

WOLF'S PLUMB BOB NEWS 2014

Issue 08 August 1, 2014

5th COLLECTORS MEETING in PISA part 1

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www.plumbbobcollectors.info

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

5th COLLECTORS MEETING in PISA part 1

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1. INTRODUCTION

Mid of July we have had our 5th International Plumb Bob Collectors Meeting in Pisa, Italy. Host was this time our well known friend and famous plumb bob collector and specialist for French, Italian and marked American plumb bobs, Riccardo Chetoni. The highlight of this meeting was his exhibition of over 2500 plumb bobs from all over the world in a small church "Chiesa della Spina" (see figure right). As usual we had at the first evening a collectors dinner, the second day was reserved for a sightseeing tour through Pisa and Lucca nearby, an ancient town with a huge wall around the city. The third day was for the visit of the plumb bob exhibition "**cercando VERTICALE, tra arte e tecnologia**" (*Searching for the VERTICAL, between art and technology*). This exhibition was open for the public the whole July from 5pm to 8 pm. A lot of tourists (100+ every day) visited this very special event.

Bravo Riccardo!



Church as home of the exhibition

In the afternoon of the third day we met in a room of the community of Pisa to show some Powerpoint-presentations about plumb bobs.

In the evening the community of Pisa organized a giant light festival and firework spectacle, the so-called Luminara (not especially for us, but every year on the day of St. Ranieri). Next day everybody flew or drove back home.

Details about the different events you will find below in special chapters.

Remark: I had to divide the report into two parts. (Limit of 16 pages and volume of 5 MB for shipping as email attachment)

This is part 1. Part 2 follows next month.

2. PLUMB BOB EXHIBITION "SEARCHING FOR THE VERTICAL"

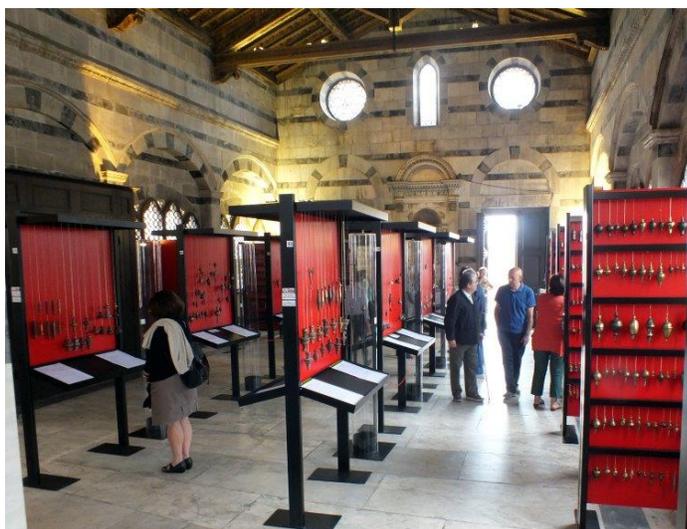
Riccardo got from the community of Pisa with the help of some sponsors for one month a complete small church to show 2500+ of his 4000+ plumb bobs. I will try to give you an idea of this remarkable event with the following photos of the 37 displays. If you want to know more about this show, feel free to ask for more material.



Board 13: Last modifications on Anatolian PBs by Rik



Riccardo opening the exhibition



View from the eastside to the entrance

looking for the **VERTICAL**
OLD PLUMB BOBS EXPOSITION
R. Chetoni collection

PISA
June 4 - 30, 2014

Church of Spina
Lungarno Gambacorti

EXPOSITION
Tuesday - Sunday
11h00 - 18h00

INAUGURATION
June 3, 18h00

5th INTERNATIONAL PLUMB BOB COLLECTORS MEETING
June 16 2014, 9h00 - 13h00

CONTACTS: riccardo.chetoni@fastwebnet.it - wolfg.ruecker@t-online.de

The official poster



Board 4: French

This is an interview by the Italian newsletter LA NAZIONE with Riccardo Chetoni: (free translation). It answers a lot of questions.

