Nielsens are, to me, nearly as good and better than the many other western chisels I have used.

A little on steel hardness of the steel in wood-working tolls- the Rockwell scale of steel hardness was developed in 1914 to set the standard that we adhere today. The table below gives the hardness of steel used as pertaining to woodworking tools. The information was given to us by Ernie Conover.

Steel Type	Rockwell Hardness
Fully Hardened High Carbon steel	HRC 68
Japanese tools	HRC 64-65
Bench chisels, Plane blades, turning Tools and Gouged	HRC 58-62
Scrapers, Mortise Chisels, springs	HRS 48-51
Axes, Cold Chisels	HRC 40-45
Fully Annealed Steel	HRC 20

A little on the two different woodworking cultures:

The craftsman of both east and west had the same goal: to build a needed object, be it a dwelling or a piece of furniture for that dwelling or perhaps

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A Home Grown Tool Test

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a chair and make a living in their chosen trade. Because the two cultures were separated by a great distance and a lack of technology in travel and communication, they took different routes when developing their tools and trade. In the west a young man would sign on at a local shop for a five year contract as an apprentice and he would start his career by performing the non skilled needs of the shop while learning the trade. He would work his way up the ladder until after five years he would become a journeyman. After that he would leave that shop and travel from town to town signing up at shops in a different town to work for a year or so. He would move on doing the same thing until he found a place to open his own shop. By that time he would have learned from several different masters and developed skills and upon opening his shop would then compete with other shops in his town.

The Japanese apprentice would sign up with one master when quite young and stay with him for up to seven years to learn the trade. Then he could start out on his own but would not be as respected as his master and would need to take lesser jobs to get by. I find it interesting that the Japanese did much more work on site than did the western craftsman. In the west, specialty woodworking shops that built custom furniture and/or windows were common. But in Japan much more was built on site by each special trade, perhaps due to lack of space for a shop, and the different type of furniture used in their culture; their furnishings seemed to be minimal, and mostly built on site. Very few shops were needed.

The first home grown tool test

I received the harder white steel set of chisels made by the Japanese blacksmith Masayoshi from Wally Carpenter. Wally had purchased these chisels several years ago and stated he was not as happy with them. They would chip easily in hard wood. He also sent two Matsumura Blue steel cabinet chisels, one 1/4" and one 3/8" along with a dovetail chisel no name. With this group he sent one high end chisel made by the Blacksmith Michio Tasai. The handle hoops had been set only on the two Matsumura and one dovetail chisels so I took the time to set them on the others. The hoop on the Michio Tasai may have been factory set but we improved a little on it. All of the chisels Wally sent were ground and honed to a 30 degree bevel within a 2 degree variance so I set my set of Lie-Nielsens to that same angle and honed all of the chisels on an 8000 water stone. The Pfeil set I left at 25 degrees to see how they hold up.

The first test I did was to cut a mortise in some air dried cherry using about the same size chisel from each group. None of them are mortising chisels, but it was a good test of the cutting edge. The results were up front and fast in coming. The white steel chisels and the Pfeil chipped (the chipping I am referring to means that tiny flakes of metal are left on the wood) quickly with the Japanese having larger chips. One of the blue steel chisels had a minor corner chip and the Lie-Nielsen had no chips but did dull down some. The Michio Tasai held up well and stayed sharper than the others.

Now comes the big part, and that was the difficulty I had in shaping. The Pfeil had to start on a 4000 water stone then to an 8000 and took some extra time on both. The Lie-Nielsen took only a short while on the 8000. The blue steel needed time on both the 4000 and the 8000, about the same as the Pfeil, due to the chip. The Michio Tasai took only a little longer than the Lie-Nielsen on an 8000 stone. Then I started on the white steel chisel by Masayoshi. There was a large chip in one corner and several smaller ones. I started with a 250 water stone but because it was a narrow chisel I switched to a coarse diamond stone and spent much time and work honing out the chips. After that I went to a finer diamond stone to start the polish, next I switched to a black Arkansas stone then finally to the 8000 water stone. It took over an hour to get the nicks out. On a subjective note this was not a good introduction of these chisels to me. However the others seemed to do well and I did like the feel of them. My opinion of how they performed in this test that was really abuse of a standard chisel as they say use the correct tool, in this case a mortising chisel. I did this cut with the standard chisel because I believe many woodworkers won't have the proper chisel and will use the bench chisels in their shop.

