

PATINAGRAM

POTOMAC ANTIQUE TOOLS AND INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION, INC.

VOLUME 28

JULY 2005

NUMBER 4

JULY MEETING

by LEE RICHMOND

The July meeting will feature what promises to be a delightful presentation of the work of a little known cabinetmaker from the West Virginia mountains. The presenter, Betsy Davison, is pursuing a masters degree in the History of American Decorative Arts at the Smithsonian Institution. She will be focusing on 18th and early 19th Century furniture with a special interest in Southern furniture. Ms. Davison attended the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA) Summer Institute last summer. She has been researching John Shearer, a cabinetmaker who worked in and around Martinsburg, West Virginia in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. While several signed and dated examples of Shearer's work exist, little is known about the man, himself. Examples of Shearer's work are in the collections of Colonial Williamsburg and MESDA, as well as in several private collections. Ms. Davison will discuss the distinct characteristics of Shearer's furniture and what it tells us about this little known but highly creative cabinetmaker.

The meeting will begin with the usual tool sale starting at 10:00am. Please don't commence selling/trading tools before 10:30am (new time) because of McLean's Sunday ordinances. The mini-auction will commence at 11:30, and the 'formal' part of the meeting will follow, posthaste! (For those among you who don't peruse the mailing page, the meeting will be on **10 JULY 2005** - Ed.)

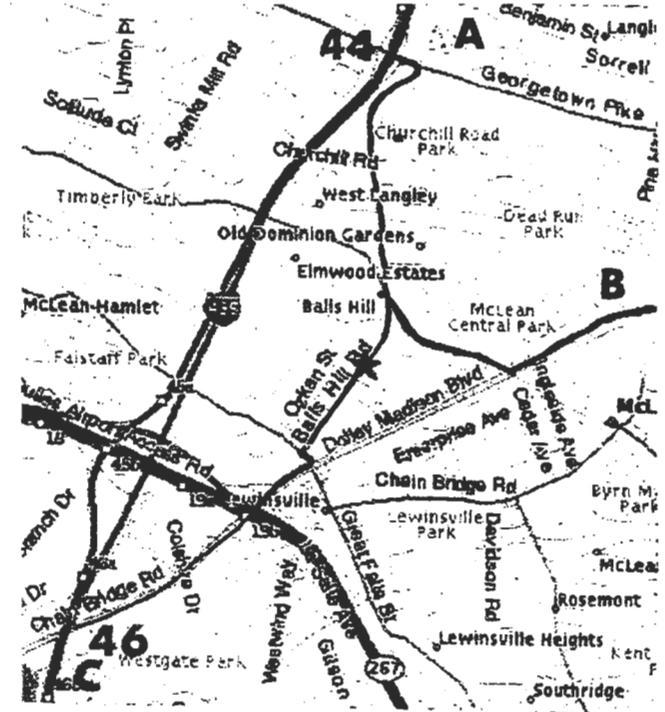
DIRECTIONS/ MAP TO THE MEETING HALL

A. THE BELTWAY FROM MARYLAND. Take Exit 44 (VA 193; Georgetown Pike). Cross over I-495 to the first light (Balls Hill Road). Turn right, go 1.4 miles to the American Legion Post 270, 1355 Balls Hill Road, on your left. There is space for about 30 cars plus a couple of handicap spaces.

B. FROM INSIDE THE BELTWAY, GOING NORTH ON THE GW PARKWAY. Take the McLean Exit (Chain Bridge Road/-Dolley Madison Blvd, VA. 123). Proceed on the Dolley Madison Blvd about 4 miles to Old Dominion. Right about 1/2 mile to Balls Hill Road. Turn left and go about 1/2 to 1355 Balls Hill Road which will be on the left.

C. THE BELTWAY FROM SPRINGFIELD, VA. Take Exit 46

(VA. 123, Dolley Madison Blvd). Go about 1.5 miles to Lewinsville Road. Left to next light (about one block), right on Balls Hill Road to 1355 Balls Hill Road which will be on the right.



MAY MEETING

by LEE RICHMOND

Roy Schaffer and Sam Pickens contributed to this report.

