

August/September, 2016

From Your Newsletter Editor - Ed Chamberlain



Note that this issue of The Oughtred Society Newsletter covers the months of August and September of 2016. Your editor and other members of the Newsletter team have been busy putting this newsletter together. I should note the team that I depend upon for contributions. They include Bob DeCesaris, who prepares the President's message, David Sweetman who prepares the updates for the Journal, Clark McCoy, who updates the OS membership, converts the DOC file that I send him to a PDF file, and emails the Newsletter to the OS members, and Anne Morris, my editor friend, who goes over the draft manuscript with a fine tooth comb. I also get contributions from members of the various slide rule circles in Europe;

Peter Holland, and Werner Rudowski from Germany, David Rance and Otto van Poelje from the Netherlands, and Peter Hopp from the UK. I also often get contributions from the broader OS membership.

This past September I traveled to Germany to make visits with my wife's sister and my nephews and niece and their families near Stuttgart. I took this opportunity to also travel to the OS international meeting - IM2016 - in Trento, Italy. I took the train from Stuttgart to Munich, then thru Innsbruck and the Brenner Pass to Trento. Trento is in the foothills of the Dolomiten Mountains in northern Italy, just south of the high Alps. It was a delightful trip by train through the German country side and the Austrian Alps. One can easily see how most Germans live near open space as the population is mostly concentrated in cities and villages, and is not spread out along the transportation corridors. Farms and forests stretch out as far as can be seen as the train speeds along. Then almost abruptly the population and industrial areas appear as the train approaches developed areas. I was a bit disappointed, though, by the view through the Brenner Pass and the Austrian Alps. Fifty years ago, Ingrid and I drove by car through this route after skiing for a week in the rugged mountains of the Austrian Orztal. The roadway, bridges and vistas were all spectacular then. Fifty years later, much of the train track now goes through very long tunnels, so there were just a few chances to see the spectacular bridges and high mountain peaks with snowfields and glaciers.



Along the way I met an elderly Austrian man traveling home to Innsbruck. He was wearing the classical alpine dress clothes and hat of an elderly Austrian gentleman. He had a smile on his face and a bottle of schnapps in his hand. He offered me a drink and we talked, me in my broken Swabish German and he with his Austrian German dialect. Before his departure from the train in Innsbruck, he even shared some cookies and a very happy smile. And the bottle was nearly empty! Later in this newsletter I tell of the IM2016 meeting in Trento, Italy.

While preparing this newsletter, I was making some calculations related to eBay sales in the past two months. I was using my trusty HP 35S scientific calculator, and in the midst of the calculations, the calculator died. I noted that the battery symbol was empty and blinking. That meant that I needed to replace the batteries, so I opened the battery port and saw that there were 2 button batteries that powered this calculator. Lacking the replacements, I turned to my trusty slide rule from the old days at Michigan Tech. That reminded me that one never has to replace the batteries in their slide rule. ☺

Reported by Ed Chamberlain

From the President of the Oughtred Society – Bob De Cesaris



As this newsletter goes out, I would like to inform the membership that founding member and Oughtred Society Editor of many years, Bob Otnes, has been in and out of the hospital recently due to a weakened heart and an infection brought on by a persistent pneumonia. Though he is not available by phone at this time, get-well wishes can be sent through Louise Burton, 2632 Ponce Avenue, Belmont, CA 94002.

Bob (in picture, below right) asked that the Oughtred Society help him with the safe storage and sale of his large collection. The last few months have seen quite a bit of hectic activity with the continued sale of items from the Thomas Wyman (in picture, below left) collection, and the transfer of most pieces from the Bob Otnes collection to the Oughtred Society storage facility for future sale on eBay.

To prepare Bob's home for sale, items from his collection were transferred to our indoor storage facility in California. The items have now been safely packed and stored, but there is still a tremendous amount of work in front of us to log, scan and make the items available for sale. At Bob's request, we want to sell as many of his items as possible via eBay. Our past experience indicates we will require more people to maintain a minimum level of items being scanned and being made ready for sale. Therefore, we will be establishing several eBay accounts in the OS name to enable parallel scanning and selling by several volunteers at the same time. In our agreement with Bob, we will provide a fair compensation for each seller's time and effort. Since the number of items is quite large, we hope that this compensation will make it easier to obtain volunteers. Each item may require scanning of images, preparation of a detailed description of the item, posting the description and images on eBay, fielding questions from prospective buyers, contacting the winning bidders, and packing and posting the item. We have not yet firmly set the process, so we welcome suggestions to make this project flow smoothly.