- 1) The Lie-Nielsen came out on top by having no chips and was the quickest to hone back in shape.
- 2) The Michio Tasai had no chips and took just a little longer to hone, it is equal to if not better than the Lie-Nielsen. (Hard to choose)
- 3) The Matsumura dulled more quickly and chipped a little - Ok performance.
- 4) The Pfeil had many chips and took extra time to hone them out but as stated before this chisel is at a 25 degrees bevel.
- 5) The Masayoshi chipped badly and took a long time to sharpen. They say to never pry with Japanese chisels but that is how you cut a mortise.

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CHAPTER NEWS

Mid Hudson Chapter

By Wally Cook

Chapter Picnic: Plan on attending the chapter picnic at the West Hurley Park on Saturday, September 14 from noon to 4PM. Bring a dish to share and a prize for the raffle table!

Klompen: Have you ever wondered how wooden shoes are made – or why? The Hurley Heritage Museum acquired the tools required to produce wooden shoes – or ‘klompen’ from a retired woodworker in the mid-west. This purchase sparked an interest in this specialized woodcraft. Here’s what we learned:

These whole foot clogs were originally produced as a cheap, dry solution for working in wet, lowland areas. The Netherlands are renowned for their clogs, but similar



1. Square the bottom and inside surface with broad axe
2. Rough shape the exterior with the axe and stock knife
3. Start a hole with soon auger
4. Enlarge the hole and hollow the shoe with spoon auger and hook gouges

wooden shoes were also made in other European countries. In France, they were known as sabot (“to walk noisily”). One story is that workers threw their sabot shoes into machinery intended eliminate jobs – thus ‘sabotage’.

Three million pairs of wooden shoes are produced each year in the Netherlands. About two-thirds are for the tourist market, but one million pairs are actually used domestically. Wooden shoes have achieved safety ratings on par with Steel-toed work boots, able to resist penetration and denting.

The traditional wood for the shoes is willow, but now most shoes are made from aspen or poplar. The wood must be green and may be further dampened to help shape the clog. A pair is made in one sitting – between 1-3 hours -- and left to air dry. Traditional klompen are made using a small broad axe, hinged stock knife, a hook knife, and several size spoon augers. Half a log will serve as a work bench.

The maker begins by cutting a length of log close the foot size of the intended user. The log is quartered

around the pith, creating four blanks. Square up the bottom and inside-facing surfaces of each blank, with the broad axe (the blade is flat on one side). The axe is then used to create a ‘click’ space – the gap between the heel and instep. Rough out the exterior shape with the axe. The shoe blanks now start to resemble boat shapes.

The hinged stock knife is like a paper-cutter on steroids. Generally cutting with the grain, it is used to refine the outside shape of the shoe. Long, smooth strokes are used with the grain. Cross grain chopping is also possible with this very sharp and heavy blade. At this stage, the shoe blank is held by hand on the workbench, while the stock knife pivots against its hinge.



The hinged stock knife is used to refine the shape of the shoe

The hook tool refines the heel and toe of the shoe. The finish of the toe is a distinct calling card of the maker; slight differences are found by region.



The shoes are held by wedges as the hollowing is started with the spoon auger

Hollowing the inside of the shoe is accomplished with the augers. A spoon auger is a long, very sharp gouge. To start the opening, it is pressed firmly against the wood and quickly rotated back and forth. One or two holes are started at the shoe entry. To enlarge the holes, the auger is rotated either clockwise or counterclockwise in the manner of a melon-baller, scooping out melon ball-like slices of wood. Various size spoon augers may be employed to create the interior space, including an arch and opening to the tip of the shoe.

When the shoe is hollowed, a small auger is used to drill a hole through the inside facing surface of the left and right shoes. The shoes are then tied together through the holes and left to season.

CHAPTER NEWS

Sacandaga Chapter

By Gary Spencer

Our Sacandaga Chapter will begin this season's first activity on September 11th with a presentation that was postponed from our May meeting. Our presenter will be Jeff Meuwissen of Northville and is a member of both NWA and the Sacandaga Chapter. His presentation will focus on marquetry and intarsia. He has recently completed a table top sized piece of work as well as several unique smaller pieces with one an outstanding butterfly creation. Jeff has given previous presentations to the chapter and they have always been outstanding, don't miss this one!

