

Unit 12: CHIP CARVING

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Photo: Plate carved by Wayne Barton

About the Cultural Skills Program

Sons of Norway's Cultural Skills Program provides a framework for learning about traditional and contemporary Norwegian culture. Each unit consists of three levels of skill-specific activities to guide you as you learn. You can complete the units on your own, through your lodge or through a special class or group. For each level, you'll complete a few activities, email (or mail) them in to Sons of Norway Headquarters, get feedback, and earn a pin in recognition of your accomplishments. As a benefit of membership, the Cultural Skills Program is available only to members of Sons of Norway.

When you complete part 1 of your first unit you'll receive a Cultural Skills pin, a skill bar, and a level 1 bar. You'll receive additional level bars when you complete parts 2 and 3 of that skill, and new skill bars when you complete part 1 of a new skill.

Going Further with Cultural Skills

Want to take your skills to a new level? Members who have completed multiple units or mentored others in the program can earn special recognition.

- A Master of Cultural Skills is someone who has completed multiple units. Finish all three parts of any three units for the bronze level, all parts of six units for the silver level and all parts of nine units for the gold level.
- A Cultural Skills Mentor instructs or guides others to learn about Norwegian cultural skills. If your instruction has helped other members earn Cultural Skills awards, you can earn a mentor pin.

For more information about the Sons of Norway Cultural Skills Program, call (800) 945-8851 or email culturalskills@sofn.com.



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www.sonsofnorway.com (Rev 03/2016)

INTRODUCTION

Chip carving is a kind of decorative woodcarving in which knives are used to remove small chips of wood from a flat surface. Designs are incised into a flat or curved surface to enhance the beauty of an object. Geometric shapes are most typical in designs, but chip carving techniques may be used for free-form carving and shapes derived from nature. As Wayne Barton, considered by many to be the founder of modern chip carving, says, "Properly executed, attractive chip carving is distinguished by chips with smooth single facets, clean grooves, and sharp ridges."

Examples of chip carving designs are found in many cultures, from Europe to the South Pacific Islands. It is one of the oldest forms of woodcarving, going back many centuries.

Chip carving is known as *Karveskurd* in Norwegian and *Kerbschnitzen* in German. *Karveskurd* likely originated in Norway as early as people there began to carve wooden objects. However, because wood is a natural material, it decomposes, leaving no examples of early carvings.

Objects from the 800-900s are the earliest carved items that still exist. The Oseberg ship, dating prior to 834 AD, has chip carving elements incorporated into dragon figures.

Vesterheim Museum in Decorah, Iowa has examples of chip carving from Norway and Norwegian-Americans in its collection. Many may be viewed online. (See the Resources section.) There are *mangletrær* or mangle boards (a traditional engagement gift), ale bowls (*kjunge*) and boxes of various shapes and sizes. Geometric shapes common in chip carving are also found on larger objects such as trunks, although they would have been executed with chisels and gouges rather than knives.

A few photos of objects from the Vesterheim collection are included at the end of this unit.



OVERVIEW:

- For Part 1, you will learn and demonstrate carving triangles, straight lines and two-sided chips.
- For Part 2, you will continue to expand your knowledge and skill by learning about and carving rosettes and free-form shapes.
- For Part 3, you will be creating an heirloom or display piece.
- For each part, you will complete a Pin Application Form, Evaluation Form and a Learning Activity.
- If you have a question regarding any part of this unit, please send an email to culturalskills@sofn.com or call (800) 945-8851.

Preparing to Carve

One of the primary attractions of chip carving is that only two knives are necessary and, if you are just exploring the craft, you may start with one. Another attraction is that chip carving projects may be portable. Most people carve with the wood on their knee. Projects can be done almost anywhere. The chips are clean and easy to sweep up.

Safety

Chip carving is relatively safe when compared to other woodworking activities, but normal precautions should be taken when handling the knives.

The initial challenge for most beginners is learning to hold the knife correctly. When holding the cutting knife, keep your thumb and knuckles on the wood. This will help avoid having the knife slide into the hand holding the wood. A Kevlar glove may be used on the holding hand, but most carvers do not find this necessary. Be careful to avoid dropping the knife to protect both the blade and your feet.

Typically, for the carver's safety, small pieces like Christmas ornaments are carved on a larger board and cut out after the carving is completed. Only carve a small piece of wood when it is securely held on something larger.

