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THE HOME SHOP Machinist

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May/June 2014



Making a Steam Turbine



Steve Lindsay

2014 Metalworking Craftsman of the Year

Engraving Artist, Knife and Tool Maker

For over three decades, Steve Lindsay has been one of the world's most respected and sought after engravers of knives, guns, and jewelry. Now he is also known within the engraving trade for the line of unique, high-quality tools he offers to other engravers. With a background and family history of both art and engraving, taking to the trade came naturally to him. The Joe Martin Foundation is proud to name Steve Lindsay the 18th winner of their annual \$2,000 award for Metalworking Craftsman of the Year. The award will be presented in person April 26, 2014 at the North American Model Engineering Society Exposition (NAMES) in Wyandotte, Michigan. The show is open to the public.



Steve Lindsay

Carrying on a Family Tradition of Art and Engraving

Steve Lindsay was born in 1958 in Holdrege, Nebraska and now resides in Kearney. His father, Frank, is an accomplished jeweler, gemologist, and watchmaker who worked with pride on precision watches and created custom jewelry, with Steve often at his side learning the skills of gold and metalworking. Steve's grandfather was a neon sign-maker and artist, and his great-grandfather was also an engraver and jeweler. Under his father's watchful eye, young Steve, beginning at age 12, quickly learned the art of engraving. His future was cut out for him when, in 1975, he was given help by three engraving friends met through his father – John Rohner, the late Lynton McKenzie, and the late James Meek (author of "The Art of Engraving"). It was at that point in his life he decided hand engraving was his future.

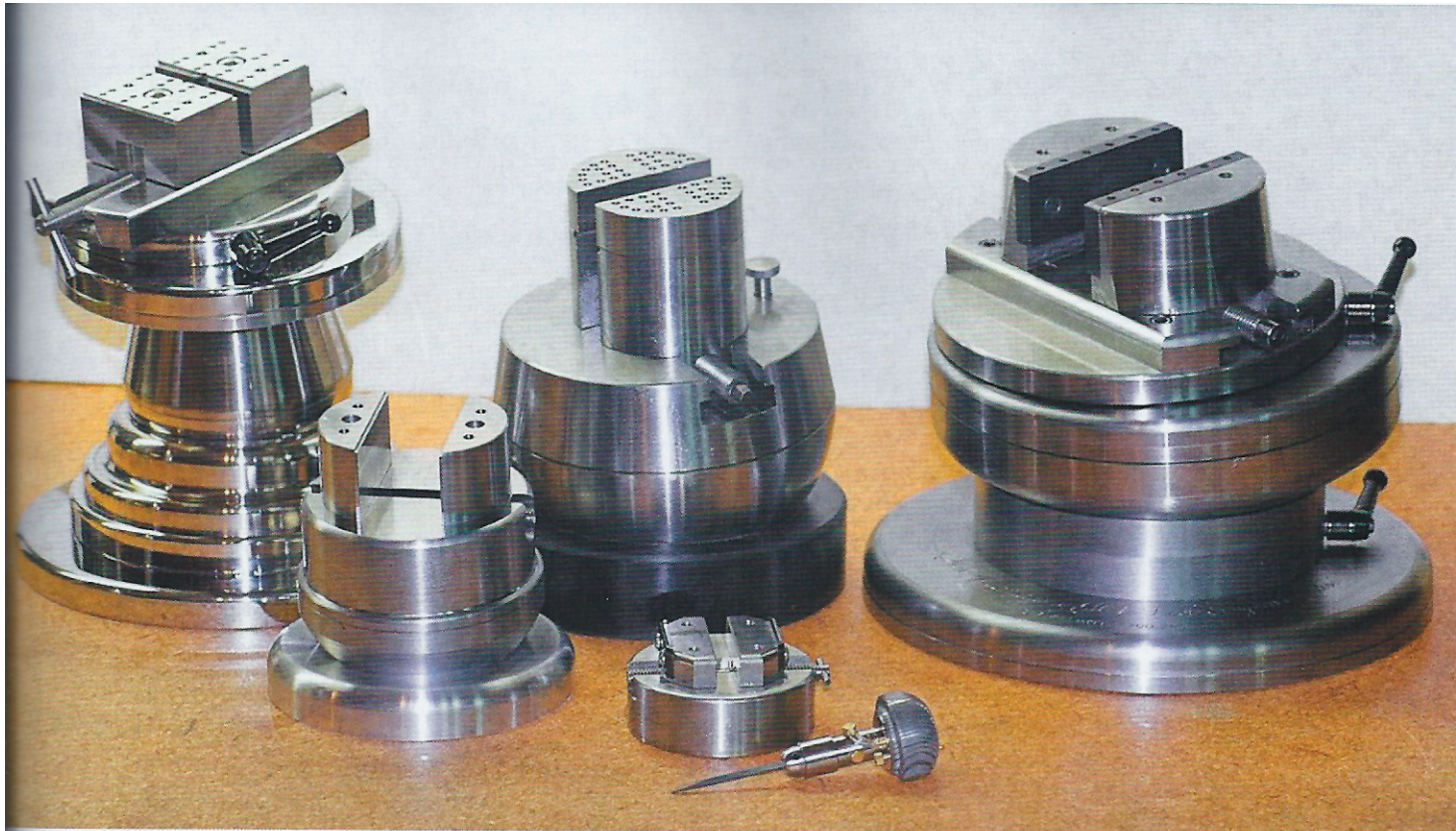
Education and Experience Leads to an Illustrious Career