We also have continued to make good progress on selling items from the Thomas Wyman collection. After several months of preparation with David Stanley Auctions, 32 folding rules and related tools from Tom's collection were offered at the David Stanley Auction held 24 Sept 2016. The first page of the catalog features a memorial tribute to Tom, a very kind acknowledgement from David and Ian Stanley for Tom's role in the international community. Coincidentally, this was accompanied by a number of boxwood rules and tools from the Don and Anne Wing Collection (owners of The Mechanic's Workbench); therefore the entire auction

featured quite a nice selection of rare and unusual items! A few of the items sold from Tom's collection are included in the list below. Note that the hammer prices shown below do not include 15% buyer's premium. Please refer to the David Stanley Catalog, 68th International Auction, 24 Sept 2016, for full details of the auction and the prices realized.

Lot #491 Mast Maker's Rule. Two-fold, Boxwood, 24-inch Rule with Gunter's Slide by Samson Aston Maker, Warranted, in well beneath slide is hand written "Thomas Cockran Leith, December 5 1843. Hammer price: GBP 1,200 (USD 1,620)

Lot #486 Rare 20" two-fold boxwood and brass Grantham's Clinometer by Watkins & Hill, Charing Cross. Hammer price: GBP 500 (USD 675)

Lot #508 An 18" two-fold boxwood folding rule by R Parkes.
Hammer price: GBP 120 (USD 162)

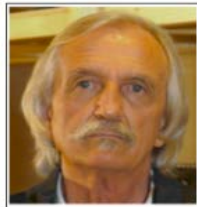
Lot #511 A 12" two-fold Stanley No. 036 boxwood and brass combination clinometer level. Hammer price: GBP 150 (USD 203)

Lot #489 A 2' two-fold boxwood and brass gunner's or ship engineer's slide rule by G Buck, also stamped Lloyd's Plan. Hammer price: GBP 360 (USD 500)

Many thanks to Clark McCoy for all of his efforts to set up our larger storage facility in Roseville, California with full shelving to insure that all items are neatly organized and safely stored. The facility now contains all of our remaining Oughtred Society Journal back copies, OS published books, remaining items from Tom Wyman's collection, and now all of the items that were recently transferred from Bob's collection

Reported by Bob De Cesaris

International Meeting of Historical Calculating Instruments – IM 2016.....



Organization:

Nicola Marras – Wolfgang Irlner

Within walking distance was the ancient city center of Trento and its 16th century cathedral, the place where the Third Council of Trent, sometimes referred to as the Counter-Reformation, was held.

I recently had the pleasure of attending the IM2016 meeting in Trento, Italy. Themed "Someone's Trash is Our Treasure, The Collector as a Preserver of Material Culture," this was an outstanding gathering of collectors of historic calculating instruments. The meeting, organized by Nicola Marras and Wolfgang Irlner, was held in a beautiful setting of modern buildings with a backdrop of alpine scenery. The meeting, itself, was held in a spectacularly modern glass building, the MUSE Science

IM2016 was truly an international gathering, with 37 participants from 12 countries. OS stalwart, Bob Adams, even traveled all the way from Australia. The technical program included 15 presentations with diverse topics such as 1) a PhD thesis on the history of the slide rule and its impact on society, its people and institutions; 2) Armand Hammer's, (the American industrialist) contribution to Russian slide rules; 3) Our



Treasure is a World Treasure; and 4) Collectanea de Logarithmis. There was even a paper by the Italian slide rule designer Cesare Baj. He has been making special slide rules for the Italian market for more than 40 years.

Of course, we all had the opportunity to display some of our treasures and also engage in some trading, buying and selling. I know of a scarce Meyrat & Perdrizet pocket watch style circular slide rule that changed hands. I brought with me an early Billeter 4-meter cylindrical slide rule dating to c1895 to show and then to pass on to Werner Rudowski for a special exhibition of early German slide rules at the Arithmeum museum in Bonn.



We also had the opportunity to visit Wolfgang's collection of slide rules and old calculators at his business office in Trento and at a permanent display (amongst dinosaur bones) in the MUSE.



Karl Kline took the opportunity to announce the Oughtred Society awards for 2016. The **OS Award** for outstanding contributions to the world community of slide rule and historical calculating instrument collecting was awarded to **Günter Kugel**. **OS Fellowships** were awarded to **Herbert Bruderer**, **Jose Fernández**, **David Walker** and **David Siminovitch**. Details of these awards follow later in the issue of the OS Newsletter.

