

CARTERET COUNTY NEWS-TIMES

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PUBLISHED TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS

Blind Man Drives Truck, Invents Manufactures, and Makes Money

CAREFUL! BLIND MAN DRIVING!

The first day that James G. Whitehurst, Beaufort, drove the Shel-Ton Industries service car on the road with this awe-inspiring sign emblazoned on its posterior, the ears lined up behind him respectfully and fearfully just as in a funeral procession.

Field hands were observed to straighten themselves up from the tobacco rows and stare in bewilderment, pointing out the phenomenon to their companions.

But any man who has eyesight enough to observe a picture of a Venetian blind-making machine in a magazine and then, with no other sort of blueprint, to hand-make a machine which performs 18 separate cutting and two sanding operations, certainly is not blind.

Hobby Started It All

A hobby of woodworking begun in his basement while he was doing civilian war work at Camp Lejeune, coupled with imagination and ingenuity, has now qualified Mr. Whitehurst for the "unusual occupation" roster. He has produced a machine that rivals the creations of the famous comic strip designer and, incidentally, has throttled down more speed happy motorists on the highway than the state patrol.

Mr. Whitehurst turns out the Venetian blinds at the Shel-Ton Industries plant at 310 Marsh st., Beaufort.

"I like to have three days, but I can turn out a set of blinds in 24 hours," Mr. Whitehurst told the reporter. All blinds are custom made to fit the customer's windows and are guaranteed for 12 months' satisfactory service.

The blinds are sold on a square footage basis. When a customer reports his windows are average size and wants to know what blinds will cost, the company's standard answer is, "There's no such thing as an average sized window. The windows of every house must be measured, and our blinds are made to fit."

The Shel-Ton blinds are made not only to fit the specific "blind" needs of the individual customer; they are also custom made to withstand Carteret's corrosive atmosphere. The selection of all moving parts, lacquer, etc., is done with a weather eye for the whims of the local salt air.

To insure that your blinds will tilt when you want them to tilt, come hail or high water, Mr. Whitehurst imports the slats, rails and all wooden parts, as well as the aluminum for aluminum slats, from Oregon. He orders pulleys made of lignum vita, the hardest known wood from the Honduran tropics, tape from England and New England, paint from Ohio and New York state, tilting and cord lock devices from Los Angeles, and cord from New England.

Little Things Count

The ex-newspaperman (he was at one time a reporter for The Beaufort News) turned plumber turned woodworker turned inventor and manufacturer emphasized that when it comes to producing Venetian blinds that do right and stay right, it's the many little things in the process which count.

Smooth holes must be routed in the slats and rails to prevent the cords from fraying. Here the importance of accurate design of Mr. Whitehurst's hole-cutting machines becomes apparent. Stops must be placed in such a way that the cords will drop from the headrail in perfect perpendicular lines, else they will soon wear through.

The two main things which work or don't work in a Venetian blind are the tilters and cord locks, the "Blind Man" pointed out. The cord lock is the device which enables you to raise or lower your blinds or to stop them at a desired level. Mr. Whitehurst's locks contain two dogs instead of the usual one which make for positive locking at any level.

The tilting device is the little "hickey" which comes into play when you seek to open or close the blinds to filter through the desired amount of light and air.

Plastic Replaces Metal

To prevent corrosion by Carteret's salt air, Mr. Whitehurst's tilters have plastic movable parts, instead of metal, which would quickly cake with rust.

Tilting, instead of so much raising and lowering of blinds, is the solution to longer wear, Mr. Whitehurst emphasized, because the more you raise and lower the blinds the quicker the tape wears out.

Mr. Whitehurst uses fine Port Orford cedar for his wooden slats, grown near Port Orford, Oregon, and believe it or not, ladies, the

This is the back of the truck which causes many a motorist an uneasy moment as he follows it along the highway. Below, James Whitehurst, the "blind man" turns out some blinds of the machine he invented. His success in business he attributes to a streak of imagination—plus a bit of ingenuity. He's a native son who has made good in the home town. Photo by THE NEWS-TIMES.



stuff smells just like satchet.

After the cord holes are routed in the slats by one of the ingenious machines, they are carried into the paint room where a lacquer undercoat is put on. Allowing about 20 minutes for drying, the slats are then buffed to remove the wood fuzz raised by the lacquer. The lacquer seals the pores of the wood and the pitch inside, and the buffing leaves the slats slick.

