



From The Shop



The newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Woodworker's Guild

Issue 07.2007

Upcoming Meeting Information

Next Meeting: July 17th, 2007 (3rd Tuesday!)

Location: Lehigh Co. Senior Center
1633 Elm Street
Allentown, PA

Speakers and topics:

- Custom hand planes by Jim Leamy. You are not goin hse...g to believe t

June Meeting Highlights – Festool Domino and Joe Deevy at Colonial Williamsburg



John Schaeffer Pete Doncezcic did a great job at showing us how the Festool Domino does its thing.

Festool. The name conjures up many thoughts, usually the first of which is expensive. Well, expensive is relative. I recently bought a jigsaw. Not a tool I use a lot and not a tool I consider a precision device. I did a lot of soul searching before I bought it. I wanted the Festool. I had two of the old fixed base Porter Cables. Good tool. Both broke with the same part going bad. They were not cheap in their day. I bought a Bosch top handle saw. Let's face it, you cannot beat a Bosch. Cuts like a demon and good ergonomics. But – I have to confess, I had a lot of cutting to do under a kitchen counter. Then some more cutting, and more. in a kitchen. At that moment, I wished I had that Festool and the dust collection it provides. And perhaps, as good as Porter cable tools are, if they were built to the same standard as the Festool, I would not have two of them sitting in my tool cabinet taken apart in boxes. So perhaps we are speaking of value added and not of expensive. Hard to say.

Festool recently came out with the Domino. What the hell is a Domino? It is a little black rectangle with white spots on it. Yes, that is what Festool came out with.

Only they are not black and have not spots on them. They look like little dominos and act like a biscuit joiner on steroids. Or more like a loose tenon machine.



Are these Dominos waiting to go to the spray booth for coating of black paint and some spots? No, they are the loose tenons used in the Festool Domino system. There are actually 5 size of dominos.



The Domino taken down, showing the cutter on the lower right and the fence, much like a Biscuit joiner fence, in the top of the photo. This comes apart very easily for cutter changes and adjustments.

We were supposed to have a factory rep present the Domino to us, but that rep could not make it. Well, I am sure that this rep would have done a fine job, but we got an excellent presentation from John Schaeffer Pete Doncezcic of Woodcraft.

There are different size cutters and different sized dominos, as shown. The action of the machine cuts an oval mortise in the wood. It plunges the cutter and then it moves side to side to make the mortise. One strength of the Domino, aside from the fact that they are thicker than a biscuit is that the grain runs the length of the

domino, giving it strength in the direction where you want it. They are made from Beech, a pretty stable wood. Also, the depth of a biscuit is relatively small. The Domino goes well into the work. The advantage over dowels is a feature shared with the biscuit – you do not need to be perfect with the holes. Plus, dowels have great strength but are round causing a weakness in ability to rotate.



A new addition to the Festool system (well I never saw it) is the arm that lifts a long dust collection hose overhead and out of your way, Nice feature and hooks right up to the Star Wars style vacuum.



The zig zag chair, built with all Domino construction, is a challenge that really shows the strength, speed, precision, and ease of use of the system.

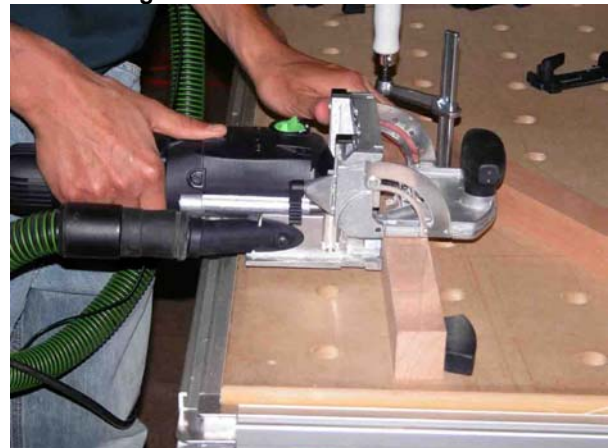
As you can see in the photo, there are 4 sizes of dominos and 4 cutter sizes – 5 mm, 6 mm, 8 mm, 10mm. The cutter itself runs at 24000 rpm and can

plunge from 12, 15, 20, 25, 28 mm. The fence is also very adjustable as well as in a biscuit joiner, but to a greater degree.

