Dear Fellow Collector,

Dear reader of the PLUMB BOB NEWS,

As always, I am searching for new material and information associated with plumb bobs. Please feel free to share new photos, catalogs, articles or stories of a personal nature. I welcome input from fellow collectors!

Wolf

PLUMB BOB NEWSLETTER 2015- Q 05

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1. INTRODUCTION

For this year I planned only 4 newsletters, but now at the end of the year I will add a fifth. (as an informative Christmas card on plumb bobs!). As in some previous newsletters, I will devote a portion of my discussion on plumb bobs sold at auction on eBay. This Christmas edition will focus on plumb bobs sold during 2010. Perhaps some of these were purchased by you! In the remaining sections I will share some of the more interesting email correspondence received from fellow collectors since my last publication; present highlights of plumb bobs from a Canadian collection; as well as discuss technical information on a hypsometer, antique car wheel measuring instrument and early mechanical plumb bobs by Troughton & Simms and others. I will conclude with an "enlightening" photo, which should make you smile! I hope you enjoy the brief, but interesting topics presented in my Christmas edition! It deviates from previous editions of Wolf's Plumb Bob News, which typically focused on a single theme or subject and showcases a potpourri of different topics—hopefully something of interest for everyone!

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a healthy New Year 2016!

Below the 5 known WIESENER PLUMB BOBS in 4 different shapes and markings. More see Chapter 9.
2. PLUMB BOBS OFFERED ON EBAY 2010 (selection).

2010/1

1. A

2. B

3. C

4. D

plumbbobwolf@t-online.de
DESCRIPTION of photos 2010/1 on page 112

1A  10 oz brass. USA. Acorn shaped
1B,C  German Freemason pewter cup from 1761 with unknown abbreviations. Who knows it?

1D,2A  Baltimore $300. Huge brass.


3B,C,D  Unknown tool. Perhaps a mold for plumb bobs? Who knows more?

4A,B  A group of Portuguese lead filled pbs with wooden spacer.

4C  Buy it now for $950. Highly ornated. Sold from New Zealand.

4D  Wooden spacer in use

5A,B  ASTRUP wallpaper plumb bob. $47
5C  Old GERMAN brass plumb bob from a mason in Berlin.
5D  This is not a plumb bob, but a PENCIL that can be pushed together (silver-plated)

6A,  A complete set from CANADA. HERCULES 5, 8, 10, 20 oz
6B  Silhouette. German postcard A.M. Schwindt; “Deutsches Handwerk”. Genau visiert der Herr Polier, der Lehrling tut sich gütlich hier. Hessischer Heimat Verlag, Darmstadt, Seestraße 3
6C,D  Early French iron plumb bob.
7A-D French free mason plumb bob

8A THE PLUMB LINE AND THE CITY. Cover of a Long Playing record. This very symbolic model of a city was a gift of Christ Church, Cincinnati, U.S.A. to the Cathedral of Coventry, England. Artist: Clarke Fitz-Gerald.

Plate for the visitors in the cathedral.

8B-9D Miniature plumb bobs.

10A Unusual Ottoman plumb bob iron

10B Ottoman. $ 525.
Seller from west coast USA

10C P B Brass & Mahogany Canister.
$449 start

10D Very rare plumb bob with wings used by mining surveyors to stabilize faster the swinging (oscillation). (It was put into a basket with water or oil). Other combination and description below.

11A,B PLUMB SQUARE small IRON. England.

11C SOLD FOR $ 599 brass common sense

11D French doorknocker, not a plumb bob.

12A STANLEY # 1 unused BUY IT NOW $490

12B Miniature plumb bobs

12 C,D German carpenter weather vane.
In my collection now.
3. UNCOMMON FAUSTMANN MIRROR HYPsomETER

I consider myself an expert for a special kind of tree height measuring instruments with a pb, called “mirror hypsometer”. A very special version of this instrument was invented by the German forester, Martin Faustmann in 1856.

For more information on this particular version of a hypsometer, review “Faustmann Mirror Hypsometer” on my web site.

Recently I found a home made hypsometer in Bavaria, a region located in southern Germany, near the border of Austria. Unfortunately the plumb bob is missing and the mirror is broken. But that is not so important.