The finished coat can then be applied, and this will be a gloss lacquer which comes near to enamel in shine. The rails which house the mechanism at the top of the blinds are handled much the same way.

But the machines which Mr. Whitehurst constructs himself are the key to his unique manufacturing processes. The big one which performs the 18 cutting and two sanding operations has two drills, three route bits, and two sanders, all operated by the same motor and three belts. The drills and bits all spin simultaneously so that the operator may readily shift from one step in the process to the next, and back again if necessary. But the sanders operate separately.

\$700 Saved

This equipment would normally cost \$800, his inventor informs you, but he built it from a picture in a magazine at a cost of only \$100. (He had the motor already.) Mr. Whitehurst is now making a machine which will route an elongated cord hole in the ends of 10 slats in one operation.

After knowing all these details of the Beaufort-made, custom-built-for-Carteret county Venetian blinds, if the customer still is not satisfied, Mr. Whitehurst has the products of Yardley Venetian Blind Co. for sale, too. He also has the agency for Kool-Vent all-aluminum awnings, too, if you want to shade your doors and windows as well as equip them with blinds.

Draw a Picture!

If a customer phones or writes and doesn't know the exact name of the gadget which Mr. Whitehurst makes, he is likely still to get what he wants. Shel-Ton Industries has manufactured and sold venetian blinds to inquirers who asked for "venetian" blinds, "magnesium," "ignition," and "vet-eran" blinds. If you can't spell, then draw a picture and Whitehurst will get the point.

Maybe you're under the impression that Venetian blinds are a new-fangled device, but Mr. Whitehurst assures you that Moses probably shaded his windows with them in ancient Egypt before leaving for the Promised Land. The Egyptians appear to have gotten the idea from palm leaves, which will shade a man from the sunlight while still admitting light and air.

So the Venetian blinds started in Egypt, moved to Arabia and then on westward to France with the expansion of civilization and today are flourishing as never before, being manufactured right in Beaufort.

CHERRY POINT NEWS

Charles Turner Appointed O-R Training Supervisor

Charles Turner, who has recently been named Supervisor of the O&R Training Sections has been chosen from several applicants by the selection board to fill the post left vacant by the death of Jack Smiley, of Morehead City, who was drowned in June while sailing.

After a year in the Navy and six months with Consolidated-Vulcan at Elizabeth City, Mr. Turner entered the O&R Department on June 11, 1943. He received the rating of aircraft motor mechanic in March of 1944, in which rate he later received competitive status. So capably did he perform his duties that he was made an instructor in December of 1945, and served in that capacity until his promotion to training supervisor.

Mr. Turner was graduated from high school in Yonkers, New York, and attended the University of North Carolina for two years. A native of New Bern, he was at one time connected with the Barbour Boat Works.

He makes his home on his own "few acres" on Green Springs Road, where he and Mrs. Turner also have a tiny garden plot. They have two children, a boy and a girl.

Although he admits that it's somewhat unusual for a man, Charles' hobby is cooking, usually seafood or steaks. As a spectator he enjoys both baseball and football, and picks as his current favorite, quite naturally, the "Tar Heels" of North Carolina U.

Genial, easy-going Charles has many friends among O&R personnel, who wish him continued success in his new assignment.

course taken under the Work Improvement Program. The certificates were handed out in the Public Works Office by Comdr. Ahlmann, and Lieut. Gault and Harry Mizell were also on hand to extend congratulations.

The Public Works Building has some new occupants. The office personnel of Newton Welding and Engineering Company are using the office formerly used by T. A. Loving and Company, since their temporary office quarters over on the job site (erection of aircraft containers) wouldn't be very comfortable when those north winds start to howl.

Motor Transport

We extend our deepest sympathy to Lytle Lee on the death of his father!

We are glad to see James McCuen back on the job and to learn that his father is a lot better... and Blanche Barbour is back from Wilson where she has been visiting her mother... Rita Walbrown is back, but says that due to illness in the family, they did not do much on their vacation. She is now busy entertaining friends from PI... the vacation bug has now bitten Henry Zucha and he is in Illinois, having a swell time... not having such a good time is Alonza Taylor who is off on sick leave. Hurry and get well, Al!

Paul Horne is building a fire in his own home in New Bern these days and Clarence Wilkins says it takes hardly any oil to heat his new house trailer which he has parked on his building lot, 4 miles this side of NB!

