

wood CARVING

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a realistic wren

Learn to carve a relief
fruit panel

**Carve an
apple with
Chris Pye**

Carve a stylised
swan – part 1

**How to carve an
acanthus leaf
on a cabriole leg**

Bird carver & wildlife artist
Terry Everitt in profile



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EDITOR Mark Baker
Email: markb@thegmcgroup.com

DEPUTY EDITOR Tegan Foley
Email: TeganF@thegmcgroup.com

DESIGNER Alan Wares

GROUP EDITOR – WOODWORKING
Mark Baker

PUBLISHER Jonathan Grogan

CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER Anthony Bailey

ADVERTISING SALES EXECUTIVE
Russell Higgins
Email: russellh@thegmcgroup.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER Jim Bulley
Email: jimb@thegmcgroup.com

PRODUCTION CONTROLLER
Clare Disano & Rebecca Braisby
Email: repro@thegmcgroup.com

CIRCULATION MANAGER Tony Loveridge

MARKETING Anne Guillot

SUBSCRIPTIONS HOTLINE
Tel: 01273 488 005, Fax: 01273 402 866
Email: pubs@thegmcgroup.com

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Woodcarving is an inherently dangerous
pursuit. Readers should not attempt the
procedures described herein without
seeking training and information on the safe
use of tools and machines, and all readers
should observe current safety legislation.

A definition

I have mentioned before that there has been an increase in the discussion and usage concerning the use of knife carving and also power carving. Both of these are areas that manufacturers are targeting too – is this linked to, or has it caused the increased chatter and usage by carvers? Who can say, but it is quite exciting to see people explore other aspects of carving more fully and see the results of their efforts.

Knife carving

Knife carving is a wonderful thing to do! The USA and other parts of the world have been very strong in this area, but the UK has been somewhat slow in realising the potential of this form of carving. Many cite cultural differences and how carving has developed in various parts of the world, as a partial reason for this difference and it is true that there are numerous cultural styles of carving all around the world, but I wonder also if there is an element of snobbishness at times. Chip carving is a form of knife carving – although some use chisels and gouges to create variants of knife-created chip carving – and I overheard a conversation where someone said, "... oh this isn't 'real' carving..." That intrigued and annoyed me immensely.

Chip carving

This is a form of decorative carving, but what got me was the presumption that it wasn't a real form of carving! What constitutes 'real' carving anyway? Knife carving in all its forms is fun, wonderful to explore and inexpensive to start with. If real carving only constitutes carving in the

round, or relief carving using chisels and gouges, then consider that a knife is probably the oldest of the cutting edge shaping tools we have and knives can be used in the round and relief carving too. If one wants to argue, chip carving is a form of relief carving – well in my eyes, anyway. Sure it is a stylised form, but there are many forms of 'stylised' work.

Power carving

Power carving is another way of shaping wood. Fine, it isn't to everyone's taste or preferred working method, but I like aspects of that too, as well as the 'traditional' hand carving with gouges, chisels and I also use knives.

For me, at times, there appears to be some form of snobbery concerning how people carve and I find it rather tedious. I don't care how people carve or shape wood, as long as they are happy making something and enjoy the journey. The more people do and create, the more confident they become and the better the results. I would like to hear your thoughts on what constitutes 'real and traditional' carving and what you are currently making. Have fun.



Mark Baker

Mark Baker
Editor of Woodcarving



Practising some chip carving

PHOTOGRAPH BY GMC/ANTHONY BAILEY

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Contents

Techniques

45 Carving a simple end pattern

Iain Whittington shares this project with us, which is perfect for bracket repairs or crown cupboard mouldings, or can be adapted to suit

58 Carved cabriole leg – part 2

Dennis Zongker completes the cabriole leg with a carving of an acanthus leaf

64 Tips for carving animals and human figures

Peter Benson shares his expert top tips and techniques for carving animals and human figures – great advice to heed before you start out

Projects

8 Swan – part 1

Andrew Thomas guides you through the first part of making a swan in lime

15 Carving an apple in the round

Chris Pye shows you how to carve an apple from a piece of lime

21 Starting at rock bottom

Steve Bisco shows us how to turn rough rocks into stone carvings

29 Carving a wren without power tools

Donna Menke explains how to carve a small bird in wood with just a few hand tools

50 Fruit panel

Continuing with his beginners' series, John Vardon shows you how to carve a fruit panel

Tests & Equipment

26 Auriou stone carving tool set

Steve Bisco puts this 12-piece stone carving set from Auriou through its paces

74 Carver's toolbox

Bringing you all the latest tools, machinery and products to meet your carving needs. All prices, unless otherwise stated, are inclusive of 20% VAT, and are correct at the time of going to press



Carve and colour a realistic wren with Donna Menke – see page 29.
Front cover image by Donna Menke



Features

38 Terry Everitt in profile

We meet artist Terry Everitt, who specialises in wildlife paintings and woodcarvings

66 Colmcille wood sculpture project

Rosaleen O'Callaghan tells us about the Colmcille wood sculpture project

70 20 minutes with Angelo Ponticelli

We spend 20 minutes finding out more about the work of Italian woodcarver Angelo Ponticelli

80 Art of Carving

The cathedral of Milan holds over six centuries of carvings, so we take a closer look



The Woodworkers Institute web forum



Why not join in the discussions on all matters woodworking on the Woodworkers Institute web forum? Covering all four GMC woodworking titles, including Woodcarving, you can view the work from fellow craftsmen, exchange useful hints and tips, or join in on the hot topic of the day on the live forums. To register, simply log on to www.woodworkersinstitute.com, click the register button, and follow the instructions.



58

Community

1 From the Editor

Mark Baker talks about knife, chip and power carving techniques

4 Round & about

With news from the BDWCA and BWA, dates for your diary and letters; we bring you the latest from the woodcarving community

54 Club Profile – Waterside Woodcarvers

Waterside Woodcarvers, based in Hampshire, tell us a little bit about themselves

56 Next issue

Can't wait to see what's in store for the next issue of *Woodcarving*? We reveal a sneak peek at what to expect



21



Woodcarving Round & About

We talk to the BWA, the BDWCA and take your letters from the forum and important dates for your diary to bring you the latest news from the woodcarving community. If you have something you want your fellow carvers to know, send in your news stories, snippets and diary dates to Tegan Foley at Woodcarving, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XN or to teganf@thegmcgroup.com

BWA: Carving for everyone



Pat Brooks with her English brown hare

There are huge benefits in joining a BWA group near you. We also really enjoy joining up with other regional groups at shows around the country, to display our carved pieces, inspire our visitors and make new woodcarving friends. Mick Mills of BWA Hamlet Wood Maidstone joined forces with the BWA Kent Wormshill Region, representing us with their superb carving skills at the South East Woodworking and Power Tool Show at the Kent County Showground in Maidstone. This is the third year that they had been asked to represent the BWA at this event. They so enjoyed meeting the visitors and encouraging them to give woodcarving a go and even to set up their own regional group. See them again at the Kent County Show in July and of course in March 2015 too! Mick Mills advises: "for those who think that they could not possibly carve we suggest



A display of BWA members' work at a recent event

that you should have a go, try carving something simple out of a bar of soap, and then go on to wood from there."

Andrew Thomas' running hare

Variety comes with the wood we choose. Lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) and basswood (*Tilia americana*) are easier to carve, but to carve in gorgeous woods such as zebrawood (*Microberlinia brazzavillensis*) or yew (*Taxus baccata*) produces amazing effects. The heady scents from the wood chippings conjure up thoughts of the country the timber originated from. Being somewhat 'harebrained' herself, Pat Brooks – BWA Herts – could not resist Andrew Thomas' running hare project in *Woodcarving* magazine's Jan/Feb 2013 issue. Not wanting to use lime and unable to find the wood she wanted, Pat chose a piece of English oak (*Quercus robur*) quartersawn with the medullary rays being prominent. It was soon apparent how changing the wood to oak changed the character of the hare too, from a sleek modern looking hare into a surprisingly different look altogether. The second shock was when she oiled the wood. All wood goes darker after

oiling but this took her breath away – it was nearly black! Rather like the oak you find in a church that is centuries old.

Please drop into any of our regional meetings for a taster session. You'll always be made very welcome.

See us again at a show near you

July: 8–10 – the Great Yorkshire Show, Harrogate; 11–13 – the Kent County Show; 20 – the Cowper and Newton Museum, Olney, Bucks, 10am–4.30pm

August: 2–3 – Model mania Shildon National Railway Museum; 9–10 – Leeds Flower Show; 16 – Shadwell Flower Show; 23–25 – Cawood Craft Show; 30 – Zion Hill Copse Community Woodfair, Chandlers Ford, Hants

Contact the BWA

Tel: 07749 769 111

Web: www.britishwoodcarversassociation.co.uk

Or write to: The National Secretary, 32 Beaufort Avenue, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 8PF

BDWCA: The Bakewell Festival of Bird Art

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BDWCA/RAY LOUGHLIN



'Kestrel on Gatepost' won first prize



'Peregrine Falcon' in jelutong was highly commended

We are now fast approaching the weekend of the BDWCA Annual Show – the Bakewell Festival of Bird Art – which will be held on 13–14 September at the Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

This event features the BDWCA's annual bird carving competitions, together with the British Bird

Carving Championship. Members of the BDWCA compete at four levels – advanced, intermediate, novice and youth – and there are 14 different categories.

One of the most eye-catching categories of birds is undoubtedly the 'Birds of Prey'. We have talked before about capturing the 'jizz', the spirit or essence of the species, and that can be especially challenging, certainly in my opinion, when carving and painting this category.

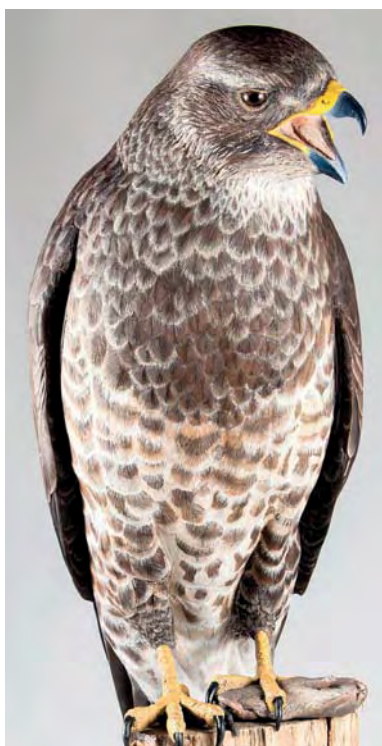
While most competitions are for BDWCA members only, the British Championship and the Carved Bird's Head on Stick are also open to non-members and entries are welcomed.

One other level, which is open to members and non-members alike, is the youth class. Entry is free and open to young people who are 17 years of age or younger at the time of entry. We would love to see more entries in this class – we really don't want to see this art form die out – so if you meet the age criteria and are interested in knowing

more, please contact us! If you are in the Bakewell area that weekend, then do come and visit the Show and do mention that you read about it in this magazine!

Dates for your diary 15–17 August, 2014

The BDWCA will be demonstrating and exhibiting in the Art Marquee at the 26th British Bird Watching Fair – 'The Birdfair' – at Egleton Nature Reserve, Rutland Water.