EQUIPMENT



Equipment requirements include:

1-2 Knives. (See details below)
 Compass. Need not be expensive, but be sure it will hold its position when used.
 T-square. A cheap plastic one is adequate.
 Mechanical pencil. 0.5mm with soft lead.
 Eraser. White polymer is good
 Sharpening stones (See details below)

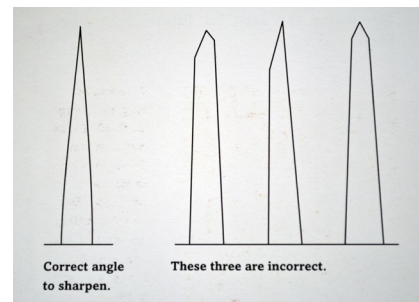
Knives

Two knives are used in chip carving: a cutting knife and a stab knife. The cutting knife is the primary tool. The stab knife does not remove wood, but cuts and spreads the fibers to enhance the work. It complements the work of the cutting knife. Some tool sellers promote multiple knives for chip carving, but no more than these two are necessary.

Sharpening

Nothing discourages a beginning woodcarver faster than knives that are not appropriate for the project and the inability to keep them sharp. Opinions on sharpening methods vary.

An important feature of a chip carving cutting knife is that it has one long bevel. Some good knives are sold with a secondary bevel that must be ground away. Unless you have the tools and experience necessary to do that, insist on a knife that is ready to use. Some sellers may do the initial sharpening for an additional charge. Inquire before you make your purchase. A list of sellers is included in the Resources listing.



Bevel samples from *The Complete Guide to Chip Carving* by Wayne Barton

Chip carving knives are small and not suitable for grinding on wheels. Ceramic sharpening stones are excellent for maintaining an edge on your knives. Once the bevel is established, only fine stone will probably be needed to maintain the edge. No water or oil is used. The cutting knife should be held at a 10 degree angle on the stone, almost flat. Lay the knife flat on the stone and then lift the back edge up only the thickness of a dime above the surface. Slide the knife back



WAYNE BARTON

Wayne Barton is an American-born professional woodcarver who lives in Park Ridge, Illinois. He became interested in woodcarving when very young at the knee of his Norwegian grandfather. Wayne took his formal training in Brienz, Switzerland, the woodcarving center of that country. Although he studied all disciplines of carving, he specializes in chip carving. In 1984, he published "Chip Carving: Techniques & Patterns." This book, along with Wayne's teaching in many settings, has introduced this craft to many and sparked its resurgence. In 2005, Woodcarving Illustrated named him Woodcarver of the Year. There are Wayne Barton books and an instructional video on the Resources list for this unit. One would do well to begin with the current edition of "The Complete Guide to Chip Carving." There are other good books on chip carving. Most, if not all, of the authors have studied with Barton.



ELLEN MACDONALD
AUTHOR OF THIS UNIT

Ellen Macdonald is an amateur chip carver living in Decorah, Iowa. She learned the craft first by studying Wayne Barton's books in the 1980s and then by taking classes from him between 2007 and 2012. She has taught classes at Vesterheim, the Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah. Ellen enjoys chip carving at Java John's Coffee House on Tuesday afternoons.

and forth, keeping the pressure even along the edge to the tip. Change sides frequently. When the ceramic stone becomes darkened from metal particles, clean it with an abrasive powder (like Comet) and scouring pad. (Consult one of the basic books listed on the Resources section for detailed instructions.)

If you are used to stropping on a leather strip, do this only with thin leather and be very careful not to begin to round over the cutting edge.

Wood

Beginners usually work on practice boards, 12" x 4" to 6" x 3/8" in size made out of basswood or American Linden (*Tilia Americana*), the most commonly used wood for chip carving. It has a fine, tight grain and is less prone to splitting than pine. The farther north a tree is grown, the tighter the growth rings will be. Carving on wood with a finer grain is desirable.

Basswood for carving will usually not be found at a lumberyard or building supply store, but at a woodworking store or through a cabinetmaker. A few sources are on the Resources list. The very pale color of basswood darkens to a richer tone over time.

Plates and boxes and other basswood items are available for sale from vendors listed in the Resources section. Be certain to buy "carving grade," as many basswood items are intended for painters who will be covering up imperfections. Carpenters and cabinetmakers in your area can make items to your specifications, if you are unable to find what you are looking for through a vendor.

Keep your wood in a sealed plastic bag when not working on it so that it does not get too dry. Wood that is too dry will be frustrating to work with because it will be more likely to break out along the grain. Wood may be rehydrated by placing it on a rack in a big plastic box. Add water to the box, keeping the level below the wood. Place the box that contains the wood in a large plastic bag for a day or two.

Grain

Some forms of woodcarving have you carve with the grain on most cuts. This is not true in chip carving. Carving is done in all directions. Break-out is most likely to occur where there is a cross-grain ridge that exists between two chips that are cut. Start new cuts away from previous chips. Keep your knife sharp and do not allow your wood to become too dry.

Tip: Sobo Premium Craft Glue may be used to glue a piece together when a break occurs. Apply a small dab with a toothpick and let dry for several hours before further cutting. This glue may be found at craft and fabric stores. The glue can be stained or used with finishing products.