The formal meeting concluded with a passing of the IM trophy from Nicola (right) and Wolfgang (left) to Karl Kline (center), who will be leading the German organizing team for IM2017 in Bonn, Germany. It was all topped off with a banquet to be remembered and savored, at the historic Villa Madruzzo, formerly a 15th century residence of a noble Italian family.

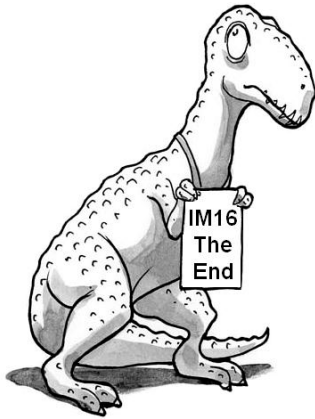
Nicola and Wolfgang should be commended for organizing and presenting the excellent program. There was never a dull moment or a glitch. Our friend, Nathan Zeldes, from Israel, had this to say about the meeting: *“Nicola and Wolfgang really pulled a miracle. The thought that we’d have an IM meet in Italy was quite far-fetched. This is not just cool – it may mark the launch of a local OS chapter and encourage a greater Italian presence in our world.”*

As usual, I recommend attending the IM meetings. They are a unique opportunity to gather with friends (and to make new friends) and talk about our slide rule/calculator collecting hobbies. IM2016 in Trento, Italy was a memorable event. The Oughtred Society is ever grateful to our Italian friends for hosting this meeting.



Reported by Ed Chamberlain

From Nicola Marras and Wolfgang Irler - IM2016 Wrap Up.....



A few closing words about the IM2016 meeting: it was perhaps risky to do it in Italy, where the enthusiasts of old calculators are very few, but we think it was an unusual opportunity to learn about different realities.

Indeed, we were able to visit Wolfgang Irler's collection of mechanical calculators, perhaps the most important of the Country, and learn about one of the last manufacturers of slide rules. In fact Cesare Baj, with his multiple initiatives, made us think that these instruments still have something to say. His work confirms our motto: "think different; think analog", but it is also our job to support his initiatives. Working alone can be frustrating. Being supported by a community can give him the energy to continue.

A nice surprise was to see young people who grow our hobby. Matteo Munari, with his collection of over 800 slide rules, allowed us to appreciate many little-known pieces. If we had been aware before the meeting we would have reserved a special space to show them. It will be for the next time.

We have not forgotten to publicly thank the editors of the proceedings. Editing and proofreading a text is a long process, time-consuming and unpaid. Without the help of David and Donna Sweetman, Jerry McCarthy and Mark McCormick we would not have published anything! MOLTE GRAZIE !



A museum would not be complete without a display of dinosaur bones. It would also be incomplete without a display of old calculating devices, for these are the fossils of today!

In the future we plan to organize a real circle of fans in Italy. We are few, but given the enthusiasm shown at IM2016, we do not doubt it can be done.

Reported by Nicola Marras and Wolfgang Irler

The Oughtred Society Awards for 2016



Since 2005, the Oughtred Society Award Committee has annually honored outstanding contributions to the world community involved with slide rules and historical calculating instruments with the prestigious '**OS Award**'. The Committee also annually bestows **OS Fellowships** on members making substantial contributions to the Oughtred Society or its affiliated national organizations.

The OS Award Committee decided that the **OS Award** for 2016 goes to: **Günther Kugel** for sharing his wide-ranging knowledge of slide rules with fellow collectors and researchers over the past 25 years in publications, for his numerous discussions at meetings, and for the many private communications he makes with OS members.

The Oughtred Society also announced the following **OS Fellowships** for 2016 to:

- **Herbert Bruderer** (Germany), for his recent book “Meilensteine der Rechentechnik” and earlier publications.
- **Jose Fernández** (Spain), for his publications in IM Proceedings, UKSRC Gazette and the OS Journal, and for his activities in the ARC (Amigos de las Reglas de Cálculo) in Spain.
- **David Walker** (United Kingdom), for his publications in the UKSRC Gazette.
- **David Siminovitch** (Canada), for his activities as Assistant Editor of the OS Journal.

Award recipients receive a framed certificate and a gold-colored pin in a special presentation box. Members bestowed with a Fellowship receive a letter of accreditation and silver-colored pin in a presentation box.

The Oughtred Society Awards Committee consists of Karl Kline, Mike Konshak, Rod Lovett and Otto van Poelje (Chair). Please submit recommendations for the 2017 Awards to Otto van Poelje at <ovpoelje@rekenlinialen.org>

Reported by Otto van Poelje

The Fall 2016 & Spring 2017 OS Journals



David Sweetman reported that the *Fall, 2016 issue of the OS Journal* has been posted to the OS members. Your editor received his copy on October 21st. Below is a list of the articles and their authors. Note that there are 9 technical papers in this issue as well as messages from the President of the Oughtred Society and the Editor of the Journal, and updates about meetings.