<http://www.lanazione.it/pisa/cronaca/2014/05/30/1072251-spina-diventa-scrigno-ospitare-grande-collezione-mondo-fili-piombo.shtml>

PISA, La Nazione

The “Chiesa della Spina” becomes chest for the largest collection in the world of plumb bobs.

PREVIEW. A "treasure" all collected over time by the engineer Riccardo Chetoni from Pisa.
The interview FRANCESCA WHITE:

Pisa, May 30, 2014 - An extraordinary private collection, the largest in the world, until now never exposed. A great little show that actually opens the doors of the church “Chiesa della Spina”. **“Looking for the vertical”** - this is the title of the exhibition (opening June 3 at 18.30) to plumb bobs and ancient instruments (now replaced by the laser technology) with which was built everything that we see around us, from the Pyramids to the Tower of Pisa. Two thousand plumb bobs, about half of what has been collected over the years by the collector from Pisa Riccardo Chetoni, engineer and author of two publications on this subject, will lead to the fifth International Congress of the plumb bobs collectors on June 16th.

Engineer Chetoni, how it came to this passion?

"At the end of the seventies, I was on a construction site for a small renovation and an old Sicilian mason pulled out a plumb line. I was fascinated. From there I started to collect them from everywhere, including markets, foreign travels, international auctions and in recent years also in the internet."

What are the most valuable bobs in the show?

"Surely the plumb bobs of Roman origin all purchased abroad, because in Italy the trade is prohibited. But visitors can also see evidence of

civilization of Ming, Ottoman and Seljuk. Plumb bobs of the nineteenth-century and British, American, French and German, antique Sicilian plumb bobs from arabesque forms, patented models and some equipped with internal mechanisms etc.. Some of the pieces are rare Roman bronze or lead and the single Egyptian lead came up to us, dating from the third century before Christ."

Where was this beautiful collection until today?

"A small part was displayed in my office, but many plumb bobs - all cataloged and photographed - were stored closed in boxes."

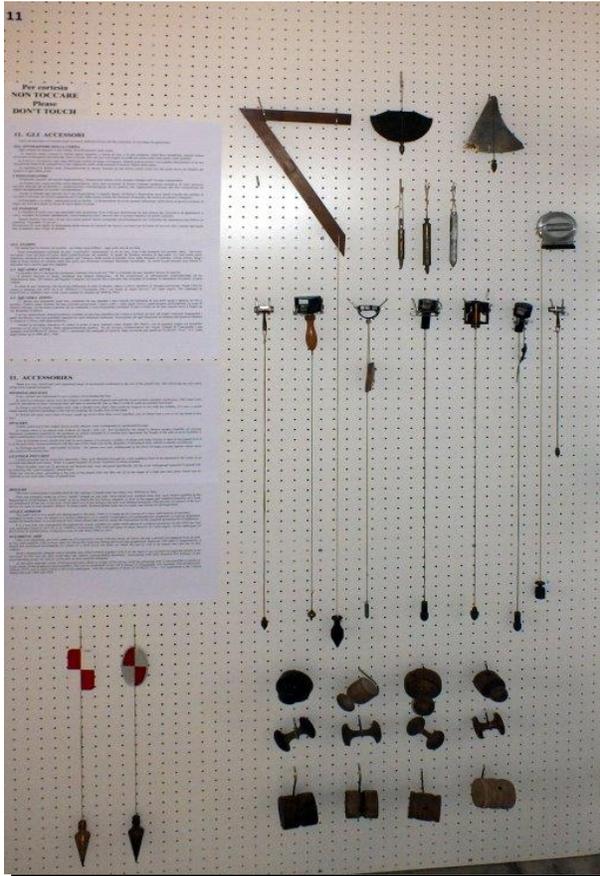
Pisa, thanks to you, will also be the location of the fifth international congress of collectors. From where do they come?

