

Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft

CANADIAN LEATHERCRAFT



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Peter Grove FCSCCL, Hamilton Branch, demonstrating at the 2007 Annual

From the Left: Emma Windatt, Hilda Chynoweth, Della Chynoweth, Sandra Roberts, and Peter

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Notes from the Editor...

Have you noticed how fashionable Leather has become –again? Leather furniture has been around for years now, at somewhat more affordable prices, but now there seems to be a resurgence of leather clothing and accessories – desk sets, picture frames, office pieces, ottomans, storage boxes, and more CSCL's main focus, in the years, I've been a member, has been both decorative and functional. CSCL'ers have explored leather clothing (how about Sean Dalgetty's Bustier) and accessories, footwear, book coverings, objets d'art, and household articles (I recall, a leather covered waste paper basket at one Annual). Things may not have changed all that much but the "Green" movement has made me think of leather in a different light.

Recently, I've been thinking about how leather is a great example of recycling and reusing. I still have a hard time tossing away a leather handbag, when there are changes in fashion. I still can see years of use in the old bag. Same thing with leather shoes. In many cases, I can't bear to really toss leather away, so I take the pieces to the local Thrift Store. I put a bag of leather scraps out at a Garage Sale and was amazed how quickly those craft room scraps got picked up by the early morning bargain hunters. I've got enough scraps for another two or three bags –unless I find a project to make. CSCL is thinking of having an award for "Recycled" Leather. Give a few minutes thought of how you might recycle or reuse a leather article in a new, creative way – you could win an award! Examples of possible award articles are in this edition.

While at the Burlington Arts Centre attending the 2007 CSCL Annual, a good number of CSCL members had a chance to visit and view the Burlington Rug Hookers site. With springtime sun streaming through the windows, the hooked rugs and wall hangings took on a jewel-like essence, look for some pictures in this issue. Many Thanks to the members of the Hooker's Guild.

Your input is always welcomed! The CSCL Newsletter will always find room for contributions of news, tips, questions –just contact me at madean@execulink.com or write to Madeleine Mitchell, 17 Light St., Woodstock, ON N4S 6G7

Mark Your Calendars and start your Project for the 2008 CSCL Exhibition

**To be held at the Lindsay Art Gallery -April 2008.
Details will follow in future issues of "Canadian Leathercraft"**

***Thanks to Lauch Harrison for the Hamilton Branch
contributions to this Newsletter!***

Contributions to the Autumn Newsletter will be from Mississauga Branch
Deadline for submissions –November 1st, 2007

Visit The Reading Corner Gallery

566 Newbold St. London

For further information, contact Dorothy McPherson,
TRC Gallery curator, 574 Cayley Drive, London, ON N6H 3G8.

Open 9:00am to 5:00pm

(519)473-6450 or email: artisan@lon.imag.net

Featuring Fine Handart by Canadian Crafters

...possibly win an award for your efforts.

CSCL Executive Council has discussed adding some new awards for CSCL members.

Awards would be given out at the Annuals. Below are some of the new award suggestions.

All pictures from the 2007 CSCL Annual.

1.Jewelry:

Try bracelets, necklaces, ear rings, broaches, lapel pins, rings –use your imagination

1.Recycled leather: Include a before and after picture when possible.

Reuse,

Recycle,

Redo

Renew

Shoes

Sandals

Mocassins

Slippers

Boots

1.Footwear:

Can you come up with some innovative items for these categories?

You could be an award winner in 2008.

1.Minature Doll House furnishings:

Furniture
Accessories
Floor Covering
Book cases
Tables

Highlights from the 2007 Annual General Meeting

May 5, 2007

CSCL's Constitution revisions have been approved by the General Membership!

If any CSCL member would like a copy of the revised Constitution contact any Executive Council

member or Membership chair Phyllis McHale –Address are on the first page of this newsletter.

President's Message – Lauchlan Harrison ACSCL

Welcome all to the Canadian Society for Creative Leather Craft Annual General meeting, hoted by Mississauga. I would like to extend greetings to new members, visitors from out of town, corporate partners and our membership. I am excited to hear the workshops and the dinner will be well populated and attendance is higher than last year.

As I began reviewing the year and assembling my thoughts, I had the feeling our craft and the CSCL are on the path to renewal and growth. The winds of change this way come. What gives me this hope and lends credence to this thesis? Let me start by choosing some signs close to my home, we have

increased the working members in Hamilton, by one hundred percent in the last two years. There are returning & new members in Toronto, and Norland. Mississauga runs weekly meetings and Woodstock hosted a successful lasted box workshop bringing interested newcomers to our doorstep. Last but not least, the visitors from Ottawa may bring a new chapter to our society our society in both figurative and substantive way.