Technical Papers in the Fall 2016 Issue of the Journal of the Oughtred Society

Note from the Editor	David Sweetman
Note from the President	Robert De Cesaris
Slide Rules Made in Spain	Jose G. Fernández
The Hemmi 154	Richard Smith Hughes
More on Sterling Slide Adders	David Riches
The Worldwide Largest Bibliography Database on the History of Mechanical Computing Devices	Detlef Zerfowski
A Poor Man's Collection	Roger V. Dollarhide
Maurice Damien Aluminum Slide Rules	Ian Lodge
A Tavernier-Gravet Slide Rule Especially Made for the British Market	Marc Thomas
Elisha Kally's Water Flow Calculator	Nathan Zeldes
Crompton-Gallager: Boiler Efficiency Calculator (1919)	Stephan Weiss

David reports that the *Spring, 2017 issue of the OS Journal* is also in good shape with the following papers tentative:

Puzzle 1	Terry Kirkpatrick
The Quality Control Slide Rule	David Sweetman
Jan Józef Baranowski -- Life and Machines	Valery Shilov/Sergey Silantiev
The S.Q.C. LATOR	David Sweetman
Calibration of a conventional slide rule	Marion Moon

Wrong Way Round!
The Chinese SPC Slide Rule
The Pickett N525
The Limpert Board

David Rance
Simon van der Salm
Simon van der Salm
Simon van der Salm

Authors are encouraged to contact David Sweetman at: d-dsweetman@att.net with proposals for additional papers.

Reported by David Sweetman

Report from Membership Secretary: Clark McCoy



Five new members joined the Oughtred Society during August and September. They are:

Monnier, Valery	France
Robinson, Mark H.	Montana, USA
Dawson, Randy	California, USA
Heimann, Stefan	Germany
Crawford, James	California, USA

Welcome to The Oughtred Society. Congratulations to our new members.

We hope that you enjoy the rewards of your OS membership, and encourage you to join in Oughtred Society activities.

REMINDER: To old members, if you have not renewed your membership yet, it is easy to do. Make sure that you get the Spring issue of the Journal of the Oughtred Society at the time it is first issued, which is very soon. The type has been set and sent to the printer. To renew your membership, just go to the Oughtred Society homepage at:

[<http://www.oughtred.org>](http://www.oughtred.org)

and click on "**Membership**" and follow instructions. You can pay online by credit card or PayPal, or you can pay by check the old fashioned way.

Reported by Clark McCoy

The UKSRC Slide Rule Circle



Rod Lovett has just reported the publication of the 2016 Slide Rule Gazette. He wrote: "We are delighted to announce that our third in a row Bumper 120 plus pages Gazette, The Colin Barnes Memorial Issue, is now available. The price is £17 for the UK, £19 for Europe and £22 for the US and the rest of the world. The Contents include:

Intro, Contents, Editorial

Colin Barnes Obituary, In Memoriam

Colin Barnes: Farmers Rules (Cont'd)

Peter Hopp: Lucas: Assessing Rule for 16mm Camera Gun

David Riches: Lambeth Cotton Driving Rope Calculator. Pt 2

Ian Lodge: Maurice Damien Aluminum slide rules

Nathan Zeldes: The Gerber Variable Scale Clone

Detleff Zerfowski: An Online Bibliography of Mechanical Calculators and Slide Rules

Hopp, Barnes, Bready et al: Slide Rule Box Identification - An Update

David Rance: Wrong Way Up

Peter Hopp: Lucas: Circular Marking Template

Werner Rudowski: Calculating with a folding logarithmic ruler

Ian Lodge: The Circular slide rule of Norman Mear & Stanley Fearn

Werner Rudowski: Calculating with a folding logarithmic ruler

David Riches: Drawing Instrument or Calculator: The Marsh Zirkel
Rod Lovett: End of the Line
Peter Hopp: Dargue Bros Sub-Ivory – An Update
Werner Rudowski: Gresham College
Peter Hopp: Rev Counters (cont. 4)
Rod Lovett & Peter Hopp: The Gerber Equameter
David Rance: The Lost Scales of Unknown Riches
David Rance: The Lost Scales of Unknown Riches
Peter Fox: The “Norman” Calculator
 Past Index, etc.



