Rocky Mountain Tool Collectors

SHAVINGS, SAWDUST and SPLINTERS

April, 1991

From the President:

Shortly after the beginning of the year, just after Bill handed me the reins of the club presidency and left me with a list of oh-by-the-ways and a chuckling "Good luck, kid," Cliff told me I have to write a President's Column for the newsletter every time he decides to publish one. That wasn't listed in the job description, nor did the nominating committee mention it when they asked me if I would be willing to take this position. I told Cliff I didn't have anything to say that everyone didn't already know. But he told me if I didn't write something he would be forced to leave a big blank space in the newsletter with my name at the top of it. Someone once said that it's better to remain silent and have people think you're a fool than to say something stupid and prove you're a fool. Well, as I just mentioned, there isn't much that the members don't already know so I won't be risking a whole lot by throwing out a few thoughts....

RMTC continues to grow each year and I feel it's important to maintain that growth. New members bring with them fresh attitudes and enthusiasms that keep the club from becoming stale and stagnant. They provide new ears for your old tales that all the other members have heard a dozen times. New members bring their own expertise and knowledge to add to yours. And they come with money in their pockets to buy those tools that you've been trying so hard to get rid of but that everyone else in the club already has. And, probably most of all, they provide for new friendships and acquaintances. So, ask a friend to come to the next meeting with you. Mention the club to people in conversation; if they express an interest, invite them to a meeting. Help our membership to continue growing.

The club depends on volunteers for everything from its officers, to meeting hosts, to activity coordinators, to stuffing envelopes. If you haven't volunteered to help with some club function, then give it a try. If you have been a volunteer, then I thank you and urge you to continue. We're all in this for the fun of it and I believe you'll get more out of it than you put in to it.

Speaking of volunteering, we need volunteers to submit items for publication in this newsletter. Original text, copies of articles, tidbits of information, pictures, etc., are all welcome. Cliff and I don't want to be the only ones with our names in this thing, you know. Besides, the more you submit, the less I have to write to fill up the blank space.

If there's something you like or don't like about the way the club does something, or you have an idea for improving things, please let one of the officers know what it is. RMTC exists for you and we can't cater to the wishes of the members if we don't know what the members want.

The Annual Meeting will be held August 30 through September 1 (Labor Day weekend) at the Landmark Inn in Denver. We'll open the doors for setup at noon on Friday and run through about noon on Sunday, with the auction being held around 10 a.m. Sunday. This will be a joint meeting between RMTC and M-WTCA Area L. Registration information and details will be sent out in a couple of months. Mark your calendar now and make plans to be there.

And make plans for next month's meeting in Trinidad, Colorado, for what's become known as the Interim Joint Meeting. It gives us the chance to hold a mid-year Executive Board meeting in combination with some good tool trading. Trinidad is roughly half way between Albuquerque and Denver, 3 to 4 hours' drive for most of us. At the risk of (unintentionally) insulting the locals, let me say that there are not a lot of distractions in the area, but that just means that you can concentrate on the tool business at hand.

Well, that should be more than enough to satisfy Cliff. If I forgot anything let me know (I'll need some more ideas, anyway) and I'll mention it in the next issue. Hope to see you at the next meeting.

Steve Scruggs

INTERIM JOINT MEETING
May 4 & 5, 1991
Holiday Inn, Trinidad, CO

From the Editor:

There's not much to report from the editor's office for this issue. The material which several of you have offered and/or supplied for reprinting is appreciated. This issue's material on the hammer is supplied courtesy of Bill McDougall.

Bill and Steve Scruggs have been very dutifully producing the material to fullfill the assignments which I have given them.

Would anyone be inclined to take some photos of interesting tools or programs at the area meetings? They would be most welcome.

I have a little something to share with you - some of the entertaining entries I see in the category of "specialty" on the membership applications and renewals. Did you know that in a club of antique tool collectors most everyone wants "old" tools'?

