


Popular Woodworking

262 ISSUES 

20,502 PAGES 


1,520 TIPS & TRICKS 

105 WOODWORKER SPOTLIGHTS 

349,750 MAX # OF SUBSCRIBERS


5 OWNERS 


2 NAME CHANGES


669 TOOLS REVIEWED 

93 TOOL SHOOT-OUTS

200+ BOOKS PUBLISHED BY POPULAR WOODWORKING

65 LUMBER DISCUSSIONS 


576 BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS 

200+ HOURS OF VIDEO 


TOTAL # OF **1,475**


WOODWORKING PROJECTS

320 SHOP PROJECTS

31 WORKBENCHES 


57 TURNING **43** CARVING

275 TABLES & SEATING 


169 GIFTS AND ACCESSORIES 

OTHER FURNITURE **37**

103 BASKETS, BOWLS, AND VESSELS

62 OUTDOOR PROJECTS 

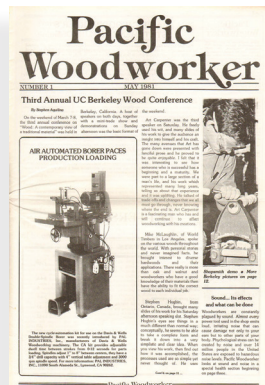
269 STORAGE & SHELVING

62 TOYS & TRINKETS 

34 DESKS

YEARS IN THE MAKING

Thinking back over the past 40 years of woodworking, there's been a lot that has happened. Publications have come and gone. Tool manufacturers have opened shop and some have shut doors. Woodworking icons have emerged, and some have left us. And *Popular Woodworking* has been there through it all. Over the next few pages, enjoy a look at some of the milestones from the past forty years, both *Popular Woodworking* and woodworking in general.



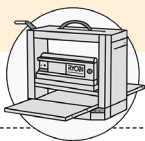
May 1981

First issue of *Pacific Woodworker*; a 16 page tabloid-style, printed in black and white

- **Editor/Publisher** — Stephen Aquilinia
- Based out of Sebastopol, California
- **Focus** — woodworkers on the west coast, specifically small cabinet shop owners with a strong focus on wood carving



1985



Ryobi announces the **AP-10 Portable Bench Planer**. For years, planers were huge machines that ran off of 220V and weren't practical in most shops. The "suitcase planer" was about the size of a large suitcase making it portable and affordable for most shops.

April 1985

- Now **focused** on woodworking nationwide
- **Purpose** – to provide project ideas and technical information to all woodworkers

February 1985

Popular Woodworker helps to announce the newest woodworking magazine into the set, **The American Woodworker** (which will later merge with *PW*).

June 1984

Name changed



Popular Woodworker

April 1984

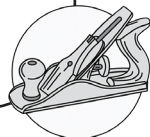
Now published by **EGW Publishing Co.** and is based out of Concord, California. Jean M. David is editor during the transition then hands it to Ellen DesGupta.

February 1982

Sold to **Charles Harris** and is now based out of Santa Rosa, California.

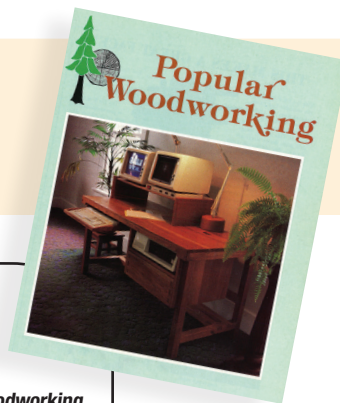
1981

The first **Lie-Nielsen handplane** was introduced by Thomas Lie-Nielsen who produced this first batch in a small shed in his backyard.



October 1985

- Name changed to **Popular Woodworking**
- **Featured Build** – Computer Desk



December 1986

David M. Camp steps into the role of editor.

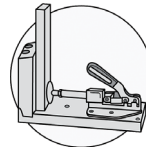
April 1987

PW refreshes look and logo



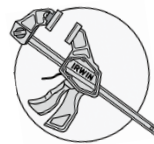
1986

Tool-and-die maker, Craig Summerfield, fashions a metal jig and stepped drill bit to join cabinet frames together instead of using traditional complicated techniques and tools. **Craig's Jig** soon became the **Kreg jig** which introduced an easy, affordable, and effective joinery method.