Of course, all collectors of slide rules and other old calculating devices are invited to join the UKSRC. Just go to the web site at <http://uksrc.org.uk/> and navigate to the Skidstick and Slide Rule Gazette tabs for additional information. Membership includes the Skidstick that is issued several times per year. Membership costs 18 BP per year, and the annual Gazette costs an additional 22 BP a year for International subscribers. The Brits and Europeans pay a bit less. Payments can be made via PayPal.

Reported by Rod Lovett & Peter Hopp

News from The German Deutschsprachigen Rechenschieber-Sammler

Your editor must apologize for not getting this issue of the OS Newsletter out in time to announce the German RST meeting in Wiesbaden. It was being held just as this newsletter was going to Press. Karl Kline wrote that the 30th RST meeting was to be held on Saturday, October 22nd, at the Penta Hotel in Wiesbaden, Germany. Karl wrote that they would meet as usual on the Friday evening before the meeting for Abendessen (evening meal) and on Sunday they would go to the Analogue Computer Museum. Note that this meeting was for German language speakers. All details were posted on the web at: <http://www.rechenschieber.org/RST30Einladung.pdf>. The next issue of the OS Newsletter will describe the events of this meeting.

Karl also wrote that IM2017 will be held at the Arithmeum museum of computing instruments in Bonn, Germany on September 22-23, 2017. The theme is: *Calculating in Everyday Life*.



In many cases in our daily life we perform computing tasks without thinking about them. We just do them. That also holds for the devices we use for these activities, we simply use them. So for this IM we do not ask for reports on yet another intricate special instrument for some technical or scientific application and its calculation, but for interesting *bread-and-butter stuff*. Of course in addition to the special theme, we are open for all kinds of submissions for IM2017, as in all the previous years.

Please respond to the *Call for Papers* to: im@im2017.org

The meeting will start on Friday, September 22nd, at 14:00, with a first paper session at the conference hotel. After a break, a traditional session will allow you to swap, sell/buy, demonstrate or just inspect slide rules, other instruments, literature and associated materials. On Saturday 23th, we will continue the paper sessions at the [Arithmeum](#) nearby. You will be able to view the Arithmeum collections on Friday morning and Sunday as well as during breaks on Saturday. We will also try to arrange guided tours for specific topics.

For additional information visit the RST web site at <http://www.im2017.org/>

For any questions, contact **Karl Kline** at: kleine@im2017.org or karl.kleine@eah-jena.de

Editor's note: The Schuitema collection at the Arithmeum is one of the largest collections of slide rules in the world. It was given to the Museum by the Dutch collector: IJzebrand Schuitema. I hope that the museum will make a special effort to display some of IJzebrand's collection for the benefit of the IM2017 participants. Go to: <http://www.arithmeum.uni-bonn.de> to learn more about the Arithmeum. To learn more about the Schuitema collection go to: http://www.sliderules.nl/media/papers/JOS_2014_Schuitema_Collection.pdf

Reported by Karl Kline

Smartest Dog in the World Knows What a Slide Rule is for

In the story of the smartest dog, Bob's Duplex (Bob) is.



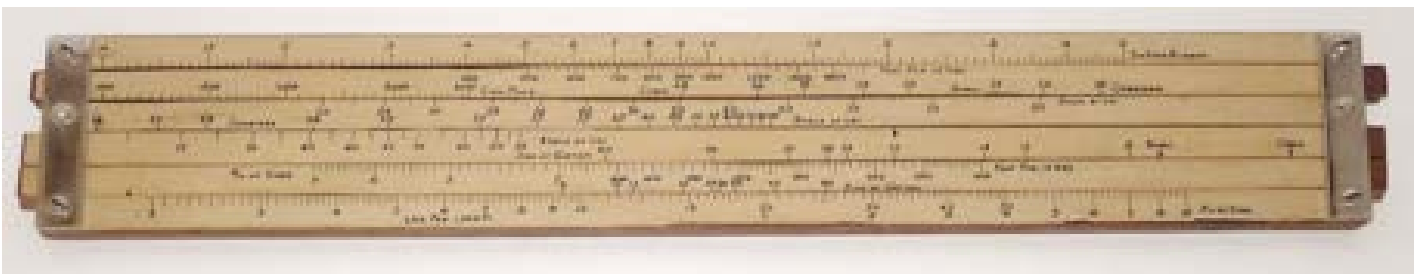
In the previous issue of the Newsletter, I included a story about Bob Solty's Jack Russell Terrier Lucky, the smartest dog in the world. In his memoir *A Lucky Life*, Lucky wrote about the Keuffel & Esser Log Log Decitrig® slide rule that a neighbor gave his Dad. I forgot to include a photo of Lucky, so here it is.

