



From The Shop



The newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Woodworker's Guild

Issue 02.2009

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 17th, 7:30 PM

Location: Woodcraft on Lehigh Street in Allentown

**Topic: Routing Loose Tenon Joinery
Speaker: The one and only Bill Hylton**

The mortise and tenon is one of woodworking's oldest, strongest, most versatile, and most frequently used joints. Learn how to make the loose-tenon version of the joint using a plunge router and edge guide and a jig you make yourself. This is know-how every woodworker can use. Learn how to make the jig. See joints cut for web frames, cope-and-stick doors, leg-and-apron stands, chairs, and even architectural doors, all with the same router and jig. It's simple, fast, strong, and inexpensive.

January Meeting Highlights.

John Schaeffer and the Duckbill table.



He's Back! John Schaeffer did a fine presentation after a long day at the store and a class that ended at 7:00. Thanks again, John! Aply assisted my Melanie Carl.

We were without a speaker. Nobody. Nada. Ray Winker of Woodcraft happened to see my e-mail asking if we had a speaker and John Schaeffer got volunteered. Well, I am sure Ray approached John to help us out. And he did. In fact, he concluded a band saw class at 7:00 and started in on this presentation, with the very capable help of Woodcraft's Melanie "I got a brand new pair of roller skates..." Carl. John's demo was centered around a project that, while the looks are impressive, is easy to make. And they were made with Festool portable hand tools.



Duckbill table.



Duck.

The first thing to know is that the legs for this project are store bought. Well, turned by a gentleman who makes them available to Woodcraft for \$45 a set. The feet on these are offset and turning them is not something I would want to take on. I saw Craig Bentzley do an excellent presentation on making of Queen Anne legs. Childs play for him, brain surgery for me. If you are a turner, have at it. By the way, I have seen Craig do brain surgery. It's not pretty...

The most difficult part of the project, according to John, is making the top. The top was made, carefully, with the Festool circular saw and a straightedge jig. No jointing. The assembled top looked every bit as good as one where a jointer and table saw was used. Obviously, planning was needed for the flat sides.



Angle of this shot is a little weird, but the table top was made from portable tools except for the surface planing.



Another shot – table on its side - intended to show the fact that the bottom of the table top is eased, hence the name duck bill. OK, I did not name it.

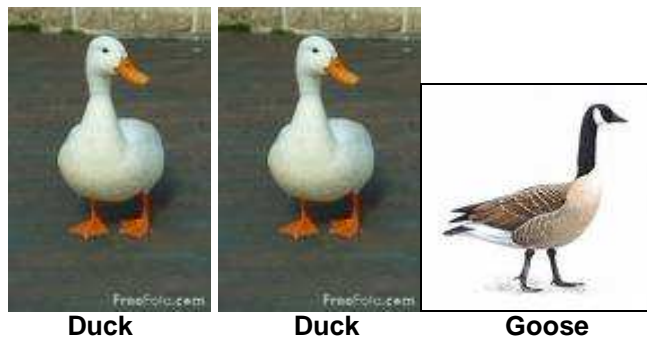
The table gets its name because a big raised panel bit is used on the lower edge to ease the edge like a duck's bill. That is a pretty broad statement. What type of duck does this bill belong to. The common Mallard, aka the Daffy Duck "What a maroon!". A Pekin duck? One can argue that Donald Duck was a Pekin variety due to the fact that he was all white. The bad news for Donald is that the Pekin duck is raised primarily for its

meat. Then of course you have the Odd Duck. No, these are not the people at the next table in a guild meeting. These are ducks of mixed breed, like a mutt but not. One such duck, named Bandit, lived to 26 years old. His last words were rumored to be "Thank God I was not born a Pekin." Finally it could look like the bill of a Black East Indies duck. Pretty duck. We may never know the variety of duck the table was named for. And I do not want to egg you on by further discussion of Ducks.