The program presented at the May meeting by William Robertson was an unqualified success. And for those of you who were unable to attend, you really missed something worth hearing about - and seeing in three dimensions - namely the two spinning wheels he has crafted, one to 1/6 scale and one to 1/12 scale, from a full size spinning wheel which he had obtained in France.

Bob Rothen gave a stirring introduction to Bill's presentation featuring Bill's background, expertise, and past affiliation with PATINA. Bill, a long time PATINA member and world renown craftsman and scholar, gave one of the best attended (about 34 souls) PATINA lectures in some time. Bill divided his talk into three distinct segments, each of which would have made an impressive presentation on its own. Supported by first

class slides, the talk was as interesting as it was enriching.

The **FIRST** part of Bill's talk focused on his research into the workshop of an 18th Century French nobleman, Bonnier de la Mosson, who had amassed one of the greatest tool collections of his time. As a young man, Mosson inherited a fortune from his father and created a town house in Paris with a suite of rooms to house his workshop and collection. The collection was at the time well documented, and Bill has managed to unearth a good deal of this original documentation, including the original 1745 auction catalog for the dispersal of this collection after the owner met an untimely demise in an equestrian accident. Bill has done the first translation from French into English. Subsequently, the bulk of this collection was obtained by the King of Sweden. It is still extant, but not open to the public. This research alone on the collection could easily become the basis of a book. In fact, so valuable is this information to the advancement of our knowledge of tools of this period that we must hope that ultimately Bill does publish his research findings..

The **SECOND** part of Bill's work took us through the steps for which he is best known, creating a working miniature version of a full sized device of some kind. In this case, it was an 18th Century French lady's spinning wheel. Not to be confused with a utilitarian spinning wheel, French lady's of leisure often owned fancy spinning wheels that they operated as a hobby. An original version of such a spinning wheel is a valuable antique. Bill obtained such a wheel from a dealer flea market on the Left Bank in Paris, and it is still resident in his own collection. Using this spinning wheel as a model, he created miniatures in the two scales given above (the 1/12 scale model would almost fit into a thimble, and the 1/6 scale model was not exactly huge). In his lecture, Bill took us through every step along the way in creating these modern masterpieces of craftsmanship. This included how he measured the original parts from which to make the miniature parts, and a description of special tools and techniques he had to perfect in the process of miniaturization of the wheels such as making his own taps and screws as small as 0.3 mm. He had to work for 3 months at 12 to 22 hours/days to produce 12 of the 1/12 scale and 5 of the 1/6 scale miniatures. Unfortunately, Bill did not have any photographs of these miniatures! To say in was amazing is to underestimate the reaction of the audience.

The **THIRD** part of this lecture shared with us how Bill was able to create for the US Park Service, a full size replica of the original drill press, that has now been lost, used by the Wright Brothers in their shop. This is not the kind of commission that Bill normally accepts, but the historical importance of this assignment lead him to take on the challenge. And challenging it proved to be as in some respects it was more difficult to do than the miniatures. For example, there was only one photograph of the press extant at the time, and that

photograph only showed about 40% of the press. Furthermore, it may not have been a commercially available press, but, instead, shop made. And only one chuck could be found for the original press. Another problem was that only a small part (floor?) of the original building existed, and Bill had to figure out just where in the room the press originally stood when photographed. Bill shared with the PATINA members the many hurdles he had to overcome before bringing this important work to fruition. This involved making patterns in wood using a 1/8" shrink rule and having the iron parts cast in an iron foundry, then cleaned, machined, and assembled into the drill press. The finished press weighed 1500 pounds and stood 7 feet tall, a tad larger than the miniature spinning wheels described above. We can all be grateful to Bill for helping to preserve a very important piece of American technological history.

Addendum

After the program Bob Rothen and I (Sam) had time to have a sandwich with Bill before he caught his plane. We remembered the day Bill discovered PATINA; it was at our second auction, and I remember Bill bidding on a Rivette lathe and subsequently standing in line to check out. He got the lathe and then joined PATINA. That was about 30 years ago, and Bob and I were somewhat surprised at the accumulation of years. Bill was one of our members who quietly did what needed to be done. The fact that he moved to Kansas City, MO has kept us from leaning on him so much, but he is still doing good work in he tool world.