Originally Reported by Bob Solty, the Mad Scientist

Nathan Zeldes: On A Home Made Textile Slide Rule

Some of my favorite slide rules are the one-of-a-kind handmade ones, none more so than those made for some specialty trade.

I bought this slide rule at an OS swap some years ago, with no idea who made it or for what purpose. It's a rather complex device, with three stators and three slides, and a multitude of scales hand-drawn in India ink on paper glued onto wood (on one side only). The scales carry names like "No. of ends", "Lbs. per 1,000 ft", "Circ. Mills", "Feet per 10 Hrs", "Dir. over rubber", "Cable", and others.



Originally I conjectured that this had something to do with manufacturing insulated cables of some kind. However, our fellow OS member Nicola Marras shared another possibility. He wrote:

"No. of ends", "lbs per 1,000 feet", "Angle of lay", etc. are textile calculations but "Dir. over rubber" is very rare and I think this slide rule is related with the woven elastic fabric invented in the '30 with the name "India Rubber Textile Fabrics". Download the patent: <http://www.nicolamarras.it/GB366019A.pdf>

I posted this image to the OS Facebook page but no one reacted; and to my own timeline, where friend Nicola sent the response, I quote. “*Maybe someone can shed more light on this mysterious homemade device. If you use it, I attach a hi-res photo; people will need to see the scale captions to be of any use.*”

If any of you readers have more information, or want a sharper jpg image please contact Nathan at nathan@nzeldes.com

Note from the Editor: I included this contribution from Nathan Zeldes in the last issue of the Newsletter, but neglected to include some important text.

Reported by Nathan Zeldes

eBay Slide Rule Sales

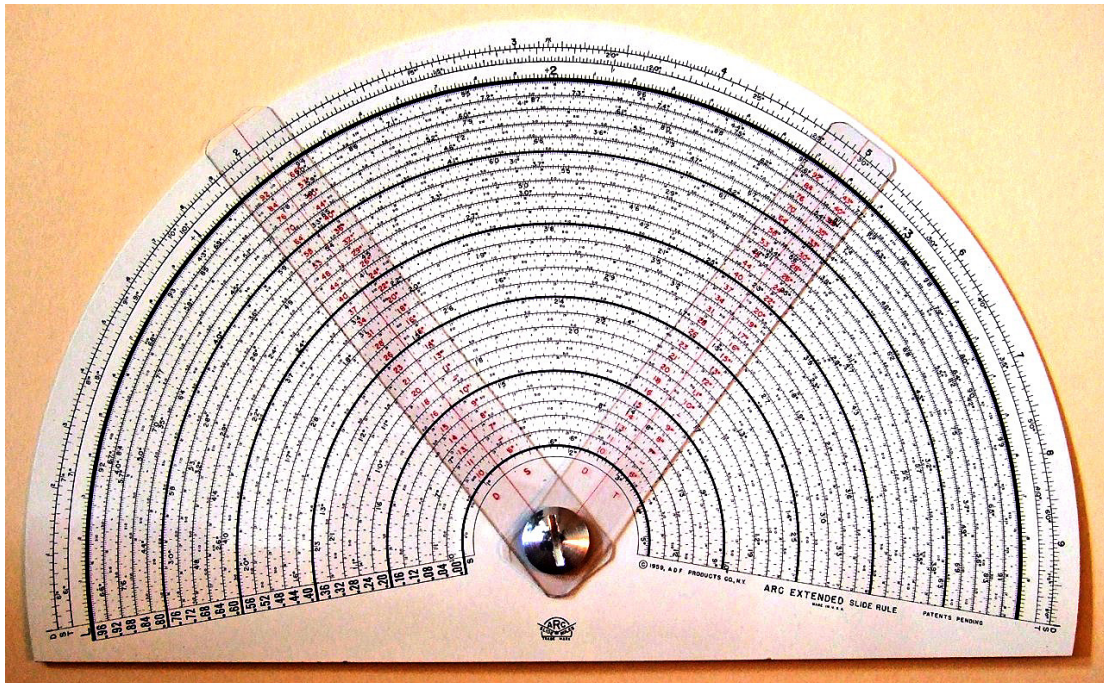
I have not featured eBay slide rule sales much this year because there have not been sales of very many special slide rules, and just a few that have sold for more than \$200. For instance during the August/September period, just 6 slide rules (excluding 2 demonstration models) sold for more than \$200 each for a total of **\$2,184**, while during the two month period of April/May of 2015, 25 slide rules sold for more than \$200 for a total of **\$13,014**. The drop in the number of high priced slide rules was 76%, and the drop in total value was about 83%

I have not done a very thorough analysis, but it appears for this limited sample that sales of high value slide rules on eBay have dropped precipitously in the past year or so. I will continue to monitor eBay sales to look for improvement in sales and prices.

