

# THE TOOL TABLE

The Newsletter of the Richmond Antique Tool Society

VOLUME 21 No. 1

WWW.RICHMONDANTIQUETOOLS.COM

FEBRUARY 2015

## Next meeting Friday February 13 Agenda

- 5:30-7:00 p.m. Tool sales
- 7:00-7:15 p.m. General meeting
- 7:25-8:00 p.m. Tool auction
- 8:00-9:00 p.m. Chisels!
- 9:00-10:00 p.m. Tool sales and fellowship



THE TOOL TABLE is the official publication of the Richmond Antique Tool Society and is published bi-monthly, in February, April, June, September and November of each year.

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## The President's Plane Talk

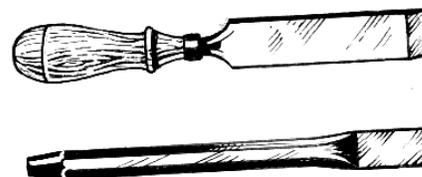
Lately, several members have asked if we could do a program on chisels. Unlike our government, we listen to you and give you what you want! Yes, the RATS "Prez 4 Life" has heard you, loud and clear! So, in our next meeting, Friday night, February 13th, we will focus on all facets of chisels. Types, makers, how to sharpen, collectible chisels, carving chisels, stones, catalogs and anything you can add to our theme on *chisels*! Hopefully, some of you will share with us how you sharpen your chisels. You know – that time-honored special secret technique that shaves wrist hair cleanly off. That is so impressive – how do *you* do that? This should be a fun night with tool trading, selling, auction and fellowship. Please bring a friend and some chisels to display, a technique to share or just sit back and enjoy the evening at Pocahontas Middle School.

At this meeting, we will have several new members attending. They recently joined RATS during our tool sale at Woodcraft a few weeks ago. That was a big success! We had 13 new members become RATS at this event. Several RATS sold tools, worked the RATS table and even demonstrated. We are planning on making this a semi-annual event.

Our December "Gathering" was another special occasion, marking the end of another tool year. We had over 30 members and their families attend and share what has become known as the "best potluck dinner" in town. Again, thank you all for supporting our club with our "Donation Auction" in November. We look forward to a wonderful and healthy 2015! I'm in the process of booking several speakers for our upcoming meetings. If you have a presenter that you think would enjoy sharing their talents with us, please call me at (804) 920-8150.

Plane and Simple,

Rick Long



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Richmond Antique Tool Society  
 c/o Dick Levy  
 556 Pantela Dr.  
 Richmond, VA 23235

**Officers**

President ..... Rick Long  
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Treasurer..... Dick Levy

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 (804) 746-8310

To receive THE TOOL TABLE and  
 RATS announcements via e-mail,  
 contact:  
 w.taggart@verizon.net



**Some Useful Links**

“A Short Guide to Chisels” from Tools for Working Wood:  
<https://www.toolsforworkingwood.com/store/know/chiselguide.html>

“Your Basic Guide to Chisels” from Popular Woodworking:  
<http://www.popularwoodworking.com/techniques/your-basic-guide-to-chisels>

Video: “How to sharpen a chisel without using a honing guide”:  
<http://www.highlandwoodworking.com/blog4/chiselsharpeningB.html>

Honing Guide Reviews:  
<http://www.woodworkersjournal.com/chisel-and-plane-honing-guide-reviews/>

Very good “Buying Guide to Chisels”, with lots of other useful info:  
<http://woodandshop.com/woodworking-hand-tool-buying-guide-chisels/>



**RATS Calendar 2015**

Regular meetings	Pocahontas Middle School, 12000 Three Chopt Rd.	April 10, June 12, Sept 4, Nov. 6
Somerset Steam & Gas Pasture Party	14375 Blue Ridge Turnpike, Somerset, VA	Sept. 11-13, 2015
Field Day of the Past	1741 Ashland Rd, Rockville, VA	Sept. 18-20, 2015
RATS Gathering	Fox Hall HOA Club House, 13550 Causeway Drive	December 9

# HOW COMPLICATED CAN A CHISEL BE?

BY BILL TAGGART

## Only Two Parts, Right?

A woodworking chisel seems like a very simple tool – a metal pointy bit and a wooden handy bit. And as tools go, they are pretty simple – a blade and a handle. Steel and wood. But that simplicity can be deceiving, and it takes a lot of practice, trial and error to really master the use of a chisel.