Our new officers are Jim Hopkins and Don Wilson as Co-chairs, Dick Edel as Secretary/newsletter officer and Gary Spencer and Mike Kratky as NWA liaison officers.

We hope that our members have had time to spend in the shop this summer and possibly could bring some examples of your productivity to show to the Chapter during our Show and Tell part of each of our monthly meetings. In addition we do plan to continue our 50/50 program.

Our chapter regular monthly meetings are the second Wednesday of each month and begin at 7:00 P.M. Our next regular meeting will be September 11, 2013. We will meet at our shop at 55 2nd Avenue, Mayfield, NY. Come visit.

For Directions or information contact:

Jim Hopkins – 725-7322
Don Wilson – 883-3698
Gary Spencer – 863-6433

Visit the
Northeastern
Woodworkers Association
Website at
www.woodworker.org

KWA Chapter News

By Wally Cook

Antique Candlesticks: Carl Ford provided a demo on making antique-looking candlesticks, finished with milk paint. This project is a great way to practice coves, beads and fillets. Better yet, you can use wood which is relatively less desirable, because it will be painted – and the cracks and defects are actually a plus.

The candlesticks are roughly 4 3/4" tall by 4" wide at the base. The sections of the candlestick include the candle cup, the mid-section, and the base; each segment is slightly longer than the next.



Carl creates a variety of styles and embellishes with milk paint

Carl mounts a suitable blank between centers and turns a tenon on the top of the blank. With the blank remounted in a four-jaw chuck, turn a slightly concave surface (this will be the bottom of the candlestick). Keep the tailstock engaged as long as possible during this step. Now remove the tailstock and drill a hole that works for your screw chuck. Finish the bottom as you wish (Carl does not finish the bottom of his candlesticks), because the blank will be remounted in the next step.

Mount the rounded blank on the screw chuck. Make sure the screw chuck is secured correctly in the chuck and the blank is screwed down tightly. Drill a hole 7/8" in diameter, one inch deep – this will be the candle cup. Make a good finish cut at the cup lip and engage the tailstock. Carl uses a tailstock insert that was created to fit in the candle cup opening.

Using spindle turning skills make a shape that pleases you. Again, the stick may be thought of in segments: cup, mid-section, and base. Vary the length of each segment: do not make them the same length. Clean up your cuts to make them as smooth as possible.

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Sanding can be avoided, because the milk paint will hide defects. Carl does use synthetic steel wool to take off the fuzz. Paint will not stick to sharp edges, so relieve these edges with the synthetic wool.

Mix the milk paint and allow to sit for 15-20 minutes. The consistency should be creamy – a 50/50 mix of paint powder and water should provide the correct consistency. Add some water before introducing the powdered paint, and then add more water while mixing to avoid lumps. Carl applies the paint while the candlestick is on the lathe by carefully protecting the ways with a covering and running the lathe at very slow speed. If your lathe cannot run below 100 rpm, then hand-turn the candlestick while applying the paint.

Wait 15 minutes and wipe off some of the milk paint with the lathe turning. The synthetic steel wool can be used for this purpose. If you used cherry wood, you will see that the milk paint reacts with cherry (or mahogany) to make a beautiful bronze color. In any case wipe off enough paint to glimpse the wood beneath at various spots. It is important not to let the milk paint cure too much, because it is tenacious and will be difficult to remove. The milk paint actually shines up to a satin finish when burnished. A finish of choice can also be applied over the paint. Urethane will dull the paint color, but provides moisture protection (milk paint sometimes exhibits a 'blush' when exposed to moisture).

For a full instruction sheet on making the candlesticks, as well as sources for the materials used, visit Carl's webpage at: www.carlford.info

Carl's tips:

If you use a Oneway chuck, replace the lever on the key with a longer hardened steel rod for added leverage.

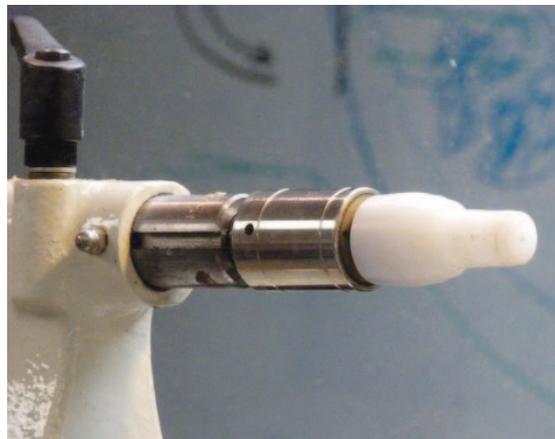
Use stop collars for both your tool rest and drills in order to maintain consistent tool height and drilling depth.