Reported by Ed Chamberlain

Glimpse from the JOS Rarities Gallery

ARC Extended Slide Rule by ADF Products



ARC Extended Slide Rule This semi-circular slide rule was designed by Andrew Frankenfield, an engineer who had his own business, ADF Products, in New York City. Frankenfield designed

and sold this and other slide rules and measuring instruments for engineering offices. The production was vary limited, as no examples are known in circulation. This example was sent by Frankenfield to Ed Chamberlain in 2008.

D, S & T calculating scales are broken into 25 semi-circular segments, having a total length of about 10 meters. In addition to the segmented scale, the ARC also has shorter D, S, T and L scales in single arc segments near the outer rim. Two transparent cursors facilitate the calculations. The radius of the semi-circular disk is about 12 cm. It is made of thin plastic about 0.8 mm thick. The scales appear to be screen-printed. The ARC Extended Scale slide rule was copyrighted in 1959 and patented in 1961.

Frankenfield promoted the advantage of this semi-circular slide rule over normal circular models. It did not need to be fully rotated to read the scales, but only slightly turned. Note that the scales cover an angular range of about 197 degrees in contrast to the 180 degrees of a normal semi-circular slide rule.

Like on other long scale spiral and concentric ring scale slide rules, the ARC's outer D scale provides the results of calculations to 2 or 3 digits. The inner semi-circular set of 25 segments for the D_{seg} scale provides a precision of 4 digits at both ends of the scale and perhaps 4.5 digits with interpolation. Note that the scales on this slide rule are very difficult to read because of the close proximity of the scale gradations and numbering. The numbering and scale gradations for the sin and tan trig functions further complicate the use of this slide rule, as every one of the 25 semicircular segments has D_{seg} , S_{seg} and T_{seg} tick marks and scale labels. The D_{seg} scale markings are on the underside of each segment, the S_{seg} markings on the topside, and the T_{seg} markings in-between the semi-circular scale segments. Range markings on the cursors provide some help with reading the scales, but this slide rule is still very difficult to use. See this, and more rare and scarce slide rules at: <http://osgalleries.org/os/index.html>

Reported by Ed Chamberlain

Werner Rudowski's Search for a Kesel Circular Slide Rule



Werner Rudowski is searching for a Georg Kesel circular slide rule to include in a special display of early German slide rules at the Arithmeum museum in Bonn, Germany. He became aware of the Kesel circular slide rule (below right) from reading a paper by Dieter von Jezerski (SR Gazette, Issue 6, Autumn, 2005). This slide rule came in a red velvet lined case (image on left) along with instructions for its use. The scales are engraved on glass plates, on the front side of the fixed 'stator' plate, and on the underside of a circular glass plate that rotates atop the stator plate. This arrangement minimizes parallax problems

that could result from reading opposing scales from one glass plate over the other. From von Jezerski's paper we know that this slide rule was "used for solving problems connected with machine making and electrical calculations." A heading at the top reads Georg Kesel, Kempten (Bayern). Kesel was an inventor and industrialist, and in his days his firm made industrial clocks and dividing engines in Bavaria.



Dieter von Jezerski obtained the details and images from a Kesel circular slide rule (image above right) that sold on eBay in October 2004 for \$1557.

It caught his attention because that was a princely sum in those early days of slide rule collecting, and because it was of an unusual construction and purpose. Unfortunately, the buyer of that Kesel circular slide rule remains unknown.

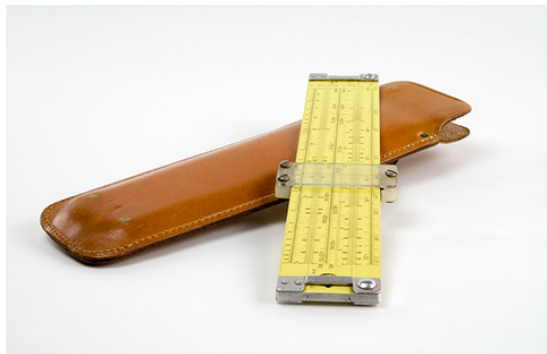
More recently, another Kesel circular slide rule sold on eBay. It sold on March 14, 2015 for \$350. That latter item (image above left) apparently came from the dispersal of the Dunottar scientific instrument collection in Australia. The buyer of this Kesel also remains unknown.