* * * * *

THE CASE OF THE INVERTED PLOW

the EDITOR

Several astute (and vocal) PATINA readers were quick to jump on your poor editor with talons extended re the affair of the inverted plow plane on the PATINAGRAM cover of the May issue. When the issue in question was taken to the printer's, the orientation of the plow plane was correct (up was up and down was down). However, the picture your editor used was a grey-scale scan of the color original. To see if a better image could be obtained by the printer re the reproduction of the plane, the editor took along the original. The printer used the supplied picture, and when he overlaid it on the submitted version, he got the plow upside down (he is not a tool buff), and he also got a picture full of lines. Your editor noticed the error immediately upon picking up the job, however he decided to let it go rather than insist on reprinting 280 PATINAGRAMs. His decision was predicated upon the assumption that PATINAGRAM readers were bright and would not need to have the 'instructions printed on the heel to pour water out of the boot'. Instead, they would know, intuitively, to invert the page to view the plow in its proper orientation.

looks like a cartoon version of a two-handed corkscrew that refused to work. Two legs bow out and spiral inward, standing wide enough to completely miss the imaginary cork and bottle neck. "Actually, it's a sugar devil," museum staffer Jean Tierney informs the visitors looking blankly at the object. "It was", Tierney explains, "used in country stores to loosen brown sugar stored and solidified in bulk containers."

Henry Duvall was a tobacco farmer by birth and a University of Maryland electrical engineer by trade. Growing up near Crooms, Duvall observed agricultural life, farm practices, and the tools of the trade made obsolete by new technologies, and he began collecting tools at an early age. Over a 50-year period, Duvall's collection of hand tools and farm implements grew to include more than a thousand 19th Century pieces.

Now housed in a barn-like structure on the grounds of Patuxent River Park, Duvall's tools are grouped according to their original use. Felling axes, crosscut saws, adzes, augers, and chisels used to raise barns in Southern Maryland cover one wall. Nearby, the "Horse and Buggy Dentist" exhibit features a country dentist's tools, including a folding chair with a tilting back panel, and a portable drill stand with a drill at the end of an articulated arm and a foottreadle for power.

Whether you're captivated by the story of life on the farm in the "Woman's Work is Never Done" exhibit, or

fascinated by the curious objects on the "What Is It?" table, you never have to look far for interesting gizmos. For example, there's a snowball maker, looking a bit like an icem cream scoop, with a thumb-operated lid and a sharp slot in the bottom. Drag it across a block of ice and shaving collect in the scoop, a summer treat ready for flavoring.

On an iron base, two pilings with wire mesh stretched between might seem to be some kind of strainer, but the object is actually a miniature model of a new type of fencing. In the days before catalogs and newspaper advertising, salesmen carried samples — miniatures of woodstoves, furniture, fencing, and other items — from farm to farm. Unhampered by the hardware-laden wagons common in the early 1800's, salesmen could move more quickly through a region and knock on more doors, thereby increasing their efficiency. There's one tool whose purpose is really obscure. A wooden base with a metal top surface of pencil-thin slots holds a semicylindrical version of itself, the up-swept ends joined by a metal rung with a wooden handle. It's a pleater, a heating iron designed to make pleats and ruffles on collars and sleeves, a fashion must during the latter portion of the 19th Century.

Your editor has visited this museum on several occasion, and he can highly recommend it to PATINA members. Description of the other offbeat museums will appear in future PATINAGAMs.