In 1977 John Rohner and James Meek recommended Steve pursue tool and die making, which he did at Southeast Community College in Milford, Nebraska. (Steve's instructor at Milford, Alan Carter, would later present his former student the Outstanding Alumnus Award in 2012.) After college Steve worked a short time in a tool room of a Nebraska manufacturing company. During off hours he made the engraving tools that he uses for engraving. In 1981 he began engraving as a full-time career. In the past 33 years he has not only engraved for collectors and makers of custom knives,



This folder, designed with hidden fasteners, was made by Steve's father, Frank Lindsay, and engraved by Steve. The knife contains 121 separate parts. It features an 18K gold handle and a pattern of 34 diamonds in the 18K gold inlay handle and one in the blade. The engraving has 424 individual 24K gold inlays per side. In addition to the visible engraving, the inside surfaces have also been engraved.

guns, watches, and jewelry worldwide, but also for companies such as Oakley Sunglasses and has done production hand engraving and lettering on gold, silver, and platinum musical instruments for companies in New England. In later years he engraved in collaboration with engraver Lynton McKenzie on a Safari international rifle, in addition to continuing the engraving Lynton McKenzie began for watchmaker and friend, the late Gene Clark.



GlideLock vises are also designed, patented, and produced by Steve. In the foreground is a PalmControl.

Making and Engraving His Own Line of Custom Knives

Steve has not only engraved gold and diamond knives made by his father, he has also created and engraved his own folding knives, having designed several new folder mechanisms himself. These are screw-together folders with all screws and pins hidden, allowing more surface to be engraved without interruption. Reaching inside the bottom edge of the knife gives access to the screws. A locking mechanism he designed is also new, thanks in part to friend and knife maker Barry Trindle. The lock bar is hidden inside, making the top edge of the knife completely engravable.

Hand Engraving Tools for Engravers, Jewelers, and Metal Artists

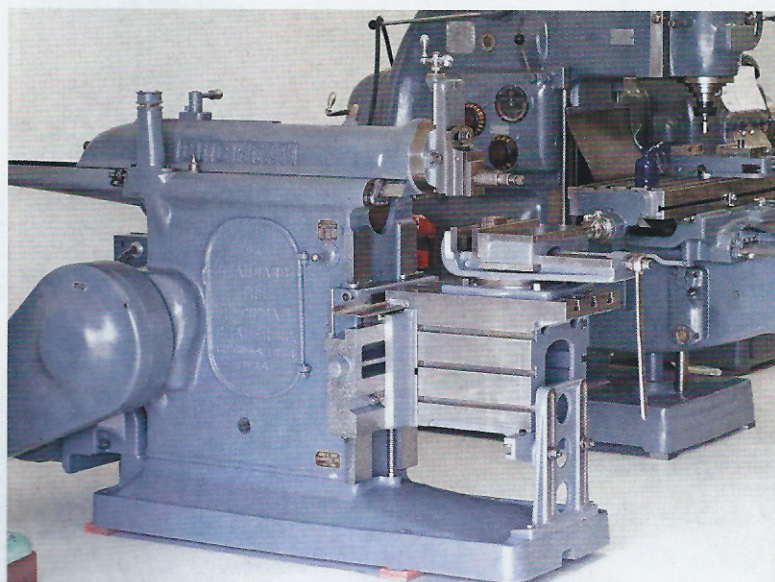
In an effort to improve the speed and quality of his engraving, Steve designed and patented his own line of hand engraving tools. The pneumatic engraving tools called "AirGraver®" and "PalmControl®" are effectively miniature air engines. These tools have earned international acclaim as the most advanced hand engraving tools in existence. Notable projects in which the PalmControl® participated include Colt's commemorative 175th anniversary Single Action Army and Browning Arms' commemorative "One Millionth" Citori shotgun. Besides firearm manufacturers, Steve's tools have found their way into the hands of jewelers and engravers the world over.

Machine Tool Restoration

Steve enjoys restoring and using turn of the century lathes, mills, and grinders. Disassembling, degreasing, and then re-scraping the precision way surfaces by hand

is a process that can take months of evenings in itself. The less critical areas of the machine castings are then sanded, puttied, and painted. Steve uses these machines together with more modern CNC machines for prototyping new engraving tools in his machine shop and studio.

Steve's work and story can be seen in the Joe Martin Foundation's online Craftsmanship Museum at www.CraftsmanshipMuseum.com/Lindsay.htm or his site, www.SteveLindsay.com. More information on Steve's tools is available at www.AirGraver.com and his forum community, www.EngravingForum.com.



A Cincinnati shaper, restored by Steve, is among his many shop tools. The restoration of machine tools has proved a valuable hobby, providing the satisfaction of the task itself and the means to prototype new engraving tools.