As Werner Rudowski will be the guest curator for the exhibition of early German slide rules at the Arithmeum museum, a Kesel circular slide rule would be a very interesting and special addition to his exhibition. Does anyone know of the buyers of one of these rare circular slide rules? Or does anyone have an example of the Kesel in their collection that you are willing to loan for the special exhibition? If so, please contact Werner at: i.rudowski@web.de

Reported by Werner Rudowski & Ed Chamberlain

Slip Sliding Away - U of Minnesota College of Science & Engineering

OS member Gary Flom wrote of a feature article on the slide rule published on the University of Minnesota College of Science and Engineering website. The article is titled **“Slip Sliding Away.”** The article reads:



“Once a symbol of technology, slide rules are a fading memory among CSE alumni. Before smartphones and the laptop, no serious science or engineering student would be caught on the University of Minnesota campus without a slide rule. During the 1950s and 1960s, the remarkable instrument—small, light, efficient, and not requiring batteries—would most often be carried in a belt holster ready for calculating action.”

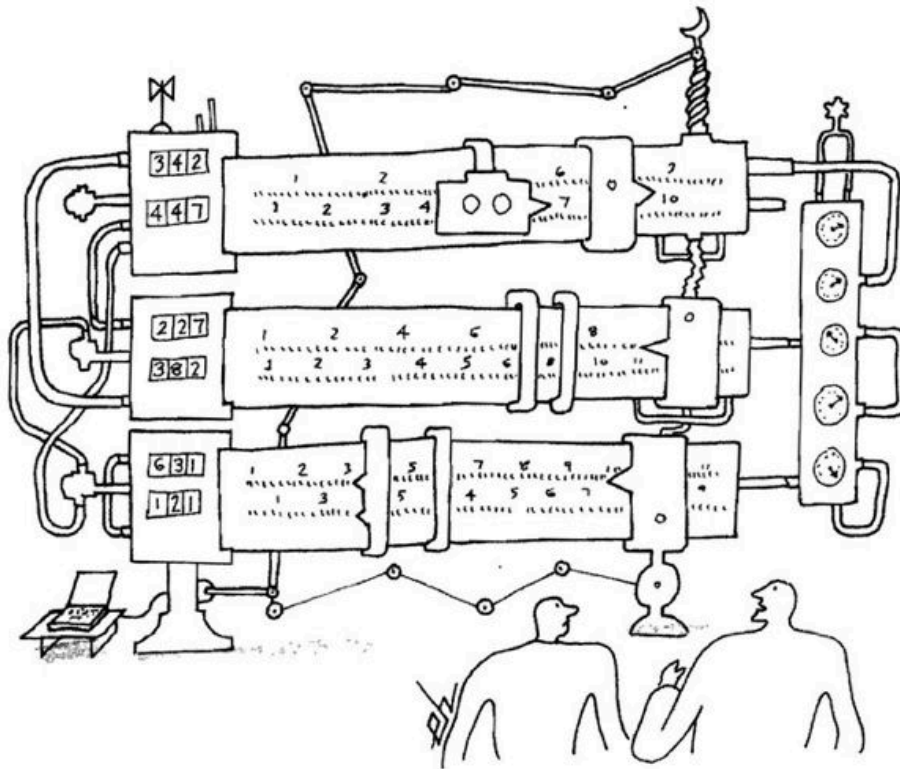
Also known as a slipstick, the slide rule itself is a kind of computer—the very basic, very analog kind. Often no larger than a 12-inch ruler and marked with numbers, the powerful mechanical computing device operates by sliding in and out to show relationships between different sets of numbers.”

We all know the rest of the story. Here is a U of M’s alumnus response to the article: *“It was always a rule to never fasten your slide rule to your belt unless you wanted to be considered what is today called a “nerd.” No backpacks—just books, notebooks, etc.—with the slide rule on top. If you dropped your slide rule on the end, it had to be whacked a little to get it back in adjustment. Since a slide rule knows no decimal places, the approximation always had to be carried in the head. Some may not agree, but for me, it gave me a wonderful ability to approximate numbers for years to come. With a little practice it was always accurate enough to accomplish the results. Pleading a slide rule error usually did not work.” —Gordon Lewis (ME ’51)*

Does that bring back any memories?

Reported by Gary Flom & Ed Chamberlain

On The Humorous Side



"Well, it's as we suspected—twelve inches equals a foot."

New Yorker

Reported by Ed Chamberlain

..... Send Newsletter Contributions to: edwin_chamberlain@valley.net