Here is a representative sampling:
anything & everything, if _____
doesn't buy it first
anything good
unusual tools
everything
old tools
any old tools
everything old
tools, mostly
misc. anything
various,
depending on the mood of my head at the minute
assorted

Cliff

In Memoriam

RMTC was saddened to learn of the death of Charles Atkinson, of Arvada, Colorado. Charlie died on February 26, 1991, two days short of his 71st birthday, following a short illness. He was one of the earliest members of RMTC and we'll miss his presence at our meetings. We extend our sincerest sympathies to his wife, Frances, and to his family.

COLORADO AREA DISPLAY AT WOODWORKING SHOW

Another Colorado Woodworking Show is behind us and this year's show, held March 15-16-17 at the National Western Complex in Denver, proved to be as successful and as much fun as those in years past. The show offers us complimentary space to display tools and gives us a lot of exposure to the public. Although we're not allowed to sell items because the space is provided for free, I think we were once again one of the most popular booths at the show. We always draw a big crowd and everyone seems to recognize at least a couple of tools "like granddad had in his shop."

For those of you who staffed the booth or loaned tools for display, I extend a hearty "thanks." The club can't participate in activities like this without volunteers, and I think those who volunteer always get more out of it than they put into it. Thanks again.

RMTC display at the Colorado Woodworking Show

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Tom Alley (Denver, CO)
Anne Bond (Denver, CO)
Rolf Cartharius (Cave Creek, AZ)
Judy Greenfield (Denver, CO)
Frank Holland (Littleton, CO)
Geoffrey Hunt (Denver, CO)
Scott Jordon (Albuquerque, NM)
Rick Martin (Georgetown, CO)
Dana Peizer (Albuquerque, NM)
Ray Rossi (Aurora, CO)
Richard Woelfle (Loveland, CO)

INFORMATION WANTED

We have received a request for information on tools made or patented by William Baxter of Newark, NJ. These would most likely be wrenches and may have been manufactured by a company with a different name. If you have wrenches, other tools, or catalog listings relating to William Baxter of Newark, NJ please contact George King III, 859 N. Franklin, CT, 06254

NOVEMBER COLORADO AREA MEETING

Our last Denver area meeting of 1990, on November 18, was held in the Community Meeting Room in Southwest Plaza Shopping Center. We had about 28 attendees (these kids wouldn't hold still for an official head count) and two guest speakers.

The meeting room provided all the amenities needed for a good meeting - plenty of space, tables, chairs, and even a kitchen and restroom - but access did prove to be a tad inconvenient, especially for those who brought in very many tools to sell & show. (There was one report of a member who got lost in May D & F and never did make it to the meeting, but he did get a lot of Christmas shopping done.) The next time we have to rent a space to hold a meeting we'll try to find a place with easier access. (Suggestions are welcome...)

A kitty was started to help defray the costs of renting the room, and sufficient donations were kindly made to cover the room and part of the refreshment costs. Until the Board of Directors can meet in Trinidad on May 4 & 5 to decide how to help cover the increasing costs of local Colorado and New Mexico meetings equitably, we'll use the kitty technique or a raffle (which the New Mexico group has been using) to help our meeting hosts cover costs. Donations of raffle prizes (a tool, a book, or ???) and $$$ will be most welcome. But since the New Mexico group is not accepting small animals as donations I guess we won't either.

The theme for the November meeting was "Restoration, Cleaning, & Preservation." We had two expert guest speakers: Judy Greenfield, a museum conservator, and Goeff Hunt, a museum curator, who each gave an informative talk and answered questions about tool preservation from a museum's point of view. Then two of our own experts: Phil Whitby and Bob Finch, gave brief talks and answered questions concerning preservation from the tool collector's and dealer's view points.

The get-together ended with an auction of about 20 tools. The bidding was at times frenzied and at times a bit slow, probably because the default auctioneer (me) couldn't keep track of what the bid was!