Taken from *Wooden Planes in 19th Century* by Kenneth D. Roberts

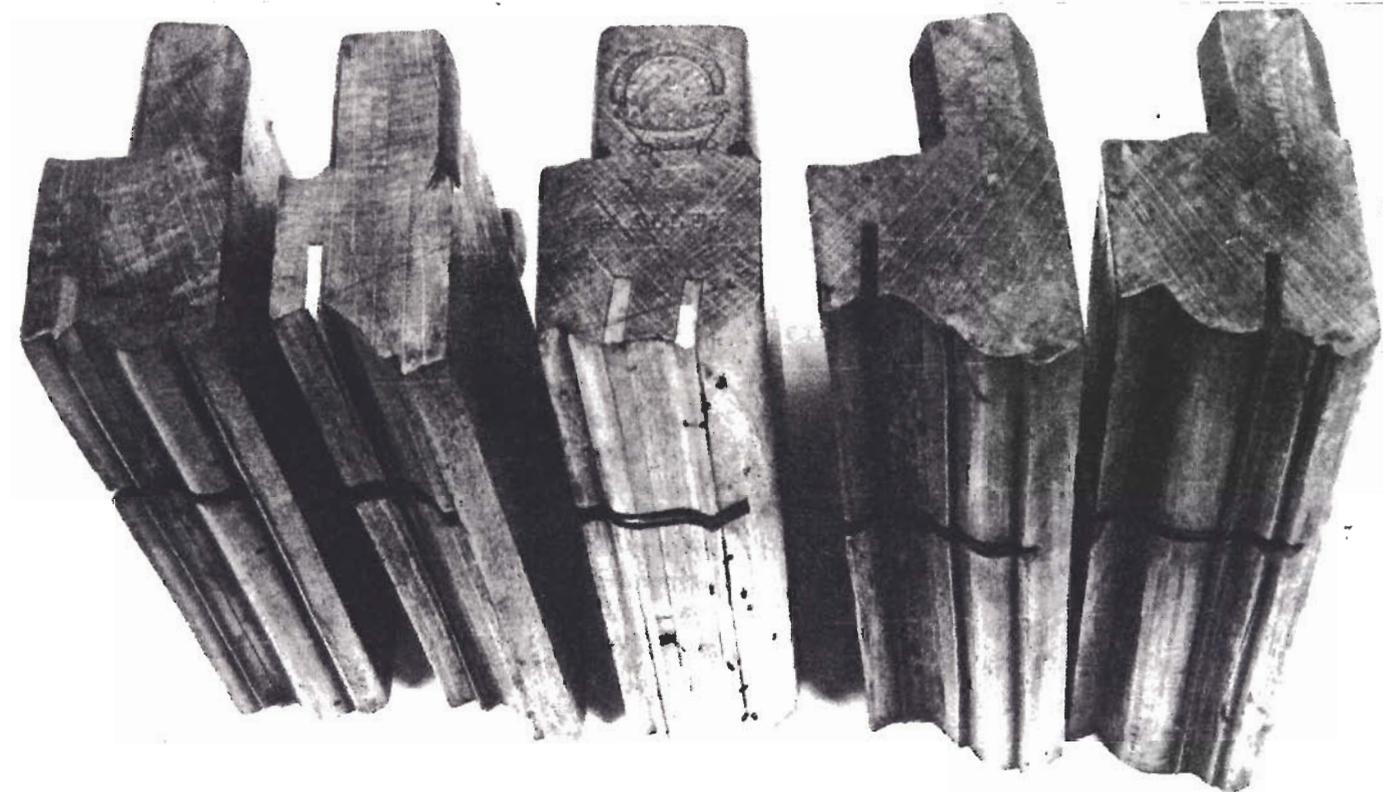


Fig. 161. Complex Moulding Planes of American Manufacture, 1800 - 1825.

Milestones in the growth of Stanley Tools

1853 — Thomas S. Hall and Francis Knapp organize firm and set up production of try squares, plumbs and levels in two-story building on west side of Elm Street north of what is now Church Street.

1854 — August and Timothy Stanley establish partnership with Thomas Conklin, formerly a rule manufacturer in Bristol, and begin production of rules under the firm name of A. Stanley and Company.

1857 — Henry Stanley, elder brother of August and Timothy Stanley, brings about consolidation of A. Stanley and Company and Hall and Knapp. Combined companies named the Stanley Rule and Level Company.

1863 — The Stanley Rule and Level Company purchases rule business of E. A. Stearns and Company, Brattleboro, Vermont.

1869 — The Stanley Rule and Level Company purchases Bailey, Chany and Co., Boston, manufacturer of the Bailey Plane, and moves it to New Britain.

1885 — The Stanley Rule and Level Company introduces variations of planes with notable success.

1892 — Metal gauges and scrapers added to product line and introduced.

1900 — The Stanley Rule and Level Company becomes one of the largest manufacturers of artisans' woodworking tools in the world.

1902 — Company expands hand tools line through purchase of three small firms which manufacture bit braces.

1903 — "Zig Zag" wood rules introduced.