The project for the evening demo'ed not only the Domino, but the Festool system. You all know this but let's run by it again. There is the tool. The vacuum that gets damned near all if not all the dust (we did NOT have to sweep up anything after this meeting where many holes were cut). The work surface. The clamps for the work surface. The accessories. On and on.



Looks like a biscuit joiner. Not hardly. Here, the motor is being re-fit to the front end of the tool.

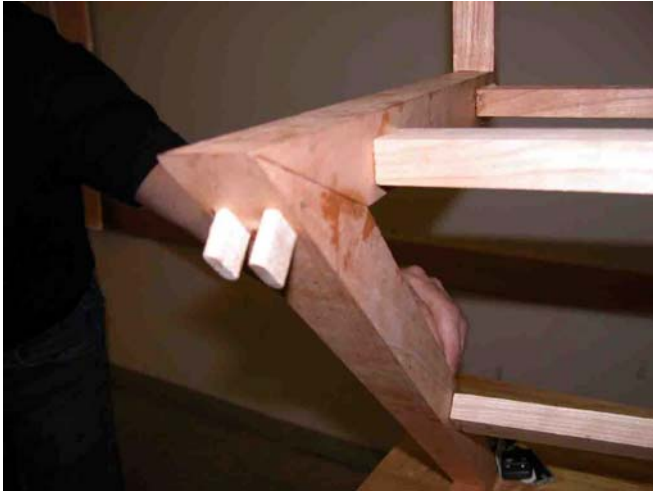


Dust collection in place, work clamped to the work surface with some of the Festool system clamps, the mortise is cut. Note, no visible sawdust in this flash photo, cause there was none.



The domino mortise being prepped with some glue.

Note that in addition to the Domino having a variable plunge depth, you can also vary the width of the slot you are "routing". This presents a little advantage if you want to allow a little "slop" in the slots and adjust the final fit of the work later on.



A double application of dominos.

The zig zag chair assemble was pretty straight forward. TO ease the process, the work was cut and measured, and half was assembled prior to the meeting, so the other half needed to be done. They used epoxy as part of the demo included someone sitting on the chair, and regular glue would not dry fast enough. Supposedly it will hold 3 people. Everyone was looking for Bill Grumbine.

Supposedly, average Research and development for a FESTOOL product is 7 year before it hits the market. That means that the product SHOULD be proven (unlike stuff from Microsoft..). And of course, some of the cost of the product is the R&D cost.



The zig zag, and yes, I sat on it and it was solid.



This accessory is included with the slightly higher priced kit. It allows you to put the dominos in narrow pieces.

The Domino itself costs \$700. Yup. And with a kit that includes some accessories, you can get it for \$750. This comes in a "Systainer", a Festool proprietary container that clips to the top of the dust collectors and to other Systainers.



Narrow wood accessory in use.



This box o' Dominos in a "Systainer" container is available for \$240, comes with all 4 cutters, and clips to the top of the dust collector.



Bag and Hepa filter changing is a snap.



This work surface is available for \$450. it includes a 35" guide. It is foldable but a very solid piece of goods. The top can be flipped and also is replacable.



A couple of the clamps built around the work surface.

There is also a kit with the smaller dust collector for \$1100, but check the web site – there are all kinds of combinations, and prices are published. Why?

Because there are never, ever discounts. Note that these very cool dust collectors will work with any power tool you plug them in and when you turn on the tool, the dust collector turns on. It keeps running for 1 ½ seconds after the tool is turned off.

What would make the Domino and other Festools perfect? Well, since they are a fixed price item, and a pricey item, it would be nice if Festool or Woodcraft (the major retailer in the US) would offer folks an installment payment plan. Not a charge card, but an interest free 4 or 6 or 10 payment option. Buying that Rotex sander and a vacuum would be a lot less painful at \$80 a month for 10 months instead of \$800. Yeah, you could use a charge card, but it is sort of different.

The Domino? Well, you better be doing a lot or work to justify it, but it is a sweet tool. Me? I think I will start my Festool collection with a dust collector, then maybe a Rotex sander, and, well, if my kid really wants that Bosch jigsaw, I'll need another one....

Thanks to the folks from Woodcraft and Festool for making the talent and the tools available for the meeting. A good job done by John and Pete on a presentation of an impressive tool.

And now...

Joe Deevy – Colonial Williamsburg



Joe Deevy and son did a great presentation on garden railroading and Joe is back with he account of a trip to Colonial Williamsburg.



