

Southwest Tool Collector's Association

**SWTCA Newsletter
March 2009**

visit our website @ www.swtca.org



*I*n preparation for an anticipated relocation to the Texas Hill Country in a couple of years, I have pulled from mothballs a very special antique I have had stashed for some thirty years. It is an elegant brass keyed lock and Handle combination dating from just before 1900 and available only for the entries to the finest establishments. It is the kind of delicate work and beautiful design that you can't buy new anymore and the opportunity to finally put it back in use after all this time both pleases me and helps fuel the excitement of the upcoming change. I have waited for this opportunity since the day I discovered it and though that was several decades ago, my moment is now approaching.

The old Wiley Hotel seemed a sad apparition as glimpsed from along the modern Interstate highway system that all but clipped the front edge from its nearly century old property line. The digression of progress in and around many old towns during the 1960s & 1970s could typically be found in East Texas as well. Hardly dead, most of these towns had merely retreated from their local beginnings on the town square and settled further back as the conveniences of each new generation gave further rise to the new flexibilities of life. Built at some point during the 1890s, this hotel location was designed as a railroad stop over with rooming house, a dining room and all the provisions availed of a town square located just across the main street. At this point in time, the remnants of yesterday still stood sentry here over an historic town past but the progress of the future threatened to neglectfully hasten and lend to its demise.

With sagging porch and partially collapsed roof above the lofty second floor attic, the old hotel had seen better days. The paint was weathered, many windows broken and the inside was a total shambles. The old fabric wallpaper still adorning some of the rooms though dull, added a needed bit of color and design to the tattered walls and the scent of ancient damp wood permeated the air from room to room growing stronger each time you ascended a stairway approaching the lofty and crumbling attic. Years of abandonment were showing and though the building was not ransacked or abused purposely, it in every way showed the tell tale signs of total neglect.

I became well acquainted with the Wiley Hotel when it was purchased by my Father some time in the mid seventies. His efforts were principally aimed at saving this structure of local historical importance while his intent was to buy enough time to hopefully find a suitable new owner capable of rehabilitating the property to somewhere near its original provenance.



He poured money into a new roof, a new porch, leveling of the foundation and window repairs. This would keep it dry and safe for the time being and buy a little short term hope.

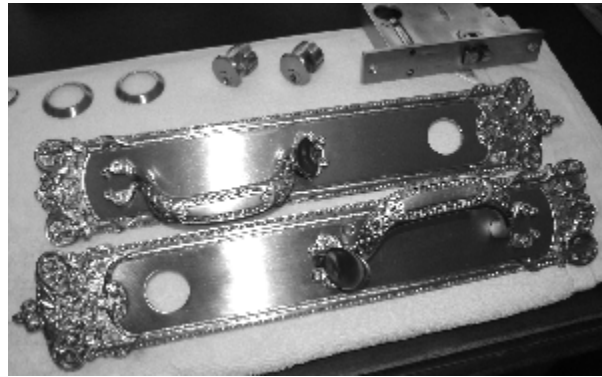
On a weekend visit I found him intently pattering around the old structure with an attention and admiration that to me seemed much too easily to have replaced that reserved for his own offspring at an earlier time! "Come look under here"I heard his voice calling from around the side of the building. The foundations had been firmed up and now sat some two feet or so above the grade level on

stone piers. As he pointed underneath, I cautiously crawled below to investigate and found myself on top of two huge doors. The doors were I estimated at the time, some 14 feet high and they each framed wide beveled glass panels in the center. Quite likely these adorned the front of a bank or mercantile building either in this town or one nearby. Very very elegant and probably salvageable at the time but buried in the mud and heavy enough to probably require a couple of oxen to remove. But the handles....the handles mounted on one of the doors were incredibly decorative and intricately detailed. I couldn't believe that such a beautiful set of brass entryway hardware could just be abandoned like this....much less, the immense set of doors that previously framed their elegance. But salvage and restoration was the issue for this hotel project so with a spirit of compatible enthusiasm, (and because I really really wanted them!), the extrication of both handles and the lockset took place there in the crawl space and with no small amount of guilt on my part, the doors were left behind. Ultimately the building passed through enough hands to assure its survival and has now been restored to the incredibly beautiful building it once was by the local Women's League.



It stands today as a beacon, both proud and colorful on I-59 North in Garrison Texas though just a bit of its local history will be traveling further West and justifiably adorn yet another favored passageway. The significance of yesterday once again the influence of tomorrow.

..... J. Goodson



"It's Alice Kramden!"



www.eaiinfo.org

NOTICE! NOTICE!