'Common Buzzard with Prey' was highly commended



'Juvenile Sparrowhawk' was awarded second place

Contact the BDWCA

Tel: 01442 247 610

Email: pam.wilson@bdwca.org.uk

Web: www.bdwca.org.uk

Or write to: Mrs Janet Nash,
26 Shendish Edge, Hemel
Hempstead, Hertfordshire

Conversion chart

2mm	(5/64in)
3mm	(1/8in)
4mm	(5/32in)
6mm	(1/4in)
7mm	(9/32in)
8mm	(5/16in)
9mm	(11/32in)
10mm	(3/8in)
11mm	(7/16in)
12mm	(1/2in)
13mm	(1/2in)
14mm	(9/16in)
15mm	(9/16in)
16mm	(5/8in)
17mm	(11/16in)
18mm	(23/32in)
19mm	(3/4in)
20mm	(3/4in)
21mm	(13/16in)
22mm	(7/8in)
23mm	(29/32in)
24mm	(15/16in)
25mm	(1in)
30mm	(1 1/8in)
32mm	(1 1/4in)
35mm	(1 3/8in)
38mm	(1 1/2in)
40mm	(1 5/8in)
45mm	(1 3/4in)
50mm	(2in)
55mm	(2 1/8-2 1/4in)
60mm	(2 3/8in)
63mm	(2 1/2in)
65mm	(2 5/8in)
70mm	(2 3/4in)
75mm	(3in)
80mm	(3 1/8in)
85mm	(3 1/4in)
90mm	(3 1/2in)
93mm	(3 3/4in)
95mm	(3 3/4in)
100mm	(4in)
105mm	(4 1/8in)
110mm	(4 1/4-4 3/8in)
115mm	(4 1/2in)
120mm	(4 3/4in)
125mm	(5in)
130mm	(5 1/8in)
135mm	(5 1/4in)
140mm	(5 1/2in)
145mm	(5 3/4in)
150mm	(6in)
155mm	(6 1/8in)
160mm	(6 1/4in)
165mm	(6 1/2in)
170mm	(6 3/4in)
178mm	(6 7/8in)
180mm	(7in)
185mm	(7 1/4in)
190mm	(7 1/2in)
195mm	(7 3/4in)
200mm	(8in)
305mm	(12in)
405mm	(16in)
510mm	(20in)
610mm	(24in)
710mm	(28in)
815mm	(32in)
915mm	(36in)
1015mm	(40in)
1120mm	(44in)
1220mm	(48in)
1320mm	(52in)
1420mm	(56in)
1525mm	(60in)

LETTERS

'Higgledy piggledy house'

Hi Mark,

Just a quick note to say that I really enjoy the magazine. It is great to see a range of carving projects and techniques represented that are relevant for beginners and advanced carvers. I have attempted a couple of the projects over the years, but thought I would send a photo of my most recently completed project – based on Peter Benson's 'higgledy piggledy house'. It was a lot of hard work, but I am really pleased with the end result – quirky, abstract and fun! Hopefully it should hold up well out in the garden. Keep up the good work!

Cheers,
Robyn

Click here
for extra
images



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE READERS

Robyn's higgledy piggledy house

Beginning carving

Hello Mark,

I am now 66-years-old and have been retired from work for three and a half years. People asked me in the final years of work how I would pass my time. I would tell them light heartedly that I was going to build myself a big shed and start whittling. This I have done. Although I spend ever hour possible in my shed I still consider myself very much the beginner.

I found *Woodcarving* magazine as a result of a birthday present from my daughter who gave me a year's subscription to the magazine. To your credit this magazine has progressed tremendously since I have been reading it, especially over the last few issues.

I read with dismay the email from John Francklow in issue No.136 where he made an observation regarding the

step-by-step how-to-carve-a.... I may be the only one out here, but I am still serving my apprenticeship and consider myself to be an amateur.

I have carved many things without the aid of the step-by-step; however, I do find these articles of great interest and have carved one or two of the examples over the last year or so. Along with the step-by-step, I also look forward to each issue to read 'From the Workshop' and such articles regarding sharpening chisels, etc.

So please Mark, keep up the good work and cater for the amateurs among us, as well as the more professional carvers.

I look forward to the next issue.

Kind regards,
Tony McGuire

Carving workstation

Dear Mark,

Regarding the carved workstation in issue No.137, I have made my own wooden carving stand, which I gradually enlarged. For the workbench, I used an old swivel chair. I added a wooden board to the surface using vice jaws and this also assured a good rotational position. Finally, I made different accessories for

the table for various settings. I have a separate room in my house where I carry out my carving work. I made a large work desk in beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and also added good lighting. Often, I also use a small rotary desk.

Best regards,
Jaroslav Kybák



Jaroslav's homemade carving workstation

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Swan – part1

Andrew Thomas guides you through the first part of making a swan in lime

This project of a swan is aimed at intermediate level carvers and is a creative balance of real-life and stylisation. The head, body and wings are all true to their real-life form but the wings and tail are designed to represent the soft, natural, delicate contours and undulations of these details which are enhanced by the effect of the shadows that strike across the surface of the finished piece. I personally prefer this subtle abstraction rather than striving to produce many layers of feathering, but of course this is subjective. The actual design of the swan is taken from real-life, so if you would like to adapt it in any way or add extra feathering detail then

simply apply these elements to embody your own ideas.

This project has been divided into two separate parts to allow for an in-depth focus on the various stages of its making. In this issue I shall describe how to carve the details of the swan's neck and head and in the next issue I will show you how to create the body, wings and tail.

Before you start working on the project read through the complete step guide and study the stages and finished images to see how the carving develops. It will also help you immensely if you gather as much reference material as you can to help you as you work through each stage and detail.

Things you will need...

Tools:

No.5, 20mm
No.2, 20mm
No.11, 2mm
No.5, 8mm
No.2, 8mm
No.8, 7mm
No.2, 5mm
No.11, 1mm
Knife

Wood:

Lime (*Tilia vulgaris*)
Dimensions: L 270 × H 150 ×
D 100mm

American black walnut
(*Juglans nigra*)
Dimensions: L 380 × W 170
× H 25mm

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW THOMAS

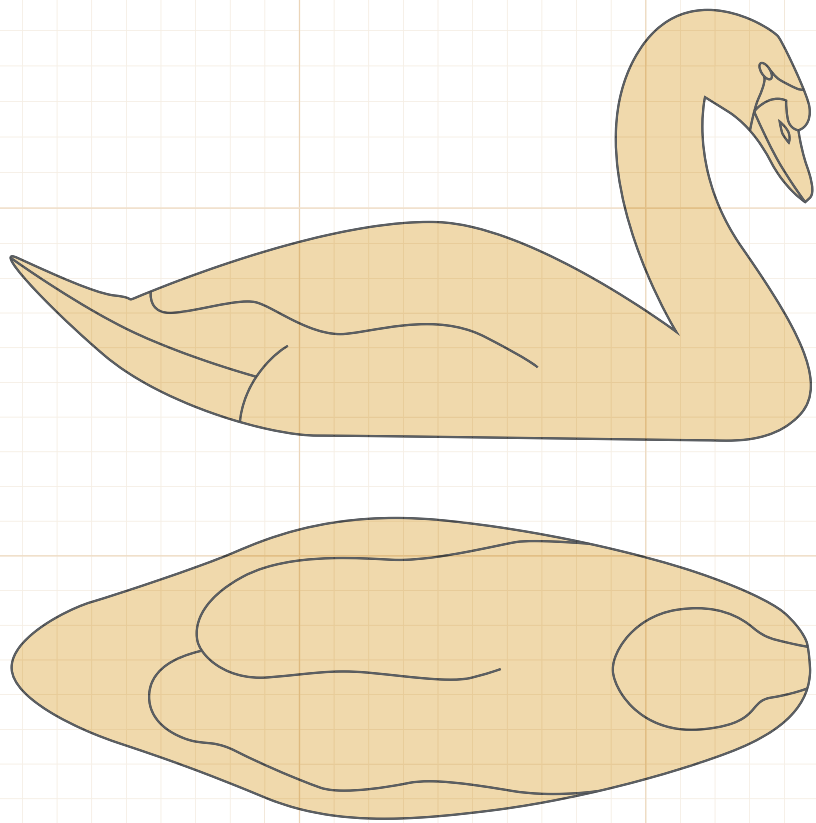


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

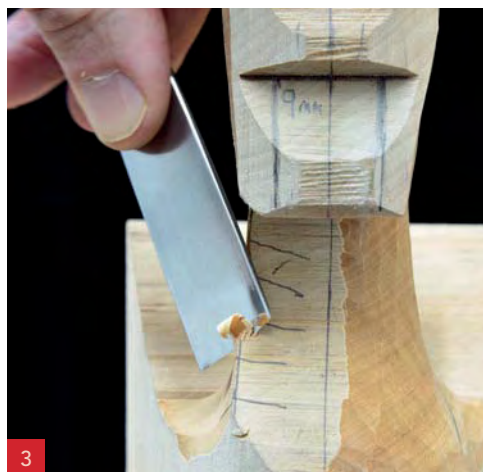
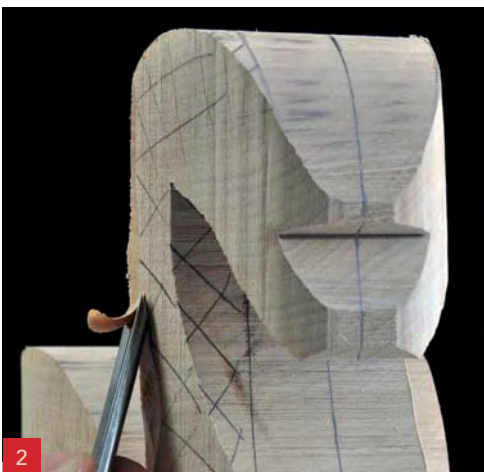
Andrew Thomas is a professional sculptor living in Wareham, Dorset with over 20 years' experience on the subject.



Working principally with wood, bronze and mixed media, his work can be seen in many private collections, both in the UK and Europe. Andrew is a qualified tutor in further education and delivers weekly lessons for private students at both beginner and intermediate levels.



1 To begin the project, scan or photocopy the scale drawings provided and enlarge them to suit your wood. You can then print them out onto card to use as templates. The next step is to transfer both the side and top view onto your perfectly square block, ensuring that they are in precise alignment with each other and that the grain is running horizontally through the design. Fix a square block underneath the bandsawn swan which will raise the piece off your faceplate, enabling you to work along the lower edges without damaging your tools. Attach securely to your faceplate



2 You can now measure and draw a centreline all the way around the swan. Using the supplied designs as a guide, accurately draw the lines of the neck and head onto your wood. Use a No.5, 20mm gouge – or similar – to pare the wood squarely back to these lines on both sides of the swan's head and neck

3 The neck and head of the swan can now be carved to their basic shape. To do this, measure and draw centrelines on both sides of the neck and head. Use a No.2, 20mm to work your way up the neck and over the head, creating a natural curve from the centrelines on the sides to the centrelines on the front and back

➔ **4** To create the natural curve at the position where the head joins the neck you will need to use a small No.9 or No.11 to carve a groove from one side around to the other. Then use the No.2, 20mm to blend the surrounding areas evenly into this groove. Repeat this procedure until you remove all square edges and produce an effective contour around the throat area

5 Measure 9mm out from the centreline at the top and tip of the bill and draw a line between these positions. Pare the waste wood back to these lines

6 The next step is to draw the details of the head accurately in position and alignment on both sides of the head

The head – anatomical details

The objective of steps 7-12 is to curve the bill from one side to the other, to create the 'knob', which is directly above the bill, and to delineate the black area of the face adjoining the knob, up to the position of the eye

7 The first job to do is to carve the knob squarely back to its correct position. Use a No.5, 8mm working from the corner of the bill up along the side of the knob