Early works were done with crude tools and getting the stock prepared was more work in many cases than final assembly. The above is an example of the rough but functional work.

OK – I confess. As newsletter editor, meetings for me are work and not usually purely informational. I need to listen and take notes which I typically, diligently transcribe into this newsletter. My purpose is to document for members what happened and maybe, on more technical topics, these can act as a reference. In addition, I like to put together an article that a presenter may be able to put into their portfolio or web site – not that the articles are always that good, but it may help someone if potential clients know that their craftsman actually gave a presentation before a group and shared their knowledge and skill. Sometimes I frankly resent the fact that I cannot just sit back and listen and enjoy, but such is the life of a journalist – or even me. You'd rather go to the football game, do some tailgating, attend the game and have a good time and go home instead of grabbing the play by play.

What has that got to do with Joe Deevy and Colonial Williamsburg? Well, I reverted to fan status. I sat, looked, listened, and enjoyed a good presentation and did not take enough notes. But Joe provided me with a copy of his PowerPoint presentation which I know took a lot of time to prepare for the guild, so I do have a record. And while we are at it, lets recall the outstanding presentation of Garden railroading that Joe and his son gave to the guild. That PowerPoint was excellent, and I know how much work it was to put together, as I have done many over the years. Thanks very much to Joe for sharing how he uses woodworking in his life and how his intellectual pursuit of woodworking knowledge led him to the Colonial Williamsburg seminar we saw a sample of.

Some of the writing here was lifted from the Colonial Williamsburg web site.

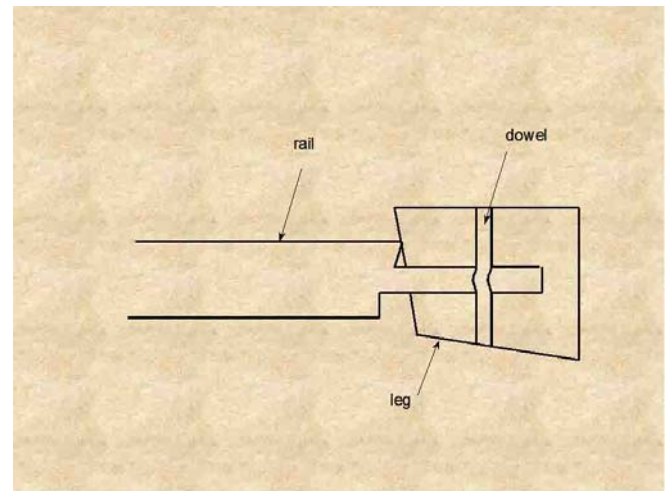
To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in North America, the ninth annual *Working Wood in the 18th Century*

conference stepped back a century and explored furniture making *before* the 18th century. The British colonies in North America were nearly 100 years old when cabinetmaking emerged as a trade. Prior to the late 1600s, the furniture in American homes was the product of joiners and turners. Chests, cupboards, and other case pieces, constructed principally of framed panels, were robust statements of wealth and power. Joiners also made seating furniture, from simple joint stools to complex wainscot chairs. Turners made chairs, stools, and table parts, and turned decorations ornamented many case pieces. Whether joined or turned, most elements were fashioned from riven green wood. Oak was the material of choice.

Green woodworker and teacher John Alexander (author of *Make a Chair from a Tree*) teamed up with Plimouth Plantation's joiner Peter Follansbee to examine the technology of working green wood. They produced a joint stool to illustrate basic techniques. Peter also carved an oak box typical of the period. Colonial Williamsburg Historic Trades joiners Ted Boscana and Garland Wood built a large court cupboard to illustrate case making. Turner and teacher Ernie Conover (author of *The Lathe Book* and *Turning for Furniture*) produced components for the cupboard and demonstrated some of the forms of complex turning that were popular during the period.

The conference was be informal. Participants' comments and questions were welcomed. During morning and afternoon breaks, speakers displayed their work, tools, and materials, demonstrated techniques, and chatted with participants.

Many pieces that were used in the seminar as examples of work from the period were obtained from the DeWitt Museum which is on the premise at Colonial Williamsburg and is a wonderful resource.



This graphic more or less shows that the emphasis in early work was on function and not on accuracy. The joint in the above graphic was sort of typical in run of the mill furniture.

