



# From The Shop



## The newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Woodworker's Guild

Issue 08.2009

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 18th, 7:30 PM**

**Location: Woodcraft on Lehigh Street in Allentown**

### Topic:

- Fein Multimaster Demo by Frank Vitucci
- A presentation by Scott Michaels of Wymysical Creations!

### Last meeting highlights:

**Plane Geometry – as opposed to plane geometry! Craig Bentzley**



**Craig Bentzley. I got to admit, as a wearer of wild shirts with crazy patterns, I like the shirt. Craig's preparation and presentation were outstanding.**

Craig Bentzley is a meticulous woodworker. He has a meticulous shop based on photos I have seen. He is also a student of classic woodworking styles, styles which are not easily accomplished by even experienced woodworkers. He enjoys the old ways. Hand tools. Woodworking by folks who were masters. With Craig's credentials, he is an obviously qualified to

do a presentation on hand planes. He has many old one and has restored them. He understands them mechanically and as a craftsman.



**I think we have some Wood River planes on the left and some Stanley Sweethearts on the right.**



**Some new one and several restored planes. Care with an oldie will make a very serviceable tool.**

Craig started his presentation by discussing bevel. Bevel up, bevel down. Wax on, Wax off. The "FROG" on a typical bench plane is set at an angle of about 45 degrees. The FROG is that part of a plane that is affixed to the body of the plane and acts as a blade holder and allows a certain amount of adjustment. The blade is set into the plane in a bevel down manner. That said, the angel of attack of the blade to the wood is about 45 degrees. The blade itself is sharpened to an angle of about 25 – 30 degrees, and he very edge has about a 2 degree micro bevel. This allows the plane to be re-sharpened easily and quickly as you deal with the micro-bevel portion and NOT the main bevel in most cases unless the plane has been used a lot.

One of the drawbacks of a typical bench plane is the large unsupported area to the rear of the blade as you view the plane from the bottom. The other curious thing about planes is the use of the "chip breaker", a large

piece of metal that holds the blade to the frog. These are really not needed, although they do look like they hold the blade tight and flat to the frog. Craig suggests when you tune your hand planes to keep the throat as tight as possible. You do this, of course, by adjusting the frog.



**Frogs. They hold the blade and chip breaker, allow adjustments, determine initial angle.**



**Frogs**

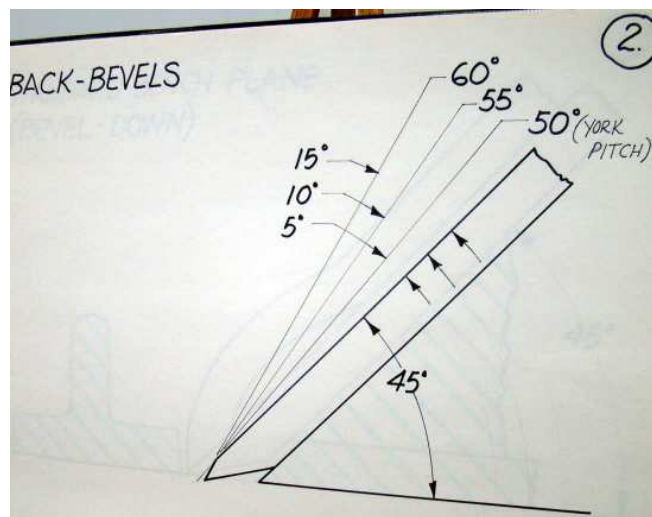
There are an amazing number of excellent web sites with instructions and pictures for not only adjusting hand planes but restoring them. I could pop some links in here but there are a lot. That's what you use Google for, right? If you are a post card recipient, disregard this paragraph.

Craig mentioned he retrofitted his Stanley he used for much of the presentation with a "Hock Iron". I thought it was something he got from a pawn shop in trade for all his good clothes. It is a plane blade – aka IRON – from a manufacturer named Hock. Aftermarket blades from Hock, Lee Valley / Veritas, and others can do much to improve on the stock iron in utility grade planes. Of course, for the cost of a small furnished home, you can get a Lie Nielsen plane that will shave the fuzz off a peach out of the box. It is all in what you want and can afford. What you NEED is something else again.