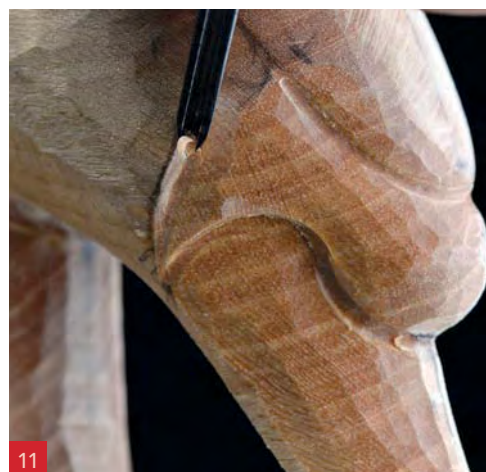
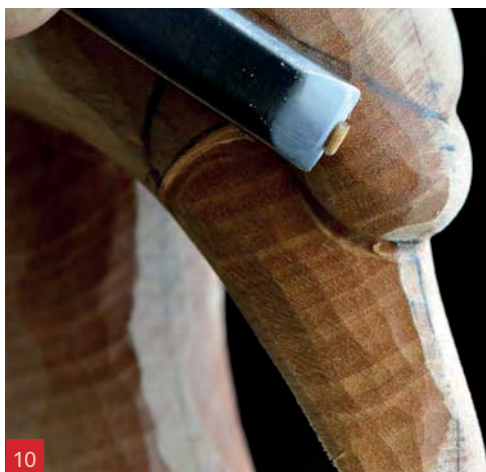
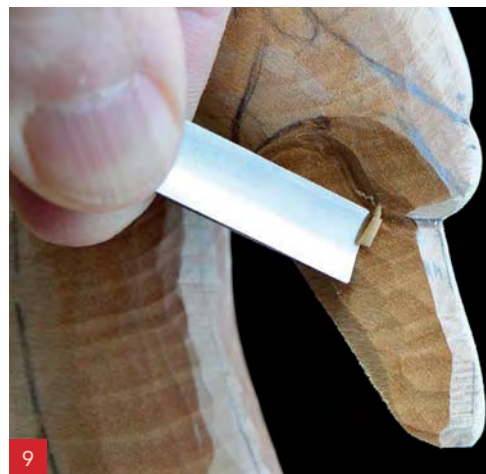
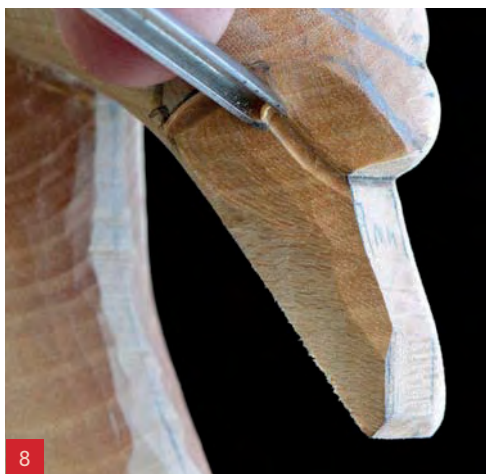
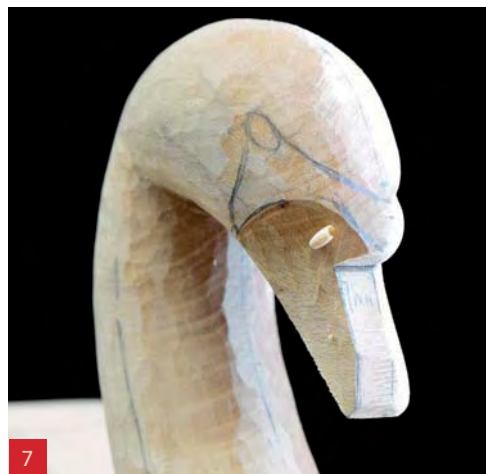
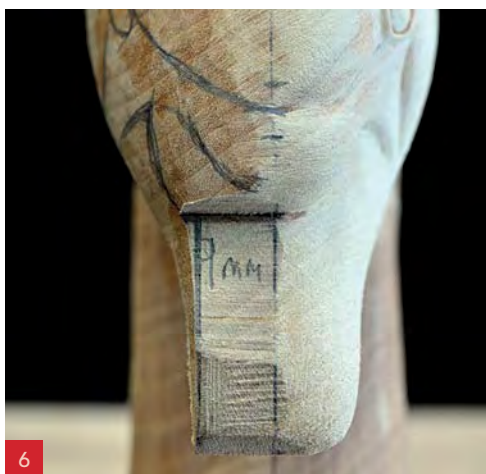
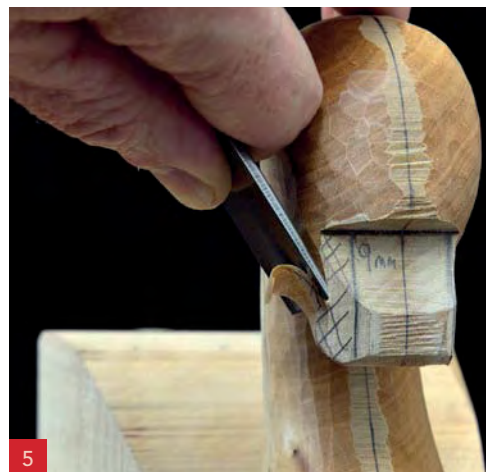
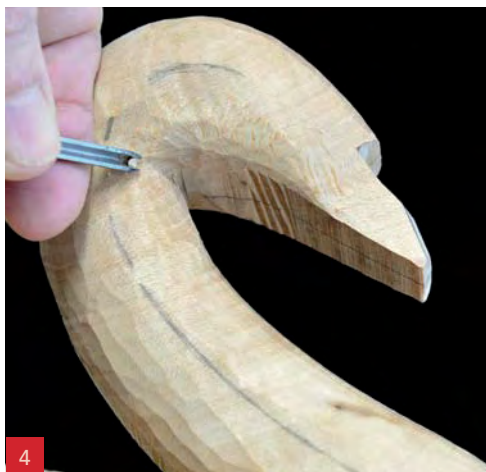
"Next, curve the bill evenly from side to side..."

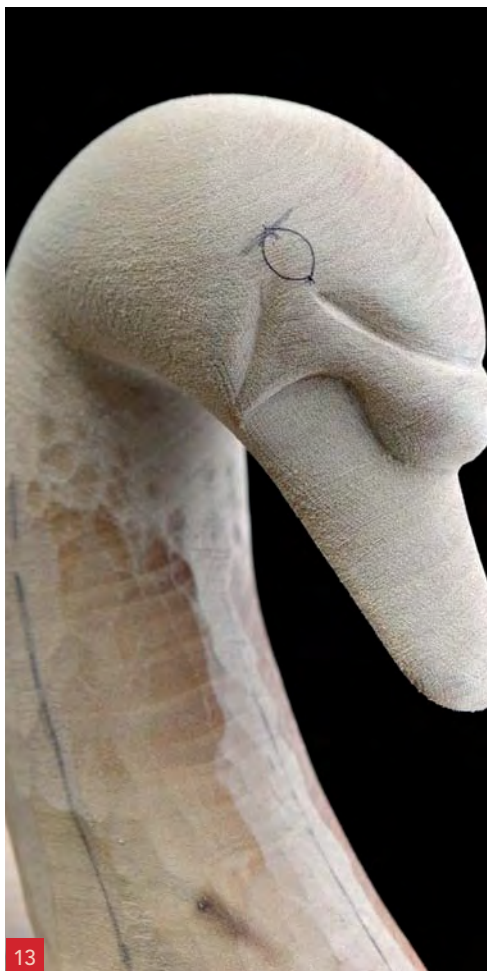
8 Next, curve the bill evenly from side to side and slightly undercut it from the knob. Use a No.11, 2mm to carve a groove from the corner of the bill up to, and underneath, the knob working towards the centreline

9 Use a No.2, 8mm to pare the bill evenly into the No.11 groove. Repeat steps eight and nine until you have produced an effective natural curved shape, up to the centreline from both sides

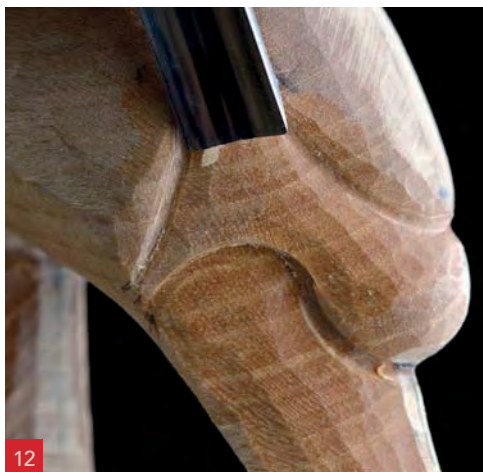
10 The knob can now be carved to its bulbous shape. Use the No.2, 8mm gouge upside down, to evenly form its structure between the bill and the upper head

11 The lines that delineate the black area of the face adjoining the knob are next to be carved. Use the No.11, 2mm again to accurately follow your pencil lines





13



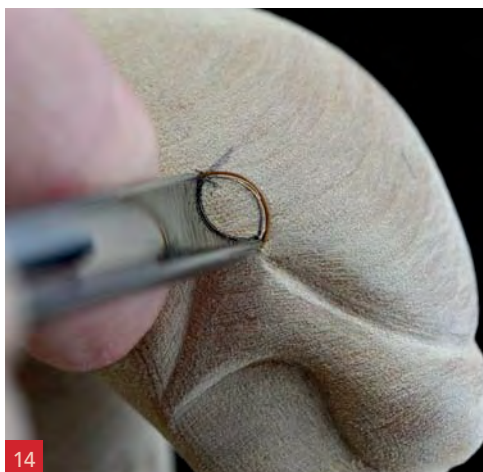
12

12 Use the No.5, 8mm to shape this black area of the head and to form the curved cheek and forehead into the No.11 groove. Check that both sides of the head are symmetrical with one another and then sand over the entire area with 120 grit sandpaper

The eyes

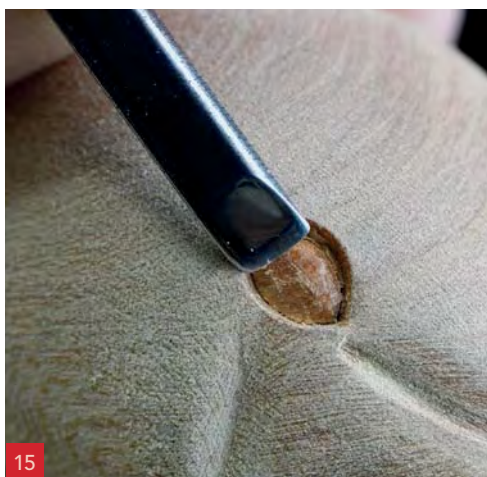
13 You can now draw both eyes accurately into their positions

14 This next procedure must be done very carefully so as to eliminate any risk of the eye chipping out. The correct technique is to press the gouge into the wood at a perpendicular angle to the surface. If you lean the gouge back at an angle and make a cut along the upper and lower eyelids then there is a high chance that it will force the eyeball to snap and chip out. Use a No.8, 7mm to press firmly along the upper and lower eyelids, rocking it from side to side to create a deeper cut into the corners

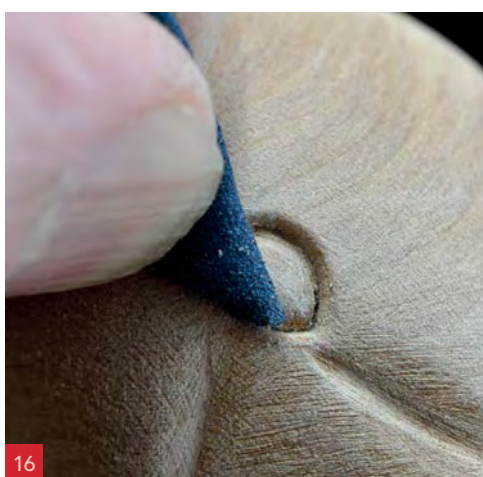


14

15 Use a No.2, 5mm to delicately curve the eyeball into the eyelid gouge cuts, going deeper into the front and rear corners. Repeat steps 14 and 15 if necessary to produce a lifelike shape



15



16

16 Use a piece of folded 240 grit sandpaper to gently smooth the eyeballs evenly over their curved surface

17 The eyelids of a real-life swan are very close to the eyeball so you will need to try to carve these approximately 0.5mm away from the eyeball and then sand them back in as close as possible. Use a No.11, 1mm to carve these grooves around the upper and lower edges of the eyes



17

Top tips

1. A small razor-sharp carving knife is also very effective for carving around the line of the eyes and deeply into their corners to produce the convex shape of the eyeball. Before you move on to the actual piece, practice using this tool first on an offcut of wood; this will allow you to get to grips with the directional control necessary to produce the detail. When you are confident you have got the hang of it, then you can apply it to your project

➔ **18** Use the No.5, 8mm to evenly blend the surrounding areas into the No.11 grooves. Repeat this procedure if necessary and then sand them very carefully with 180 grit to smooth over the eyelids and naturally blend them into their surrounding areas

19 The areas to the rear of the eyes on either side of the skull of a real-life swan have very subtle contours, which can be simply produced by cutting them with a No.7 gouge and then sanding them with 120 grit to blend them evenly into their surrounding areas

20 Also just to the rear of the bill there is more often than not a little crease which runs in line with the edge of the black area of the head. This is also simple to produce by using the No.11, 2mm to create the groove and 120 grit to naturally shape and smooth the detail

The bill

21 Draw the line of the bill opening in its correct position on both sides of the head, ensuring that they are in perfect alignment with each other. Use a razor-sharp knife to cut along these lines

"Draw the line of the bill opening in its correct position on both sides of the head..."