TIPS

- Never, ever pry out a chip with the tip of your knife. Make the cut again, trying to hold the knife at the same angle.
- If the bottom of your cut is not clean, lay your knife along the wall of your original cut, hold it firmly and cut to the depth you want.
- Experiment with lighting to find what works best for you. You want to see shadows on your work so overhead diffuse light is generally not as good as directional light.

PART 1: TRIANGLES, STRAIGHT LINES AND TWO-SIDED CHIPS

To help you get started a partial list of books and additional resources can be found in the Reference section at the end of this unit. While chip carving can be learned by using only books or videos, taking a class or mentoring from a chip carver will be a big help and is suggested.

If you are not taking a class, select at least one book or video to learn the hand positions and techniques necessary to carry out chip carving activities. Be patient. Gripping the knife and the angle at which the knife is held is complicated, frustrating most chip carving students in the beginning.

Most teachers begin by having students learn two positions for holding knives. They are designated as Position 1 and Position 2. Others have students use only Position 1 in the beginning. There are advantages to each approach. Try both to see which is most comfortable.

The most basic shape in chip carving is a triangle. Many varied designs are simply different arrangements of three-cornered chips. One skilled chip carver says that a beginner should carve 250 triangles to begin learning the craft. This will help develop “muscle memory.”

Part 1 Activities

Activity 1: Triangles or Three-sided Chips

Begin by laying out grids on a practice board, following instructions in the book you have chosen.

Using the hand and knife positions illustrated in a basic book or video, carve a number of triangles until they look clean. Your first triangles may have a chewed look rather than clean lines. Do not be discouraged. Keep trying and you will improve. Doing a few hundred would be excellent!



Practice Board

Try to maintain roughly a 65-degree angle between the side of your knife and the board. As you make your cuts, plunge the knife point into the wood. The tip of the knife should begin at the surface of the wood and move down toward the bottom of the cut. As you carve, try to visualize the point of your knife under the wood. Stop it where your cuts meet at the bottom of the chip.

You will be demonstrating your mastery of this level when you photograph the sampler you will carve for Activity 3.

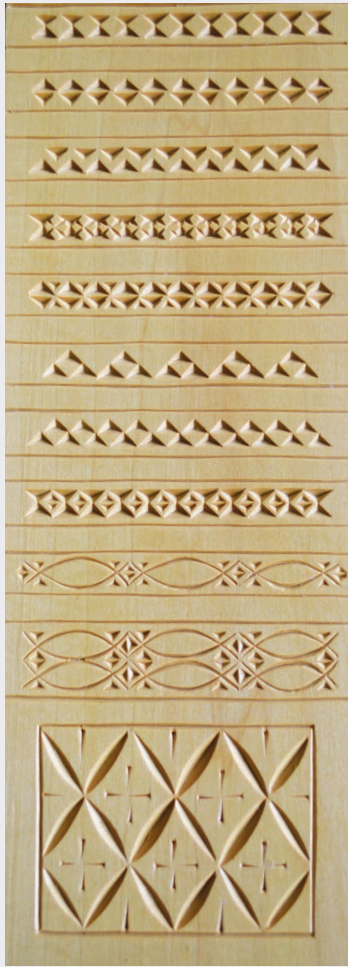
Activity 2: Straight Lines and Two-Sided Chips

Straight Lines

As with triangles, the way to master straight lines is to carve a lot of them. You can begin by drawing lines across the grain of your practice board about 3 mm apart, beginning and ending about 1 cm from the edge of the board. Before carving the line, make a “stop cut” at the ends of the line by inserting the point of your knife into the wood. Make your first cut on the line, maintaining the 65 degree angle of knife to board. Pull the knife toward you without changing your hand position. Rather than keeping your eye on the tip of the knife blade, try to look about ¼ inch ahead of the moving point. Reverse the board and cut the other side of the line. For now, keep this line narrow. Obviously, the width of the line may be varied. The wider apart your two cuts, the deeper you must sink the knife blade.

Two-sided chips

Two-sided chips may be ovals, crescents or irregular figures. Begin with ovals, drawing some on your board. In making curved cuts, raise the blade to a more vertical position when the curve is tight, maintaining the 65 degree cutting angle. Continuing to practice at this level will serve you well as you move on to more elaborate carving.



Example of a sampler

You will be demonstrating your mastery of this level when you photograph the sampler you will carve for Activity 3.

Activity 3: Make a sampler of the cuts you have learned.

Create a sampler of patterns learned in Part 1. Using a practice board, arrange triangles in different combinations such as you see in introductory lessons in books or videos. Separate the designs with straight lines. Make a grid using two-sided chips. Use borders from a book as an example. Photograph your work to submit with your pin application.