**An aftermarket iron by Veritas.**

We discussed the 45 degree angle of attack. There is a technique where you back bevel the iron. This back beveling would actually INCREASE the angle of attack of the blade up to 50 degrees or even more. Regular bevel of 45 degrees plus back bevel of 5 degrees = 50 degrees. Craig uses this on Curly Maple and figured wood – it is almost like a scraper. Hard work. Lee Valley makes a nice jig for sharpening blades and also for back bevels. Lie Nielsen actually has frogs of 50 and 55 degrees. Remember – the higher the pitch, the harder it is to push the plane. Be prepared to work – hard.

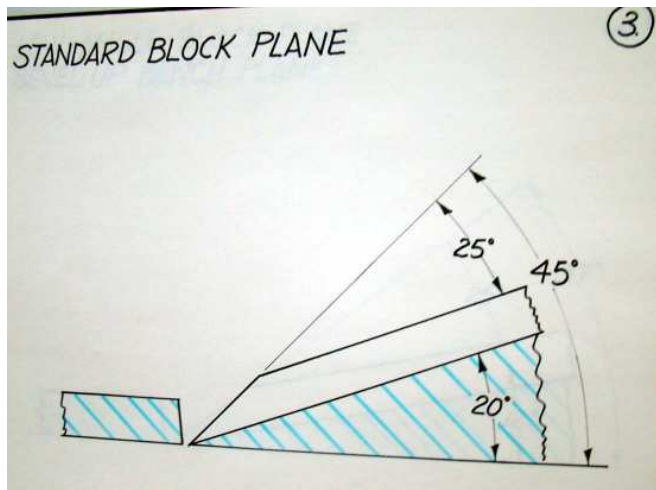


**This photo tells a lot and also illustrates Craigs preparation for his talk – The working angle with varying amounts of back bevel with a 45 degree frog.**

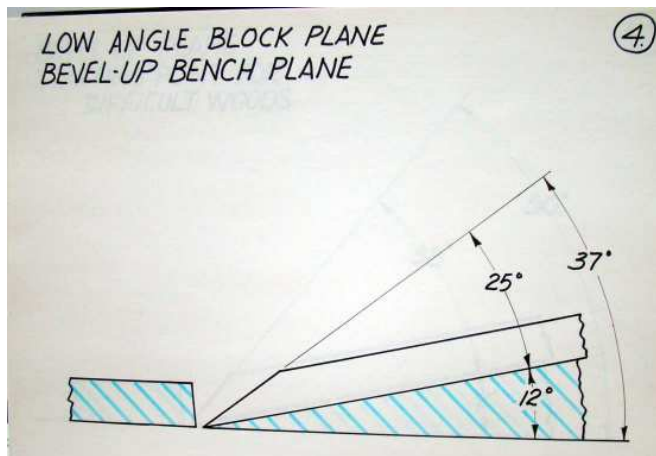
Now Craig talked about bevel up planes – typically small block planes. Block planes have a low angle – 20 degrees or so – frog. But, with a bevel of 25 degrees



on the plane iron, placed bevel up on a 20 degree frog, you have an angle of attack of – yes! 45 degrees! Same as a bench plane. Many block planes offer the ability to adjust the throat opening by loosening the front knob and sliding it. Actually, a 20 degree frog would be frozen like a rock. You could probably screw a blade right into one of them. But I digress...



Standard block plane with 20 degree frog and 25 degree bevel = 45 degree effective angle.



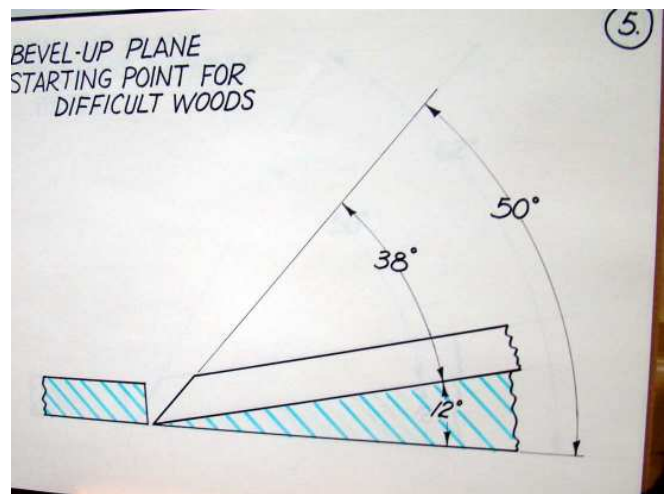
Effective angle of a bevel up low angle block plane and how the 37 degree angle is achieved.