## Types of Chisels

Although they're all relatively simple and similar in form, there are lots of different types of chisels. Mortising chisels, paring chisels, general purpose bench chisels, firmers, butt chisels, patternmaker's chisels... Although some chisels can be used for various jobs, in many cases, it really is best to use the right chisel for the task. You don't want to use a paring chisel to chop out a mortise. Mostly because you'll almost certainly end up destroying the tool. And even if you don't (which you will), you probably won't get very good results – because it's the wrong tool for the job.

## Construction

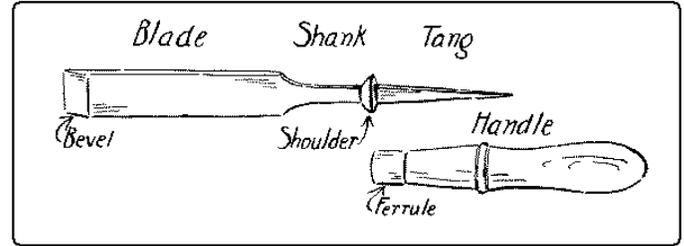
A big differentiating feature among chisels is how the blade is attached to the handle. Very generally, there are two different methods: a socketed blade or a tanged blade.

A socketed chisel has the rear end of the blade forged out into a cone-shaped socket. The wooden handle has a matching tapered spigot turned onto it. When the spigot is properly fitted and firmly driven into the socket, it makes a very sturdy and pretty much permanent attachment.



Socketed chisels are usually larger, very stout chisels, meant to be struck with a mallet. The socket prevents the end of the handle from splitting apart, and only gets tighter as it is struck with the mallet.

Tanged chisels have the rear end of the blade forged out into a long, narrow, tapered tang, which usually is square or rectangular in cross-section. It is driven into a hole drilled into the end of the handle.

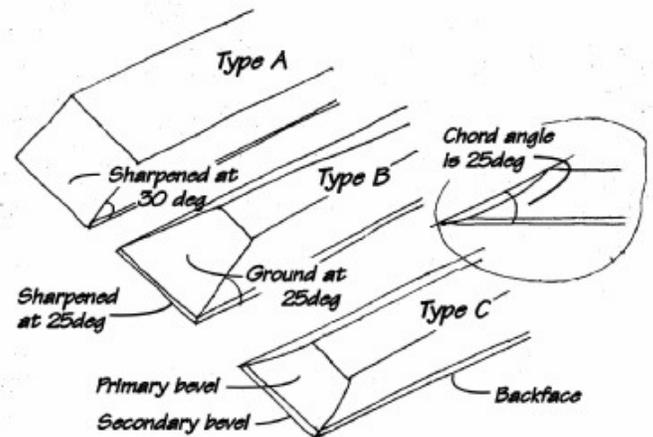


## More Than Two Parts?

A tanged chisel often will have a ferrule, to keep the handle from splitting where the tang enters. Chisels that are meant to be struck with a mallet also sometimes will have a ring at the back end, called a strike ring or schlag ring (from the German word meaning "to hit or strike"), to keep it from splitting. Other will have a leather washer, or stack of leather washers, on the struck end.

## The Blade

Chisel blades can be long, narrow and thin, as in the case of paring chisels, or short and squat, as in the case of butt chisels, or thick and stout, as in the case of firmers and mortise chisels. Some blades are straight and rectangular in cross-sections; others have bevels along the side edges. Chisels without beveled edges typically are for heavy chopping. Those with thin, heavily beveled edges usually are more for paring and generally are not to be struck with a mallet.

