



Volume 18 • Number 3 • June 2019

Welcome to *Nib Noise*. I hope you'll enjoy reading this month's issue.

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO THIS NEWSLETTER!

The robot that sends it out still hasn't learned to read. If you have comments or questions, send email to:

richard@richardspens.com

To subscribe or unsubscribe, please visit the Free Email Newsletter page on my site:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?info=nibnoise>

The Ongoing Saga of Style

I have tweaked the text size of *Nib Noise* upward a little. I hope this change will make it easier for those with visual issues to read while not making the text ridiculously big for others.



Meet Me in St. Louis

The Second Annual St. Louis Pen Show will be happening from June 20 to June 23, *a week earlier than last year's inaugural show*. And we will be there. The organizers proved last year that they can field an amazing show, and we're again looking forward to seeing our Midwest friends who just can't make it farther east. The selection of pens, vintage and modern, is certain to be lavish; there will be a boatload of seminars and workshops; and a squad of highly qualified repairers will be in evidence in the persons of Mike Kennedy, Joel Hamilton, Sherrell Tyree, Martin Ferguson, and others. I will be working on nibs, and nib worker Linda Kennedy, my former student and now a pro in her own right, will also be there. As always, Barbara will be making sure I keep my nose to the grindstone. *Please read our "Table Talk" FAQ to learn how we operate at a show:*

<http://www.richardspens.com/?info=shows>

If you plan to come and haven't ever been to a show before, you might want to read my article "Your First Pen Show":

<http://www.richardspens.com/?shows=firstshow>

The list of exhibitors who have registered is seriously cool! Find out more about the show—and make your reservations today! For more information, visit the show's site:

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

We hope to see you there!

It's a Nib Workshop!



With assistance from Linda Kennedy, I will offer my hands-on workshop on nib smoothing, working directly with participants, at the St. Louis Pen Show.

The workshop will begin promptly at **8:30 a.m. on Sunday, June 23**. In this intensive 90-minute session, I will teach you how to smooth nibs using the tools

and methods I've developed over 20 years of experience. (I cannot guarantee that you will be an accomplished nibmeister at the end of the session, but you will have learned a lot and, I hope, had a good time.)

We will have space for 12 hands-on participants. *You must register in advance.* Registration for this workshop will open at **9:00 a.m. Eastern time on Friday, June 7, 2019**, on this Web page:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?page=workshop>

Your prepaid \$20.00 materials fee will cover the cost of the tools, supplies, and pens you will use. You'll also need to bring a hand good loupe. I recommend a high-quality 10× loupe such as the BelOMO triplet shown below, available at Amazon, eBay, and other dealers on the Internet. (With cheap loupes, you get what you pay for: shoddy construction and poor optics.) Unlighted loupes work better than lighted ones for this task.



The materials kit includes two practice pens like those shown here; please don't bring your own pens expecting to work on them during the workshop. After the session, you will keep your materials so that you can continue honing your skills at home.



Don't miss out. *Register early!*

If you won't be a registered participant, you are still welcome to audit the workshop. We'll have extra copies of the handout for you, and we'll take questions from auditors just as from paid participants. If you decide after the workshop that you'd like to try working with your own pens, Mike and Linda at Indy-Pen-Dance will have complete kits of the workshop materials, including the two pens, for sale at their table.

The Glossopedia

With more than 1,600 definitions and descriptions, more than 950 illustrations, and more than 2,150 cross-references, the RichardsPens Glossopedia is the most comprehensive resource of its kind anywhere. Each month, *Nib Noise* includes a randomly chosen Glossopedia entry.

Tortoise Shell. (also *Tortoiseshell*, *Tortoise-Shell*) Widely used name for a pattern resembling the color of real tortoise shell, which is usually a mixture of brown and translucent amber. Interpretations of the color have varied widely; shown below are five different examples: upper row, from left to right: vintage Pelikan 101N, modern Pelikan M400, modern Pelikan M101N; lower row: Parker 75 & 180, modern Bexley and Gate City Pen. Note that the Parker chip illustrates lacquer over brass, not a translucent resin.



To immerse yourself in the Glossopedia, follow this link:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?gloss=>

If you would like to suggest an entry for the Glossopedia, you are most welcome to do so. Send an email to me at this address:

richard@richardspens.com

Broad Strokes

Early fountain pens were made of black hard rubber (BHR). There are relatively few ways to “jazz up” something in Basic Black, and after you’ve seen one slender cylinder of BHR, you’ve pretty well seen them all. One way to make a pen more attractive without raising the price was by using colored rubber:

http://www.richardspens.com/?desn=colored_hr



To help you find reference articles on my site that have been edited recently, there is a handy heading right at the top of the reference index, listing the five most recently added or edited reference pages.

The Pen Doctor

The Pen Doctor is a regular visitor to the Nashua Pen Spa, and every so often he puts a few prescriptions up in our site's reference section. Each month (except when I forget), I'll be reprinting one of his prescriptions here. With the upcoming St. Louis show featuring several calligraphers, and with more people taking up calligraphy, I thought this prescription might be of use.

Q: I have picked up two boxes of dip pen nibs. One is from C. Howard Hunt Pen Co. in Camden, NJ. The other box is Bank of England No. 104 Ball Pointed Nickel Aluminum nibs. I cannot get nibs from either box to hold any ink. I dip the nib. Brush off extra ink and the first touch to the paper the ink makes a blob, then perhaps writes about three letters and then it's done. Is there a trick I do not know to using a dip nib?

Rx: Steel dip nibs are almost always shipped with a very light coating of oil to keep them from rusting. Ink will roll off them like water off a duck's back. Most users of steel dips are in the habit of sucking on each new nib for a while before using it; if this doesn't pass your reasonableness test, try shaking the nibs gently in a sealed jar containing one tablespoon of clear household ammonia mixed with $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of water.

Another thing to check, if no amount of cleaning will make your nib hold ink, is the ink you're using. Dip nibs do not work at all well with fountain pen ink. If they'll hold it at all, they won't hold enough to be useful. Try switching to a calligraphy ink made for use with dip nibs. (But don't put that stuff in your fountain pens!)

A Tray, A Tray, My Kingdom for a Tray!

Because my pen collection is getting a little overweight, I have put together a tray of pens for sale.

The arrangement I described last month would have been crazy clumsy, so I've simplified it. Below this photo is a link to a private page on my website that will show the same photo plus descriptions and prices, and will also indicate which pens are sold and which are still available.

I will put the private page up on my website at 10:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, Saturday, June 1. Before that time, there will be a dummy page there so you won't get “page not found” (404) errors if you go there a few seconds early. Just keep refreshing until the Witching Hour.

Payment by PayPal to richard@richardspens.com only, please. I cannot accept checks or credit cards, nor can I hold a pen for you to buy later. If two or more payments arrive for the same pen before I can mark it sold, I will refund all but the earliest one.



Link to tray page: <http://www.richardspens.com/?info=tray1906>

Please note, this will *not* be a monthly tray. It's a one-time deal, although there might conceivably be more one-time deals like it in the future.



Follow RichardsPens on Facebook

RichardsPens would like to be liked on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/NashuaPenSpa>

If you received this newsletter from Richard Binder, you are a *Nib Noise* subscriber. If it came from someone else, I invite you to subscribe.

To subscribe or unsubscribe, please visit the Free Email Newsletter page on my site:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?info=nibnoise>

Privacy Policy: I will never sell your name or email address. Your privacy is as important to me as it is to you.

--

Richard Binder • Fountain Pens

Pens That Write Right! -- www.richardspens.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/NashuaPenSpa>