The Weston Trophy Competition had entries from every chapter it has been a long while since our Fellows have had to look at so many articles. We are tool users, we need to use our hands and we need creative outlets that computers cannot supply. When our craft unites imagination and skill to produce articles of beauty and function we are elevated in spirit. Those pieces are here today for us to enjoy.

This Annual will bring about the culmination of more than three years work on the Constitution and Bylaws, resulting in an effective and more democratic society.

Let's make our new members feel at home, by showing them our craft, our care and our respect for the medium.

Norland Branch Three Workshops-September 22

At the Old School Hall

3448 County Road 45

Norland Ontario

Hamilton Branch table at the 2007 CSCL Annual

HELPING OUT: some facts and figures by Dorothy McPherson

This is the 8th year that leather crafters will be among 9,000 Ontarians honoured in 45 Volunteer Service Award ceremonies across the province for continuous years of service with a community group such as the Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft. There are 45,000 incorporated, non-profit groups in Ontario active in health, recreation, the arts, social services, newcomer settlement, education, religion, the environment and other fields.

Statistics Canada shows that 86 percent of Ontarians volunteer while the national average is only 83%. Statistics Canada values Ontario volunteer time at over \$10 billion annually. Yes, Over 5 million Ontarians volunteer yearly contributing over 800 million annual volunteer hours — equivalent to more than 400,000 full-time jobs. The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards are a way for the government to recognize volunteers for their undeniable contributions. The awards are also a way to thank volunteers for their continuous years of commitment and dedicated service to a group. Youth volunteers (under the age of 24) are recognized for two or more years of continuous service. Adults are recognized for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40 (new in 2004) and 50 years of continuous service.

Membership alone is not a qualification for recognition. It is necessary to have held office in the organization at the local or national level or have performed some active, on-going, unique or outstanding service to the group.

Non-profit groups that have been in existence for a minimum of five years may complete a nomination form. Until this year, 2007, each group was allowed to nominate up to six volunteers each year. **However, beginning this year, to encourage more youth nominees, organizations may nominate up to seven volunteers (at least one of the nominees must be a youth). Organizations nominating only adults are still limited to six nominees. Also new this year, the first June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award for Voluntarism will be presented at select ceremonies.**

Each CSCL branch may nominate 6 adult volunteers each year if they so wish. However, none of the CSCL branches elected to do the required work of contacting their members who are potential nominees, collecting biographies, and submitting the necessary paperwork. As a CSCL Director, I prepared nomination biographies for 43 members. Some people who were eligible declined the nomination for various reasons.

How are the awards presented? A recipient is presented with a stylized trillium pin and personalized certificate at a government ceremony. Usually the local MMP is on the platform to congratulate recipients and present the awards. Pin and certificate correspond to the length of service being recognized. The fifty-year pin has turquoise and diamond stones; 40 is ruby; 30 is diamond; 25 is amethyst. The 5, 10, 15, and 20-year pins just have the numbers on them, no stones. Usually, recipients receive an invitation to attend the ceremony with one guest. Each organization making a nomination is also invited to have two representatives attend the ceremony. If a nominee cannot attend the ceremony the government will mail the certificate and pin after the last provincial ceremony has taken place.

So, if a member has never served on any CSCL executive, either locally or on the Executive Council now is the time to begin. Branch presidents should check with their members and offer a position on the local executive to anyone who hasn't yet served. By rotating the jobs, everyone who is willing to serve has an opportunity to do so. Members-at-large who do not have a local branch can join, and support, any nearby branch. They can also serve on the Executive Council.

Although volunteering is rewarding it is always nice to receive recognition for your efforts and have someone say "Thank you." The names of this year's nominees, Paul Kitchener and Miles Roberts, have been added to CSCL's list of OVSA recipients: Robert Dengler/Ruth Haig/Dorothy Muma/Sadie Roebuck/Nora Huyck/Jessie Little/Marion Kehoe/Gladys Riddell/May Corbett/Betty Heacock/Mildred Kemp/Hilda Chynoweth/Loreen Manuel/Carol McLean/Dorothy Stanton/Muriel Strongman/Irene Girling/Beula Reynolds/Laura Bush/Betsy Rennie/Jack Meharg/Della Chynoweth/Madeleine Mitchell/Emma Windatt/Harry Wendland/Don MacLeod/Kevin Armstrong/Phyllis McHale/Carol Broumley/Nancy Durham/David McPherson/Dorothy McPherson/Allan Foss/Cindy Magura/Keven Magura/Marian Sim/Lauchlan Harrison/Heather Atkinson/Sandra Roberts/Marilyn Harry/Barbara Chynoweth/Paul Kitchener/Miles Roberts.

Leather crafting Tips...