"They are coming from all over the world. During the past years the conference was held in various cities, including Turkey, this time I've taken care of the organization and I chose June 16 in order to enable participants to enjoy also our Luminara. And there will be a surprise: the same day, June 16, some legionnaires in historical costumes will show the use of the Groma an ancient Roman surveying instrument."

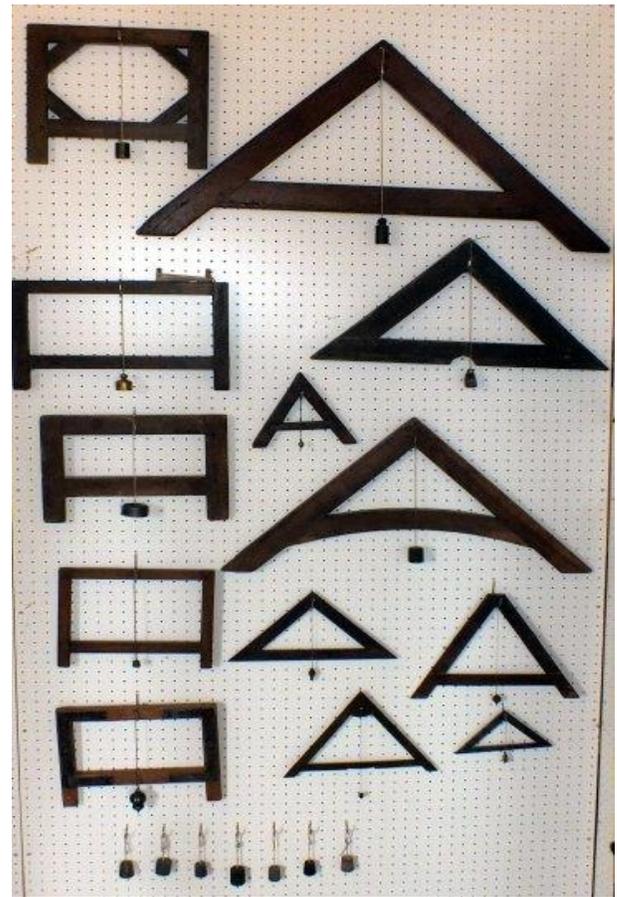
The exhibition will reopen the Church of the Thorn. A wonderful opportunity to Pisa and the tourists.

"In these days in which - with the help of my friend architect Richard Cerasa (see figure right) - we are setting up the show, we realized that a lot of tourists would like to visit the church and are surprised to find it closed. They knocked on the door, wanted to enter. We are very happy to reopen, even only for a few weeks, the church of the Thorn to the public."