When discussing bevel up planes and block planes, the one that comes to mind, and likely the only one you will need is the low angle block plane. These have a frog of 12 degrees (whew!), plus a bevel up of 25 degrees = a 37 degree angle of attack. Ah, Angle of Attack – reminds me of my old flying days. This would be very useful for planing end grain. There are also low angle bench planes, and with a 38 degree bevel up blade, you are right back to 50 degrees. You can get as high as 62 degrees on this type of setup depending on the iron. You are definitely in scraper territory here. Craig likes to put a little camber on his plane blades. There is actually a jig that enables this easily – again, Lee Valley / Veritas makes a good one. This reduces the amount of plane tracks left on the wood – the point where the edge corner of the blade cut into the wood. It

also leaves a very slight scallop in the wood, which is actually the hallmark of hand made furniture as Craig called it. I recall seeing Frank Klausz judging a bombe chest of drawers at an American Woodworker show and he remarked about the scalloped hand planing on the piece. Either that or he said he could really go for some scallops for lunch.

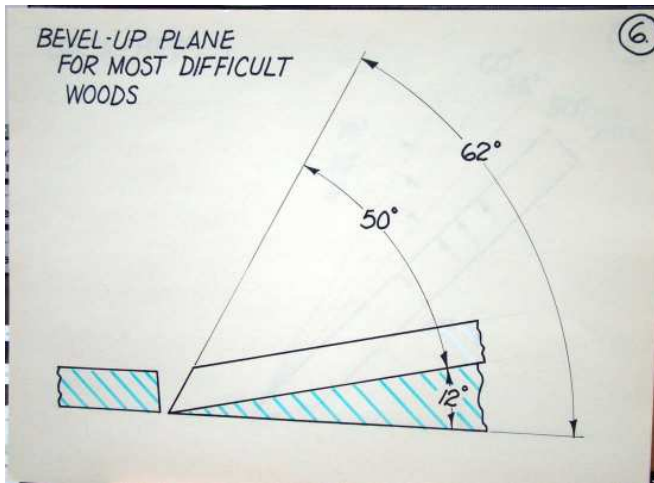


This is what Craig means by a cambered edge. The size of the chord will determine the “Scalloped” effect.



This would be good for highly figured woods like curly maple. **HARD WORK**, though.

How old are planes? Bronze planes have been found in ruins of ancient Rome. It is good that they turned up because Andy Andersen was wondering where he left them. Planes were working man tools. Most mass produced planes by Stanley were tossed into tool boxes. The Stanley Bedrock was a better model. We all know Lie Nielsen, sort of a late bloomer in the plane business but their tools are outstanding.



**This would effectively be a scraper!**



**Lie Nielsen low angle block plane. Rolls Royce of planes.**



**Nice turnout. Crown was still gathering..**

So we have a range – Stanley utility models, Lee Valley / Veritas as sort of middle of the road, and Lie Nielsen in the Mercedes showroom. Which brings us to China. Yes, China. China is the Japan of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Japan made crap. Cheap. Then they got Quality. Their goods were better than ours in many cases, and of course, the price went up. China has been flooding our markets with cheap stuff. But China also has been developing and has been able to

produce some very serviceable products. So, like them or not, they are becoming a force to be reckoned with. Which brings us to a new line of plane being marketed by Woodcraft called Wood River. Craig has done an evaluation of these planes and has been pretty impressed with what you get for the money. Flat sole out of the box. The lateral adjust is pretty flimsy, but this is not uncommon on many planes. Very strong and are actually capable of producing high end work.



**Some Stanley Sweetheart planes. Very nicely made.**

Stanley is also producing a line of high end planes called the Sweetheart line. These had had some initial issues but these are being quickly corrected. You need to decide if you are buying a plane for your tool box or for your tool bench. I actually went through a hand plane phase myself and got a number of old one that I restored, including one owned by my grandfather. It is fun to do on a weekend winter day and very satisfying work. I actually got these to work really well.



**The popular Electric Plane.**





**Craig demonstrating plane use.**

Bottom line, you can go in many directions when it comes to acquiring hand planes. Used at flea markets and Ebay all the way to Lie Nielsen. Wood River, Stanley, Lee Valley / Veritas. There is even Record out of England, but I always hated the blue paint on them. Get an oldie and fix it up and put in a new iron or go for the Gold standard. Either way, Craig did, in a short period of time, cover almost all the ground. Plane Geometry was well presented, Craig was well prepared, and I found his presentation interesting, VERY informative, and sprinkled with enough humor to make it enjoyable.