Always present your detail gouge perpendicular to the blank when rolling a ball or bead.

Use custom tailstock inserts, if you plan to make multiple objects with the same dimensions – Carl turns his own from ultra high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMW). 🐾

NWA Learning Center Has Moved

The NWA Learning Center is no longer located at Mustang Drive in Cohoes. It is now at 15 Solar Drive, Clifton Park, NY.



A custom tailstock insert is turned from UHMW to fit in the candle cup



Milk paint being applied to the candlestick

**Life should be an exciting
adventure; if not it is nothing.**

Helen Keller

A Home Grown Tool Test

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The next test.

I started with some paring tests on Brazilian Cherry. As expected the Pfeil did best, due to the angle of the bevel followed by Michio Tasai, then the Masayoshi, then the Lie-Nielsen, then the Matsumura, which seemed to dull down quickly.

After that I cut six dovetails in the same Cherry with each chisel. Not stopping to hone any of them, I did another paring test. The Pfeil did the best job on this one. The Michio Tasai was second, the Lie-Nielsen next, the Matsumura was fourth, and the Masayoshi chipped again but cut Ok. After that I sharpened them all. Except for the minor chipping in the white steel, there was not much trouble. According to some well known woodworkers the Japanese chisels sharpen faster than the western chisels, due to the thinness of the hard steel, but I have found the opposite to be true. The Japanese chisels seem to take a little longer to sharpen than the western ones.

I then did one more test of cutting off the ends of some edge banding with each chisel. The Pfeil won this hands down with its 25 degree angle. A little subjective note: the Japanese chisels have a nice balance and feel to them, perhaps because they weigh more. It shows itself when making paring cuts. However the roughness of the hammered wood above the hoop was a little uncomfortable. This again is a case for using the correct tool for the job is advised. On another note I have read of some well known woodworkers using the white steel chisels and not having the chipping problem when cutting hardwood perhaps there is a problem with this set.

The results.

- 1) The Michio Tasai cut well and sharpened Ok it felt good and held a good edge it could go longer without sharpening and cut more dovetails.
- 2) The Lie-Nielsen cut well, sharpened quickest, not as good for paring as the Tasai when dulled by use it also holds a good edge.
- 3) Matsumura cut ok and sharpened ok they seem to dull quicker but don't chip.
- 4) Pfeil cut Ok- chipped a little- sharpened Ok- best on shear test. The thin hard blade set at the 25 degrees and hard steel chip easily
- 5) Masayoshi chipped again though I was careful not to pry with them. Due to the chipping it took longer to sharpen than I would like.

Next I tried a small test of the cutting edge after a sharpening.

I placed a piece of hard Maple on the bench and held each chisel at 90 degrees hitting each one with a wooden mallet into the flat sawn grain with the cutting edge perpendicular to the direction of the grain. I tried my best to make each hit as equal in force to the other as possible. I then measured the depth of cut of each by marking the blade before extracting it from the wood. All but the Pfeil cut to about the same depth- too close to measure accurately. The Pfeil went deeper due to the low angle and thin blade. I then checked for chipping and found both the Pfeil and white steel on the Masayoshi had minor chips, but none of the others chipped. A side note: I didn't test the dovetail chisel. After sharpening I did the same test on a piece of Poplar, The results were as I would have expected- a deeper cut and no chipping on any of the chisels. I tried this test a second time with about the same results. To back up a suspicion I cut some dovetails in both the Poplar and the maple using only the Masayoshi chisels that are made with the white steel being careful not to do any prying. The result was an excellent cut in the Poplar but I could see tiny flakes of shiny metal in the cut on the Maple. This may help with the presumption that the Japanese using soft wood and the white steel being formulated for that use, but it does not explain how some well known woodworkers use white steel chisels in hardwood with no mention of chipping in their woodworking articles.

The results

- 1) Michio Tasai they cut well and sharpened well held edge like new after test
- 2) Lie-Nielsen also cut well and sharpened well (Hard to choose)
- 3) Matsumura as before did Ok
- 4) Masayoshi chipping in hard wood
- 5) Pfeil had chipping and due to the angle and thin blade it was not suited for this test.