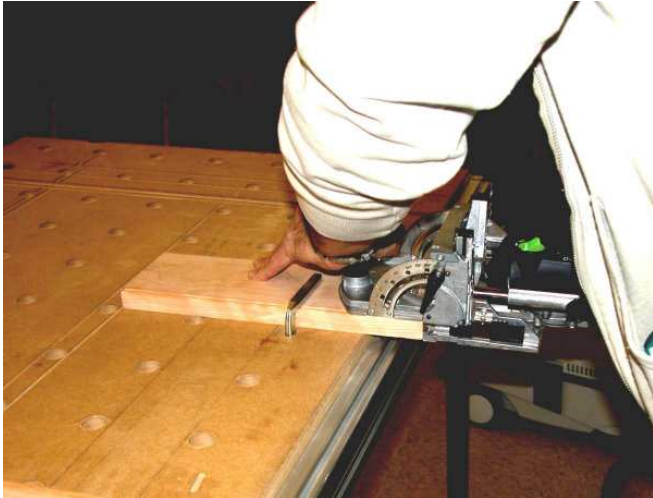


The setup – Festool Domino hooked up to a Festool vacuum. Work held onto Festool work table with Festool clamps. The extension cords I do not know.

The construction of the table is straightforward and consists of 4 legs, 4 aprons and the top. The aprons are attached to the legs using a Festool Domino. No measuring is required with careful setup and use of the registration pins. Bits come in various sizes from 5 mm to 10mm. The domino is also capable of cutting at varied depths. And widths (oscillations). Setup is critical as with any power tool but the accuracy of the Domino makes the rest easy.



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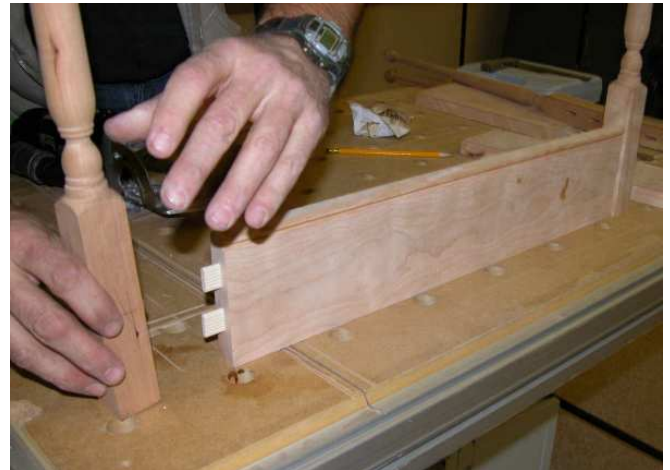
Cutting mortise slots in apron ends.



Slots cut in this end, the piece is reversed, face up, with proper orientation for cutting

Most of us are familiar with biscuits. Norm Abram made them a Saturday morning household word. The tool is readily available. They work. They are made of compressed pressed beech and the slots cut have some give in both dimensions. Their strength comes not only from the glue used, but from the fact that they are designed to draw moisture out of the glue and expand to more or less lock themselves into the void. This expansion can be a little bit of an issue in thin materials as it can cause a minor bulge, but this is not a drawback to their use.

The Domino tenon is made of hardwood - Solid beech - and the dominos and slot have very little if any slack in the thickness. The tenons in and of themselves are very strong. The grain in the tenon also runs perpendicular to the groove giving added strength. The Biscuit has no such properties.



Domino tenons inserted into the Domino tool cut mortise slots.

John cut 4 holes in each apron, two on each side. John cut 4 holes in the top of each leg to correspond with the apron holes. The pins on the Domino were, as stated, used to align. You can measure, but once you are familiar with the tool, this trick is a fast and easy way to get accurate slots made.



John is cutting the slots for the table clips in the inside face of the aprons. The machine is running in this photo, and a flash always illuminate sawdust really well. There is none.

John did make the slots in the legs 5 mm longer than those in the apron (25mm vs 20mm) to allow some adjustment.

John went through cutting all 32 holes (16 in the aprons and 16 in the legs) In about 10 minutes. He used 5 mm Dominos for this project. You cut with the fence on the face side.

A nice feature about the Domino cutter is that you can also cut slots in the inside face of the aprons for top hold down clips. A caution here – Tenon grooves are deep, and the Domino can cut 28mm deep. Conversion is about an inch and an eighth. That is going to blow right through $\frac{3}{4}$ " stock. RE-Set the depth to what you need. The slots and clips allow for some movement due to expansion and contraction as is required of all well made large flat tops.



Some nice quality hardware clips.

John Schaffer is probably one of the most experienced people you will meet in using Festools and has demo'ed the Domino many times. But at the end of a long day, and while being distracted by questions, and with some old fat bald guy running up and snapping photos, you get distracted. In cutting one tenon hole in an apron, the bottom of the tool rode on the edge of the bench and caused a minor inaccuracy of the cut. John was immediately aware of it but continued his presentation.