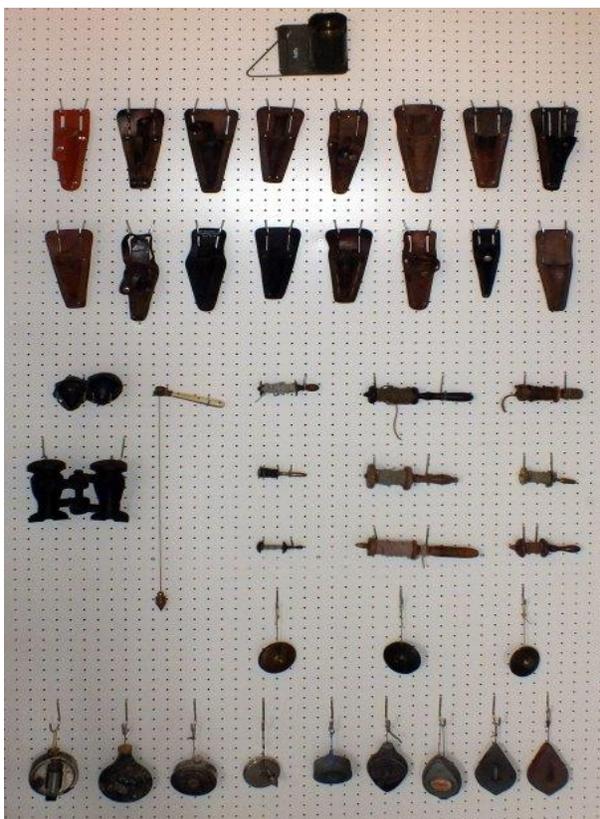




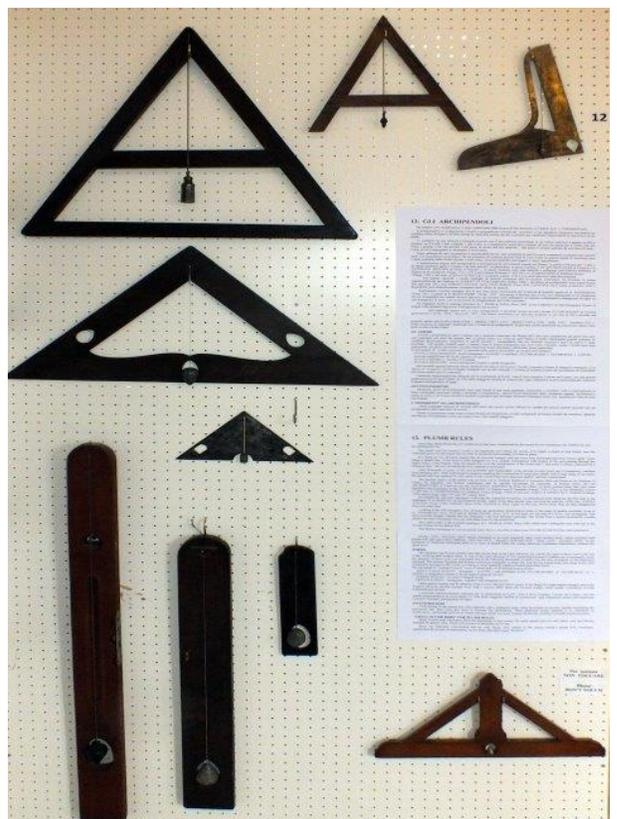
Board 11a: Accessories



Board 12 a: A-levels



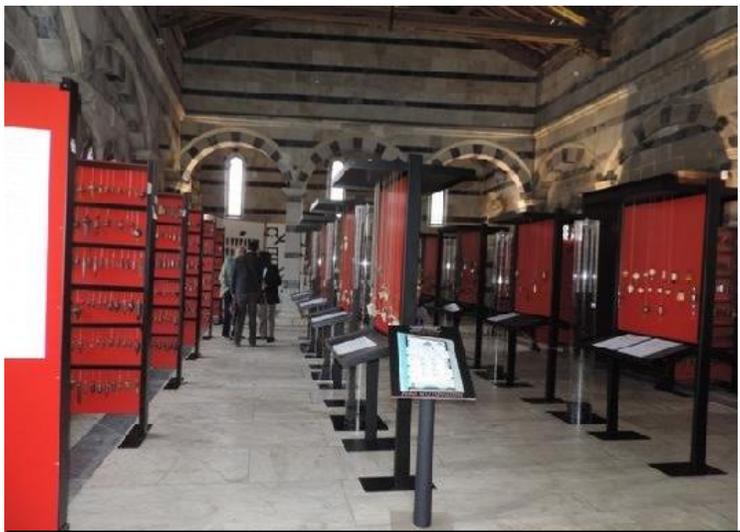
Board 11b: Accessories



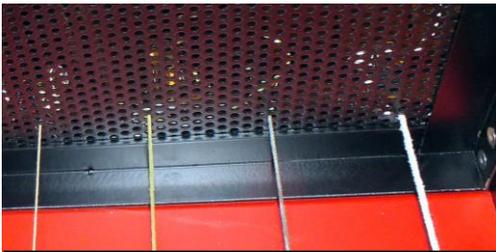
Board 12 b: A-levels, plumb boards



Riccardo with Amos Ciani, a pb collector from Florence



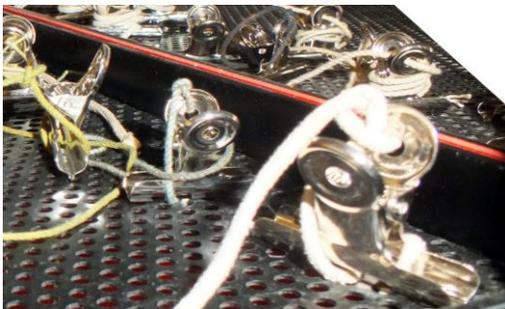
View from the west entrance



Technical details of the installation



Board 21: Antique Italian



"Secrets" on the top



Board 16: lead plumb bobs from ancient Rome



Board 14: other antique PBs (Asia)



Board 15: Roman weights from lead



