



MPF CONSERVATION
BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA,
TILT-TOP TABLE



BUCK'S COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, TILT-TOP TABLE, CA. 1750: TREATMENT REPORT

HISTORY

The tilt-top table has been in the [REDACTED] family for several generations, and can be traced back to family ties in Buck's County, Pennsylvania. The provenance gleaned from discussions with Mr. [REDACTED], it appears that this table may have been made in the mid 1700's by a local woodworker.

When MPF Conservation (MPFC) assessed the piece, we found no mark for a professional woodworker, and so believe that this may have been made by a seasonal tradesman.

ASSESSMENT

The table has been repaired by others, but since the [REDACTED] move to Southern Oregon from the moist California Bay area in 2000, a formerly small, older crack in the table top opened clean along the grain line from the dry heat of the valley. It appears that the original crack in the table may have occurred from the stretcher bars being reversed and improperly mounted in a previous repair intended to hide the damage from a bug infestation. The bug infestation caused considerable damage to one of the stretchers. At the time of assessment MPFC saw no current evidence of bug infestation.

The joints were loose in the birdcage, and the table wobbled a bit.

The table will be staying in the valley for the foreseeable future, so attention is advisable for all the joints in order to deter further problems.

MPFC assessed the table, outlining the scope of the conservation repairs to fixing the table top, and disassembling the table to clean the joints and reglued all areas. MPFC would repair the bug eaten stretcher bar, and then restore the reversed stretcher bars to their original position.

TREATMENT

GENERAL NOTES

- When nails are removed, the existing holes are selectively shimmed with Oregon Alder and hide glue to be reutilized again. Oregon Alder is used as it is softer hard wood; hide glue for its elastic properties. Both are utilized so that they “give” as the nail is reinserted into the existing hole, and yet hold the nail anew.
- MPFC chose to utilize finish materials on the table appropriate to the period, with the exception of the B-72 on the center pedestal.
- Appropriate barriers are used when necessary.

TREATMENT

MPFC treated the table as follows:

- Disassembled the table top, the leg from table, the leg supports (feet), and birdcage.
 - Gently extract hand wrought nails as necessary.
 - 3 nails were missing or had been replaced by modern nails; MPFC had our blacksmith create new nails to match the existing original nails.
 - All pieces were identified and marked for reassembly.
- Clean all joints of old hide glue.
- Broken top was repaired:
 - Crack was clean, and no pieces were missing.
 - A form was built to create a stable environment for the top to be reglued.
 - Hide glue was used to glue the broken top, for its reversibility and for historical purposes.
 - The two stretcher bars will structurally support the top once repaired.



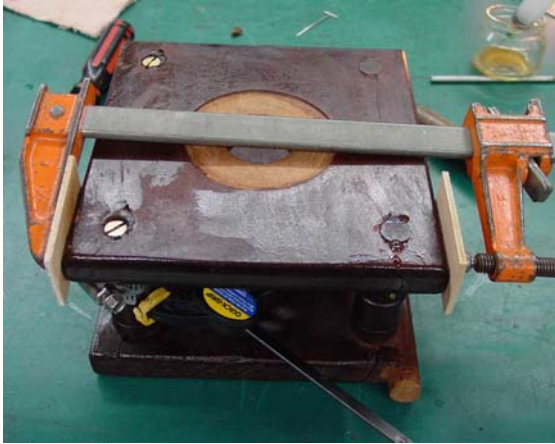
- The bug eaten stretcher bar was repaired with clear-grained cherry cut to fit the eaten areas.
- Presently there is no evidence of an active bug infestation.
- The second stretcher bar was repaired where a prior repair drilled a large hole.



- The legs and feet were repaired as necessary; the broken “shim” shown below is an example.
 - This “shim” was actually a piece which had splintered along the grain line in the leg cavity.
 - It was glued back into its original position.
 - The foot was placed back in its original position and secured with hide glue.
 - Selective existing nail holes were shimmed as described in our General Treatment Notes.
 - Finally, it was nailed in place with the original nails.



- This process was applied to all feet and the bottom of the turned post as necessary, shown above.
- The birdcage was squared, reglued and reassembled, and all joints were tightened in the process.
- The cage was repositioned to the bottom of the table top.



- The stretcher bars were applied to the bottom of the table top.
- A barrier was laid to protect the old finish.
- Color infill was applied to the new stretcher bar repairs.
- Shellac was applied to the stretcher bars to seal.





- The entire piece was gently cleaned with naphtha, being careful to leave the accretions built up over years from the original shellac which migrated and shriveled, probably from the application of boiled linseed oil.
- B-72 was applied to the center pedestal to protect the "alligatored" finish.
- Wax plugs were created to protect and fill areas around old repairs where gaping holes could harbor pests.



- A wax slurry was applied to unify and protect the entire piece; it was allowed to sit for a few minutes, and then it was buffed to a medium sheen.
 - First the table leg was turned on its side and the undersides of the legs were waxed.
 - The underside of the table top was waxed.

- o Table top and leg were turned upright, and the encaustic process was performed to the entire piece.







- Finally, the top + birdcage were applied to the post and legs and secured.



BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE, BEFORE



BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE, BEFORE





BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE: BEFORE & AFTER





BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE: BEFORE & AFTER





BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE, BEFORE & AFTER





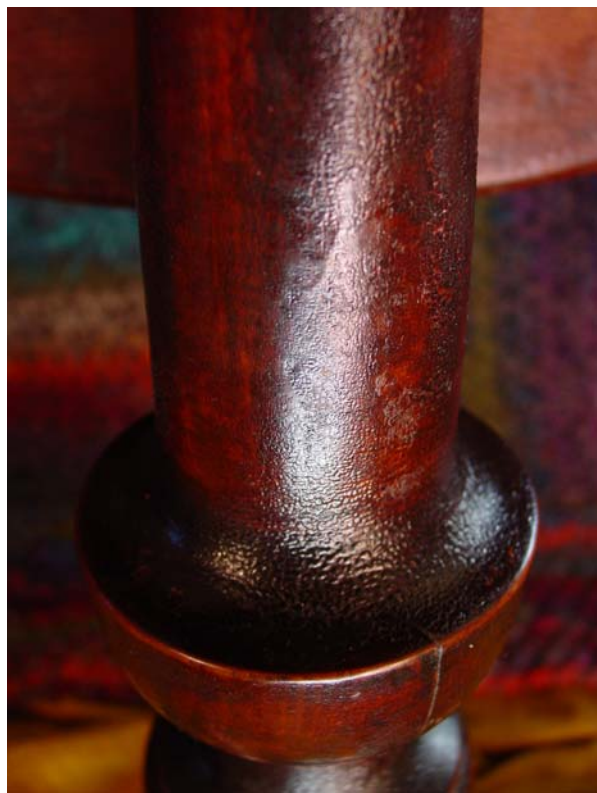
BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE: BEFORE & AFTER





BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE: BEFORE & AFTER





BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE: BEFORE & AFTER





BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE, AFTER





BUCKS COUNTY TILT-TOP TABLE, AFTER



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BEFORE HOUSE (2)



BEFORE HOUSE (3)



BEFORE HOUSE (4)



BEFORE HOUSE (5)



BEFORE HOUSE (6)



BEFORE HOUSE (7)



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BEFORE HOUSE (11)



BEFORE HOUSE



BEFORE STUDIO (1)



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BEFORE STUDIO



B4 STUDIO (5A)



BEFORE STUDIO (6)



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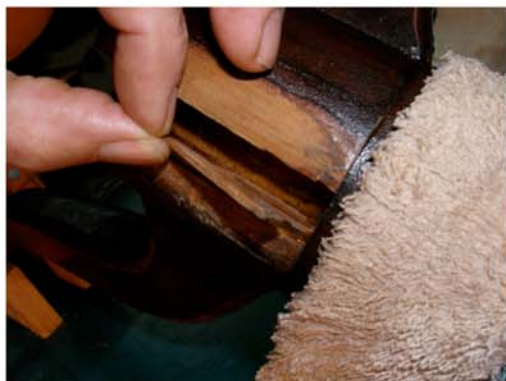
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3A tripod repair (88)



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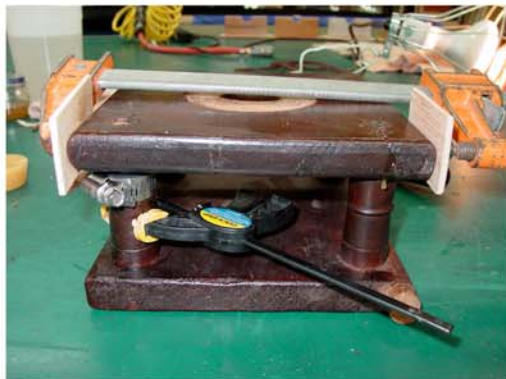
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3C stretcher repair (22)



3C tripod repair (21)



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3d top form built



3D top gluing (1)



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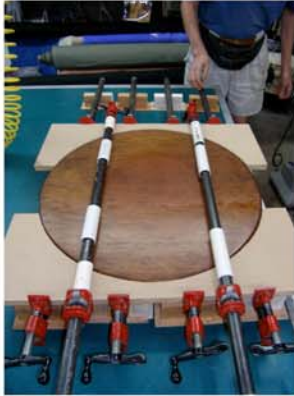
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3D top repaired



3A tripod repair (1)



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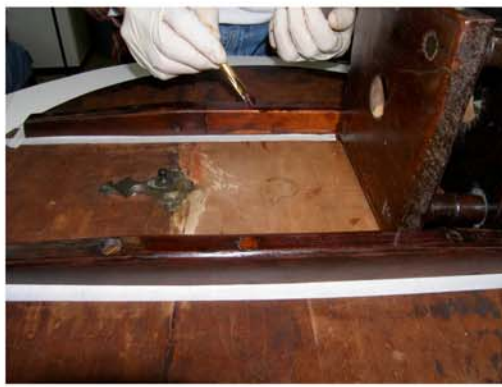
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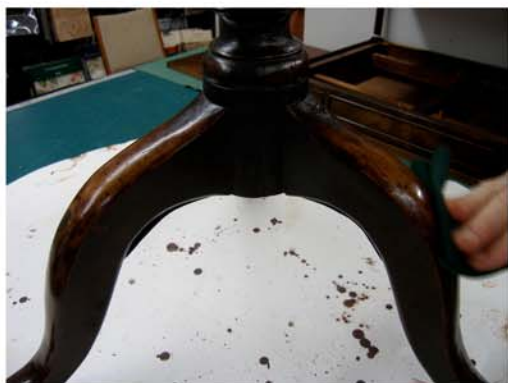
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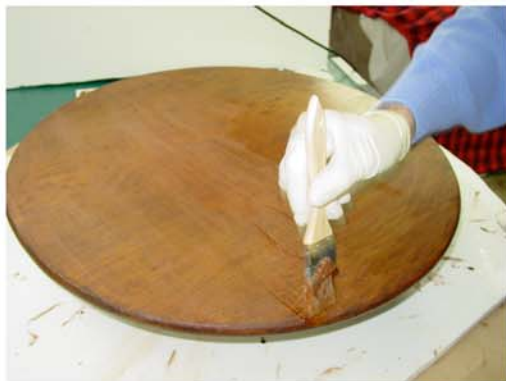
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