Activity 4: Complete one Learning Activity.

Choose from any of the Learning Activities listed on pages 14-15.

Submitting your work

Complete the Pin Application Form included in this section, and submit all of the following items:

- ☐ Photograph or scan of sample board showing the cuts learned in Part 1.
- ☐ Learning Activity
- ☐ Unit Evaluation Form

★ *Remember you must include photocopies, photographs or scans of your projects and learning activity requirements with your completed pin application form. Failure to include the required items will delay the awarding of your well-deserved pin or bar! To help make this unit even better, please take time to fill out the evaluation form provided at the end of the unit.*

Send materials by email to culturalskills@sofn.com (preferred) or by mail to:

Cultural Skills Program
Sons of Norway
1455 West Lake Street
Minneapolis, MN 55408

If you use traditional mail channels, please make and retain copies of all materials (including photos) prior to sending. Original items will not be returned.

- For expedited processing, send materials by email to culturalskills@sofn.com. Reports and pictures can be sent as attachments.
- This form can now be filled out and submitted digitally. Just sign in to the "Members Login" section of www.sonsofnorway.com to find a digital copy of this form that you can fill out, save and email with the rest of your report.
- This form can also be printed, completed, scanned and emailed with the rest of your report.
- Materials sent by mail may take additional time to process.
Mail all materials to:
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Minneapolis, MN 55408
- ★ Please make copies of materials sent by mail. Original items will not be returned.

PIN APPLICATION FORM - CHIP CARVING PART 1

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____ E-mail address: _____

Phone: (____) _____

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: (required)

Membership #: _____ District #: _____ Lodge #: _____

1. Activity 1, 2 & 3:

☐ Photo or scan of sample board showing the cuts learned in Part 1.

2. Learning Activity # _____

☐ Learning Activity requirements (photos, copies of patterns, articles, entry forms, report, etc.)

3. Evaluation Form

Have you received Cultural Skills Program pin awards previously? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list: _____

Signature (Cultural Skills Applicant)** _____ Date _____

***By signing this form and accepting awards you are giving Sons of Norway Headquarters permission to use your photos in future promotional materials.*

(Name of Lodge Cultural Skills Admin/Officer) _____ Date _____

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(Signature of Fraternal Dept. Cultural Skills Program Coordinator) _____ Date _____



UNIT EVALUATION FORM - CHIP CARVING PART 1

For each of the four questions below, please check the box that fits your opinion most accurately.

	Agree	Disagree
❶ Instructions for this part were easy to follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❷ Requirements for this part were reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❸ Learning Activities provided a lot of choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❹ Required activities were interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This part has (check all that apply):

- ☐ Helped me gain a better appreciation of Norwegian heritage & culture.
- ☐ Increased my involvement with other lodge members (such as participation in formal & informal discussions, presentations, formal group activities, etc.).
- ☐ Increased the interest of my lodge in the Cultural Skills Program because of my participation through special interest groups, presentations, or cultural fairs.
- ☐ Offered me an opportunity to involve or pass on this skill/interest to family members or other interested individuals.
- ☐ Helped prepare me to participate in the district and/or International Folk Art Exhibition & Competition.

FEEDBACK: To improve the unit, please add comments and suggestions. Your comments are confidential and in no way affect the awarding of your earned pin or bar.



PART 2: ROSETTES AND FREE-FORM SHAPES

Part 2 Activities

Activity 1: Construct a rosette directly on wood with compass and straightedge.

At times it can seem as though putting your design on wood is as time-consuming as doing the carving. Do not be discouraged, practice will increase your skills. The books by Wayne Barton and others show detailed instructions for constructing rosettes using a compass and straightedge. Practice on paper before drawing on wood. Hold the compass upright and then draw on your wood. Two or three rosettes of size appropriate for Christmas ornaments fit nicely on a practice board. Larger designs must be carved more deeply and require more strength. As a beginner, keep your chips smaller. Photograph your rosette drawn on wood to submit with your Pin Application.

Activity 2: Transferring a pattern to wood.

Materials needed for this activity:

- Tracing paper
- Graphite paper - Available at art stores. Do not use carbon paper that may leave greasy residue.
- Drafting tape - Resembles masking tape but is easy to remove from paper and wood.
- Stylus - Pencil may be used, but if you reuse the pattern, your lines will stay cleaner with a stylus.

Trace a pattern using tracing paper and then position it on a practice board, using drafting tape to fasten the pattern to the wood. Slip a piece of graphite paper face down between the pattern and the wood. Use a stylus to trace the pattern onto the wood. Photograph your rosette pattern transferred to wood to include with your Pin Application. **Tip:** Place a piece of wax paper over your pattern when transferring it to wood so that you can see what you have traced. Do not glue a paper pattern onto wood and carve through the paper. The grain is covered up and cleanup is difficult. Ridges tend not to be as sharp as you want them to be.