The Endurance test

In the next test I put the chisels through was to cut forty dovetails for a wide box. Normally I would have used a jig and router to cut that many dovetails in a utility type box, but thought it a good test for the chisels. The box is made of hard maple and had ten dovetails on each corner- that is ten tails and ten pins each. I used most of the Japanese chisels in this project. Due to the limited number of them I had an equal number of western chisels. The idea was to measure how long each would hold an edge

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while doing common chisel work. The Michio Tasai chisels cut well and stayed sharp longer than the others by a fair time, however when they got to a certain point they dulled quickly and I could see tiny shiny metal flakes in the cut. They must be very small chips because the edge became rough and did not cut as well. It didn't take much effort to sharpen, but it was more than on the Lie-Nielsen. I found later that sharpening the Michio Tasai just before the rapid dulling would speed up sharpening to equal the Lie-Nielsen. The Lie-Nielsen stayed sharp a shorter time yet dulled gradually. The sharpening went quickly and there were no shiny places or rough edges, therefore I believe they didn't chip. The Matsumura did well but dulled faster than the above mentioned tools; they sharpened Ok and had no noticeable chipping. The dovetail chisel stayed sharp about as long as the Matsumura and sharpened about the same. The Masayoshi lost their sharpness sooner than the Lie-Nielsen due to chipping and dulled quickly, and they took longer to sharpen due to the need to hone out the chips. The Pfeil chisel cut well and it was handy to use them as paring chisels but they dulled rather quickly due to chipping although they sharpened quickly.

How did they do?

- 1) The Michio Tasai chisels were the best by far they held their edge longer than others and sharpened easily. Their balance and weight felt the best.
- 2) The Lie-Nielsen chisels dulled faster than the above but sharpened quickly, a few seconds on 8000 water stone is all that was needed. I like the feel of the Lie-Nielsens perhaps because of using them over several years.
- 3) The Matsumura stayed sharp about as long as the Lie-Nielsen but took longer to sharpen
- 4) The dovetail chisel did about the same as the Matsumura a nice little chisel to use
- 5) The Masayoshi chipped again however one lasted through the complete cut and didn't need sharpening at all and I know that I used it. The rest took too long to sharpen due to chips.

Conclusion

Having contacted well informed people in the woodworking world and reading a number of books on the subject, along with having tested the chisels, I have made some observations. I started this test with a bias toward the western but that may be changing, in my opinion woodworking as a hobby or even as a profession should be as pleasurable to you as it

can be, although as you will read later price of the equipment will enter into your decision

Our chisel test seems to agree with the general information on Japanese chisels that I find in books, magazines and talking to people in the trade. All that have used the Japanese style chisel say they hold an edge much longer and sharpen faster than western chisels. We have found that to be true with a good quality blue steel chisel, however the lesser quality blue steel fares no better than the western chisels. The white steel chisels chipped badly in hard wood, but may hold up longer than all of the other chisels in soft wood - a test we did not perform. There is also a way to heat treat the white steel to make it work better.

What to buy and use it is all up to you. If money is no object, then, "You get what you pay for," is a good saying to go by meaning higher quality equals higher price. I am not telling you anything new; buy the best quality you can and enjoy them. It is your hobby and therefore your form of enjoyment so, go for it.

My opinion on the chisels test is that the Japanese chisels had a better feel than the western tool, but to me, not a lot better than the Lie-Nielsen. This just my opinion, as other people find that to them there is a big difference. The homogeneous steel blade of the Lie-Nielsen chisels allows me to hollow grind my edge, this lets me sharpen quicker and reestablish my edge on the power grinder that I use when needed. I use this method on the Pfeil also but not with the same success I have on the Lie-Nielsens. You are NOT ADVISED to hollow grind Japanese chisels as it leaves the hard steel unsupported and prone to severe chipping.

Grading the chisels tested

The number one chisel in my opinion is the Michio Tasai, The feel of it makes you want to use it again. The edge stayed sharp longer than all the others and the sharpening was better than most. I can't say just what makes them feel so good to use so if you get the chance, try one and see if you feel the same. There is one distraction to the feel and that is the roughness of the hoop and wood around it when used them for paring.