Board 1: Italian



Board 9: United Kingdom



Board 2: Italian



Board 10: United Kingdom



Board 20: French carpenters



Board 28: ancient United Kingdom



Board 24: Inaugural, ceremonial, ivory



Board 22: Particular forms



Board 17: English bridge builders



Board 8: Europe E, POR, GER, NL etc.



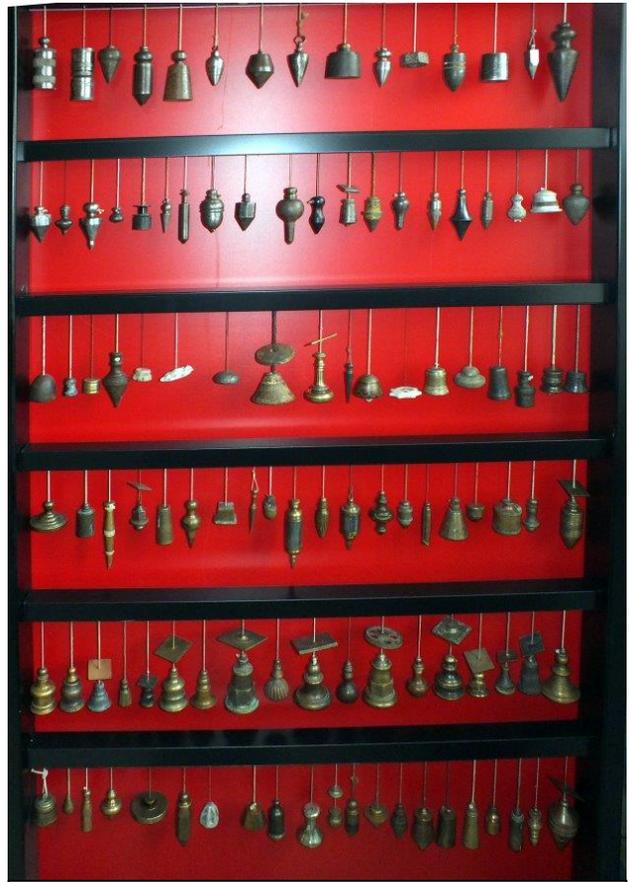
Board 26: U.S.A. 19th century



Board 19: U.S.A. patented



Board 3: French



Board 6: French



Board 5: French



Board 7: French



Board 37: different countries



Board 30: U.S.A.



Board 31: U.S.A.



Board 34: U.S.A.



Board 25: US common sense, lamp



Board 36: U.S.A.