SWTCA 2009 Dues Are Now Late!

The SWTCA membership records have now been completely updated and organized into our books. This list will be going to the printer by mid March as we publish our new directory for this year. **PLEASE BE SURE YOUR INFORMATION IS CORRECT AND CURRENT!** Please contact our Secretary Carl Blair (405)- 376-4229 <blademok@sbcglobal.net> with any last minute changes.

Please do this now for everyone's benefit!

A new membership form is included on the back cover of this newsletter.

Nothing but freezing sleet, ice and blustery weather for a week on the weather report from in and around the Dallas Texas area. This preceding of course, Gregor Mszar's Spring SWTCA / MWTCA Super Bowl regional tool meet at Bedford Texas just in the heart of this mega Winter event. With the touch of a master though, and the tempered hand of experience, Gregor allowed for the taming of the heavens for a couple of days just in time for the show to come together. He's very good at what he does!



The 10AM meeting began at 9AM with a very unusual exhibition and display of intarsia and marquetry techniques along with related tools of that trade by Alton Bowman, an multi award winning artist in furniture design, construction and restoration. The art of intarsia or the art of creating pictures with small pieces of various types of woods cut to shape, was far more popular a couple of centuries ago and was an art predominantly favored in the European countries during the middle ages.



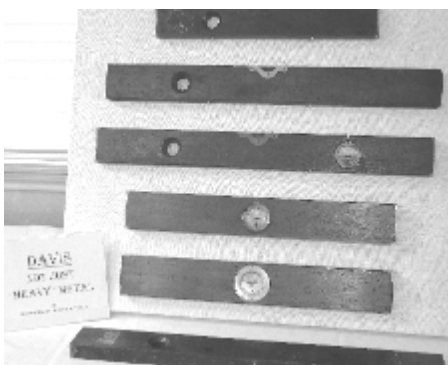
A very impressive device for cutting the tiny wooden pieces to shape in 'sandwiches' formed by multiple pieces of stock was on display and used for demonstrating this technique first hand. Called a 'Mule', this impressive structure is French typically though this magnificent example was built by Alton himself. Here he is shown demonstrating the appropriate cutting technique used to produce the tiny pieces.



Along with a thorough discussion of the history and the techniques of intarsia, Alton displayed a number of the very rare shoulder knives used in this process. These were acquired in Europe and date as far back as the 1760s. I

had the great fortune to procure these rare knives for him as I on occasion would run across one. Most hailed from Austria, Germany and Switzerland. We as a group were most fortunate to have the opportunity to hear about this rare and obscure trade from a true master. Thank you for your demonstration Alton and for sharing your expertise with us.

Setting the mood for a great meeting highlighted by all the sunshine and break in the severe weather patterns were a number of excellent displays all along the North wall of the meeting room. Lots of attention to details and lots of effort here in sharing some of our members private collections and interests.



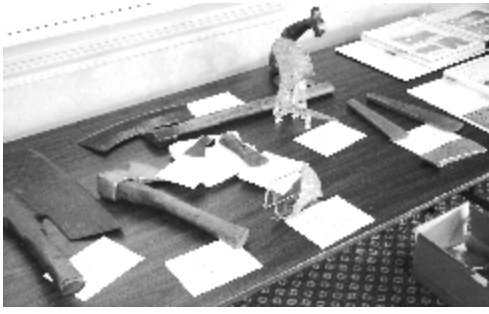
Gregor's display of Davis levels
'Not Just Heavy Metal'



Jeff Gaston's huge display of braces
their history and development



Robert Nethers displayed
many varied hand held ice tools



Jim Goodson's display of European axes from the Medieval period to the 18th c.



Early arrivals enjoy Alton's pre show presentation



Alton Bowman's awesome award winning French styled desk inlaid with Texas wild flowers



Rachel's smile says it all!



Rachel and Matt Stankus square off over a 'slick' find. Possession may be nine tenths of the law but survival (the remaining 10%) may still be perceived as the greater part!

Thanks to all those who ignored the 'iffy' weather conditions and joined their friends to make this another very special event which every year brings the 'collecting bug' back to life after the dreary Winter months.

.....J.G.

Photos by J.Goodson

Dr. Stephen Pierrel Baylor Medical Psychologist passed away at Summer's end 2008

In Memoriam

Long time member of the SWTCA regional Gulf Coast / Houston club and the MWTCA Stephen Pierrel passed away early August 2008. A medical Psychologist, Steve spent much of his time on call to aid at fire and rescue scenes where the consolation of victims required special handling. He was also an assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine where he lectured to medical students during their residency. His popularity and involvement ranged among a myriad of clubs and organizations.

