

Norwegian Chip Carving

A presentation by Meryl Valnes
For Sons of Norway, Raleigh, NC



The art of chip carving dates back to before Christ. It is believed to have started in the Far East, in China and Mongolia. Through invasions and wars the art was brought into Europe during the end of the Roman empire and made its way into Switzerland. During the 4th through the 10th centuries, this art form was brought back to the Scandinavian countries.



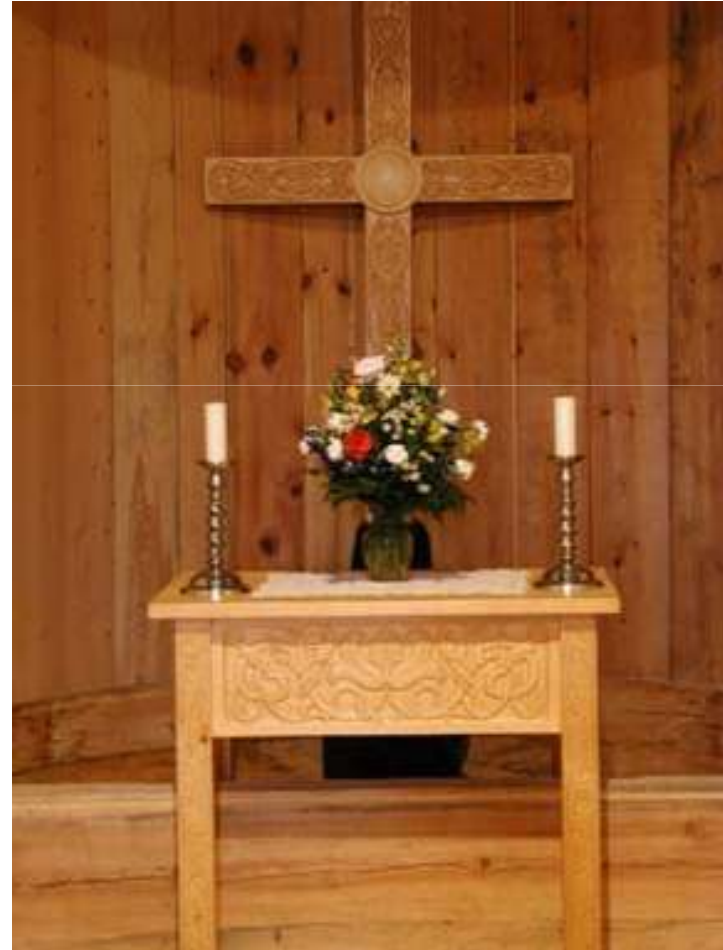
Most of the Chip carving was done for the churches of the time.



This type of carving was called “KARVESKURD” or chip carving.



As was mimicked from the stone carving that was done in southern Europe during the end of the Roman Empire and the middle ages . This is due to the fact that wood was an easier medium to work with and was more prevalent in the Scandinavian country.



Chip carving in Norway was done in the villages and town along the coast and southern regions of Norway. It was considered “Folk Art”.



The piece were decorated with carvings for items that were used around the home, such as bowls and Toys