Steve Scruggs

LOST AND FOUND

FOUND: Three books (Foxfire, etc) at Dave Keefover's after the January Colorado Area meeting. If you want them you know what to do.

Trinidad: May 4 & 5

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JANUARY COLORADO AREA MEETING

The first Denver area meeting of 1991 was held on a snowy January 19 in Lakewood at the home of Dave Keefover, with special hosting & culinary assistance from Hannah Mauch of Colorado Springs. A head count during the business meeting showed we had about 30 members, including 4 guests. We probably missed a few heads that were still in the basement admiring Dave's collection which, among some fine tools, includes a very nice selection of antique sewing machines and cameras.

This was our first meeting on a Saturday in recent memory and despite the cold & snow the turnout was good and the change from our usual Sunday meeting day seemed to be well received. Tool trading seemed to be as brisk as the weather outside; the 2-month lag since our last meeting had apparently whetted some appetites. That first 15 minutes of the meeting reminded me of a shark feeding frenzy.

Special guests for the meeting were Anne & Brock Bond. Anne is a curator with the Colorado History Museum and she gave a very informative talk about the museum's role in preserving our state's history, such as the acquistion of items of everyday life (yes, that includes tools). She also talked about the current exhibit at the museum, which is actually a ten-year, revolving exhibit of memorabilia of each decade of the 1900s.

Bill Teasley gave a report on a special tool display he has been coordinating with the Golden Pioneer Museum. He has arranged with several RMTC members to loan tools for a display that will run at the museum from June through August. This display is the result of the work and courtesy of your fellow members; make plans to get out and see it. Thanks, Bill.

Steve Scruggs

FEBRUARY NEW MEXICO AREA MEETING

Our first meeting of 1991 at Mike Stark's home on February 16th was a great start for the New Year! We had nineteen members and one guest, Ted Callaway, attending.

After some great refreshments and tools changing hands, the meeting was very well conducted by our new Vice President Drew Goodmann.

The What'sit? session was led by our very own what'sit, Dave Fessler.

In spite of the very serious and educational nature of this discussion, we still got several very imaginative (silly) suggestions of what some of the tools were used for. One item brought in by Elmo was never identified (there is some suspicion that he made it himself), and the tool that McDougall had bought as a folding buggy wheel wrench was properly identified as a lemon squeezer.

The member-donated mystery raffle prize was won by John Neary and turned out to be a "priceless" fence stretcher (at least it wasn't another lemon squeezer).

Although the attendance at our local meetings is steadily increasing and represents over half of the New Mexico membership, we are hoping to see more old familiar faces at these meetings. At this tine our treasury will not support the cost of printing photographs on milk cartons (and beer cans) but we are not giving up on seeing you all at these meetings. Please come!

Because of the volume of tools bought and sold at these meetings, we want to assure our members that every tool sold is positively guaranteed.

Listed here are some of the sellers' special warranties: The Fessler "no fault repair guarantee" - In case of any checks or latent defects in a tool, Dave will, at on charge, repair with patching plaster and touch up finish with a close match of latex house paint.

The Woodford "50-year" - Dan warrants his tools to be within 50 years as old as be describes them to be.

The Goodmann "money back guarantee" - In the event a tool proves defective, Drew will keep the "money" and "back" out of the guarantee.

McDougall's "unconditional tool parts guarantee" - If a tool, for any reason breaks into 2 or more parts after the purchase, the buyer automatically owns all the parts.

Bill McDougall

COLORADO WOODWORKING SHOW

MARCH COLORADO AREA MEETING

Where were you on March 24 at 1:00 p.m.? If you weren't at the home of Phil Whitby in Englewood then you missed out on a darn good Denver-area meeting. You missed out on the best-attended area meeting we've had in a long time--over one hundred feet maneuvering among tens of tables so that a thousand fingers could handle literally hundreds of tools.