I would put the Lie-Nielsen in the number 2 spot. Even after changing from the hollow ground edge they were easy to sharpen. They did dull faster than the Michio Tasai but stayed sharp longer than all the others and did not chip. The feel is not as good as the Japanese chisels but is better than any other western chisel I have used; I must say that I enjoy using them also and the handles are smooth when paring.

The dovetail chisel held its edge well and sharpened well. It was nice to use. Being a light duty

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chisel I didn't put it through the entire test but it did its job well.

Next would be the Matsumura. They have the good feel of the Japanese chisel but not as nice as the above tested, perhaps only due to the weight. They dulled quicker though, so to me they were not up to the quality of the Michio Tasai or Lie-Nielsen.

Next would be the Pfeil. Though they were ground at 25 degrees and left with the hollow ground bevel, they performed a little better than the Masayoshi and did better than all the rest when used for paring; the handles are suited for paring, so it felt good when used that way. They did chip when used heavily but we have to take into account the 25 degree and hollow ground bevel. When chipped they took some effort to sharpen.

The Masayoshi had a feel almost as good as the Michio Tasai and maybe a little better than the Lie-Nielsen but the chipping of the cutting edge in hard wood and the time it took to hone them out was just unacceptable. There may be a way to heat treat them and soften the steel turning them into a good set of chisels.

The cost comparison

Maker	Set Range	Price
Pfeil	11 chisels, 4mm - 40mm	\$496.48
Pfeil	6 chisels	\$209.10
Lie-Nielsen	10 chisels , 1/8 "- 1"	\$580.02
Lie-Nielsen	5 chisels	\$340.02
Masayoshi	13 chisels, 1.5 mm- 42 mm	\$1,217.02
Matsumura	15 chisels, 1.5 mm - 45mm	\$1,314.02
Michio Tasai	10 chisels, 3 mm - 42 mm	\$2,278.02

I would like offer my special thanks to Ernie Conover and Thomas Lie-Nielsen for their insight and knowledge given by them in writing this article. Their time and information was much appreciated. I believe we should support those that go out of their way to support us. Also, thanks to Wally Carpenter for his support and chisels. 🐶

The 2013 NWA Family Picnic

By Rich Duval

The Family Picnic was held on Sunday, July 21st at the Jonesville Fire Station. It was a lovely summer day. It was perfect weather for a picnic.

There was plenty of BBQ Chicken with all the fixings and delicious desserts of all kinds. There was plenty of chatting and lots of laughter. Of course, let's not forget the competitions.

Dick Flanders and Tom Osborne set up and ran the Hand Plane Competition. The competition was won by Matthew Bonanni. Bart Chabot was on hand demonstrating and passing on his vast knowledge of Fly Fishing. He even taught me how to properly cast a fly. Louie Anderson set up a lathe and generously made pens for children of all ages who asked. Also out amongst the trees Ken Evans treated us with some Banjo music

In the pavilion Chuck Walker and George Rutledge set up the elaborate and electronically timed track for the Tape Measure Races. Due to some difficulty with the track, we did not get a clear winner for the fasted tape powered vehicle. But the Free Standing Tape Division was won by Stefania Bonanni. Seems as though the Bonanni family has the picnic competitions all figured out.

In addition to those already mentioned, I would like to thank Bette Andrews for taking care of the door, Karen Arkison for setting up the activities, my lovely wife Theresa Duval for helping me pick up the food & cold beverages as well as purchase and decorate all the prizes. Thanks to Dick Flanders for picking up the key to the building, Lew Hill, our Hospitality Chair, for his wonderful coffee. I want to thank everyone for the delicious desserts, and all who helped set up and clean up afterwards. As with all events the NWA picnic is only possible because of volunteer efforts.

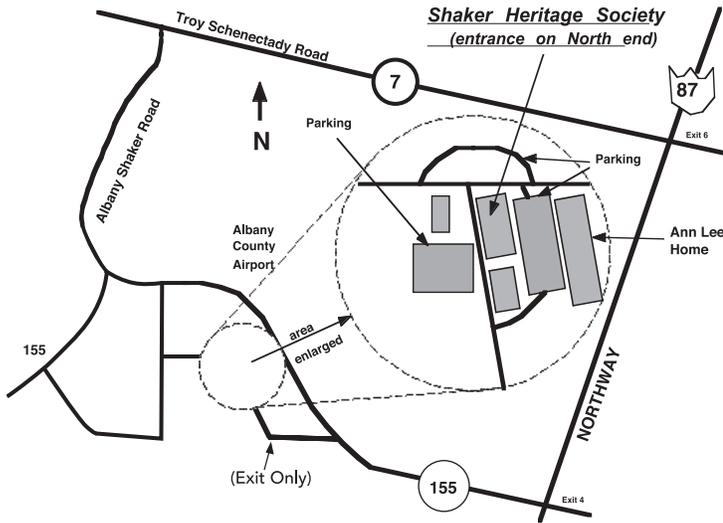
CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale

Four turned teak table legs, 29" long and 2-7/8" square at top. \$50 OBO. Also Sears 1/2" drill chuck, never used, \$10. Fits drills with 1/2" x 20 spindle threads. Chris 518-439-6268



Northeastern Woodworkers Association
P.O. Box 246
Rexford, New York 12148-0246



September Meeting

Thursday, September 12, 7:00 pm

Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House

Heritage Lane, Albany NY

**GENERAL MEETINGS
AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

For meeting cancellation information, call Ken Evans 753-7759 or Charlie Goddard 370-0388

September 12, 2013
Ken Stefanik "Premium Plywood"

October 10, 2013
Norton Industries "Stone Sharpening"

November 14, 2013
Doug Stowe "Fiske Lecture"
at the Clifton Park Senior Center

December 12, 2013
Family Night at the Clifton Park Senior Center

January 9, 2014
Carl Borst "Carving"

February 13, 2014
"Men with Musical Instruments who know how to make them"

March 13, 2014
Tom Osborne "Machine Applications"

April 10, 2014
Garrett Hack "TBA"

May 8, 2014
Mid Hudson "TBA"
Election of Officers

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

Adirondack Woodturners Association (AWA) - The AWA is active throughout the year. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month (except in January and July when it is the second Wednesday), and are held at the NWA Learning Center located at 15 Solar Drive, Clifton Park, NY from 6:30 PM to 9:00PM.

Wednesday "Learn and Turn" sessions occur on all other Wednesdays at the NWA Learning Center. These sessions run 6pm-9pm. www.adirondackwoodturners.com **Contact:** Ken Evans, 518-753-7759 or kevans1@nycap.rr.com

Scroller's Guild - Meets on the first and third Thursday of the month at the NWA Learning Center located at 15 Solar Drive, Clifton Park, NY. A beginner's session starts at 6:30 PM followed by a general meeting at 7:00 PM. **Contact:** Jeanne Aldous at AMJAMt2@aol.com or Barbara Nottke at scroller87@aol.com or 869-6268.

Kaatskill Woodturners - Meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Opdahl property in Hurley, NY. **Contact:** Matt Clark, (845) 454-9387.

NWA Crafters - Meets every Saturday and Tuesday, from 9:00 am until noon at the NWA Learning Center located at 15 Solar Drive, Clifton Park, NY. The Crafters provide public service woodworking for various charitable organizations, including the Double H Hole in the Woods camp for children and the GE Elfuns toy modifications group, and the Make A Wish Foundation. Sharing information, fellowship, and relating experiences are a major part of these sessions. **Contact:** Dave Axton (518) 237-6942, daxton@nycap.rr.com, Wayne Distin (518) 674-4171, wdistin@nycap.rr.com Steve Schoenberg (518-371-1260), sschoen1@nycap.rr.com for more information.

The NWA Wood Carvers SIG - Meet each Thursday at 5:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. all year except the 2nd Thursday of each month at the NWA Learning Center located at 15 Solar Drive, Clifton Park, NY. Programs are determined at the previous weekly sessions. Discussions start at 7PM. The goal is to promote the art of Wood Carving. Individual private sessions are available Wednesday evenings by appointment. Wood, tools, and patterns are available. **Contact:** Ray Gannon. LoRayG@Gmail.com

CHAPTERS

NWA Mid-Hudson - The chapter meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday, except July and August, at the Hurley Reformed Church. The Church is just off the Hurley exit from Rte. 209. Right at the exit, right at the stop sign and left into the Church parking area. **Contact:** Pete Chast, pchast@francomm.com.

NWA Sacandaga - The chapter meets at 7 p.m. on the Second Wednesday of each month at 55 Second Avenue, Mayfield, NY. **Contact:** Gary Spencer, 518-863-6433.