

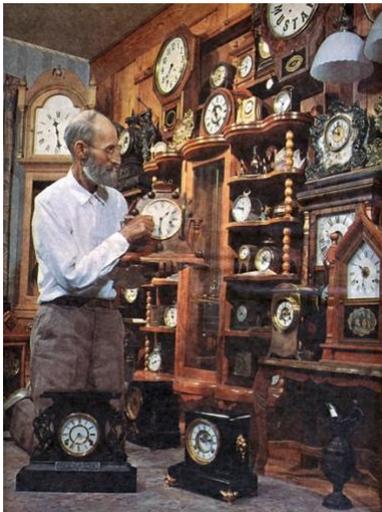
Who they are

An interview with the Jan-Feb 2022 Monthly Contest Winners

Meet our latest contest winner, Alan Jacobson. His shop storage unit is impressive. It looks great and holds tools.



Jacobson's shop storage cabinet is part art, part history, and very functional. Phil Soper interviewed Alan recently and asked Alan to talk about the design. Alan said, "The wood came from Park Rapids in Minnesota." "This was salvaged wood from a table made by my grandfather who had salvaged it from a jukebox in the 50s." The wood was in bad shape and Alan just removed material until the sides were symmetrical. The design was utilitarian. He started with hand planes and built fitted slots for each of his planes going from side to side. The rest of the tools were laid out similarly, tools laid out from side to side. The cabinet is 4' wide and mounted to the wall with a rock maple cleat that is 42" long. The cabinet is lagged to the whole structure along the bottom. Alan indicated that this project took 2 months and he fit it around his landscape business schedule. Some of the tool slots would sometime take several hours working in this fashion



Alan's family has a history in woodworking. His grandfather ran a lumber mill at the Mississippi River head waters. Upon retirement, Grandfather, took up furniture refurbishing and restoring and restoring antique, rare clocks. Some of those cabinet slots were hand fitted to hold the planes that his grandfather had used. The holders were made from salvaged walnut and mahogany.

Phil asked how many times Alan modified the tool slots. Alan replied, "Not a lot." "But, I have acquired more planes since the cabinet was finished so there have been some change. One of those new planes is a Type 1 Bedrock and I have to find a place for that one."



From the pictures Alan has posted, it is obvious his two car garage shop is packed. Alan has used all the space he has and still have the shop functional. In addition, the space provides storage for the landscape business. Alan has been creative in using the space. Alan stated, "This shop is not for production work."



It is for a single user.” The paths are tight, and workspaces overlap. “I can operate three tools from one station.”, Alan said.

Alan has been working with wood since 1966. He started “piddling” when he was 6 years old and had his own tools. I’ve been woodworking since 1966. Not a lot of projects but I’ve been piddling with woodworking since I was 6 years old with my own tools. His father would tell stories of sneaking into grandfathers shop and using the tools, cleaning the tools and putting the tools back as he found them.



Alan claims his father was only a “tiny” influence on developing his woodworking habit. “My dad complained that he would use the tools, clean them, and returned them as found and would still get caught and get a “whoopin”.

Alan remains busy using the tools in the shop and from the cabinet. On the NCWW Facebook page you can see his latest project. It is barn house built to 1:12 scale. It seems Alan has penchant for building doll houses complete with working doors. He’s now on his 10th doll house. This latest one is to be a model of his grandparents’ house. The house was built in the 1800’s by his great, great grandfather. One of his recent builds was a post and beam structure where the posts were 1” X 1” post and mortise and tenon joinery. All of this was done with hand tools.



Too add realism, Alan turns and carves farm animal toys and equipment. Alan says pigs are easiest. “Just turn the body shape and drill holes for the legs. Easy to build but time consuming.” He uses scraps from his shop and from the shops of friends. That means no material costs.

When asked what brought him to the NCwoodworker.net forum. He replied that he had stumbled upon while googling. He is more active on the NCWoodworker Facebook page but does log on the forum a couple times a week.

His recommendations for new woodworkers are, “Have fun! Start off simple and don’t spend more money than you wanted to.” Good advice. That money thing may be challenging for all of us.

If you would like to know more about Alan’s work message him through the forum.