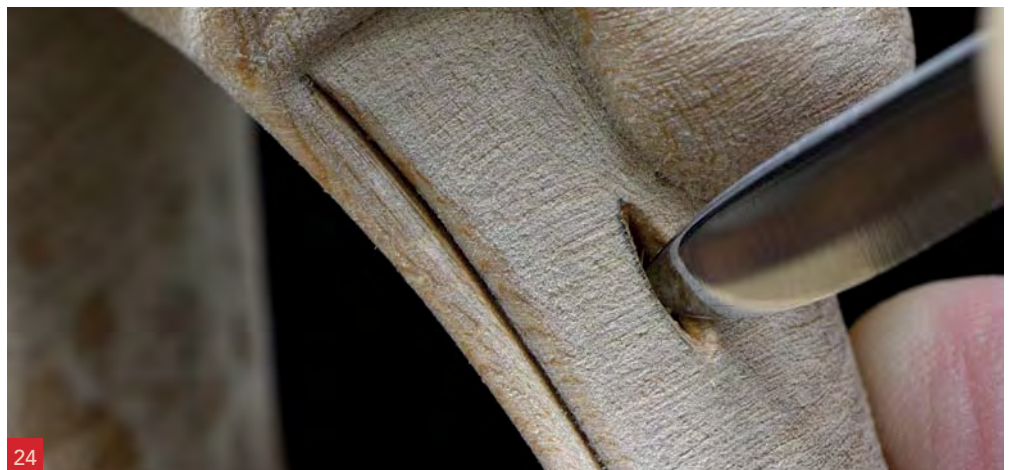
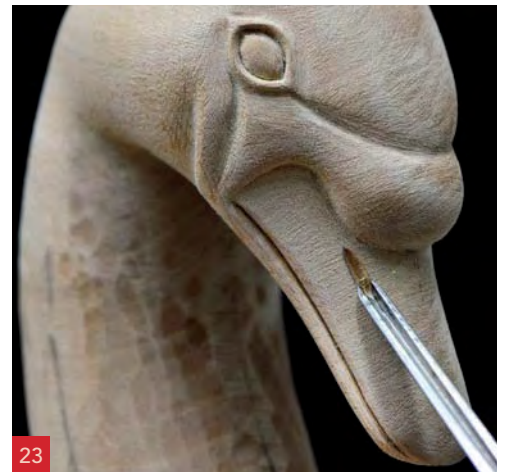
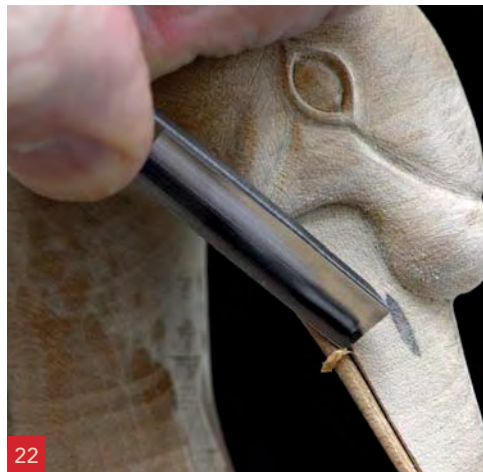
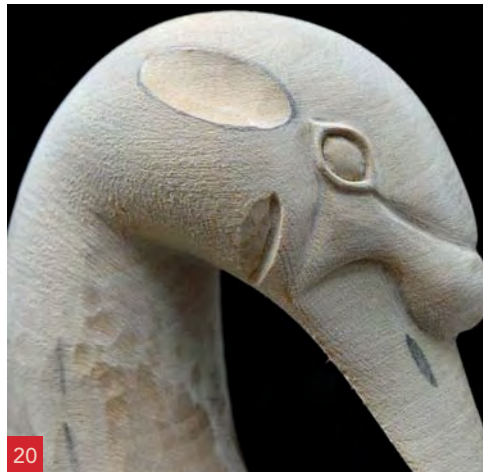
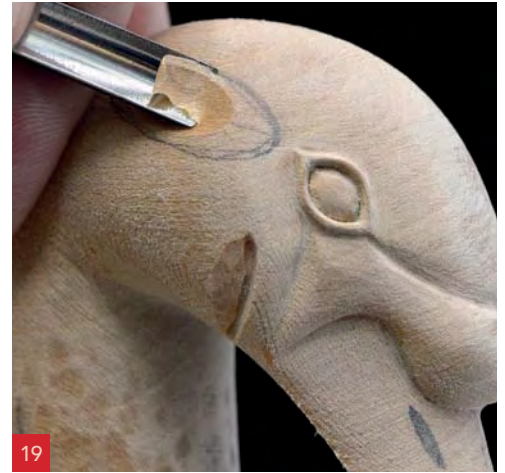
22 Use a small No.2 gouge to delicately pare the wood either side of the knife cut, into the knife cut. Repeat steps 21 and 22 at least once more to produce the desired lifelike effect

23 Draw the nostrils in their correct position on the bill, either side of the knob. Use the No.11, 1mm to carve a groove as deep as the veiner will allow you access

24 Use the knife to produce a deep slice inside the No.11 groove creating the visual impression of a deep hole going into the bill. Use a piece of 240 grit sandpaper to naturally shape and smooth the nostrils into these deep cut holes ▶

Next month

In part 2 of this article, Andrew will be demonstrating how to form the body and create the detail of wings and tail ▶





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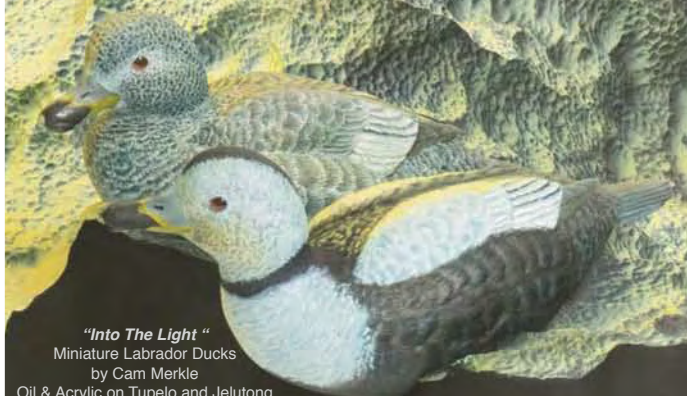
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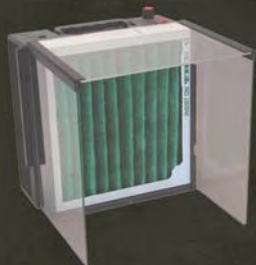
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Carving an apple in the round

Chris Pye shows you how to carve an apple from a piece of lime

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Pye is a member of the Master Carvers Association; a woodcarving instructor both in Hereford and the USA; the author of some seven woodcarving books and numerous magazine articles and co-founder with his wife, Carrie Camann, of the online instructional website: www.woodcarvingworkshops.tv. His work can be viewed at www.chrispye-woodcarving.com



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS PYE

In the round' is an expedited way of saying that what you are carving is 'as it should be', front to back, side to side; without changing any of the dimensions or having your subject stuck to a background as you do in a relief carving. Many beginners are intimidated by working fully in the round but, actually, it can be a lot easier than relief carving. For one thing, the perspective and dimensions are all present and correct! If you've never carved 'in the round' before, here's a good place to start: a simple three-dimensional form, a somewhat stylised apple.

To be honest, if I were to carve a 'serious' apple, I'd probably carve the leaves separately; you'll see here that we must work across the end grain, which makes the thin leaf edges weak. I'd also spend a lot of time studying apples... But that's not the point, which is to give you a few exercises, get you thinking in the round

and, most importantly, tell you three of the most crucial things to bear in mind as you carve in the round.

Wood

Even though this is an 'exercise', if this is your first carving, get yourself tight- and straight-grained carving wood to work in: limewood (*Tilia vulgaris*), basswood (*Tilia americana*) or Brazilian mahogany (*Plathymenia reticulata*) for example. You'll find good carving wood really helps! You'll need a block of wood, which is more like a post that measures 50 x 50 x 300mm – or more if you'd like to repeat the exercise.

Learn with Chris

You can watch Chris carving this apple at www.woodcarvingworkshops.tv

Things you will need...

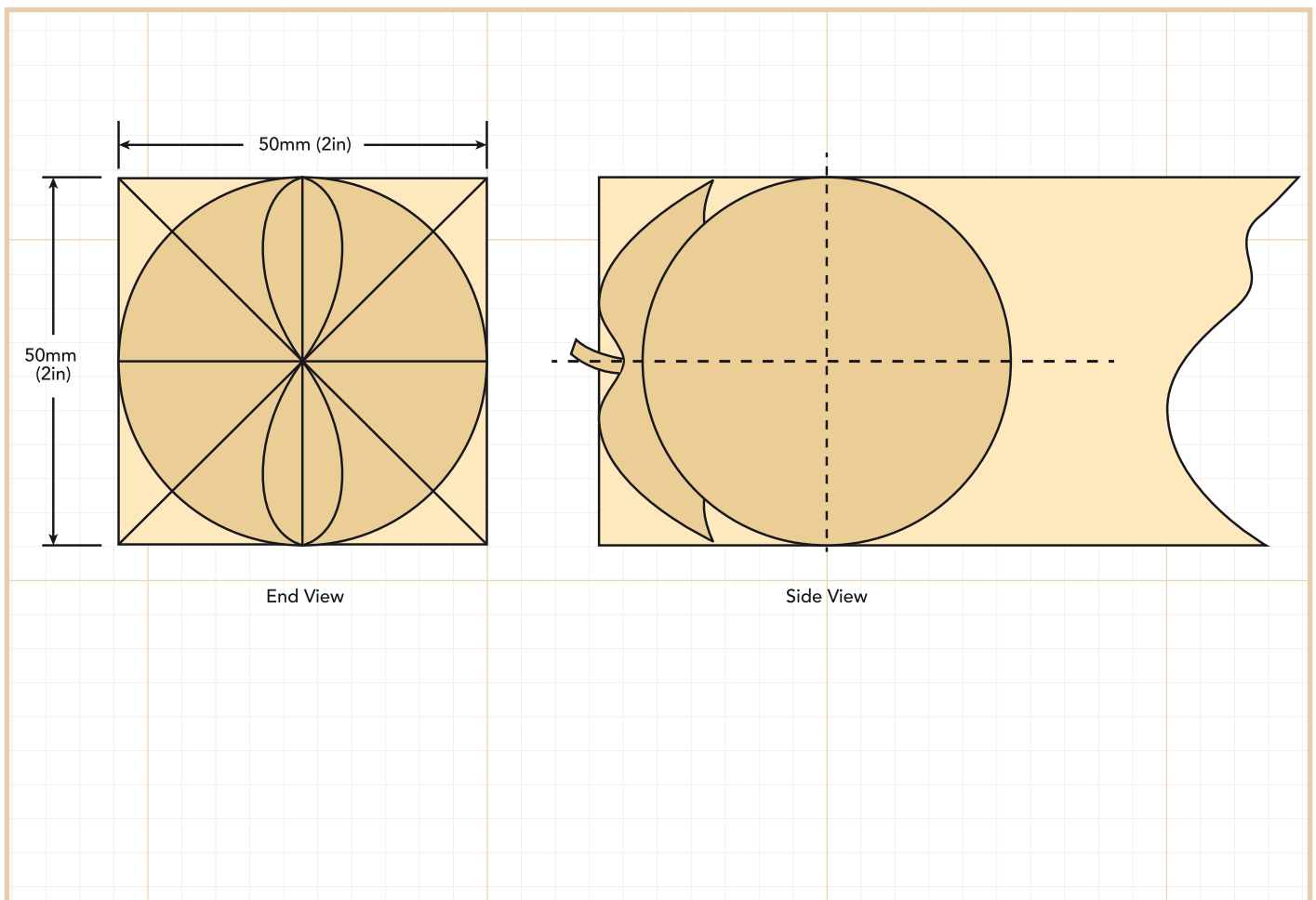
Tools – Sheffield List:
No.3, 14mm
No.6, 8mm
No.9, 14mm
'V' tool 60°, 10mm
10mm skew chisel

Three crucial things to think about when carving in the round

High spots – points or areas where you won't remove wood. As a carver, removing wood is the only thing you do, but it's what you leave that counts! So look for 'high spots' all the time. From high points on your initial block you'll carve down to other areas, which in turn become high spots.