From Robert Muma FCSCL & Charter Member CSCL

"When Morocco has been rubbed down until surface is smooth and shiny, moisten surface and stiple, using a stiff-bristled brush to strike the texture back into the morocco. You have to have a staccato movement – the brush has to bounce. This is best done while the leather is still moist"

From Gladys Riddell FCSCL

"When you have chosen a piece of leather for a pattern, check the piece thoroughly for blemishes, holes and other flaws. Mark these on the flesh side with a pencil or pen dot. On the top side, stick a straight pin into the blemished area to give yourself a guide to work around.

There are always some marks that do not show well, and another system can be used to find them. Take some very diluted Antique Golden Tan dye, and wash it over your leather and let dry. The flaws will appear clearly and the diluted dye won't affect the eventual colour of the article."

Splitting and Skiving Machines

by Lauch Harrison ACSCL

The splitter is used to reduce the thickness of leather. The skiver is used like a splitter but it can also taper the split to a fine edge. The leather is pulled over a roller past a stationary blade, The blade is then able to cut across the work piece in a very controlled manner.

The earliest American production models were made in New Jersey by a number of Makers and Inventors in the middle of the 19th century. There have been many different configurations of blades

and frames but the Osborne/Randall style seems to have had the right stuff as the machines made today follow the same principles and look very similar.

The Blade

The blade must be sufficiently thick that it will not distort when it is under heavy stress. The blade can be made in several different ways, laminated or all tool steel.

Laminated steel blades – the cutting edge is fine tool steel and the back of the blade is a milder steel. The tool steel would have a higher carbon (0.7% and 1.4%) content making the steel much harder, but rendering it more likely to chip and shatter if it was misused or dropped. The high carbon steel is required to hold the edge.

The blades can be hollow ground, this allows the user much more ease when sharpening, as just the cutting edge and the back edge touch the stone. I've seen hollow grinding on both sides of the blade (HF Osborne #615). This speeds the process allowing just the cutting edge to be worked. Flat ground blades are great until a large nick has to be removed, if the blade is tool steel, the job is labourious.

Look for unpitted steel and blades that are wide enough to permit the reshaping. Laminated blades must be more than 1 1/4" wide otherwise the edge has been consumed and the blade can not be sharpened. The blades made with tool steel can be sharpened all the way through the width of the blade.

The Frame can be cast iron, cast steel or welded mild steel, each has advantages. In the case of the cast iron, the least expensive, frames can be made lighter and more open, cast iron is very stiff and has many impurities, making the frame prone to shattering. Cast steel has the strength and the malleability to allow open lighter casting and resistance to breakage. The Welded frame is generally very tough, but it is heavier. Look for the absence of cracks, welds or broken pins or rivets. A highly pigmented lacquer -Japan that was put on in layers and polished was used to prevent rusting. Pitting, rusting and loss of Japanning will not affect the usability of the machine. Make sure all the parts and screws are present.

The Roller should be smooth and even, pitting is not a critical concern to the operation of the machine. More important is the gap between the blade and the roller, if the skiver is used mostly for strap widths less than 1 1/2" the gap can be larger on one side than the other. When splitting wider material, the gap must be very regular across the machine to prevent the strap from casting over towards the side with largest gap.

The Wishbone is spring steel, slightly higher carbon content than mild steel, tempered to hold it's shape. The spring allows the roller to be opened to insert the strap, the tension pushes the roller towards the frame holding the strap in the same place for repeated splits. Look for the absence of cracks, and make sure the spring is still able to close the roller. Some makers marks are under the wishbone spring (CSO #86)

HF Osborne 6" Splitter

In 1874, Patent No. 179948, for a leather splitting machine was awarded to HF Osborne

An 1891 H.F. Osborne catalogue, lists this tool as a "615 -- Knives, New Pat'n, Iron Frame". It also was available in sizes from 5", 6", 7", 8", 9" and 10" sizes. The distinguishing features are the castings are shaper than CSO #86 and the bump outs that hold the wishbone are cast pieces riveted on to the sides of the frame. This splitter has pad screws for the blade hold down. Most harness makers would have pad screw pliers in their kit. The thickness adjustment is made with a large knurled disc that protrudes down from the back of the splitter. This blade is clearly marked "H. F. OSBORNE NEWARK N.J." and "TRADE OPT MARK" (OPT is Osborne Patent Tools). Cost is \$175 - \$275 used
Collection of Lauch Harrison



The differing steel colour and texture can be seen in the photo on the left, as the edge fades back to the milder steel, the roller is on the left. the frames were coated in Black Japan a highly pigmented lacquer, some frames may have 80% or more of the original finish.

CS Osborne 8 inch Keystone #84

In 1883, CS Osborne is Listed as assignor of Patent No. 274921, Lap Shaving and Splitting Machine, by David Dixon.