I fondly recall a few years back when Steve showed up at our Houston regional meeting and instead of scouting the tables, made himself comfortable at the sign up table and began to write out name badges for each attendee as they entered. Noticing this I mentioned that my wife Susan was on her way after offering to help with the registration table. He just grinned and said he had an appointment in about an hour and just wanted to say hello to everyone!

When I hadn't heard from him in the previous year, I left a message at his office (the only number he ever left). My call was returned by another Psychologist who conveyed to me the sad news of his passing. Upon verifying just who I was, he chuckled to himself and shared another of Steve's moments with me. He told me that even on his death bed, Steve had demanded a laptop computer be brought to him wherein he commenced to ordering tools until the end. Dr. Finney then said that the following week on Monday morning as he was starting to adjust to his new position as Steve's replacement, little packages of tools started to appear with the morning mail.....a defiant stand to the end!

Thanks for your boundless friendship and extreme good will Stephen.....Jim Goodson

The Lynn Dowd Tool Emporium Experience

Tool collecting exists in many forms and the stories heard of ‘the other guy’s find’ have always been a stimulus to the collecting activities we all experience. If you think you’ll never experience that special discovery and exceptional moment, drop by Lynn Dowd’s tool emporium in Garland Texas just North of Dallas. Lynn has on hand a huge variety of woodworking and machinist tools for both the user and collector. Everything from foot powered devices to signage and 18th c. pieces may be found along with a myriad of small and large items in drawers, on shelves and hanging from the ceiling. Lots of great treasures to be found here. As your exploration takes place, Lynn’s wife Tracy sets up a long table with freshly homemade pies of all types and a huge urn of coffee. Now shopping for tools is usually a two handed affair but with the advent of free pie and coffee, it becomes a four handed affair which must certainly default to two hands as a matter of the nature of physical amenities. The picture needed here would be that of a balancing act where pie, coffee and tools must be precariously handled and secured with various parts of the physical anatomy which I won’t go in to here. May I add that Tracy bakes pies that are far better than most of the finest bakeries. Her fare for this weekend included chocolate meringue pie, deep Dutch Apple / streusel & cinnamon pie, Chess pie and Pumpkin Pie all with the added touch of whipped cream if desired.



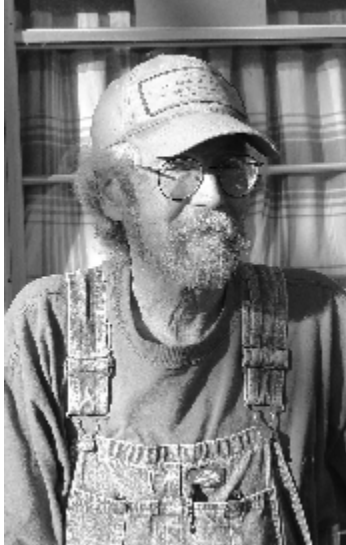
**No One Makes
Them Better !**

**Tracy
Dowd**

There are places to sit of course but the true ‘tool collecting artist’ would never long be diverted and ignores those hindrances that would burden a normal person. Nothing tops a great tool story more than a bit of whipped cream!

Lynn has several open houses each year and a mailing list which may be joined by contacting him.....

Lynn Dowd: 972-271-8665 dowdstools@tx.rr.com



Lynn....A Gracious Host!

The ‘Dowdian’ Emporium
where the prices are reasonable
and the whipped cream
is sky high!



Thanks for a great afternoon Lynn and Tracy. You truly have a one of a kind ‘not to miss’ experience for the tool collector’s story book.J.Goodson

One Little Tool

..... Jim Davis

I never set out to collect old tools. Like so many of us, it just happened. I have always gone to auctions to try and find things I could use on the farm and would occasionally buy an old tool...a drawknife, spokeshave, broad axe, etc.

My fascination with things before electricity came early in life and I admired things built by hand. Cutting wood with a hand saw and shaping and smoothing with a plane is hard work. Building this way took time, lots of time, not anything done in an hour or a day like present times. Therefore, mistakes would glare back at you. Those with pride were forced to do a job to be proud of for years to come.

Over the years the tools I had gathered were piling up. Some were on barn walls, some in boxes in the tractor shed...wherever I could poke them. One day after morning chores, I thought I would put them all in one spot and see what I had. I was amazed at the number and decided to display them in some way. There was a stack of old oak boards, leftover from a hog project and I nailed them to the inside of my shop wall. I drove nails and hung tools till the wall was full. When completed, I gazed in awe at these wonders of the past... all the shapes and designs, each made to perform a specific task.