Prepare – if you know what you are aiming for, you will have a much better chance of hitting it. So be clear and confident; the more you can visualise, 'see', the better the end result. Drawings and photographs are a great start and if you still feel vague, get or make a model.

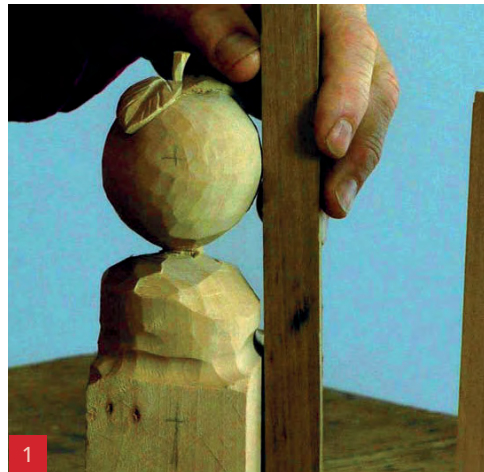
'Feel the form' – no, this is not some Jedi mind trick, just a way I have of saying that you need to look and feel for the form as you carve with your gouges. Try not to let your tools get in the way; rather, think through the gouge to the surface beneath and feel for it.



End View

Side View

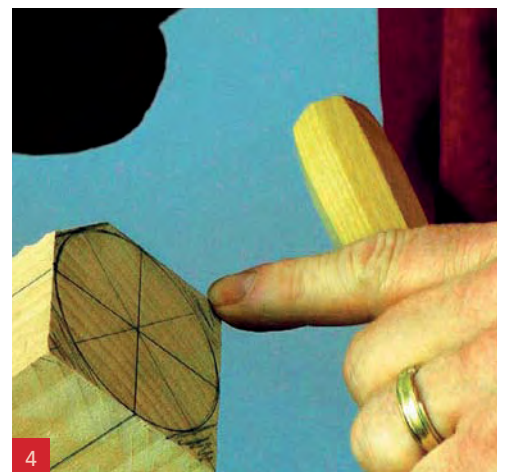
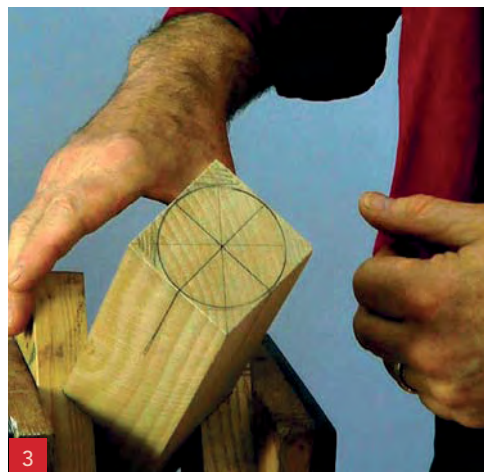
➔ **1** To begin, here you can see how the apple will fit inside the starting block of wood. The ruler follows the original wood surface on the side, and the outer limit of the apple touches this. So here we have our first 'high spot', where you must leave wood

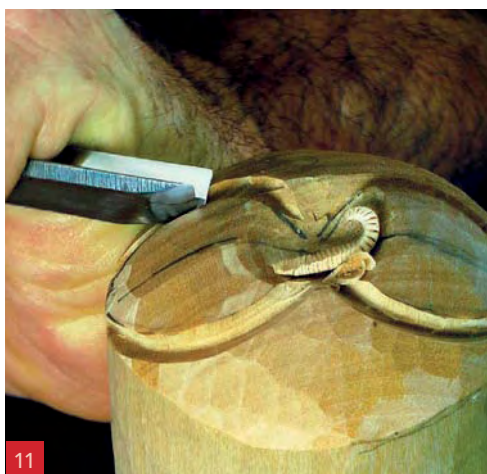
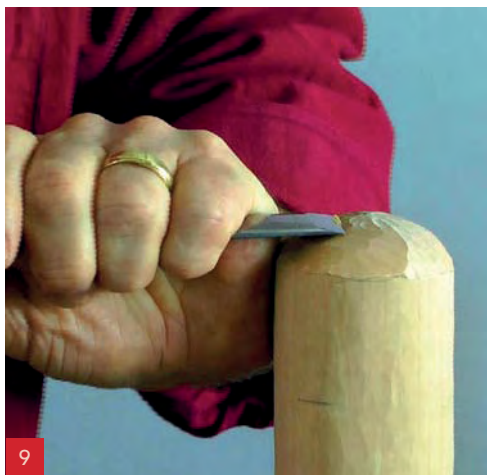
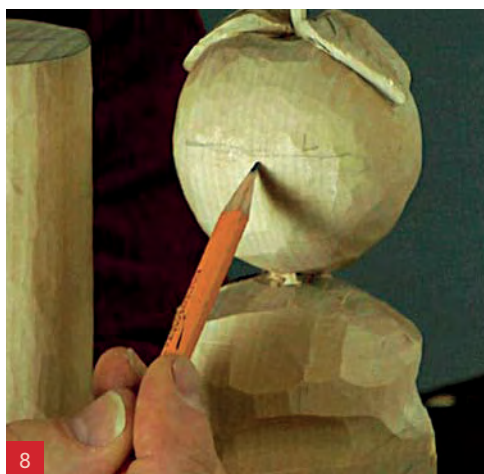
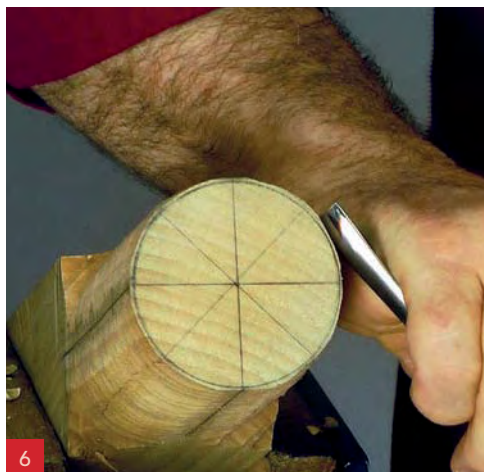


2 On the square end of the block, draw lines between opposite corners, giving you a centre. From this centre point, draw a circle to the edge of the square – this will be the circumference of the apple. Draw lines from the sides of the block through the centre point, and then down each face of the block – let's call these 'side lines'. They lie on the high spots shown by the ruler in step 1



3 The easiest way to hold the wood, which is in effect a post, is in a bench vice, tilting it at an angle. You'll find turning the post makes carving a lot easier so if you also make yourself a pair of vice pads with 90° cutouts, you can hold the post on the quarter. Since the apple is round and the block square, you need to remove the corner areas – these are shaded in step 2. And this gives us a good first exercise: making a cylinder





4 Using a deep gouge, take a light, straight cut across the corner. Follow this with another to its side, then another, until you have a short flat row of neat cuts all down the corner. Make each pass uniform, both in position and depth. Make a second pass and repeat until you have taken the whole corner off down to the drawn circle. When you have each corner carved, you'll have a neat octagon with new flat 'corner faces'. Draw vertical lines down the new corner faces – the 'corner lines'. The apple in the block will also lie on these lines as a new set of high spots

5 With the same gouge, start rounding over from one side line to the adjacent corner line. Make one cut all the way along, and then make a second pass. The tool cuts more tidily across the grain if you rotate the handle and slice – or 'rock' – the edge through its cut

6 Now to turn the octagon into a cylinder. Cut in an arc from one face to the next, leaving the pencil lines untouched. When you have worked all around the post, check the drawn circle at the end and adjust. The tool must follow the curve and you need to visualise the surface beneath clearly

7 Refine the surface with a flat No.3 gouge, slicing with the cutting edge. Try for an even truer cylinder and, if your cylinder is true, you'll find that you will very lightly skim away all the pencil lines

8 Compare the finished cylinder with the apple. The apple is obviously more of a sphere the outer limits of which lie as a high spot at some point along the side of the cylinder. You will be removing wood above and below this line – the maximum apple diameter – creating a high 'spot' around the circumference. You will also be allowing for some leaves above the apple itself. The stalk will be added separately later

9 You need to position the leaves before you carve the top half of the apple, and that's best done from the top, starting with the overall shape. The actual curvature of these leaves is not important. Start by profiling them as an arc from about 20mm down at the side over to the centre point on the top. Use a flat gouge 'upside down' – the concave sweep is more in sympathy with the rounded surface beneath and will leave you with shallower facets

➔ **10** Draw the outline of the leaves from the centre point. Part-shape the side profile of the leaves with a dip in the middle for the stalk. Take a deep scoop in the middle with the No.9 gouge and redraw the leaves

11 Outline the leaves with a 60° 'V' tool, working deeply from the outside of the block right into the hollowed centre

12 Draw a line around the cylinder below the leaves and estimate the maximum width of the apple. With the wide flat gouge upside down, remove the waste as you round over the wood to the edges of the leaves. Eye through a sense of a sphere around the top of the apple

13 Turn to the lower half and draw a line around the cylinder for the bottom of the apple. Chop down into this line from either side around the cylinder with the No.3 gouge. You may need a mallet to begin with. Turn the wide flat gouge upside down again on the apple side. Visualise the curve of the apple and look at the profile. Leave about 20mm of the apple attached to the cylinder below it

14 Hollow around the junction of the two leaves with a No.6, 8mm gouge so the leaves look like they arise from the apple and, working across the end grain, give some more shape to the leaf surfaces. 'Set in', i.e. outline, each leaf. If you are happy with your leaves, undercut the edges with the same gouge at about 45°

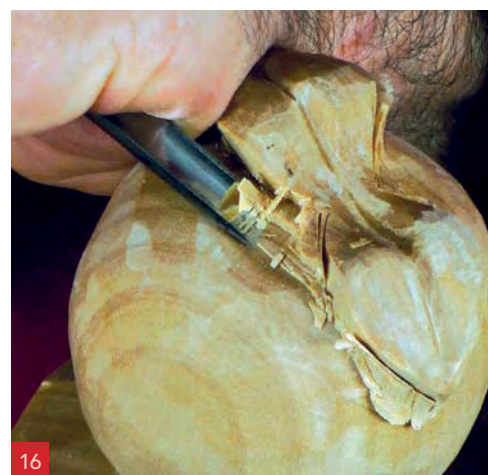
15 Back to the top curved surface: with the same flat No.3 gouge, used upside down, remove the waste as you shape under the leaves to make a tidy junction

16 Switch to the No.6, 8mm gouge as you bring the apple surface over and into the hollow from where the leaves arise

17 You can now carefully tidy up the junction at the base of the leaves with a skew chisel

18 Here is the apple with its leaves, to which you can add veins, carved but still attached to the original post. What you are trying to do here is get a cleanly cut surface travelling around the form. We want the shape to be accurate