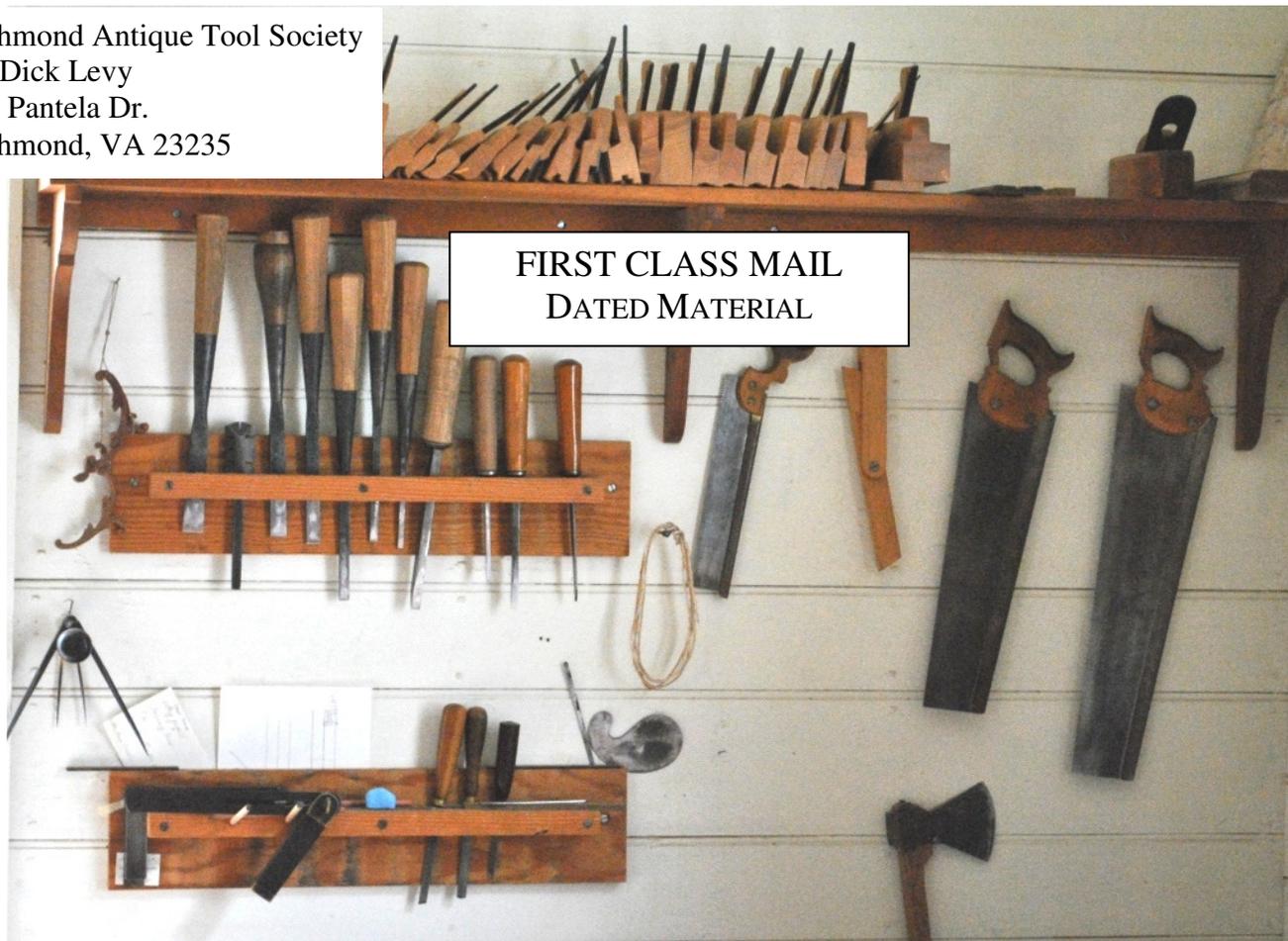


## Use the Right Tool!

A final point: when striking a chisel, **do not** use a hammer! Use a wooden, leather, plastic or rubber mallet.

Now, there are different types of mallets – carver's mallets, joiner's mallets, carpenter's mallets...

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Visit the RATS website!  
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