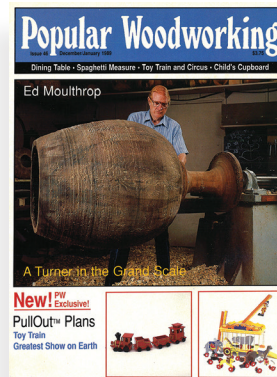
1989

Joe Sorenson, a Nebraska boat-builder, sometimes wished he had 3 hands to hold assemblies during glue-ups so he designed the one-handed bar clamp, also called the **Quick-Bar Clamp**. He sold his invention to a manufacturer whose brands were eventually acquired by **Irwin Industrial Tools** and debuted in 1989 to a countless number of delighted woodworkers!



December 1989

- *PW* refreshed the cover design.
- Introduced new exclusive **PullOut™ Plans**



May 1991

- Celebrated **10 years**
- **William (Bill) H. McMaster**, long-time woodworker and author of the column "Focus on Carving" found in the past 45 issues passed away on December 21, 1990. This issue contains his last column.



1992

Dewalt introduces the **first line of portable electric power tools and accessories** that are designed specifically for residential contractors, remodelers, and professional woodworkers. Tools in this line included cordless drills, saws, screwdrivers, impact drills, and much more.



■ Rob Cook: Editor from 1992 - 1994

What do you think is one of the most iconic PW projects over the past 40 years?

Hands down, my favorite articles and projects were ones by **Ken Sadler**, a custom furniture builder and talented writer. He could sell a rocking chair for \$1,000 back in the 1970s. I got to sit in one and my back just melted into the spindles. Most of the time there was just a finished photo that came with the text, so we got to build his creations in our shop. Ken became my woodworking dad—my real dad thought a screwdriver was something with orange juice in it, not mechanical at all.

Visit popularwoodworking.com/RobCook where Rob Cook goes down memory lane of what he describes as the “most fun thing I’ve ever done for money in civilian life!”



July 1995

Time for a cover refresh

November 1994

- Sold to **F&W Media** and is now based out of Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Stephen Shanesy becomes the editor.

September 1994

PW goes online with an online forum called **CompuServe® Information Service** so they can network more easily with their readers.

October 1992

- Robert C. Cook takes the editor role
- **Featured Build** – Morris-Style Chair



September 1995

The first of several **in-shop seminars** take place with 50 PW readers and representatives of a woodworking company. The first was hosted by **Freud, USA** who talked about saw blade design, gave a refresher course on blade selection, and addressed shop safety.

November 1995

New interior look



March 1996

- PW acquires **Woodworker Magazine**
- In-shop seminars continues with **Bosch** (new plunge router and the new jigsaw blade quick change system) and **Black & Decker** (VersaPak™ cordless set and new benchtop woodworking machines).

September 1996

PW replaced a few parts, performed a general cleanup, and continued to do a fair amount of publishing, which adds up to a new look.

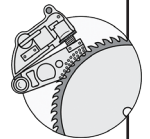
- 1 Changed the look of the logo
- 2 Made photo captions easier to read
- 3 Replaced **PullOut Plans™** with **Project File** (up to 12 projects with complete diagrams, materials list, and final photos)
- 4 Fully described projects, techniques, and tool features with patterns that use the **1 square = 1"** system
- 5 Close up photography to show, not tell, you about important steps

July 1999

Bob Flexner begins writing a column on finishing and continued to write for **Popular Woodworking** for over 20 years!

1999

SawStop launches one of the single greatest safety advancements in woodworking, a **safer tablesaw**. Steve Gass was a full-time patent attorney and part-time woodworker who invented a blade brake after his father caught his hand in a blade. The new blade brake is activated by skin contact and stops a running blade in 1/200th of a second, leaving the user with only a scratch.



November 1998

Popular Woodworking launches a **website**. Before that, woodworkers only had a few resources that they could use for immediate help with their questions. The growth of retail websites helps to drive down the price of tools and products, making it even easier for beginners to get into woodworking and veterans to expand their knowledge.

1998

The **Makita 6213D Driver Drill** becomes the first commercial power tool used in outer space by **NASA**. It was used to build the international space station.



100 ISSUES

January 1998

- Celebrates **100 issues** and where PW has come thus far: from issue no. 1 serving small-shop owners to issue no. 22 where it features more projects and techniques to **PullOut Plans™** in 1989 and finally to a strong emphasis on project building in 1996.
- Each issue now contains 15 projects in a wide variety of skills, which shows practical building techniques that result in quality work.



2004

The *Popular Woodworking* staff publishes *Woodworking Magazine* which had no ads and reported only the best in woodworking.

