

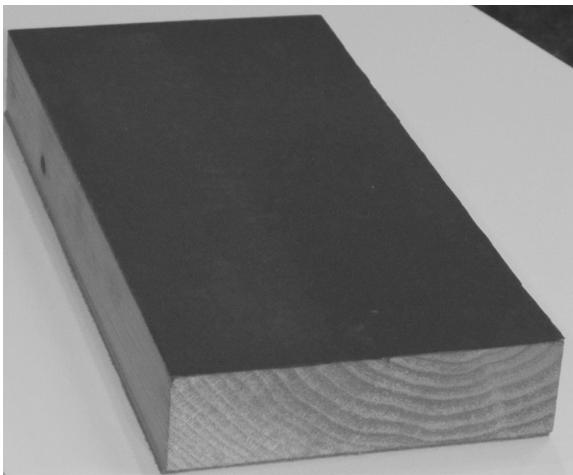
A Note From A Wood Tinker

This past Thanksgiving and Christmas saw many of us Chippers on the road jockeying with J.B. Hunt trucks, Fedex triple trailers, and thousands more vehicles speeding to destinations near or far. Many travelled to be with family and count their blessings. Others had only a short commute, say, between their home's woodpile and its fireplace. In November, we hit the road to Ohio. This enabled the Wood Tinker to return a chisel to his brother-in-law, Don.

My start in tool sharpening began on a previous trip, which saw Don sacrifice his old wood chisel to my education. A class in "Hands On Squaring Rough Lumber Using The Jointer, Planer & Table Saw" at Woodcraft in Appleton left me with a planed, flat, squared block of wood which formed the base for a sandpaper tool sharpener. A "cut to fit" piece of P220 grit sandpaper was removably attached to the block with 3M multipurpose spray adhesive. A few finer grit sandpapers were cut, to be placed on the P220 as needed. The P220 fixed sheet acted to grip an added sheet laid in place (as described in Everett Ellenwood's "The Complete Book of Woodcarving," Chapter 6 on Sharpening). After making this sharpener, a few swipes with the P320 in place followed by P600, using a honing guide to keep a set angle and voila - a sharpened chisel. Well, that's what I'd like to tell you, but the truth is I used a bunch of different grits to see what the effect was on the chisel (uhh, my brother-in-law's chisel). And the honing guide was set at the wrong angle initially, but I fixed that pronto without too much... well let's not get into that. In any case, I returned the chisel in better shape than I got it, and I learned a lot to boot.

Lessons learned:

- (1) Place the block on a nonslip surface so it doesn't move around while sharpening.
- (2) The sandpaper grit is aggressive in removing metal, surprisingly so (at least surprising to me). Don't go coarser than P330 unless reworking the tool. Check sharpening progress often.
- (3) Get the angle right. This will, absent a honing guide (and, as I learned, even with a honing guide), take care and practice.
- (4) Find "beater" tools to practice on (like your brother-in-law's stuff.) ;) Don't sharpen tools that don't need it. Lean towards stropping to renew a slightly dulled edge.



Here is the sandpaper sharpener that I made. On the top is the P220 Silicon Carbide sandpaper which may be used to "grip" the backing on other grit sizes of sandpaper. The reverse side is covered with a rectangular piece of leather, rough side out, that was permanently attached using Original Barge Cement. This makes a flat strop to which a honing compound such as Flexcut Gold may be applied for final polishing and burr removal. The leather was available from Hobby Lobby; the Barge Cement from Tandy Leather. Back to our November trip to Ohio:

The David Warther Museum opened in Sugarcreek, Ohio on May 4, 2013 to house the studio and carvings of David Warther, Jr. The grandson of Ernest "Mooney" Warther, David was born in 1959 into a carving family. A hundred year heritage of carving ivory and ebony can be seen in his sailing ships with their ivory rigging (0.007 inch diameter) and scrimshawed features.



The David Warther Museum houses over 80 miniature ships depicting the history of ships from ancient Egypt, circa 3000 B.C., to modern pre-steam times. Working with legal pre-ban ivory, David expects that ultimately his museum will house about 100 carvings of western pre-steam ships. David uses a technique that he developed at age 13 to make the fine ivory threads for rigging. The ships planks are defined further using scrimshaw (engraving with India ink).



The museum has five rooms dedicated to different shipbuilding eras. Ancient shipbuilding features Egyptian, Phoenician, Greek and Roman ships. The oldest ship for which David made a replica is a circa 3000 B.C. 38 foot Egyptian Royal Vessel in which the King sat at the rear while a forward boatman attended to its being towed from shore or by another ship. It was carved in 1/4 scale (1/4 inch = 1 foot).



An ivory and scrimshaw carved replica of a similar Egyptian Royal tow boat from 2600 B.C..

By 550 B.C. Greek warships had evolved to feature a bireme 48 oarsman powered water level battering ram with lightweight plank on frame construction. The sail, mast and yardarm were all lowered during ramming operations with propulsion relying upon the oarsmen. Here is David's 1/8th scale carving of the Greek ship The Wild Boar.



The Medieval era focuses upon Viking ships; and the Modern era has ivory renditions of such famous ships as Columbus' Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria, Mayflower, Susan Constant, BonHomme Richard, H.M.S. Bounty, USS Constitution, and up to the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Eagle which was a training sailing ship build in 1936 Germany and claimed as a war reparation.



At 1/18 scale, Warther completed the Eagle at age 17 in ivory, ebony, walnut and Abalone Pearl.



The museum exhibits various tusks as well as carvings. David Warther, Jr. carving in his shop.

The David Warther Museum is located at 1775 State Rt. 39 Sugarcreek, Ohio. Admission is \$10 and the museum is open Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. www.warther.org