1904 — Screwdrivers added to the product line through acquisition of Hurley and Wood factory in Plantsville, Connecticut.

1906 — Mitre boxes added to product line.

1907 — Company enters promising Canadian market for hand tools by purchasing Roxton Tool and Mill Company, Roxton Pond, Quebec.

1908 — Product line expanded by introduction of nail sets, awls and ice picks.

1912 — New Britain firm of Humason and Beckley, manufacturers of hammers, purchased by the Company.

1913 — To bolster hammer business, Company purchases Atha Tool Company, Newark, New Jersey. Atha presently a branch plant of Stanley Tools.

1914 — Wood chisels, cold chisels and punches introduced.

1916 — Eagle Square Manufacturing Company, Shaftsbury, Vermont, purchased to supplement hand tools production particularly in regard to carpenters' squares and zig zag sticks. This Company is presently a branch plant of Stanley Tools.

1918 — Combination squares added to product line.

1920 — Assets of The Stanley Rule and Level Company purchased by The Stanley Works.

1924 — Stanley "Tools for the Handyman" introduced. Aluminum levels also added to product line.

1928 — Electric drills developed and introduced by Stanley Rule and Level.

1929 — About this date Stanley purchases the Union Mfr. Co. of New Britain. Union Planes are offered in the dealer's catalogs until the inventory is depleted.

1930 — Company enters coilable steel rule business through purchase of business of Hiram A. Farrand, Berlin, New Hampshire.

1934 — Plastic-handle screwdrivers, utility knives and blades put on the market.

1935 — Stanley Rule and Level Division renamed Stanley Tools Division.

1938 — Phillips screwdrivers line introduced.

1941 — Stanley offers a line of "Two-Tone" Planes in observance of National Hardware Week. They include No.'s OH4, OH5, & OH20.

1946 — Stanley purchases North Brothers Manufacturing Company, Philadelphia, manufacturer of "Yankee" tools and other products.

1956 — "Steelmaster" hammer and "Surform" tools added to Division's product line.

1957 — Stanley garden tools line introduced.

1963 — Stanley Powerlock Tape Rules introduced. Ground breaking at the site of the new plant for Stanley Tools, April 18.

1964 — Plant Dedication Day, January 17.

1968 — Fiberglass Hammer introduction.

1971 — New Eagle Square Manufacturing plant completed and in operation.

1872 Stanley R&L. Co. Invoice



All claims for damage or error must be made immediately after the receipt of Goods