Activity 3: Carve Rosettes

Carve the rosettes that you have drawn in Activity 1 and 2. Photograph them to submit with your Pin Application. After you have carved the rosettes, you may cut them out to use as Christmas ornaments, using an appropriate saw. You need not always make the outer cuts round. A diamond or hexagon adds variety. You may also send photos of the cut out chip carvings, if you wish.

Activity 4: Complete one Learning Activity.

Choose from any of the Learning Activities listed on pages 14-15.

Submitting your work

Complete the Pin Application Form included in this section, and submit all of the following items:

- ☐ Photograph or scan of rosette drawn on wood for Activity 1.
- ☐ Photograph or scan of rosette transferred to wood for Activity 2.
- ☐ Photographs or scans of both rosettes carved in Activity 3.
- ☐ Learning Activity
- ☐ Unit Evaluation Form

★ *Remember you must include photocopies, photographs or scans of your projects and learning activity requirements with your completed pin application form. Failure to include the required items will delay the awarding of your well-deserved pin or bar! To help make this unit even better, please take time to fill out the evaluation form provided at the end of the unit.*

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Minneapolis, MN 55408

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- Clean up cuts that you are not happy with as you go along rather than waiting until you are finished with the project when the job might seem overwhelming.
- Eraser cleanup will be easier if you draw your pattern so that you will carve off most of the lines. Be especially careful when erasing delicate areas.
- Painting the wood surface before carving gives good contrast between the surface and the chips. Transfer papers in various colors are available from art supply stores.



- For expedited processing, send materials by email to culturalskills@sofn.com. Reports and pictures can be sent as attachments.
- This form can now be filled out and submitted digitally. Just sign in to the "Members Login" section of www.sonsofnorway.com to find a digital copy of this form that you can fill out, save and email with the rest of your report.
- This form can also be printed, completed, scanned and emailed with the rest of your report.
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Minneapolis, MN 55408
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PIN APPLICATION FORM - CHIP CARVING PART 2

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____ E-mail address: _____

Phone: (____) _____

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: (required)

Membership #: _____ District #: _____ Lodge #: _____

1. Activity 1:

☐ Photo or scan of rosette drawn on wood.

2. Activity 2:

☐ Photo or scan of rosette pattern transferred to wood.

3. Activity 3:

☐ Photo or scan of both carved rosettes from Activities 1 & 2.

4. Learning Activity # _____

☐ Learning Activity requirements (photos, copies of patterns, articles, entry forms, report, etc.)

5. Evaluation Form

Have you received Cultural Skills Program pin awards previously? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list: _____

Signature (Cultural Skills Applicant)** _____ Date _____

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(Name of Lodge Cultural Skills Admin/Officer) _____ Date _____

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(Signature of Fraternal Dept. Cultural Skills Program Coordinator) _____ Date _____



UNIT EVALUATION FORM - CHIP CARVING PART 2

For each of the four questions below, please check the box that fits your opinion most accurately.

	Agree	Disagree
❶ Instructions for this part were easy to follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❷ Requirements for this part were reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❸ Learning Activities provided a lot of choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❹ Required activities were interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This part has (check all that apply):

- ☐ Helped me gain a better appreciation of Norwegian heritage & culture.
- ☐ Increased my involvement with other lodge members (such as participation in formal & informal discussions, presentations, formal group activities, etc.).
- ☐ Increased the interest of my lodge in the Cultural Skills Program because of my participation through special interest groups, presentations, or cultural fairs.
- ☐ Offered me an opportunity to involve or pass on this skill/interest to family members or other interested individuals.
- ☐ Helped prepare me to participate in the district and/or International Folk Art Exhibition & Competition.

FEEDBACK: To improve the unit, please add comments and suggestions. Your comments are confidential and in no way affect the awarding of your earned pin or bar.





TIPS:

- A Tombow Mono Sand Eraser can be useful if you are having trouble erasing lines.
- As varnish soaks into the wood, it will close little spaces left by undercuts.



PART 3: CREATE AN HEIRLOOM OR DISPLAY PIECE

Part 3 Activities

Activity 1: Create your own heirloom or display piece.

Using all the skills you have acquired, execute a design on a medium to large size plate, box or other item. You will not need to cover the entire surface with carving.

It is not required for this activity, but lettering is often used in chip carving. "The Complete Guide to Chip Carving" by Wayne Barton has several fonts suitable for use.

Activity 2: Apply a finish.

As you plan your project, think about what you will apply as a finish. The various chip carving books advocate different finishing methods. Many chip carvers find a matte finish more pleasing than glossy. Use a small practice piece to test a finish, especially if you are thinking of using a stain.