This is the most popular style of Splitter/skiver, the handle moves the blade, this allows the worker to pull the strap thru as the gap is closing, giving a taper skived edge. The #84 has a spring loaded stop screw that sets the machine up for repeated skives or splits. Pad screws are used for the blade hold down. This machine was made in Newark New Jersey before the turn of the Twentieth Century.
collection of Lauch Harrison . Cost \$250 - \$450



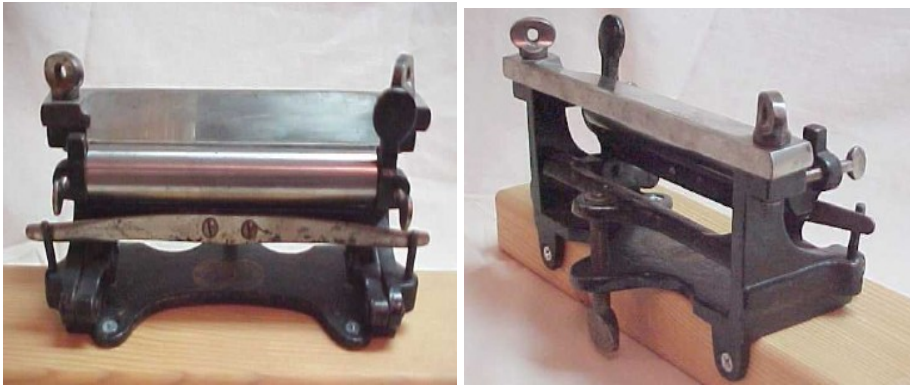
Heritage #84 Skiver/splitter (modern)



Heritage #84 (a work horse) on the bench at Tundra Leather. Collection of Peter Grove
 Modern #84 Lap skivers are made by Randall-Bosworth Keystone #84 (\$565 usd) and Craftool Professional Leather Splitter (Tandy \$575 cdn)

CS Osborne 6 inch #86

The #86 splitter is the most common splitter s still made today. The 2001, C.S. Osborne & Co. catalog #59 illustrates an almost identical 6 inch splitter design, with modern hardware .



The blade is stamped "EST'D 1826" inside a rectangle and "C.S. OSBORNE & CO."

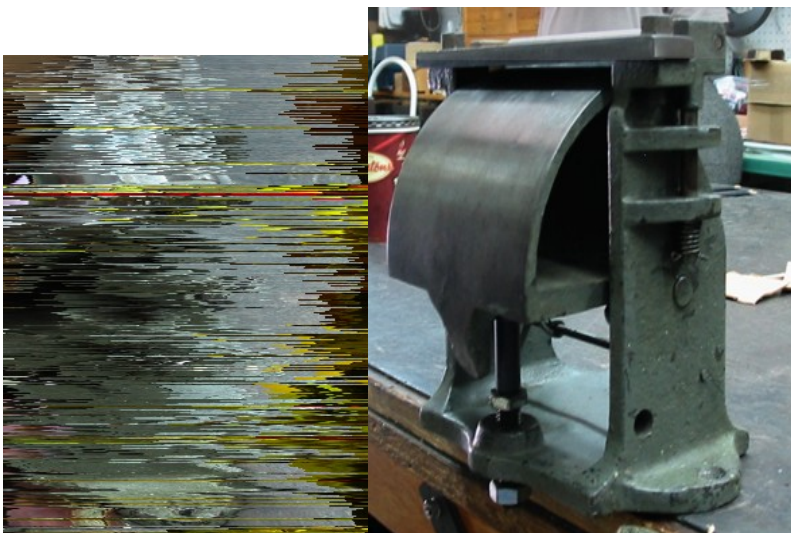
A late 1880's vintage C.S. Osborne catalogue lists this tool as a, No. 86. Iron Frame Splitting Machine, made in sizes 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12 inches.

Note the pins that hold the Wishbone, and the thumb screw.

Collection of the saddle tool dude http://home.att.net/~saddle_tool_dude/ Cost \$150 - \$300 US

Randall 6" Lap Skiver

In 1888, the Patent No. 391190, was issued for a Leather-Skiving Machine, by Silas H. Randall, of Wyoming, Ohio. James D. Randall, listed as 1/2 assignor. The Randall lap skiver uses a concentric cam to close as the leather is pulled through the skiver, the gap closes up in a very controlled manner allowing the repeated skive. Saddle Skirt weight leather strap can easily be given a 4" - 6" long taper. This machine sells for \$250 - \$500 USD



There are many types and maker of splitter/skivers, each has advantages. Look for solid castings and good blades. When you decide to get one you will find that you will use more of the old leather down in the workroom because now you can split it down to a more useful thickness. With this kind of thinking you can convince yourself that you are saving money (sic).

Please call if you have questions about old machines and tools.

Yours sincerely, **Lauch Harrison**

Hamilton Branch's Winning 2007 Weston Trophy Entry