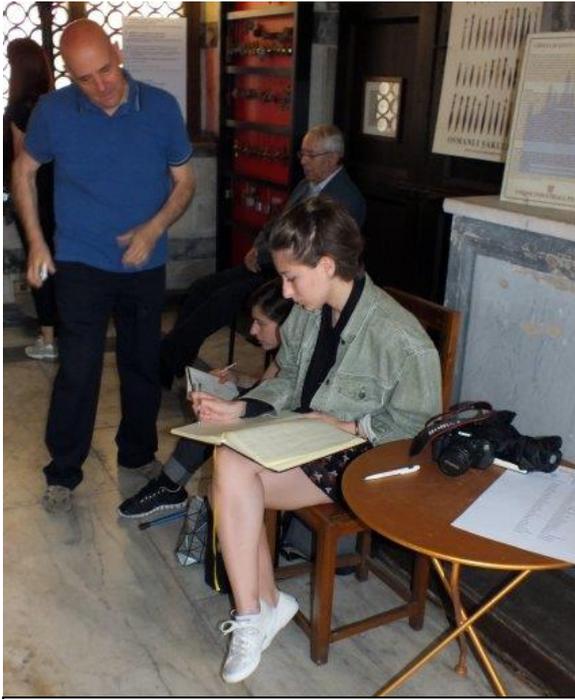
Board 18: mechanical plumb bobs



Board 33: U.S.A.



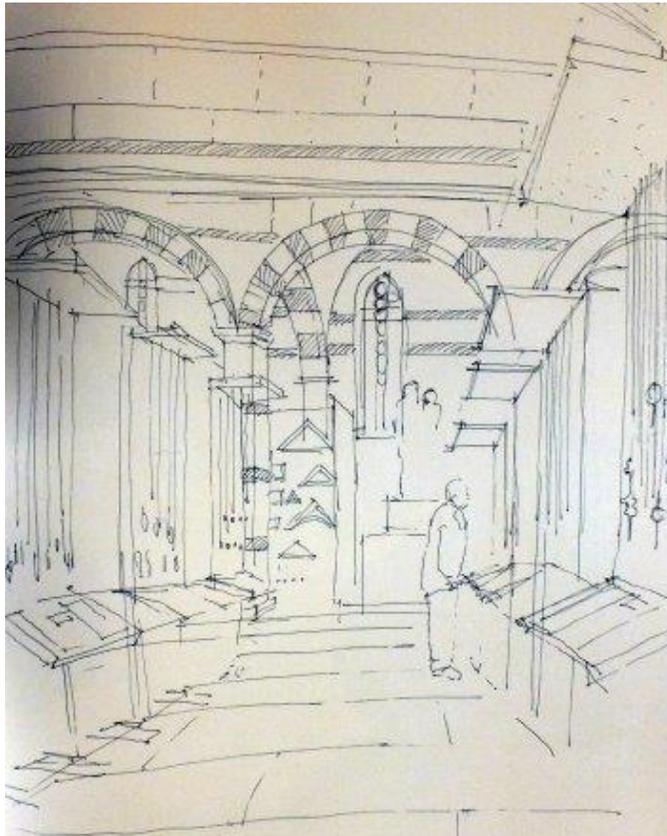
Board 35: U.S.A.



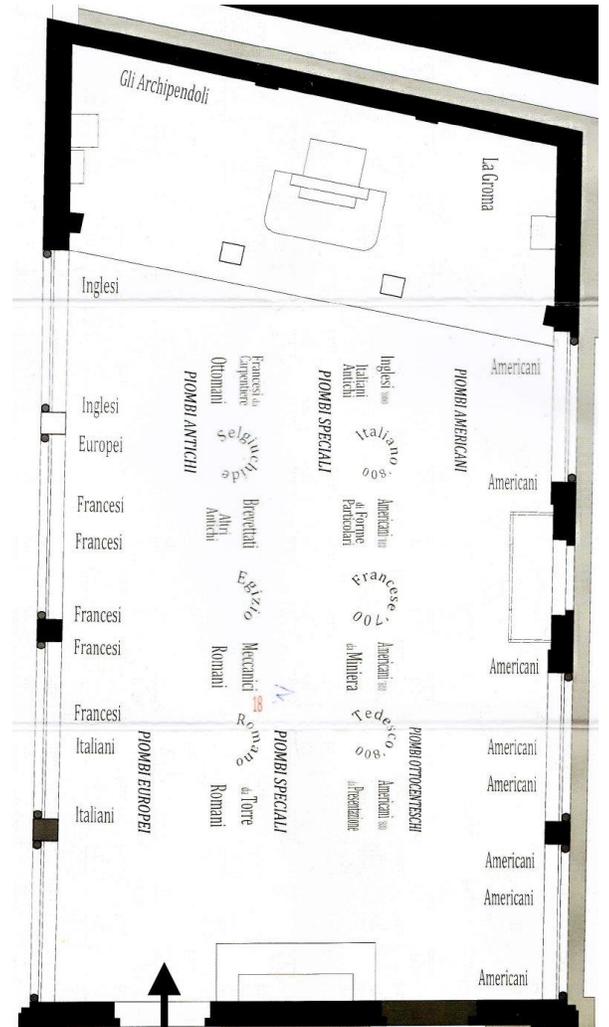
The Spanish artist Ara Gonzales, (daughter of Primitivo) working in the guestbook.