Remember that you will be aware of flaws in your work that no one else will ever notice.

Activity 3: Complete one Learning Activity.

Choose from any of the Learning Activities listed on pages 14-15.

Submitting your work

Complete the Pin Application Form included in this section, and submit all of the following items:

- ☐ Photograph or scan of carved heirloom or display piece for Activity 1.
- ☐ Photograph or scan of carved heirloom or display piece with finish applied for Activity 2.
- ☐ Learning Activity
- ☐ Unit Evaluation Form

★ *Remember you must include photocopies, photographs or scans of your projects and learning activity requirements with your completed pin application form. Failure to include the required items will delay the awarding of your well-deserved pin or bar! To help make this unit even better, please take time to fill out the evaluation form provided at the end of the unit.*

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Minneapolis, MN 55408
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PIN APPLICATION FORM - CHIP CARVING PART 3

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____ E-mail address: _____

Phone: (____) _____

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: (required)

Membership #: _____ District #: _____ Lodge #: _____

1. Activity 1:

☐ Photo or scan of carved heirloom or display piece.

2. Activity 2:

☐ Photo or scan of carved heirloom or display piece with finish applied.

3. Learning Activity # _____

☐ Learning Activity requirements (photos, copies of patterns, articles, entry forms, report, etc.)

4. Evaluation Form

Have you received Cultural Skills Program pin awards previously? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list: _____

Signature (Cultural Skills Applicant)** _____ Date _____

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(Signature of Fraternal Dept. Cultural Skills Program Coordinator) _____ Date _____



UNIT EVALUATION FORM - CHIP CARVING PART 3

For each of the four questions below, please check the box that fits your opinion most accurately.

	Agree	Disagree
❶ Instructions for this part were easy to follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❷ Requirements for this part were reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❸ Learning Activities provided a lot of choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
❹ Required activities were interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This part has (check all that apply):

- ☐ Helped me gain a better appreciation of Norwegian heritage & culture.
- ☐ Increased my involvement with other lodge members (such as participation in formal & informal discussions, presentations, formal group activities, etc.).
- ☐ Increased the interest of my lodge in the Cultural Skills Program because of my participation through special interest groups, presentations, or cultural fairs.
- ☐ Offered me an opportunity to involve or pass on this skill/interest to family members or other interested individuals.
- ☐ Helped prepare me to participate in the district and/or International Folk Art Exhibition & Competition.

FEEDBACK: To improve the unit, please add comments and suggestions. Your comments are confidential and in no way affect the awarding of your earned pin or bar.





Unit 12: LEARNING ACTIVITIES

WHAT'S A SUMMARY OR A REPORT?

The writing required by a Learning Activity is used to explain what you've experienced or learned. Focus on what you learned and not on spelling or grammar; your report is not graded. And, if it makes writing easier, just imagine writing a letter to a friend! Please write a minimum of 2 or 3 paragraphs unless otherwise stated in the elective. However, if you wish to write more and would like to enclose additional photos, articles, etc., please feel free to do so.

Select and complete one Learning Activity for each of the three parts of this unit. For each activity you choose, submit documentation in the form of a brief written report (300 words), photographs, and/or a video.

- 1 Take a chip carving class. List the activities you did and photograph your work.
- 2 Attend meetings of a woodworking club. After you attend three meetings, submit a brief explanation of the club's activities.
- 3 Visit a woodworking show and find chip carvers displaying their work. Or find chip carvers through another source. Ask about their work. What tips would they offer to someone taking up the craft? Write a short description of the carvers and their work. Photograph or video them at work.
- 4 Give a demonstration of what you have learned about chip carving to your lodge or to a family member or friend. Ask someone to take a photo of you making your presentation.
- 5 Write a short article for your lodge newsletter about chip carving and how you became interested in it. Submit a copy of the newsletter that contains your article with your Pin Application.
- 6 Organize a craft show in your lodge or community, inviting people to display and/or demonstrate their handwork of various kinds. Submit a brief report (300 words) on the show.
- 7 Set up a Cultural Skills Help Night in your lodge or community. Invite experts on Norwegian crafts—knitting, Hardanger, rosemaling, woodcarving, etc.—to assist members who need help in completing requirements for Cultural Skills units. Enclose a photo of you and the members working on their crafts along with your Pin Application.
- 8 Enter a piece of your work in a competition or exhibition such as a county fair. Submit a photo, along with a brief report, and submit it with your Pin Application.
- 9 Enter your work in a Sons of Norway convention folk art competition at the district or international level. Include a photo of your project, preferably one showing it on display at the convention or a copy of your registration form. Submit all materials with your Pin Application.
- 10 Make a study of chip carving knives. What are the technical specifications of the steel used? Why does a cutting knife work best with no secondary bevel? Compare different writers' or teachers' preferred methods of sharpening and maintaining a good edge. Write a report of what you learned (300 to 500 words) and submit it with your Pin Application.
- 11 Research a basic design commonly used in chip carving. An example would be the 6-petal flower or "flower of life." Carve the design and submit a photograph of the completed project with your Pin Application.
- 12 Extend your skills by studying lettering and then incorporating lettering into a project. Progress from straight letters to curved. Write a short report (300 words) and submit a photograph showing your use of lettering in a project with your Pin Application.
- 13 Extend your skills by carving leaves and other curved designs such as those by Wayne Barton. Submit 3 to 5 photographs of your carvings along with your Pin Application.
- 14 Create your own design and carve it. Make it appropriate in difficulty for the part for which you are submitting it. Submit photo of the drawing and of the completed work with your Pin Application.
- 15 Visit a museum. This is best done in person, but Vesterheim in Decorah, IA has many examples of chip carving online. (See the Resources section of this unit.) Write a short report (300 words) on what you have seen or make your own design based on something you see and carve it. Submit your written report or a photograph of your completed project along with your Pin Application.