This hypsometer is different than others for the following reasons:

- Hand-made
- Bigger 9 3/8 in (23,5 cm) long 3 7/8 in (9,8 cm) high 3/8 in (1,1 cm) thick
- The scales are written by hand and also the lines are drawn by hand.
- It has 2 “garages” for the (missing) plumb bob. (not shown here on pictures)
- On the scales you find not only the values, but also for what reason this scale is used (height or distance).
- Very special is a handwritten information: “Eisele f/s Keuchengenossen Eder”

Eisele is the name of the maker and his friend Eder got it from him as a gift.

f/s = für seinen (for his)

Note the term, “Keuchengenossen”, which translates to “fellow prisoner” in English. You can locate this word on the internet, however if you search for further details on the term, you find the phrase “Keuche” was used until 1800 in the southern part of Germany and in Austria for a “very narrow jail cell” (or a prison tower). This instrument was built after 1872. This word was later also used for a narrow room in a small house. (I don’t think that this instrument was produced in a prison tower or narrow jail cell.)

In my opinion, the hypsometer was manufactured by a forester student who lived together with another student in a narrow room, while they were attending school, as they identified this room by calling it a “Keuche”, an uncommon and very old term.

“Keuchen” means gasping for air.

I realize that tracing obsolete German word roots may not be as interesting to my American friends, as they are to my German friends. All you Americans, review your family history – maybe you have some German ancestors who are “still available” and are familiar with this term.
4. OLD CAR WHEEL MEASURING INSTRUMENT, USA

I got an email:
“Wolf, I found this plumbing device recently. It is handmade out of steel but have no idea what it does. It is 25 inches long. 1’8 inches mid bar to tip of bob. Bob is 3-1/4 inches long. Bottom cross bar is 11’-1/2 inches. Stand at top is 8 inches. Bottom bar has 6 divisions on each side of center. Main bar is 1/2 inches square. You are welcome to print it in the newsletter or just write it off as an oddity. I plan to sell it but do not have a price in mind at the moment. Care to make a price guess as to value? I am thinking between 25-50 dollars. Hope you find it interesting. Jim “

My answer;
“Jim, it is a good find. It is an instrument to measure the parameters (camber, king pin alignment, side inclination, caster) of front wheels from old cars. See my attached newsletter 2010-08 on pages 107 + 108. I have the same one in my collection. Yours is not correctly installed. The V-part on top must be inset to the other side to have contact to the wheel. The plumb bob has to show to the user and not to the car. Have fun to TRY IT! ... I did not see it again on eBay since 2009. Good luck Wolf”

Here is the information from my newsletter 2010-08:

Last year I procured an instrument from the USA to measure some parameters of the WHEEL as camber, caster, king pin and side inclination of front wheels.
The plumb bob was still under patent protection in 1953.

Patented Feb. 3, 1953

2,627,123

5. HERGA and WHPLUMB from AUSTRALIA

I received some information on two plumb bob makers from Nigel Clarry who lives in Ipswich, Queensland, Australia. I already mentioned the names HERGA and WHPLUMB in my newsletter 2010-05 ENGISH PLUMB BOBS part 2, but now we have better photos of the marking.

Below you find a HERGA ad from 1967 and a plumb bob with sheath, both marked with HERGA & CO:
WHPLUMB maker of tools:
Nigel told me:
“Last year I visited the actual site of where the WH Plumb foundry was located. There is some sort of shop there now and it is very expensive real estate!”
I found the following information in the internet:
W.H. Plumb is from Sydney.
W.H. Plumb started Friday Jan. 17, 1930 as you can read below:
W. H. Plumb (Australia), Ltd., capital £100,000, to acquire and take over as a going concern the business now carried on at Woollahra (suburb of Sydney) of W. H. Plumb, and to carry on the business of toolmakers and general engineers, etc.
First director: W. H. Plumb, W. A. Crick, M. Donohoe

6. TRAILER LEVEL INDICATOR
Instruction below tells all you need.
7. PLUMB BOBS FROM THE COLLECTION OF ARCHIE MACKINNON, CANADA

Some nice plumb bobs from the collection of Archie MacKinnon, Canada
With REMARKS by Wolf Ruecker
plumbbobwolf@t-online.de
Sept. 20, 2015 UPDATE
#08 KUKA
166 grams
5" high
This is a German plumb bob / chalk line combination from KUKA Augsburg, maker of gas installations.
Purchased from eBay.
Some other photos from my collection.

Internal reel
#02 No marking
579 gm.
7" high
1 3/8" diameter
Lever break/wind-up

Fig. right
#05 No marking
1590 gm.
7 3/8" high
2 ¼ " diameter
Might be Mercury- or lead-filled
Remark WR:
Plumb bobs are usually filled with LEAD-SHOT to make them heavier. Mercury (more expensive) is used only in special cases, to have a slim shape.