New York Aug 8 1872

Wm Corbett Tailing & Co

Bought of THE

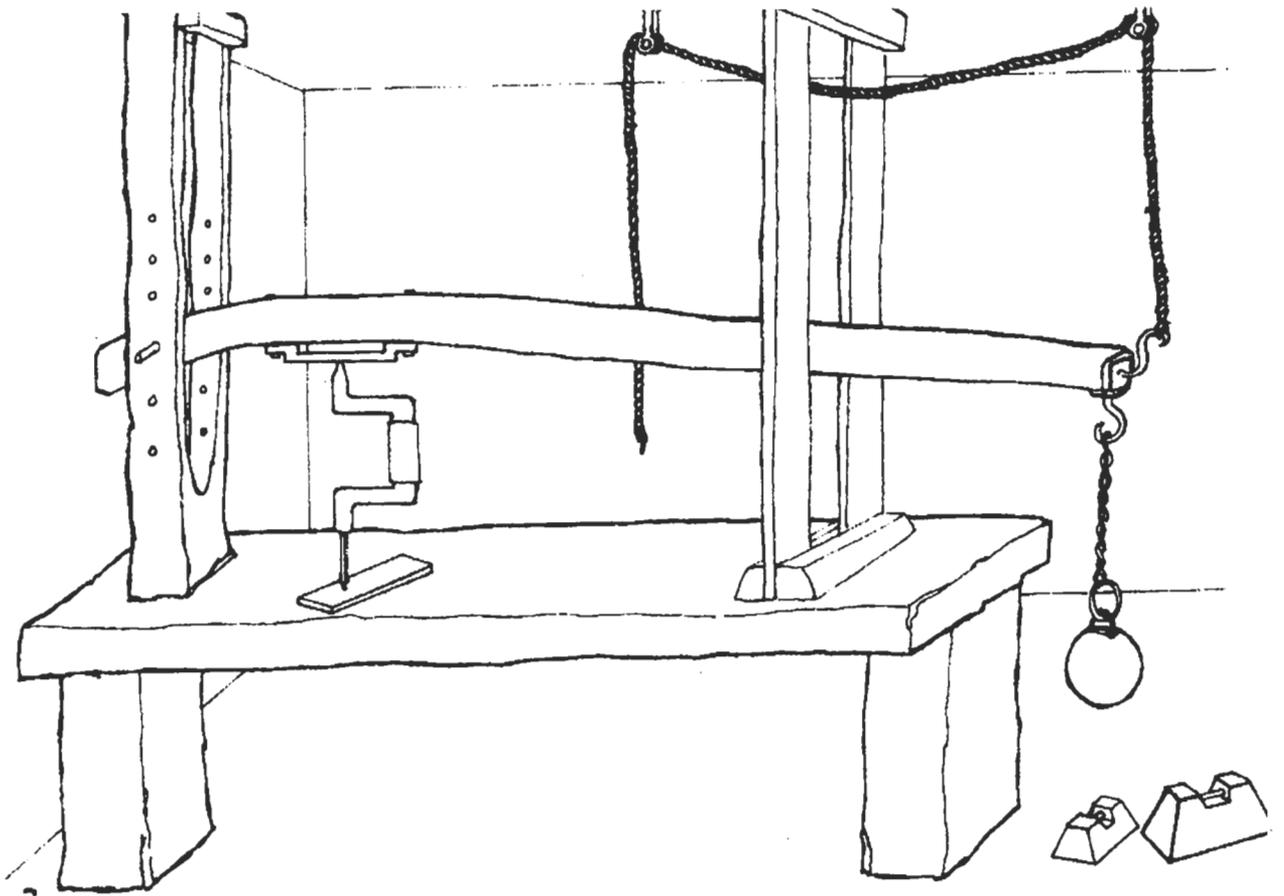
Stanley Rule & Level Co.

Factory at
NEW BRITAIN, CONN.

55 CHAMBERS ST.

<i>2 doz Stearns Rules</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>2500</i>	
	<i>25%</i>	<i>625</i>	
		<i>1875</i>	
	<i>10%</i>	<i>187</i>	
		<i>1688</i>	
<i>Cash</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>168</i>	<i>1520</i>

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Editor

DALE BULTMAN 13004 Clarion Road
 Ft. Washington, MD 20744 ☎301-292-1606
 e-mail: jdbultman@aol.com

President

*JIM GLASS 24349 Hilton Place
 Gaithersburg, MD 20882 ☎301-253-4892
 e-mail: hlbarker@comcast.net

1st Vice President

*LEE RICHMOND 12640 Magna Carta Road
 Herdon, VA 22071 ☎703-391-0074
 e-mail: lee@thebestthings.com

2nd Vice President

*KEITH NEWELL 15 Bates Road
 Great Mills, MD 20634 ☎301-994-1044
 e-mail: knewell@mail.ameritel.net

Secretary/Treasurer

*HUGH SOUTH 11166 Wood Elves Way
 Columbia, MD 21044 ☎410-992-1823
 e-mail: hmsouth@comcast.net

Membership Chairman

This position is currently vacant

Librarian

ROBERT E. ZIEGLER 177 Lewis Drive
 Ruckersville, VA ☎804-990-4223
 e-mail: geofiz@aol.com

Board of Directors

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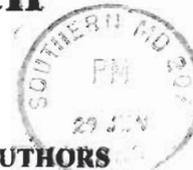
BOB ROTHEN 20310 Ayoub Lane
 Hagerstown, MD 21742-4003 ☎240-420-6484
 e-mail: timefor@aol.com

Webmaster

CHRIS SCHWARTZ 3513 Eventon Street
 Silver Spring, MD 20906 ☎301-962-3493
 e-mail: kjworz@comcast.net

First Class Mail

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AUTHORS

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PATINAGRAM

2006

JIM GLASS
 24349 HILTON PLACE
 GAITHERSBURG, MD 20882

MEETING DATE

10 JULY 2005