**Woodcraft hosts!**



**Part of the Woodcraft crew!**

Our woodcraft friends Always make us feel welcome. I believe that the move to Woodcraft continues to have benefits. Thanks!



Ray was away and John Schaeffer was on vacation so we got stuck with Mary Winkler and Melanie Carl. Ray, John, you guys need to get away more often.

**Drag and Brag:**



**Shutter cutter I use.... Great jig by Walt Segl**





Indexed marks move the jig.



Jig itself cut to fit router base and it just slides in the groove. Tile it the other way to do the other shutter stile.

Walt Segl decided to make some shutters for a cupola he was building. With a copper top at that! So being the perfectionist he is, they had to be made in the true way that they made them years ago – slat by slat, routed into stiles. Walt came up with this neat jig and indexing sled. Ingenious! He had some shots of the actual cupola. It is going to be pretty impressive.



Judy Muth of the Judy and Ken combo did a great job on the food and Poppy brought some stuff too!



This stuff went fast! Hot dogs, beans, ham, all sorts of stuff.



Sawstop – a saw and a buffet table.



Great to see Bob and Mary Ellen Evans back. Mary had a health setback but seems to be back to her great self. And Bob is still Bob! Bob is one of the December 1995 original members.

**GUILD REMINDERS  
OCTOBER CONTEST  
BLOCKS!  
NEWSLETTER!**

**Allen will be making sure that only folks who volunteered to make blocks take wood. Andy will enforce this.**

**OCTOBER IS CONTEST MONTH!  
It may be nice to have some entries.**

**I do not have much talent Surely someone out there can do this newsletter better.**

**Zy Keenan Rae  
1990 - 2009**



I obtained this photo from the Internet of Zy and Andy Rae.

Zy Keenan Rae, son of Andy Rae, was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident on July 13<sup>th</sup>. He was 19 years old.

Andy Rae is an old and dear friend of this guild, and a great guy who does it right. He and Paul Anthony showed up at our initial meeting back in 1995, and he did many presentations for us. Folks like Ron Snayberger and Bob Tinsman, and later Art Silva worked at the Rodale shop in Emmaus and Andy was with Rodale at the time. He moved out to the Ashville, NC area perhaps 10 years ago.

This is a parent's worst nightmare. I used to ride, my kid went through dirt bike and street bike phases. I know Andy to be a careful and thorough person and I also know that he would have done all he could to ensure that Zy had the training, equipment, and judgment he needed to be safe. But you cannot prepare for everything, a fact that is impossible to reconcile when something like this happens. Accounts I have read indicate it was one of those situations all bikers dread where there are no options. It can happen in a car, anywhere. It is a part of living your life and Zy did that with a loving and nurturing family, much more than many kids have. He was a highly regarded young man with folks who knew him, and he still is. My heart goes out to Andy and his wife Lee and family. The Guild members who know Andy personally know what his family means to him are all touched by this sad event.

**HELP!**

On that note, we are ALWAYS looking for speakers. Writers! Articles! You hear of someone, let us know. Thanks!

**Wood Specials**

**SHADY LANE TREE FARM**

Louise & Mike Peters  
5220 Shimerville Road  
Emmaus, PA  
610 965-5612 Please call

**FLEETWOOD LUMBER & FLOORING**

BILL BURKERT  
27 Rapp Rd.  
Fleetwood, PA  
610 944-8364 Please call  
**Member discount 5%**

**Bailey Wood Products, Inc.**

441 Mountain Rd.  
RD#2 Box 38  
Kempton, PA  
610 756-6827

**Woodcraft**

Pkwy Shopping Ctr.  
1534 Lehigh St.  
Allentown, Pa.,18103

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<b>Refreshments and so many other things..</b> Ken and Judy Muth	

**2009 Meeting Calendar:**

Month	Topic	Speaker
August 18th	Fein Multi-master Wymysical Creations – CARVING	Frankie “the Hit Man” Vitucci Scott Michaels
September	FESTOOL RETURNS!	Tom Loveless
October	CONTEST CONTEST	CONTEST

**Next Meeting: August 18th, 2009 (3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday!) 7:30!! That’d be P.M.**

**Location: Woodcraft**

Parkway Shopping Center  
1543 Lehigh Street  
Allentown, PA 18103  
Phone: (610) 351-2966

**Topic: Fein Multimaster! Heck of a tool. - Frank Vitucci  
Wymysical Creations – Scott Michaels.**