#03 No marking
652 gm
4 ½ " high
1 ¾ " diameter
Spring brake

#4 No marking
1288 gm.
5 3/4" high
2 ¼ " diameter
Must be Mercury filled-too heavy for its size

#01 K&E CO. NY
Mining plummet
805 gm.
6 1/2" high
2" diameter
No wick

#14 no marks
338 gm.
4 1/2" high
?? "diameter
Cast iron.
Looks like Stanley #5
No markings
546 gm.
6 3/8" high
1 1/8 diameter
Button release
It looks similar to the design patent of this pb. Prutch US des pat 198470 (fig. right)

#11 no markings
407 gm.
4 1/2" high
1 1/2 " diameter
Hinged point.
For measuring in oil tanks.
#09 no marking  
457 gm  
6 ¼ " high  
1 ¾ " ? Diameter  
No key  

It is US 3027977 KNAUS 1962 TOOLS Plumb Bob. Known as AUTO BOB.

Was offered on eBay as “Buy it now” $1,000.00 😊

It is now also offered as a remake by TPI. See my newsletter WOLF'S PLUMB BOB NEWS 2015-Q 03

The brake system see fig. below.

#16 no marks  
1157 gm.  
7" high  
2 ½ " diameter  
From the Nelson Denny collection.

Two b/w photos from Nelson Denny of his pb. #460
#15 no marks
95 gm.
3 3/8" high
7/8 " diameter

#13 Veritas
73 gm.
4" high
?? " diameter
Made for Lee Valley Co.

#10 no markings
126 gm
2 3/4" high
1 3/8 " diameter
Ivory? Fine grain.

Veritas® P724 Plumb Bob
The first in a series of plumb bobs we are producing, this one is compact, functional and well designed. Finely made from brass with a stainless-steel tip, it is about 37/8" long with a slim body just under 7/8" in diameter at its largest section. An integral O-ring bumper protects against marring when used against a vertical surface. The 8' long braided nylon cord (no endless twirling, like twist cord!) is threaded through the removable brass crown to ensure perfect balance. Acting both as a tip protector and a cord spool, the 15/8" diameter black anodized aluminum case is fitted with a rare-earth magnet to hold the bob securely when not in use. Drawstring bag included. A useful tool in any toolbox, and a great gift. Made in Canada. Patent pending.

Veritas® P724 Plumb Bob
05k05.12
$26.50
8. HUGE GERMAN ARCHITECT’S PLUMB BOB

From Berlin, Germany I got a plumb bob with a nice brown patina and unusual shape:

It is 4 ¼ inch high (10,5 cm) and has a diameter of 1 ¾ inch (4,5 cm). The weight is 25 oz (860g)

Usually this type of plumb bob, a combination of a flat bottom and a conical plumb bob is not so big, as you can see in the figure below. The small ones are used by Architects. They could put it into the trousers pocket without making a hole in it.😊

Unfortunately the seller could not tell me more about the history. He bought it on a boot sale / antique market.

It is a three-part bob, but you can’t screw in the upper part directly into the lower part. (different threads). The lower part is to protect the (unhardened) tip and to use it as a flat bottom mason plumb bob.
BRITISH PATENT GB19687 from 1907 GEORGE W. WIESENER Australia

The first time Bruce Cynar mentioned 1991 in his famous “THE PLUMB LINE” (available for download on my web site) a mechanical plumb bob marked TROUGHTON & SIMMS (see figure below).

This plumb bob was marked with a **patent number 6247**. A search of British patent records only revealed “An Optical Aneroid Barometer” published July 8, 1909. Inventor: George William Wiesener, Sydney, NSW, Australia. However, this barometer has no relation to a plumb bob.

Later I found that Wiesener also had a patent GB 19687 from 1907 for “An Improved Adjustable Plumb Bob”. In this patent I found the drawings of the plumb bob shown by Bruce.

Now we know that the maker of the plumb bob, Troughton & Simms mixed up the patent numbers in the office and marked the plumb bob with the (wrong) patent number of the barometer.

The **WIESENER #1** is marked TROUGHTON & SIMMS Ltd. LONDON

Later my friend Dogan B, purchased an unmarked WIESENER in a box, with a label at an auction:

**REMARK:** It looks like an original box. Perhaps it was made later by a dealer or collector. The box is adapted to the paper with the information about Wiesener. Usually the box is adapted to the size of the tool (plumb bob) and then the written information is adapted to the box. From my perspective, it appears to be a “presentation box”, but this is only a guess.