September 1999

F&W Media, parent company of *Popular Woodworking*, is sold by the Rosenthal family to an investment group.

June 2000

R.J. DeCristoforo passes away. His final column was in issue no. 115. He published over 40 books and thousands of magazine articles in *Popular Woodworking*, *Popular Science*, and *Popular* magazines. His first article appeared for *PW* appeared under the title "Cris Cuts" in 1994, which he shared his system for approaching any project (and this sort of practice advice is what he will always be known for):

"One, don't accept the dimensions on the materials list or a drawing, yours or another, as bible. Two, most projects have a main component that should... be the basis for accurately determining, or checking, the sizes of other parts before sawing. Three, design always follows function."

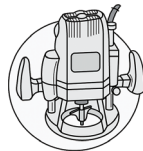
— R.J. DeCristoforo

October 2003

PW introduces a new department called **Woodworking Essentials**

- **Purpose:** Explore a basic subject in great depth over 7 issues.
- **Why:** Individual articles on a subject are fine, but certain subjects are so important they require a more textbook approach to be truly meaningful.
- **Benefits:** Great for novices, includes elements that fill in knowledge gaps of advanced woodworkers, and is hole-punched for a 3-ring binder creating a textbook series.
- **First subject:** The router

**WOODWORKING
ESSENTIALS**



"I'm glad someone recognizes that we're all not professional woodworkers who just "know" how to do things ... The how-tos and descriptions walk you through the process and do a good job of explaining. Thank you for sticking to the basics."

— Rafa Middleton (Park City, Montana)

October 2005

Next **Woodworking Essentials** section: *Casework Construction*

2005

Christopher Schwarz writes the first blog for *Woodworking Magazine*.

2005

Milwaukee Tools introduces the **V28™ Lithium-Ion Battery**. It gives tools twice the run-time, 50% more power than an 18-volt traditional nickel-cadmium battery, fade-free performance, and more tools the opportunity to become cordless.



October 2004

- New **Woodworking Essentials** – *Table Saws*
- New subscription program is introduced. For every subscription, \$5 is donated and split between *The American Cancer Society* and *The Nature Conservancy*.

2005

Festool launches the **Domino Joiner**, which was invented by a German engineer who wanted to combine the easy-to-use biscuit joiner's speed with the strength of a mortise-and-tenon joint.

December 2004

Featured Build – Arts & Crafts Tool Cabinet



Steven Shanesy:

Editor from 1994 - 2005

In your mind, what makes *Popular Woodworking* different than other magazines?

I like to say *Popular Woodworking* gives its readers real projects and real techniques that they can actually use. We lead you through projects in the most practical, straight forward way possible. When we tackle complex projects, we let you in on professional shop building techniques that simplify the process without sacrificing quality. Some call this getting the most bang for the buck. We look for great results from simple approaches. At this magazine, we're cabinetmakers who later become editors, not vice versa.

November 2005

Steven Shanesy moves to Publisher at **F&W Media** and Christopher Schwarz takes over as editor. Steve's favorite memory during his time at **Popular Woodworking** was in the beginning. The team was setting up the new shop when senior editor, David Thiel, turned to him and said: "Can you believe they're paying us to do this?"

June 2006

I Can Do That! column starts, focusing on woodworking with a limited tool selection.



February 2006

PW celebrates **25 years** with a refreshed logo



POPULAR Woodworking

Christopher Schwarz: Editor from 2005 - 2011

What in your mind makes PW different than other magazines?

It's amazing—shocking really—that **PW** has survived so many changes. Changes in the magazine industry, the woodworking world, who owns the magazine, and even the name of the magazine. The reason it has survived is that it has always had scrappy editors that refused to give up on it. The magazine has always been an underdog in the industry, and that position has been its advantage at times. Editors had the freedom to experiment and do things that the big corporate magazines would never do for fear of losing readers and advertisers.

What is one of the most iconic PW projects over the past 40 years?

The **Sam Maloof Table** we built for issue 100. We used drawings that Maloof published in the magazine in its earliest days. That project—which is gorgeous—sums up the magazine's West Coast roots and its Midwest ambitions.

What is the biggest change in woodworking in the past 40 years?

While it would be easy to answer this question with one word (the internet), the bigger changes have come as a result of the rise of all electric media. So, being a woodworker takes far more dedication and passion. I know very few "casual" woodworkers these days.

December 2009

Celebrated the lives of 2 woodworking legends:

Sam Maloof (1916 - 2009): Designer and builder of elegant yet simple furniture. Maloof's iconic work can be seen in several major museums and the white house.