19 Carve the stalk from an offcut and give it a bit of curve. A knife is probably the easiest tool to use

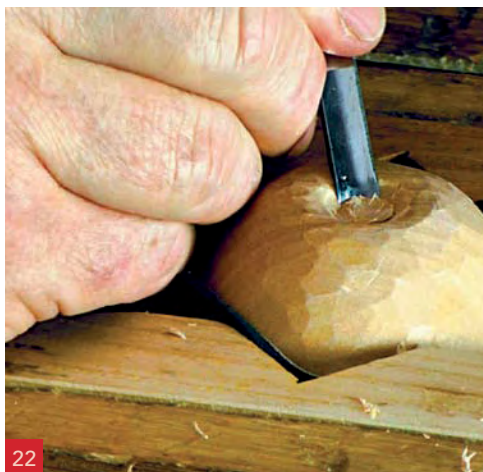




20 You want to shape the stalk rather like sharpening a pencil. Use your thumb as a lever and push the blade away. Whittle the stalk end down to about 3mm. Bore a hole in the apple to match at the junction between the two leaves



21 Release the apple from the post by continuing the lower surface around and gradually attenuating the junction. When the wood at the junction is reduced to about 6mm, make a final check of the apple profile and release the apple with a coping saw



22 You can now grip the apple in the quarter-turn vice blocks you made, padding the jaws well to protect the carved surface. With the apple upside down, you can finish off the bottom by curving over the surface into the little 'florete', which is actually the remnants of the original apple flower calyx. With this the apple will be fully in the round. Because you are working in the end grain, you'll find the wood will cut, almost break, away readily and you can create an impression of this florete quite easily



23 Finish the apple with beeswax. I usually brush wax on, melt it into the wood with a hair drier and then burnish with clean cotton rag. You can see I have a matchstick in the stalk hole to prevent wax entering



24 Glue in the stalk. I didn't wax it; waxing turns wood darker and by leaving the stalk unfinished I kept it a lighter colour, just to add a little more interest. When you've carved one apple, why not try another from the same post? What about a basketful? Each one will give you more practice carving literally in the round



25 The completed apple should look something like this ▶

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Starting at rock bottom

Steve Bisco shows us how to turn rough rocks into stone carvings



PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE BISCO

There is no doubt that the ideal material for making fine stone carvings is the good-quality Caen or Portland limestone you can buy in cut blocks from architectural stonemasons. However, with the price of cut stone being around £80 a cubic foot – or 30cm metric cube – it can work out a bit expensive if you are still practising or just carving for your own amusement.

A much cheaper option is to use the rough lumps of moderately soft, creamy-coloured limestone you can buy easily in garden centres for pocket money sums. Working rough rocks into a finished carving can be hard work and the results can be uncertain, but it is very satisfying working stone the way stonemasons have always done it. And in starting at 'rock bottom' you will become better acquainted with the geology of the

raw material and the Jurassic world that formed it.

In this article, I will take you through some tips for buying rough quarried stone, how to test your rocks, introduce you to limestone and also the tools you will need for stonecarving. I will also show you how to make three different projects: an upright statuette, a flat panel and a horizontal statuette.

Carving stone safely

Wear eye protection when carving stone – flying stone chips are sharp! Stone is heavy, so take great care of your back when lifting heavy blocks, and don't drop them on your feet

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steve Bisco has been carving for 30 years specialising in decorative carving in period styles, first in wood and more recently in stone. His latest book 'Stone Carving for the Home & Garden' is available from GMC Publications (and also in French from Éditions Eyrolles).



Buying rough quarried stone



Cheap limestone can be bought from a garden centre

Most of us live not too far from a garden centre where you can buy randomly shaped lumps of the fairly soft, creamy limestone sold cheaply for rockeries. Look for the wire bins of the rocks generally sold in England as 'Cotswold stone', or the nearest equivalent where you live. If you are lucky enough to live near a limestone quarry you should be able to buy bigger and better lumps straight from the quarry at reasonable prices.

If limestone is not easily available in your area, you can use sandstone as a substitute. Sandstone is widely used for building and carving, often being the most available rock in an area. Many sandstones have a tendency to delaminate or leach out rusty iron salts, so choose carefully. Carvers using sandstone must also consider the blunting effect on tools and the risk of respiratory illness from silica dust.

Choosing your rocks



Test rocks with a chisel

Rockery stone will vary greatly in carving quality, even in the same batch. Limestone hardens when exposed to the elements, so rocks with a weathered face will be harder than those fresh from underground. Take a small chisel with you when buying rocks and discreetly dig the sharp end into the rock. If it is freshly quarried medium-soft limestone you should be able to make a groove and produce some powder just by pushing the chisel with your hand.

Although you shouldn't be afraid of learning to carve harder stone, there is no point in breaking your back on a rock that is too hard and brittle to produce a good carving. You will soon learn to select your rocks, and as they are quite cheap you can afford to chuck the rejects on your rockery.

The nature of limestone

Limestone is made from sedimentary deposits of calcium carbonate formed from coral reefs and the shells of prehistoric marine creatures laid down in shallow seas 50-300 million years ago, so expect to meet many Jurassic creatures when using limestone.

Each deposit is the product of the circumstances in which it was laid down, in layers aligned in what is called the 'natural bed'. The natural bed may have been tilted severely by later geological movement, but the layers can usually be seen in the rock. The way a stone is cut in relation to the natural bed – the bedding plane – is important to a stonemason for structural reasons. It is less important to the hobby stone carver, but you may get some flaking along the natural bed.

"...you may get some flaking along the natural bed"

The stone may have vertical cracks caused by geological movement, random fractures from quarry blasting, clay pockets, holes eroded by water, soft spots, colour streaks and fossils placed inconveniently. By 'reading' the fracture planes and other visible features you can judge how a rock can be cut and carved.



You will often find fossils in limestone



The 'natural bed' of the rock



You'll need to 'read' the rock's fracture planes before carving

Stonemasonry tools

'Tooling-up' for stonecarving is quite cheap compared with woodcarving. It requires only a few simple chisels and gouges and a couple of mallets, supplemented in due course with a saw, rasp and rifflers.

Roughing out tools

Roughing out and 'dressing' a stone is mainly done with three tools. A point tool – either a stone punch or a marble point, shown second left in photo – is used to break out the bulk of the unwanted stone. A claw chisel – first left – is used to remove stone in a more controlled manner down to the required surface. A bolster is used to flatten and square-off a surface and to smooth it level. A 'pitcher' – first right – is a heavier mason's bolster but tends to be more expensive than a regular bolster, which you can buy from a hardware store.

In addition, you will need a club hammer – on the left – and it is also useful to have a stone/concrete saw – underneath tools – as well, which you can buy from a hardware store.



Roughing out tools

Carving tools

Most of a stonecarver's work is done with just a few chisels and gouges. The four chisels on the left of the photo to the right, in widths of 18mm, 13mm, 6mm and 4mm, can be used to shape any flat or convex surface. Gouges are used mainly to shape concave surfaces, but they can also be used 'upside down' to finish off narrow convex details. The three on the right of the picture, in widths of 6mm, 13mm and 18mm, are all you need. A 13mm 'bullnose' chisel – right of centre – is useful for concave mouldings. You also need a small mason's 'dummy' mallet – centre.



Carving tools

Rasps and rifflers

Rasps and their smaller cousins rifflers can be used to shape the stone by abrasion. This can be useful on fragile projections, such as the ears of an animal, for example. They work best on fairly soft limestone and will tend to slide off hard stone. In addition to these tools, you need a stout outdoor bench, which presents the stone at a comfortable height for you to work at without bending your back.



Rasps and rifflers



Stonecarving bench

- 'Dressing' a stone

'Dressing' a stone to six dead-flat surfaces with perfect square corners and sharp straight edges – or 'arrises' – to an accuracy within 1mm is the most basic of the traditional stonemason's skills. Luckily the hobby carver rarely needs to achieve these standards, but it is very useful – and good practice – to be able to work a stone to a dead-flat surface

1 This 'loaf-shaped' rock lends itself to being worked into a block. Assess which face to level off first to get the most out of it

2 The first stage is to remove the bulk of unwanted stone with a point tool. At first you will be knocking off large chips of stone, then, as you get nearer the required surface, you'll take out smaller chips. Work in parallel lines to create 'furrows', then repeat the process at right angles

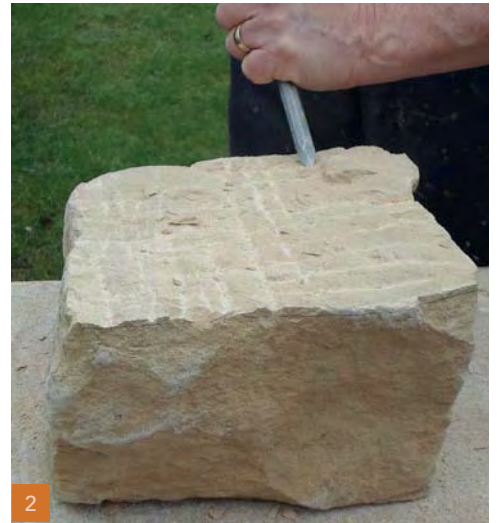
"At first you will be knocking off large chips of stone..."

3 Level off a strip round the edges of the block with a claw chisel or bolster. Sight-up two rulers on opposite edges to see if they are exactly parallel in level without any twisting. Repeat the process at right-angles on the other pair of edges

4 When the edges are level in all directions without any twisting, cut across from corner to corner with the claw chisel, using a steel rule to check that each strip is dead-flat and level with the edges

5 Now remove the high points between the flat surfaces and check again with the steel rule. Use a bolster to work the surface dead-flat and smooth. Work lengthways, crossways and diagonally, moving the bolster in short strokes, until all high spots and hollows are removed

6 Repeat the process on the opposite face, and then on the sides and ends. Check that the angles are exactly square with sharp 'arrises' and no twisting. While you are at it, take time to marvel that masons could do this to a high standard several thousand years ago!



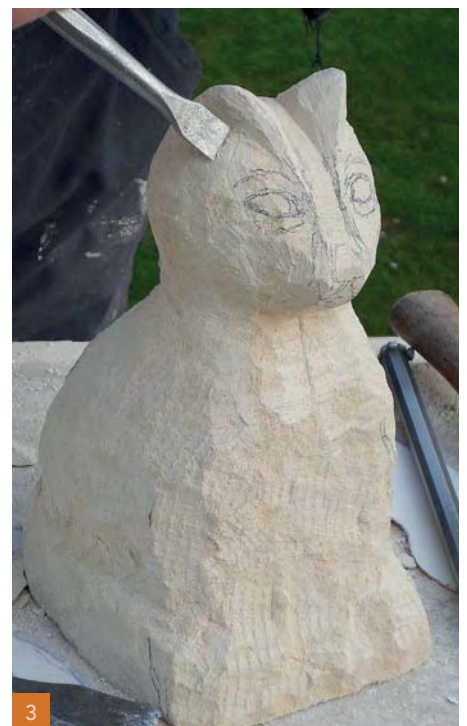
What's in that rock?

You don't always need to dress a rock into a six-sided block to get a carving out of it. Often you can just create a flat base and then pitch into roughing out the shape of your chosen subject from the rough rock. But first you have

to decide what subject the rock has stored within it that you can 'release'. It goes without saying that every part of your chosen subject must fit within the boundaries of the rock. Look at the rock from all angles to see what it

suggests to you in various orientations – not always the most obvious ones – and take account of how any faults and fracture lines may affect the carving. Following are three examples of what different shapes of rock can give you.