This **WIESENER #2** has the same shape as the FIRST one, but is not marked.
Todd G. from the West-Coast of the U.S.A. bought on eBay this unmarked WIESENER:

I bought in 2011 my first Wiesener. It is unmarked and shaped like Wiesener #2.

It was shipped in a metal box, but not well wrapped inside. The result was a heavy perforation of the bottom of the metal tube as you can see below.

This plumb bob is shaped different to the others, especially the BODY (English onion-shape) and the TIP (Australian shape).

The WIESENER #3 (see figs. above) is unmarked and in the shape of a typical Australian plumb bob, like the well-known CARTER TOOLS that is marked CT. (see fig. below)

The WIESENER #4 (see fig. on top of this column) looks like the Wiesener #2.

Last month I could purchase another Wiesener. Unfortunately the second Wiesener from my collection is not totally complete (the spring is broken and a small piece of the brake mechanism is missing), but that is not so important.

However, this incomplete Wiesener contains a marking C.T.&S. Ltd., along with a completely different tip, which is threaded
for a cover for tip protection. Review the photos below, which exhibit the differences in my two Wiesener plumb bobs. (#5 left and #4 right)

Missing part of the brake mechanism:

Very funny was the “parcel” used by the English seller for shipping. 😊😊
It was a common plastic box for OLIVE SPREAD that you find on your breakfast table. Inside a little bit wrapped with bubbles. A very dangerous way to ship such a heavy plumb bob, but it arrived in good shape.
(See fig. on top of the next column.)

The **WIESENER #5** has a completely different tip and is marked C.T.&S. Ltd. (Cooke, Troughton & Simms)
The British company of Cooke, Troughton and Simms Ltd (‘CTS’) had a long history with J. Troughton (senior) opening a business as an instrument maker in 1756. 'CTS' was formed when T. Cooke and Sons Ltd purchased Troughton and Simms Ltd in 1922.
CTS finally ceased trading in 1988:
In “The SURVEYOR” from 1909 I found advertising for this “TIME SAVER” and information about the quantity: “Over 130 are in use”.

**CONCLUSION:**
This chapter on patented WIESENER plumb bobs from the inventor Wiesener (who lived in Australia, but has German ancestry), updates a previous article in my "Patent Newsletter", 2007-47, available on my web site [www.plumbbobcollectors.info](http://www.plumbbobcollectors.info)
The 2007 Wiesener article also provides additional historical information regarding Wiesener and his patent drawings. Now we know that there are at least 5 Wieseners in 4 different configurations/shapes. If any of my readers are aware of other Wiesener plumb bob shapes, PLEASE let me know!
10. ASIAN GODDESS WITH PLUMB BOB

In my collection I have a very small figure (1.5 inch) of a sitting god, holding a plumb bob in his hand. (see. fig. above)

Last month I saw on eBay a similar figure, but much bigger (unfortunately no measurements are known).

The headline: “statuary of the goddess of earth and celestial alignments”

The seller described it (not checked) as follows:

“An extremely rare statuary of the goddess of earth and celestial alignments. Building foundation to plant seeds of wisdom in the divine light and sacred geometry. This is a powerful Feng Shui harmony statuary and has all the vibrations at all levels for good luck Feng Shui and spiritual growth. I love the energy of this amazing goddess statue which is holding a MOVING PLUM BOB and sacred HOE for creating a even path for planting divine seeds of wish giving and intention. Set up on a altar make offerings and ask for special things to grow for you and watch the effects of your thanks on any place you empower your life with this very special statue. Fully consecrated offering it has amazing energy of growth of good luck and you will feel the love the moment its in your hands. Very old statue being sold “as is” as pictured see all pics and ask question if you wish? NOTE: Orange Butterflies that started to fly around me and the statue the moment I took it outdoors see photographs.”
Unfortunately, I could not obtain this, because costs for shipping the statue from Los Angeles to Germany was way tooooo expensive for me and would cost significantly more than the $54 statue! Do YOU know more about such items?

11. SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT

Offered on eBay. Lamp with plumb bob.

12. REMARK

DEAR READER OF THE PLUMB BOB NEWS,
DEAR FELLOW COLLECTOR,

This is an article of the regularly published WOLF’S PLUMB BOB NEWS that is sent on demand as PDF-file attachment by email. FREE.
You can see all former publications on the website www.plumbbobcollectors.info on subpage “download publications”.
Remarks and contact by email: plumbbobwolf@t-online.de

Enjoy it
Wolf Ruecker

PS. This NEWSLETTER is also available in GERMAN /DEUTSCH.