You missed seeing the vast layout and display of tools that Phil always affords us when we meet at his house. (You say you've seen his stuff before, but you know that you can't see it all in one visit, or even a dozen visits.)

You missed your chance at the mini-auction to buy a $300 Davis inclinometer level for a measly 45 bucks. (Sure, it had some slight damage, but it was no where near $255 worth of damage.)

If you weren't there then you missed the chance to talk to some friends that you may not have seen in a while, or the chance to make some new friends. There's not a friendlier bunch of guys gals around.

There was a new member there looking to buy a left-handed, reverse-spiral canuter thrapet just like the one you've been trying to pawn off for 10 years, but you weren't there to sell it to him so he spent his 50 dollars on a self-regulating, semi-helical juba modulator instead.

Some of us learned how to set a Newhouse No. 15 bear trap without losing any vital organs in the process. What are you going to do when it comes time to set yours?

And since you weren't there, we walked away with all of the bargains on all of the tools that you've been looking for all of your life.

Where are you going to be during the next meeting of RMTC?

Steve

1991 RMTC MEETING DATES

January 19	Dave Keefover/Hannah Mauch	Denver
February 16	Mike Stark	Albuquerque
March 17	Phil Whitby	Denver
April 13	Doug Fritsche	Albuquerque
May 4,5	**Interim Joint Meeting**	**Trinidad**
June 8	Paul Lisle	Albuquerque
June 9	John & Grace Goss	Boulder
July 14	Leo Stambaugh	Georgetown
August 10	Pat Darnell	Albuquerque
August 30-Sept. 1	**Annual Meeting**	**Denver**
(Joint meeting with SWTCA & M-WTCA Area L)		
October 13	Elmer Frink	Denver
October 19	Glenn Perrin	Albuquerque
November 17	Don Arstrong	Arvada
December 7	Dan Woodford	Albuquerque

CORRECTION - DATES

The June area meeting dates listed in your membership book are incorrect; please correct your book and calendar. June 8 is New Mexico; June 9 is Colorado.

The Nail Hammer

SEVERAL YEARS AGO a foreign metalworking company made and exported a quantity of nail hammers to the United States. The retail price was right; and to the untrained eye, they looked great. Yet sales were disappointing until a sharp merchandiser entered the scene. With the benefit of a clever advertising gimmick, he sold out the lot in a hurry.

What happened?

First, the manufacturer did not have any experience in the hand-tool business, or more specifically nail hammers. People in the business will tell you that the striking face of the import was flat. As a result, it was impossible to drive a nail. They invariably bent.

The hand is always above the head of a hammer when a nail is struck. For this reason, the striking face must have a precise angle (see drawing) ground into it, explains J. Dan Snyder, manufacturing manager, Hardware Div., True Temper Corp., an Allegheny Ludlum Industries Company, one of this country's leading producers of hammers, other hand tools, garden tools, and such other well-known items as golf-club shafts.

The wheeler-dealer capitalized on the shortcoming of the import and promoted it as a gift for the neighbor who always borrows hammers and other tools.

The incident makes an important point: although the hammer is undoubtedly one of the more commonplace items about the home and plant, it is a pretty sophisticated piece of equipment.

In fact, you'll find there is even an American National Standard on the subject: ANSI B173.1-1975, "Safety Requirements for Nail Hammers." The standard "provides safety requirements for the design, construction, testing, and use of nail hammers which are intended specifically for use in driving or pulling common unhardened nails and ripping apart or tearing down wooden components or structures."

The drawing above was adapted from that standard.

Closer Look at the ANSI Standard

When you get into the details of ANSI B173.1-1975, it becomes apparent that the hammer is the product of some pretty solid metalworking technology. The standard encompasses definitions, design, materials, physical properties, and tests for determining the hardness of the head and claws, tensile testing of the complete assembly (handle and head), and a test for checking the ability of the claws to withstand nail-pulling forces.