A few things to note – the clips in the shots holding on the table with plenty of room for expansion and the excellent job that a circular saw did on ripping the boards that went into this table top.

John did mention that with the offset foot of the Queen Anne leg, you must be very careful to make sure that the tenon slots are cut on proper corners, not the same as a straight leg. Or you will have a pigeon toed table.

Final assembly is typical glue up, square, and clamp. Dry fit first. **BE CAREFUL** – there are not biscuits and you can break through a thinner piece of wood if you twist it.

There were a lot of messages in this simple project and presentation.

First is that a simple and elegant project need not be difficult.

Secondly, YES, the legs are made by someone else. Well if Queen Anne legs are too difficult for you, make round ones. Or just make square tapered ones if you must make is all yourself.

Thirdly, stationary tools are great but portable tools can still take you a long way. While FESTOOL accuracy is the best in the business, care with other tools should be able to produce a nice result. I do not think biscuits are the right way to hold those table legs on, and Dominos are as fast but much stronger, but you figure something out. A router and some dados would work.

Forth (forthly?), A Festool advantage is that if you use the dust collectors, you can cut all day long and there is virtually NO sawdust.

Lastly, the attention to simple details will keep even the best woodworker from an error. I always make extra pieces because I almost always cut opposing dados on the wrong side. Sometimes I use the extra piece and sometimes it goes in the burn barrel. Sometimes I find the piece I cut wrong on the floor in the corner of the garage 3 years after I tossed it there in self disgust. Under that Elton John CD I lost.

I myself am really hankering for a Festool circular saw. I think my kid needs a circular saw and I sure would like him to have my nice Porter Cable....

During the commentary, John was quizzed about a few things. What's the warranty on Festool? 1 year parts and labor and 2 way shipping and 2 years labor and parts and 1 way shipping. They typically get a tool out in 48 hours. If you ship it to them snail mail, you get it back that way,. If you pay for overnight, you get it back that way!



Melanie did a great job assisting John. Melanie enjoys carving – not chip carving but 3 dimensional stuff. A multi-dimensional person.

Ray and Mary Winkler stores will give you a loaner if you bought it there and really need the tool and it needs repair. We all know that Ray and Mary are also very ethical. That means that Festool pricing policy is what it is. You want to know about deals and prices, go right to the web site and it will be what Festool says it is. They are expensive. So is a BMW.

Woodcraft gives out birthday cards with a percentage discount on certain items on your birthday. What if you do not want to buy anything on your birthday? Ray and Mary allow 1 birthday per year. Great pricing on Woodcraft Internet close outs? If they have it in the store, you get that price.



Decent turnout for John's presentation.

The other nice thing, as good as Festool is, is that Woodcraft will now be carrying Bosch tools. Many woodworkers cannot afford or cannot justify the price of Festool. Not everyone drives a BMW. And choices are nice in a store we like so now we have more choices. The manner in which Ray and Mary stand behind their products and their customers makes me, anyway, want to have more affordable quality choices at Woodcraft rather than going to a big box store. Some folks may argue that Woodcraft is a big box store, but the Winkers do not run it that way.

To summarize, I would like to thank John Schaeffer and Melanie Carl for lugging the stuff over to the Senior Center for the demo after a long day at the store. They are great people and now we will be having our meetings in their house. I for one think this is a good move for our group. Let us hope it turns out as well as we think and hop it will.

If it looks like a duck and it quacks like a duck and it walks like a duck - it's probably a table.

Reminder - 2009 – WOODCRAFT Meeting Place Starts February!

Start time will be 7:30 as it is now.

to know if you want to do something different. While Judy does a great job with the refreshments, we want to create some spirit and energy and hope you are not just there for the home made baked goods.

Please know that this guild does not exist to serve anyone but its members but we need your input and participation. Lets hope that participation begins at the

Members suggestions!

Well, Alan Powell collated the results of the cards passed out at the January meeting and will be giving a readout at the February meeting. Lots of ideas we will follow up on. Thanks for the input.

HELP!

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

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Woodcraft

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2009 Meeting Calendar:

Month	Topic	Speaker
February 17th	Routing Loose Tenon Joinery	Bill Hylton!
March 17 th	Toxic effects of wood!!	Dr Dolphin – Lehigh Valley Medical Center

Next Meeting: February 17th, 2009 (3rd Tuesday!) 7:30!! That'd be P.M.

Location: Woodcraft

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

Topic: Routing Loose Tenon Joinery with Bill Hylton!