We were elated when Howard Lewis informed us his wife did not have polio and was getting along

WEEKLY VISIT ABOUT THE BASE

Public Works

Often in the past we sat picking at our old broken-down typewriter, trying to meet the deadline and get this stuff to Mrs. Delisle for further processing, we wondered if it was all worth the struggle and if anybody ever read it anyway, etc., etc. Well, now we know...

They read it. We know this because in last week's column we made a mistake and said Jim Whitcomb had gone to Asheville to the Shriners' convention, whereas really Jim Whitcomb had gone to Asheville to an AMERICAN LEGION convention. Mr. W. had this mentioned to him every day for a week by somebody or other, and finally got to where he didn't say anything, he just smiled (weakly), and we promised to correct the statement.

This error was due to overwork, postwar nerves, and the fact that we weren't watching what we were doing... Mr. Whitcomb is going on another convention trip this month, this time to Miami—and this also is an AMERICAN LEGION convention... It must be a great life.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Cathey and children have returned from Charlotte, N. C., after a visit to Mrs. Cathey's brother-in-law, who is in a serious condition following an automobile accident there... Mr. and Mrs. Guy Combs were recent visitors in Elizabeth City... Mrs. Frank Massey has returned after an extended visit in Sylva, N. C.

Lucy Willis is such a follower of Vaughn Monroe's 10:30 broadcasts that she hates to go to bed early for fear of dozing off and missing one. Luckily, he is soon scheduled to come on the air at 7:30, just in time for dinner-time listening...

S. G. Hobert is taking a two-weeks' vacation... And Roxie Earle and her husband were among the spectators at the Duke-Navy game last week-end in Durham. Roxie, by the way, has become quite a proficient bridge player. She got high score the other night at her club, and took the score pad home to prove to friend husband that it wasn't the "booby" prize she had won...

Alfred Mayo and N. G. (Pete) Meekins received certificates the other day for completion of a

cookies and iced drink.

Mr. and Mrs. Claude Taylor and daughters of Bachelors were here Sunday afternoon to visit Mr. and Mrs. Ashby B. Morton.

Mr. and Mrs. Alex Williams and daughter, Alexis, of Vanceboro, visited Mrs. W. C. Williams during the weekend.

Mrs. Charles Merrill, of Cherry Point, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Ralph G. Temple.

Mr. and Mrs. William Ingram and daughter, Betty, of Kenansville, visited relatives here during the weekend.

Phillip Taylor and Johnnie Olund attended the show at Newport Friday evening.

Tsetse Fly Attacks Counterattacked with Bomb

LONDON — (AP) —The Tsetse fly is being attacked with a bomb.

Scientists believe that a chemical bomb dropped by a helicopter will release an insecticidal smoke which will be kept close to the ground by jungle foliage. The insecticidal smoke may not only

annihilate the fly which is a major problem to the livestock industry, but other insects as well. And some of them are beneficial to man. A problem is to make the smoke selective. An uninhabited region was chosen for the experiments to minimize injury if the plan is not feasible.

The 1872 fire in Boston burned 776 buildings valued at \$75,000,000.

ANNOUNCING

THE OPENING OF

THE YOUTH CENTER

Next Door to the WAFFLE SHOP
On the Beaufort Highway

— IN —

HAVELOCK

MONDAY, OCTOBER 18th

Infants' & Childrens' Clothing & Accessories

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MORE VALUE

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You'll find that Chevrolet gives more riding-smoothness, more riding-steadiness, on any and all kinds of roads. That's true because it has the original Unitized Knee-Action Ride, proved and perfected by 14 years of experience in building Knee-Action units. Available only in Chevrolet and higher-priced cars!

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at LOWEST PRICES

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More Value in All-round Safety

Chevrolet brings you the fourfold safety-protection of Fisher Unisteel Body-Construction, safety plate glass in all windows, the Unitized Knee-Action Ride and Positive-Action Hydraulic Brakes; and this is another combination of Big-Car features found elsewhere only in higher-priced cars!

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You know that there's only one leader in fine coachcraft—Body by Fisher! It's world-famous for true quality, beauty and luxury, not only in exterior design, but in important interior appointments such as hardware and upholstery, as well. And Body by Fisher, too, is exclusive to Chevrolet and higher-priced cars!

SOUND CHEVROLET COMPANY, INC.

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