Wonderful ceiling of the church



The excellent result in the guestbook



Exhibition plan



Board 32: U.S.A.



Board 27: U.S.A. 19th century



Board 23: US + EUR mining plummets



US Consul General, Florence, Italy arrives

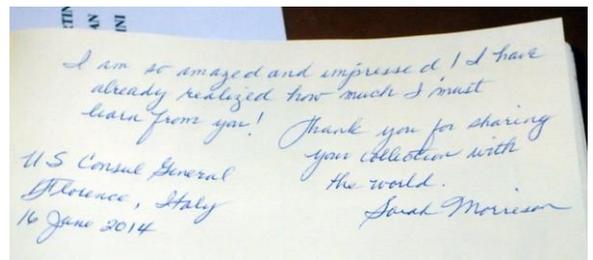


Sarah C. Morrison listening to Riccardo

Monday afternoon the US consul general visited for half an hour the exhibition with the biggest collection of American plumb bobs worldwide. Mrs. Morrison was very impressed about the number and quality of the presented tools. Finally she signed our guestbook.



Signing the guestbook



Guestbook entry

3. LEGIONNAIRES OF THE LEGIO DECIMA SHOWED THE USE OF THE GROMA

Here is a link to a video showing the presentation on the meeting:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZgW-ZFmJP4>



Place 29: The Groma



Four from lead, one from bronze

plumbbobwolf@t-online.de

29. THE GROMA (surveyor's cross)

This tool is the *surveyor's cross* of the ancient Romans.

It is made up of a cross (*stelletta*) with equal-length arms mounted at right-angles.

At the end of each arm hang 4 plumb lines. These have two pairs of similar coupled plumb bobs.

At the centre of the cross hangs a fifth plumb line: this plumb bob centres the tool on a specific point on the ground known as the *station point* (*reference point*), whilst the others identify two right-angled planes, each one passing through the lines of three aligned bobs. The cross, arranged on a horizontal plane, is attached to a bracket arm (*rostrum*) which enables it to rotate.

The bracket is supported by a wooden staff (*ferramentum*) with a point to fix it in the ground.

The staff is off line with respect to the centre of the cross so as not to block the view of the surveyor. The surveyor's cross (*agrorum mensor* or *gromaticus*) aligned three lines of the tool with a second point a certain distance away (*meta*). The instrument was then moved through 90° and, visually lining up the other plumb lines and the central line, it indicated where to position a second picket and another surveyor's cross at a right angle to the first.

In this way the pattern of roads was traced beginning from the main routes (*cardo maximus* and *decumanus maximus*), encampments and centuriations (*road networks, canals and agricultural plots*)

An intact *groma* was found in Pompeii.

Others are depicted on tombstones:

- The *Stele di Nicostrato* conserved in the antiquarium of Basco Reale, Naples
- The *Stele* displayed in the *Museo Civico of Ivrea*

The model displayed here was reproduced by SPQR Cultural Association of Roma, which kindly loaned the tool for display in this exhibition.