Now the hunt was on! We went to every flea market and antique shop within 150 miles. I was having a blast! Sheer numbers was the goal. If 2 saws were good, then 20 would be better. Some I wired buffed and some I left with the ubiquitous rust that permeates all unprotected surfaces throughout the Midwest. On one of these hunts north of Springfield, MO, in an old barn converted to an antique shop, I discovered a thing of wonder! A 12" fancy filigree Davis plumb and level. I didn't think things like this were still around. It was priced way more than I would normally spend, but I had to have it! With encouragement from the little woman, I headed home with my treasure.

The next day after chores, I placed it on a little shelf in the middle of all my tools, thinking it would enhance the collection. I was shocked at how it outshined and somehow cheapened the things I had so admired. At that time I was awakened to the fact that I wasn't a tool collector, but an accumulator of things of little value.

I discussed this with the wife and she suggested to get rid of most of it and replace them with tools that would appreciate in value instead of going down. So I rented a booth in an antique mall, cleaned up my plunder, and got rid of most of it with little, if any, profit.

Shortly thereafter, I joined Midwest and Southwest TCA's and with a lot of advice and help from some very kind and knowledgeable members, I was a changed man. Finding the origin and history of certain tools and using some of them...especially my Barnes #2 scroll saw, have made it a much more enjoyable hobby. I have attempted to reproduce a few of them and even with modern tools, it has not been a simple task. But by doing this, I have a much greater appreciation of those craftsmen that came before us.

Through the years since, I have collected many tools rarer and more valuable than the little Davis level, but it will always have a place of honor in my collection...for changing me from an accumulator into a tool collector.



Article and Photos by
Jim & Carol Davis



A kaleidoscope constructed of polished brass tubing and hardwood, a strap adze of exotic woods with ivory inlays and a selection of other beautiful hand tools of fine hard woods and brass castings all designed and hand made by Jim Davis of Thornfield Missouri.

Awesome!J.G.

SWTCA 2009 Spring Meeting To Be In Tulsa Oklahoma

Come the thaw of the numbing Winter months (the emergence from the sub 50 degree arctic winds ‘howling’ through the Gulf Coast region here), is the Spring SWTCA Meeting to be held in Tulsa Oklahoma on Saturday, April 18th. Once again it will be organized and hosted by member Tim Hoss and arranged as a one day event beginning at 8:00 AM and lasting until 2:00 PM. The scheduled agenda includes a special room rate for overnights, an auction beginning at 1:00 PM, and the requisite selling tables for dealer set up in the tool room. Registration fee is \$5.00 per person (spouses are free) and \$9.00 per each selling table desired. Please see the enclosed registration form for details and make your reservations early.....it really helps out.

Editor

*Southwest Tool
Collectors
Association
Spring 2009 Meet
Tulsa, Ok. – Sat., April 18th*



This is a one-day show with a limited amount of selling tables

Show hours will be from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

*We will have an auction, starting at 1:00 p.m., with 10% going to SWTCA.
A limit of 3 items from each member may be placed into the auction.*

*Best Western Trade Winds Central
3141 E Skelly Drive
Tulsa, Ok
1-800-685-4564
From I-44, take the Harvard exit.
The hotel is located on the
northwest corner.*

*We have been given a special room
rate of \$65.00 per night. Be sure to
mention SWTCA when registering.
The special group rate includes a
Deluxe Hot Continental Breakfast.*

*For more information, contact:
Tim Hoss
(918) 261-1277*

*There are numerous restaurants in
the immediate area, as well as a
restaurant at the hotel.*

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____

Registration fee: \$ _____ (registration fee is \$5.00 per person – spouses free)
Table fee: \$ _____ (table fee is \$9.00 per table)
Number of tables: _____
Total enclosed: \$ _____

Make checks payable to SWTCA
Send Payment to: Tim Hoss
1535 E. 34th St.
Tulsa, Ok. 74105

Membership is U.S. \$12 per calendar year.

Date: _____ Check one: New ___ Renewal ___ Information change ___
Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Zip+4 _____

Primary Phone: (____) _____ Secondary Phone: (____) _____

Fax: (____) _____

Collecting Interests: _____

E-Mail Address 1: _____

E-Mail Address 2: _____

E-Mail Address 3: _____

Web Site Address: _____

Please remit payment to:

**Carl Blair
712 So. Linden Ln. Ct.
Mustang Oklahoma 73064-4140**

Please return to:

Carl Blair
712 So. Linden Ln. Ct.
Mustang Oklahoma 73064-4140
Address correction requested