Cabinetmakers in colonial Virginia produced fine furniture, but neither England nor the colonies could support full-time furniture producers until the last half of the 17th century. Only then did an adequate number of people have the leisure to enjoy the material trappings that reflected their new status. By the mid-18th century, only one-third of stylish Virginia furniture appears to have come from England. This percentage diminished as patriotic Virginians increasingly honored attempts to boycott English goods as the Revolution neared.



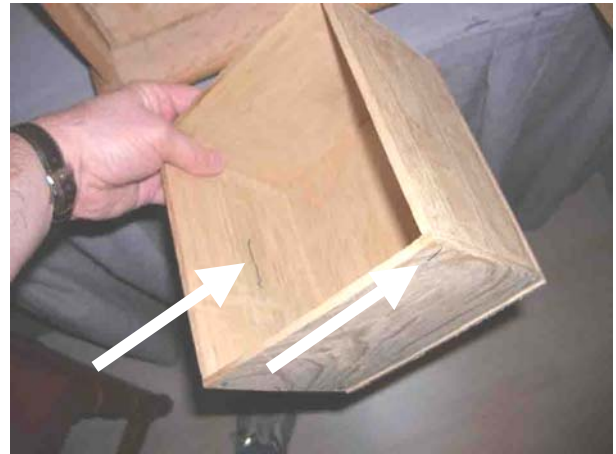
A colonial workbench!



This is a reproduction of a piece that now sells for tens of thousands of dollars. The outside of these pieces was usually ornate to the degree that the person who commissioned it was affluent.



The inside of the cabinet shows (if you look REAL hard) that the way to find the middle of the drawers was to scribe two diagonals on the fronts. But – they never bothered to remove the scribe lines, and these were left in place.



Often, wire was used as nails and to secure something, the wire was merely bent over and left in place. The reproduction is faithful to this old technique.



I guess the caption for this photo is “stock preparation in the 1700’s”. You can see the pile of wood, and the gentleman with the bat is whacking a blade through the log to make a board. Wonder how many folks had woodworking as a hobby then? These folks would have loved to have a cheap Taiwanese jointer! Actually, there was no Taiwan back then..



Joe advised again that the carving work on this frieze was done quite quickly and it took more time to prepare the stock used than it did the carving.



A colonial tool box with some chisels.

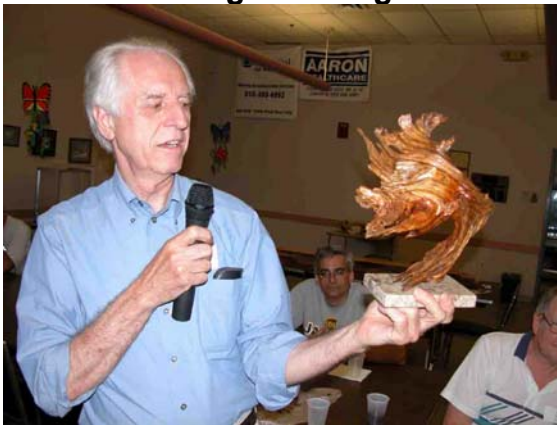
The seminar that Joe attended apparently cost about \$250 and was 2 ½ days long. A similar version, with a different topic, will be held next January.

Working Wood in the 18th Century
Tools, Tool Chests, and Workbenches
January 9-12, January 13-16, 2008

Details can be found here:

<http://research.history.org/ConferencesForumsWorkshops.cfm>

Drag and Brag



Another Will Schmidt work. He really liked this one as he mounted it on a small piece of granite.



A photo of some photos of a trestle bridge made by Ken Muth for his train setup.

And the Woodcraft winner is...



Tom Enot!

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

I was not there. How would I know? I had company and could not attend.

Wood Specials

SHADY LANE TREE FARM

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

FLEETWOOD LUMBER & FLOORING

BILL BURKERT
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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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2007 Meeting Calendar:

Month	Topic	Speaker
July 17th	REALLY Custom hand planes	Jim Leamy
August 21st	Probable demo of a dovetailing jig by vendor.	
September 18th	Carving	Frank Rauscher
October 16th	Annual Woodworking contest	Anyone and everyone
November 20 th	Vacancy!	
December 18th	Annual Holiday Party	Members and families

NEXT MEETING – July 17th, 2007 (3rd Tuesday!), **Starting at 7:30, sharp. Allow time to arrive and be seated before start time.**

Location: Lehigh Co. Senior Center
1633 Elm Street
Allentown, PA

Topics: Custom hand planes – really custom! By Jim Leamy These are serious planes that will totally blow you away,