Using the Groma



Our gift to the legio X: Replica of a Roman PB



Giorgio Franchetti gives the commands



Talking about the Groma; Dick + Elias



Antonio Pisaneli



The Video-Man



Reproduction of a Roman Bronze PB 12 oz. Production see newsletter 2012-10 Roman Plumb Bobs



A legionnaire of the "legio decima" and Wolfgang



Surveyors are also soldiers



Uniform of a legionnaire

4. PRESENTATIONS

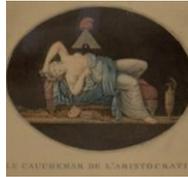
In the afternoon we came together in a room of the community of Pisa to present news about plumb bobs. Details of these Powerpoint-presentations I will publish in the **next** newsletters (part 2).

Below a short overview:

01 REVIEW TO THE LAST 4 MEETINGS (2006 Istanbul, TR; 2008 Paris, F; 2010 Cologne, GER; and 2012 Athens, GR) by Wolf Ruecker.



02 FR-ALLEGORY ON EQUALITY by Dogan Basak. The A-level as symbol for equality in the French Revolution



03 MUNITIONS AS PLUMB BOBS by Ulrich Biber



04 THE KANT MEDAL 1784 with Leaning Tower of Pisa and plumb bob by Wolf Ruecker. (Details see **last** newsletter 2014-07)



05 THE PLUMB BOBS IN ITALIAN MUSEUMS by Giovanni di Pasquale



06 SOME THOUGHT ON THE USE OF THE ANATOLIAN PLUMB BOB by Elias Zacharopoulos



07 A VIDEO ABOUT THE USE OF THE GROMA made by LEGIO X see the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZgW-ZFmJP4>

08 PHOTOS FROM THE COLLECTION OF ALAIN GRANDEAU, Paris.



5. SIGHTSEEING IN PISA AND LUCCA

We did not talk only about plumb bobs, but also took the chance to visit the city of Pisa and the nearby ancient town Lucca (Details will follow in the next newsletter)

6. THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS "LUMINARA"

Monday evening (it was the holiday Saint Ranieri.) the community of Pisa celebrated a great firework (not especially for us). ☺ All the houses along the river Arno were illuminated by candles (NOT electric lamps) and at 11.30 pm they started the firework. (Details will follow in the part 2 in the next newsletter)

7. OFFICIAL PHOTOS OF THE MEETING

This is a "weak point" for me. I was not able to get our group together on ONE picture as I managed it every of the last meetings. ☹ Every time one or more were absent or I did not know that they are new collectors, because I did not know them. SORRY! But on the other hand not everybody stayed with us every day. Nevertheless, here are some photos (with most of the participants)





Sightseeing in Pisa



Some new Italian collectors

I was happy to meet some new plumb bob collectors in our group. Welcome!

If you will travel to Pisa, feel free to ask Riccardo for a date, watching his collection in his office.

9. REMARK

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

This is an article of the monthly 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 sub page "download publications".

Remarks and contact by email: plumbbobwolf@t-online.de

Enjoy it

Wolf Ruecker

plumbbobwolf@t-online.de

8. SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT

I got the email below: ☺

*"Dear Wolf,
I have a curious plumb bob. It is cast Iron. Has Pat. 76 embossed on back. The curious thing about it is that it is in the shape of a man's head. The mouth opens and the chin is the pointed end. It was My Grandfather's and his Father's before him. I don't know if the 76 is the year or the number of them that were made. I have researched many web sites and have not found any. So when I saw your site I thought I would ask you. I watched my Grandfather use this tool when I was young and acquired it when my Aunt died. She kept it safe in her kitchen drawer from the time my Grand Father, Harry James R. died. Vicki M."*



In the www I found another figure in a similar shape. I never heard of plumb bobs in a shape of a head.

Do YOU know what it is?



Logo of the IPBCA
INTERNATIONAL PLUMB BOB
COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION.
For us THE WORLD TURNS
AROUND THE PLUMB BOB