- 16 Adapt a design from your Norwegian heritage to do as a chip carving. David Elliker-Vågsberg of Eugene, Oregon used chip carving techniques to carve designs from a calendar stick or primstav. (Images of a 1566 primstav is available on the Vesterheim website. See Resources section for a link.) The author of this unit designed and carved a 6" plate based on a detail of a trunk seen at Vesterheim Museum.



- 17 Don't see the Learning Activity that you wish to do? Make a suggestion by emailing culturalskills@sofn.com, or call (800) 945-8851 and ask for Cultural Skills.

PARTIAL LIST OF RESOURCES

All urls below are hyperlinked.

Books

No one book will have everything you want to know and the authors do not always agree with one other.

Basic Chip Carving

- "The Complete Guide to Chip Carving" by Wayne Barton
- "Stamp 'n Chip: A Beginners Guide to Chip Carving" by Jeff Fleisher (includes rubber stamps for practice patterns)
- "Basic Chip Carving" by Pam Gresham
- "Chip Carving Essentials" by Marty Leenhouts
- "Chip Carver's Workbook" by Dennis Moor

Design Books

- "Chip Carving Design and Pattern Sourcebook" by Wayne Barton
- "Chip Carving Pennsylvania Dutch Designs" by Pam Gresham
- "Chip Carving Workshop" by Lora S. Irish
- "Chip Carved Christmas Ornaments" by Bruce and Judy Nicholas
- "Artistry in Chip Carving: A Lyrical Style" by Craig Vandall Stevens
- "Chip Carving: The Best of Woodcarving Illustrated" by the editors of Woodcarving Illustrated

Magazines

- Chip Chats
A bi-monthly magazine on all forms of wood carving with a regular chip carving column by Wayne Barton.
National Wood Carvers Assoc.
PO Box 43218
Cincinnati, OH 45243
<https://chipchats.org/>
- Woodcarving Illustrated
This is a quarterly woodcarving publication, with only an occasional article on chip carving. Fifty of their chip carving projects are contained in the book:
"Chip Carving, The Best of Woodcarving Illustrated Magazine"
1970 Broad Street
East Petersburg, PA 17520
<http://woodcarvingillustrated.com/>

DVD

- "Chip Carving" with Wayne Barton (2012)

Museum

- Vesterheim, the National Norwegian-American Museum and Heritage Center
Historic chip carvings by Norwegians and Norwegian-Americans
502 W. Water St.
Decorah, IA 52101
563-382-9681
info@vesterheim.org
<http://vesterheim.org/>

ONLINE RESOURCES

Vesterheim Museum, Decorah, IA

artifacts tagged "Chip Carving"

<http://collections.vesterheim.org/items/browse/tag/Chip+Carving>

Primstav or calendar stick from 1566, similar to one seen in the Learning Activities section

<http://collections.vesterheim.org/items/show/170>

Carolina Mountain Reefs (artist Bill Johnson)

Excellent examples of chip carving, with an emphasis on aquatic themes. <http://www.carolinamountainreefs.com>

My Chip Carving (Marty Leenhouts)

My Chip Carving offers supplies, classes, and online videos through a membership plan.

<http://www.mychipcarving.com/>

- Some My Chip Carving videos are available to view on YouTube without a membership.
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MyChipCarving>
- "Proper Technique"
Especially useful for Part 1, Activity 1, triangles
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5-G-VdvA7I>
- "Chip Carving Straight Lines"
Especially useful for Part 1, Activity 2, straight lines
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=612GG5sSPj4>
- "Chip Carving a Rosette"
Useful for Part 2, Rosettes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1Ra8ITGqeY>

Woodworkers Institute (UK)

Wayne Barton carves a plate. Still photos with explanatory text.