Spoons



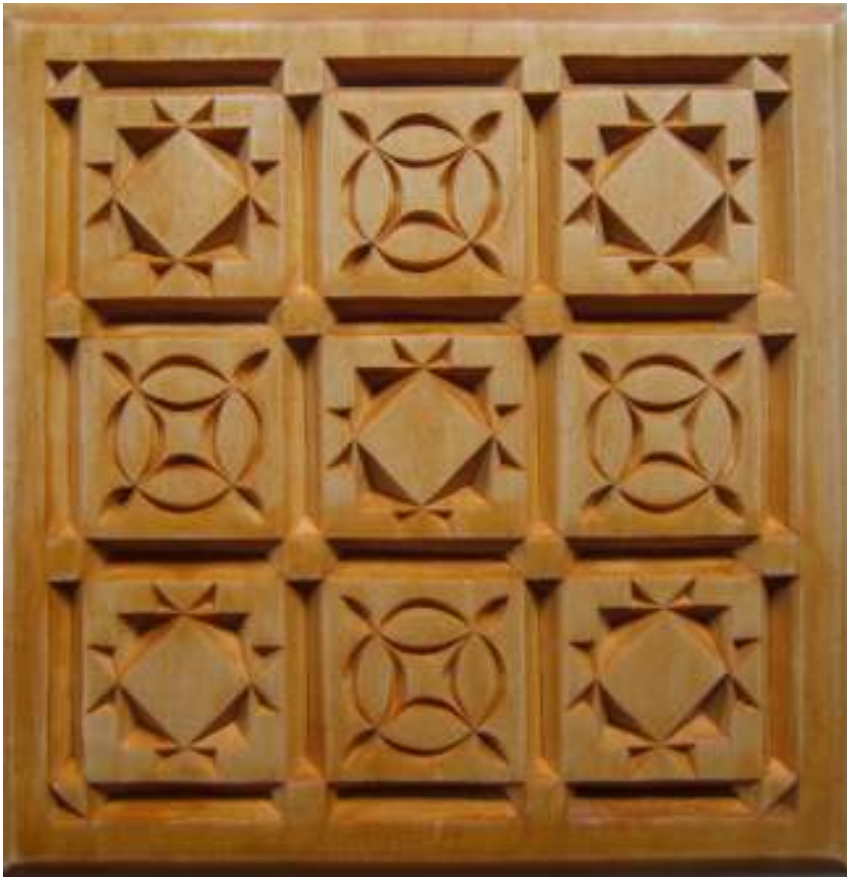
Plates and cutting boards.



During the 16th and 17th centuries, wood carving was propelled into an art form by itself, and became pretty much a profession. The young men of the day were sent to large cities as an apprentice of know artist. When they completed there trainings, some returned to there villages, were they become the community carpenter.



The Farm carpenters would not only be in charge of building furniture, but would decorate the cabinets. The more decorations in your home, the higher the status in the community.



This continued until after World War II, and the advent of affordable power tools , woodworking became more of a hobby for the average person. Now, carving clubs are all over the United states. There are two basic types of carving . Relief carving as is on the right, and Chip Carving which is on the left.



Chip carving is the easiest and cheapest to get into. You need basically two different knives, as is shown on the left. If you really want to get fancy, you can acquire the knives on the right. The types of wood that you would want to use are basswood, butternut, and white pine. These are the best for chip carving as they are soft and easy to work with.



Two of the most noted chip carvers in the United States are Walter Gritner of Minneapolis, and Wayne Barton of Park Ridge, IL. Below is some of Walt's work. Walt has been chip carving since 1937, His work is sold at Ingebretsens in Minneapolis. Walt also does many shows, demonstrations, and classes in Chip carving around the upper Midwest.



Wayne Barton is from Park Ridge, IL, where he runs the Alpine School of Woodcarving . Wayne is Swiss training, and has been doing demonstrations and classes all over the world since the mid 1970s. He has also written many books on the subject.



The Following are links that you can get knives and materials.

- Woodcraft 4317 Pleasant Valley Road, Raleigh, NC 919-781-1911 www.woodcraft.com . This is where you can get knives, books, DVD's and wood. Their wood prices are a little high.
- Klingspor's Woodworking Shop. 3141 Capital Blvd. Raleigh. 919-876-0707 They carry knives and some wood carving books, but their selection is pretty light. I did check out their wood. They have a good selection of basswood, and some butternut. The prices are very good.
- Vesterheim Decorah, IA www.vesterheim.org. You can order plates, boxes, books, and DVD's from their museum store.
- Michaels There are several stores in the area. You can get plates or plaques from them.
- AC Moore You can get some of the plates and plaques, and some of the practice pieces from them.
- Amazon You can get books and DVD's from there please.
- You can also google "chip carving" and get a lot more information