James Krenov (1920 - 2009): Teacher, writer, and craftsman whose influence will live on through his work, teaching, and 5 books: *A Cabinetmaker's Notebook*, *The Fine Art of Cabinetmaking*, *The Impractical Cabinetmaker*, *Worker in Wood*, and *With Wakened Hands*

October 2006

- **PW** launches a **blog** to bring additional content including extra drawings, answers to reader's questions, and an inside look at tool reviews and future projects.
- **PW** begins a new **Woodworking Essentials**: *Setting Up the Shop*

August 2007

PW gets a brand refresh.



October 2007

PW begins sending email newsletters.

June 2008

Announces the 1st annual **Woodworking in America** conference hosted by **PW** held at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, which will take place in November with a focus on hand tools.



December 2007

Featured Build – Shaker Workbench



November 2007

Next up for **Woodworking Essentials**: *A Better Way to Work* (all about safety)

"Thank you for the **I Can Do That!** section and the manual... I was so impressed with the no-nonsense approach for each topic that I subscribed online before the printer was even finished printing out the manual. It is a most-read and is so well written that anyone at any level who is interested in woodworking will find themselves saying, *I Can Do That, Too!*"

— DeNault Schwartz II (Fayetteville, North Carolina)

April 2010

Popular Woodworking and *Woodworking Magazine* merged combining the best of each.



October 2011

Christopher Schwarz bids farewell to *PW* to focus on his company, *Lost Art Press*, which publishes books on traditional furniture work. Stephan Shanesy stepped back into the editor role.

April 2012

Matthew Teaque takes on the editor role.

November 2013

200
ISSUES

PW celebrates the 200th issue with a special issue that focuses on a select group of woodworkers.

- **Roy Underhill** – More than 30 years of TV hasn't softened his approach to the craft
- **Wendell Castle** – Built his career on unique techniques and methods
- **Mary May** – A trip to Europe, a phone call, and an undying love of carving led her to the creation of an online school
- **Dale Benard** – A journey from carpenter to furniture maker to teacher
- **Brian Boggs** – From journeyman to elder, he defines his role as a chairmaker
- **Jameel Abraham** – Iowa-born toolmaker, woodworker, and luthier
- **Norm Abram** – America's most recognizable personality retires after 21 seasons of *The New Yankee Workshop*
- **Peter Ross** – This smith's hand-forged tools and hardware combine art and function

April 2013

Matthew steps down as editor but continues to contribute to *PW*. Megan Fitzpatrick takes over as editor, having held a previous position at *F&W*.

■ Megan Fitzpatrick: Editor from 2013 - 2018

What in your mind makes *Popular Woodworking* different than other magazines?

Unlike most of the other magazines, which have a corporate voice, *Popular Woodworking* has always celebrated the voices of individual writers; it sounds like a friendly conversation between author and reader, which I find encouraging and engaging.

What is one of the most iconic *PW* projects over the past 40 years?

18th-century workbench, *The Return of Roubo*, August 2010

What is the biggest change in woodworking in the past 40 years?

The hand-tool renaissance not only of users, but of high-quality makers—a movement that was at least in part fomented by Christopher Schwartz and the *PW* Staff during Chris's tenure as editor.

March 2019

F&W Media CEO Geogory Osbery announces that *F&W* has filed for bankruptcy.



June 2019

Active Interest Media acquires *Popular Woodworking* magazine, along with a handful of other brands from the *F&W Media* bankruptcy auction. *Active Interest Media* is the parent company of *Woodsmith Magazine*.

November 2019

Popular Woodworking, now based out of Des Moines, Iowa, publishes its first issue under *Active Interest Media*.

November 2018

PW gets a whole NEW look from cover to interior and even the website.

June 2018

Andrew Zoellner takes over as editor. He previously worked with *American Woodworker* and *Family Handy Man*.

November 2017

Featured Build – Arts & Crafts Sideboard



March 2020

The **Covid-19 pandemic** takes effect and the entire woodworking community starts spending more time in their shops.

April 2021

Andrew Zoellner steps down and Logan Wittmer takes his place, leaning on his years with *Woodsmith Magazine*. An effort is made to return to the roots of woodworking, highlighting both traditional techniques as well as new technology.

Focusing On: inspiring each and every reader to build, design, and try new (or traditional) techniques, and never be afraid of failure

October 2014

The American Woodworker magazine merges with *PW*.

40
YEARS

February 2022