<http://www.woodworkersinstitute.com/page.asp?p=980>

Wayne Barton on American Woodshop

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zj3YvaW-cgc>

Lora S. Irish on Chip Carving

<http://www.lsirish.com/tutorials/woodcarving-tutorials/woodcarving-projects/chip-carving/>

Chip Carving: Tips for Beginners by Kari Hultman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOE99r5N0Ds>

Introduction to Chip Carving with Jeff Fleisher

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WRCVqGKX6A>

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

Vesterheim Store

502 W. Water Street
P.O. Box 379
Decorah, IA 52101
800-979-3346

Wayne Barton's Alpine School Of Wood Carving

225 Vine Avenue, Park Ridge, IL 60068

847-692-2822

wayne.barton@comcast.net

www.chipcarving.com

Sells knives and other supplies. His knives are the standard, but the cutting knife must have a bevel removed. For an extra charge, he will do it for you.

MyChipCarving

51654 164th St.

Garden City, MN 56034

866-444-6996

<https://mychipcarving.com>

The WoodCraft Shop (not the national chain)

2724 State St.

Bettendorf, IA 52722

<http://www.thewoodcraftshop.com/>

Woodcraft (the national chain)

See their website for store locations

<http://www.woodcraft.com/>

Chipping Away Incorporated

836 Courtland Ave East

Kitchener, ON N2C 1K3

Canada

888-682-9801

<http://www.chippingaway.com/>

Wood

Krantz Wood Sales

16748 Stanford St. NE

Forest Lake, MN 55025

651-464-5632

jkrantz@usfamily.net

Basswood plates

Montzka Woodworking, Inc.

5294 250th Street

Forest Lake, MN 55025

651-464-5847

tpmontzka@aol.com

request current pricelist – note added charge for carving grade, as opposed to blanks to be painted.

Norwegian style woodenware

Lusk Scandia Woodworks

N906 County Rd. Pl

Coon Valley, WI 54623

608-452-3472

luskscandiaww@yahoo.com

<http://www.luskscandiawoodworks.com>

request current pricelist – request carving grade.

CLASSES

The best source of information about classes in your area will be local carvers, woodcarving clubs, or supply shops. Ask around.

- John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC
<https://www.folkschool.org/>
- Carolina Mountain Reefs, Bill Johnson, near Ashville, NC
<http://www.carolinamountainreefs.com/chip-carving-classes.html>
- Chicago School of Woodworking, Chicago, IL
<http://chicagowoodworking.com/>
- Fletcher Farm School, Ludlow, VT
<http://www.fletcherfarm.org/>
- Highland Woodworking, Atlanta, GA
<http://www.highlandwoodworking.com/woodworking-workshops-seminars.aspx>
- Milan Village Arts School, Milan, MN
<http://www.milanvasartsschool.org/>
- My Chip Carving, Marty Leenhouts, Garden City, MN
<https://mychipcarving.com>
- North House Folk School, Grand Marais, MN
<http://www.northhouse.org/>
- Northwest Woodcarving Academy, Ellensburg, WA
<http://www.nwcarvingacademy.com/>
- Vesterheim, the Norwegian American Museum, Decorah, IA
<http://vesterheim.org/>

Scandinavian Festivals with Live Woodcarving Demonstrations

- Milan Village Arts School Annual Spoon Gathering, Milan, MN
http://www.milanvasartsschool.org/spoon_gathering.html
- Nordic Fest, Decorah, IA
<http://www.nordicfest.com/>
- Norsk Høstfest, Minot, ND
<http://hostfest.com/>
- Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival, Moorhead, MN
<http://www.nordiccultureclubs.org/>

Directory of Woodcarving Clubs

Fill in your state and the kind of club you are interested in and a list is displayed. <http://woodcarvingillustrated.com/clubs/>

HISTORIC SAMPLES OF CHIP CARVING

VESTERHEIM NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN MUSEUM



① Bowl, turned by Gary Smith and carved by Miles Lund, 1991. 1991.079.001, Museum Purchase, Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa.

② Picture frame, carved by Herman Soli, 1907. 1977.084.001. Gift of Herman Soli, Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa.

③ Ale Bowl (Kjenje), Norwegian, 19th century. 2011.032.012, Gift of Lila Nelson, Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa.

HISTORIC SAMPLES OF CHIP CARVING

VESTERHEIM NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN MUSEUM



① and ② Bentwood Box, Norwegian, 1766. LC0924, Luther College Collection, Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa.

③ Box for Church Candles, Norwegian, c. 1762. LC0203, Luther College Collection, Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa.

④ Mangle Board (*Mangletre*), carved by Norman Seamonson, 1995, 1995.064.001, Museum Purchase, Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa.