Example 1 – upright statuette

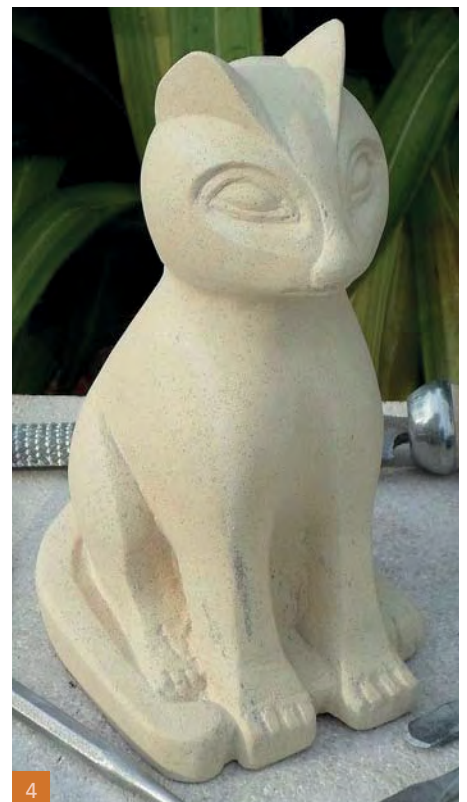
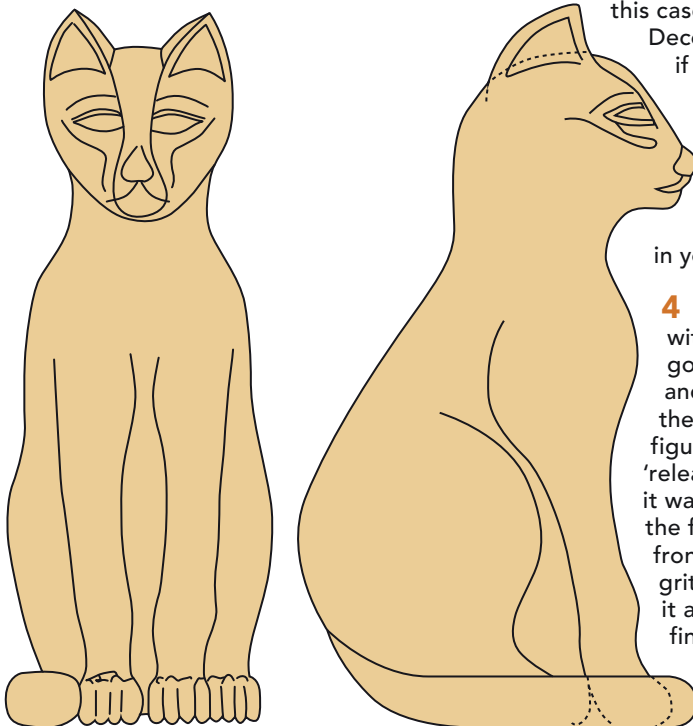


1 This rock is fairly long and narrow, so it lends itself to an upright figure such as a cat

2 The statuette needs a flat base, and as the stone I used was fairly soft I could remove the knobby end with a stone/concrete saw. It isn't much quicker, but it's sometimes simpler

3 You can draw a template of your subject to work from – in this case a stylised Art-Deco-style cat – or if you are feeling creative you can just pitch in with the chisel and rough out the shape from the rock as you see it in your head

4 Carve the details with the chisels and gouges, and rasps and rifflers if you need them, to create the figure that you have 'released' from the rock it was trapped in – note the fossil mark in the front leg. I used 120 grit abrasive to give it a smooth Art Deco finish



- Example 2 – flat panel

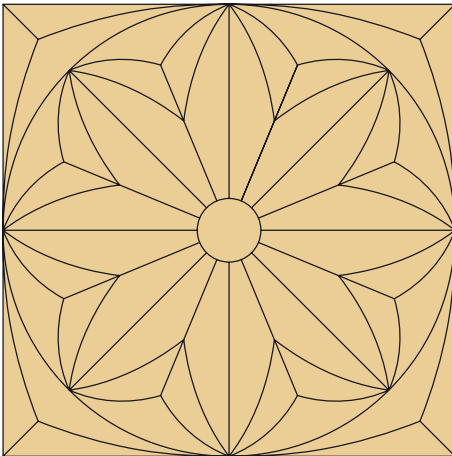
1 This rock is shallow and broad, and has been smoothed by flowing water underground, so it is a little harder and more brittle than some rocks but can be used to create a flat panel with an incised pattern

2 With the upper and lower faces 'dressed' to a flat surface, it provides a slab about 50mm thick

3 With the sides squared off and dressed, you now have a 185mm-square

plaque on which to carve an incised rosette. Although the hardness of this particular rock makes the 'dressing' stage a bit tougher, the smaller carving tools can deal with it easily

4 The shallow water-worn rock with the rosette pattern has now been transformed into an attractive decorative plaque, which can be displayed indoors or out



Example 3 – horizontal statuette

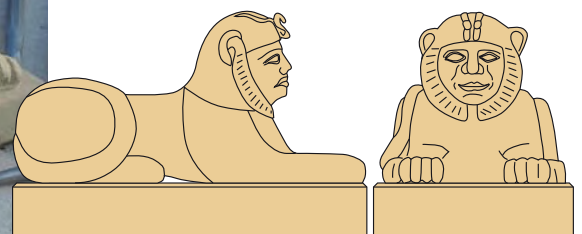


1 Returning to the block 'dressed' earlier, I think it suits a horizontal statuette on a 'plinth' base, so I'm going for the Sphinx of Taharqo from ancient Egypt. It's easy to draw the outline on the dressed block from a cardboard template

2 After chiselling away the surplus stone the piece looks much smaller, but the statuette still uses most of the length, breadth and height of the original rock

3 The smaller the carving, the more delicate you need to be in carving the fine detail, especially when it comes to facial features. Eyelids and lips can be 'engraved' with the points of a 6mm chisel

4 The dressed surface of the block is retained in the base plinth, which is a feature of the original sphinx



Auriou stone carving set

Steve Bisco puts this 12-piece stone carving set from Auriou through its paces

These stone carving tools, supplied in the UK by Classic Hand Tools are hand-forged by the respected French toolmaker Auriou. British and French masons have a shared stone carving tradition dating back to Norman times, but there are some national differences in the types of tools used, so I was keen to try out some of the French variations.

What's in the set?

I was supplied with the standard set which comprises 12 hand-forged high-carbon steel tools:

- Three flat chisels in widths of 20, 25 and 30mm
- 10mm gouge
- 25mm claw chisel with five flat teeth, a 15mm claw with five pointed teeth, a 20mm claw with 6 pointed teeth and a 15mm 'deer's foot' claw
- 10mm 'ognette' or 'quirk' chisel
- 15mm 'rondelle' or 'bullnose' chisel, for concave cuts
- Point tool
- 10mm 'snake's tongue' chisel, which has a V-shaped point

The standard set does not include a mallet, but I was supplied with a 900g 'dummy' mallet from the Auriou range of four, priced at £35.40. There is also a fine set available – priced at £210 – which consists of mostly the same tools but in smaller sizes for carvings with finer detail. This set has one less claw chisel but includes a 400g dummy mallet in the price. All the tools can be purchased separately.



The six-point claw chisel



PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE BISCO

Standard set of stone carving tools

In use

After sharpening the tools on a water-cooled grinding wheel I put them to use on a small sculpture of an Easter Island Head in Cotswold limestone. The point tool easily removed the surplus stone when hit with the 900g dummy mallet.

The set is well-provided – perhaps over-provided – with claw chisels. These performed well in the 'roughing out' stage, especially the 20mm six-pointed claw, which made easy work of the medium-soft limestone.

The 10-14mm octagonal shafts of the tools are comfortable to hold and easy to hit with the dummy. The flat chisels did a good job in shaping and smoothing the flat and convex surfaces of the carving. The rondelle and gouge took care of the concave hollows, but I would have liked more of them in a range of sizes to do everything the carving needed. The snake's head chisel works like a V-tool where a sharper edge is needed between surfaces.

The tools all performed well on the limestone so I then gave them a much tougher test on a hard lump of marble. All the tools made a suitable impact on the marble and kept their edge. The rondelle in particular showed itself to be much better than a gouge at carving a concave groove in hard marble so I may have to add one to my toolkit!

Verdict

These are well-made good-quality tools at competitive prices. Like most carving sets, there are things a hobby stone



The rondelle tool

carver may need more of and things you may need less of. Of the four claw chisels I would stick with just the 20mm six-pointed claw, and I would choose chisels, gouges and rondelles each in a range of 6mm, 12mm and 20mm sizes. Neither the standard or fine set covers this range, but as all the tools can be bought separately with little difference in price it is easy to assemble a set specific to your needs. ▶

Specifications

The set contains 12 tools, all supplied in a handy tool roll

Price: £198

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Carving a wren without power tools – part 1

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Donna Menke explains how to carve a small bird with just a few hand tools



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DONNA MENKE

The carving 'The Bird in My Hand' was made in 2012. I had carved a rather nice bird, but was at a loss for how to mount it. Finally, the homily 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush' came to mind, and so I decided to carve a hand for its base. I used my own hand as a model and carved it in basswood (*Tilia americana*) with a clear finish. The base is mahogany (*Khaya ivorensis*). The hand is held in place with one screw through the base and into one knuckle on the back of the hand. The bird is held in place by the pegs of the pewter feet epoxied into holes in the hand.

What was interesting to me was that it took exactly 24 carving hours for both the bird and the hand. I learned so much about bird carving from this project that I wanted to share it with other woodcarvers.

Most bird carvers use rotary power tools. Although I have made some birds in tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) using power tools, I prefer the less dusty and less noisy technique of using hand-powered tools with basswood.

We are going to make a realistic, life-sized Carolina wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*), the state bird of South Carolina. This is a small bird just 140mm from beak tip to tail tip, but it has a perky tail and eye markings that give it a distinctive look. You could carve this bird in butternut (*Juglans cinerea*) for a more stylised version. If you choose to do this, follow the carving instructions until you get to the wood burning part and, instead of burning and painting, just sand the bird to 320-grit sandpaper and seal it with a clear satin finish.

Things you will need...

Tools:

- 38mm bench knife
- Small, thin bladed and pointed 25mm bench knife
- No.9, 3mm gouge – I call this my drawing gouge because it can be used to follow lines on the blank, like a pencil
- No.7, 10mm gouge – or something close to this size and configuration, for general wood removal
- Wood burner with variable temperature control, skew tip and writing tip

Paints & materials:

- Two brushes, No.5 round synthetic bristle brush of good quality. Also a newish No.3 or No.4
- Acrylic artist paints: white, black, yellow ochre, burnt sienna, raw umber, clear satin acrylic varnish (optional)
- Epoxy putty

Wood:

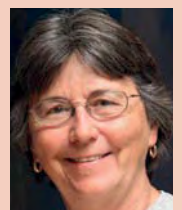
Block of basswood (*Tilia americana*) 115mm – length with the grain – x 75mm x 50mm, cut to the pattern

Inserts:

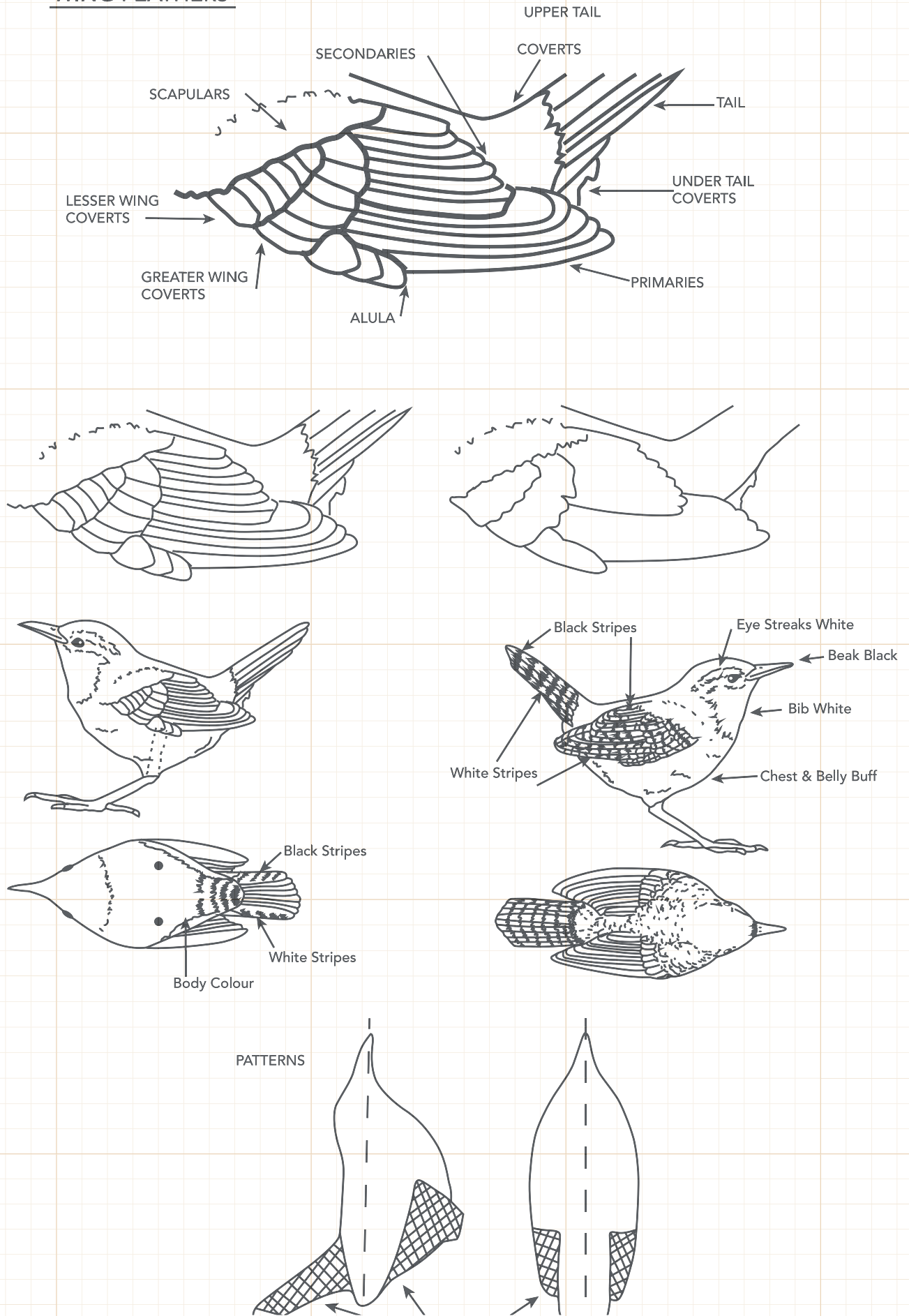
Two 4mm brown glass eyes
1 pair of Carolina wren legs in cast pewter

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Donna Menke has been carving seriously since 1995. Once she felt at home with carving gouges she started teaching simple projects. This is one of her more complex projects. See more of her work and items that she sells here: www.woodworkers-by-donna.com



WING FEATHERS

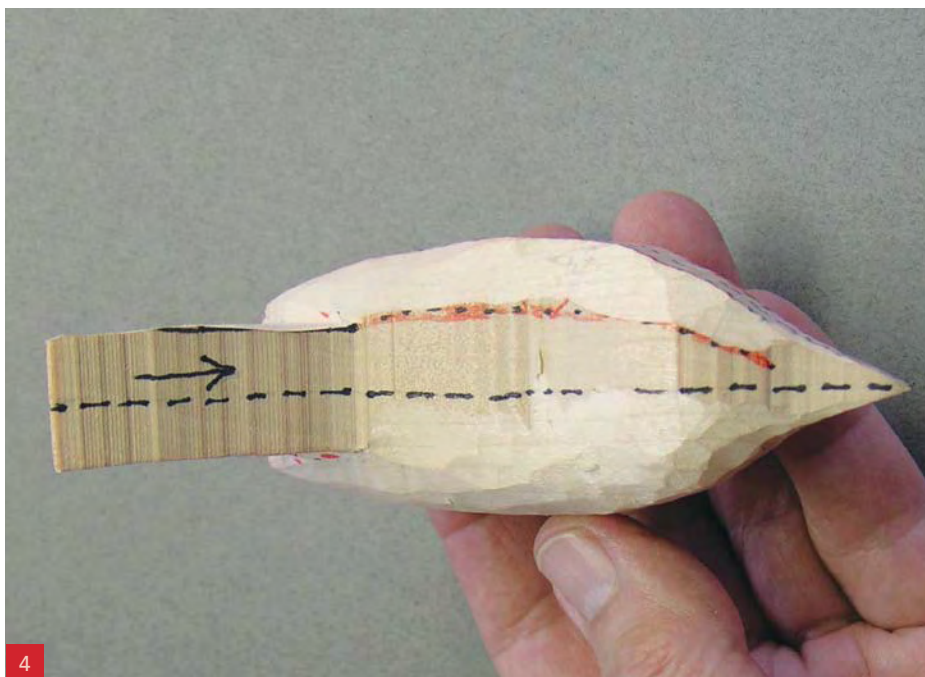
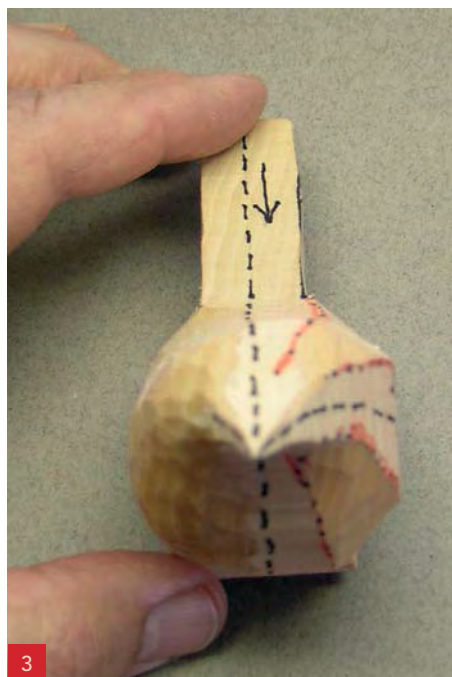
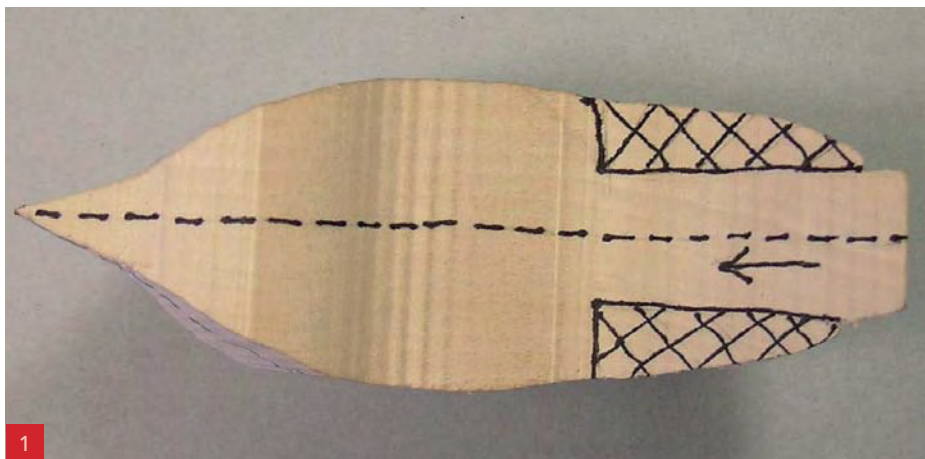


1 Start by removing the excess wood between the wing and the tail, and also under the tail, as shown in the drawing

2 Use the 3mm veiner to outline these areas and the No.7 gouge to remove the bulk of the wood. Start at the surface of the blank at the front section under the wing, and go to 6mm deep at the end of the wing. Make the tail cuts square to the pattern, using your strong knife. Clear out the area between the tips of the wings using the gouges and work carefully in the direction of the centreline so as not to damage the wing tips

3 Draw centrelines from the beak to the wing tip on all four sides of the blank. Draw another set of lines – make these dotted or a different colour so you don't get confused – halfway between the centrelines and the edges of the blank. Crosshatch the areas between these second lines on all four corners. Use your bench knife to remove all the wood between these lines in a straight plane. The result will be a bird with an octagonal cross section

4 This next step is important for how your bird will eventually look. Except for the bottom of the wings, you want to round all the edges of the body to make it round in cross section and to remove all of the saw marks. Your hefty bench knife will work best for this job. Use your large knife to judge that all surfaces have been rounded. When you are finished, the knife edge will touch at only one point

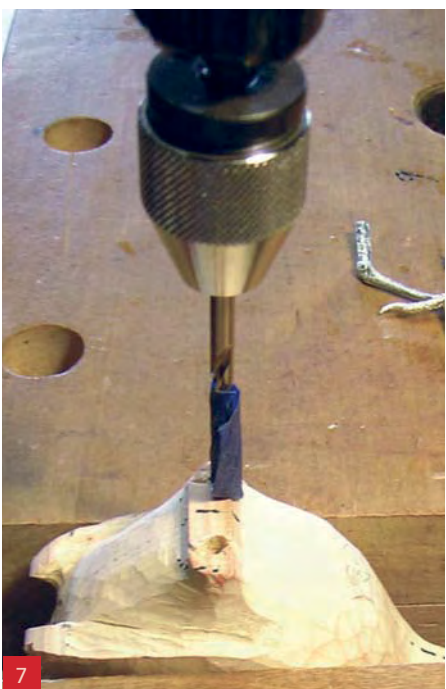




➔ **5** Draw some guidelines. Draw a line about halfway through the thickness of the tail to thin the tail to about 3mm at the tip. Draw a line to separate the top of the wings from the base of the tail and the body. Draw the undertail coverts area to separate them from the rest of the tail. Think of coverts as a group of small feathers covering an area. Use the 'drawing gouge', the 3mm veiner, to outline the areas to be removed. Remove the wood in this crosshatched area to thin the tail to a little over 3mm thick, leaving the undertail coverts at their original level

6 Round over the undertail coverts from the centreline to the bottom of the tail. They should look fluffy when finished, so leave it high in the centre where the feathers are fluffiest. Round over the top of the tail from the centreline to 1.6mm from the bottom surface of the tail. Now completely round over all the carving – there should be no flat spots when you are finished, except for where the legs enter the body

7 Use a hand drill fitted with a 4mm drill bit to make the holes for the pewter legs with the blank held in a wood vice, drilling 20mm into the body. The centres of the holes should be 20mm apart. Test the legs in the holes. The legs will be set



in with epoxy putty, which will fill in any extra void inside the blank, but try to keep the outside undamaged. Clean out the area between the legs in a rounded groove 12mm wide. Round over the fronts of the legs and remove the saw marks from the backs of the legs, but do not round that area

8 Use the patterns to draw the outlines of the wings onto the body. Check that both sides are the same by looking at the carving from the front and top. You'll need to decide how far over the top of the back you want the wings to go.

Use a gouge to make a groove all around the wing, keeping the groove shallow towards the front of the bird and getting to 3mm deep by the tail end where it runs into the under and upper wing coverts. Remove a small section of wood on the sides of the back to blend this groove into the rounded back. Remove the excess wood between the bottom of the wings and the legs, but keep the underbelly rounded.

Draw in the lines defining the wing's major feather sections, and lightly outline them. Taper each section into these grooves from the tail towards the front of the bird so that they seem to overlap. Thin the underside of the wings so that at their tips they taper to 1.6mm thick.

Using the No.7 gouge, make a 3mm deep groove around the head in the area of the neck, just ahead of the wings and under the cheeks, to separate the head from the body, and then blend

the groove into the surrounding areas. Narrow the head to no greater than 25mm wide.

Draw a circle 12mm from the end of the beak, all around the beak, and carve with your knife to make the beak just 10mm wide where it ends on the head. Taper the surrounding wood and beak into that groove. Locate the eyes above the centre of the beak line and 22mm back from the tip of the beak. Draw in 4mm circles and check from the top and front to see if they are symmetrical to the rest of the body. Draw a teardrop shape 3mm from the eyes and pointing towards the beak. Using your No.7 10mm, carve the eye grooves from 3mm behind the eyes to the start of the beak. The eye grooves need to be deep enough to recess the eyes into their sockets. They need to taper smoothly to the start of the beak. Add another groove 3mm behind the eye area groove and in the same direction, but not as deep. Blend all together to make a smooth transition between eye groove and the rest of the head.

Sketch out where there should be lumps and bumps on the breast, belly and undertail area. Now carve these irregular grooves with your No.7 gouge and then round the edges with the same tool. Mark and cut a shallow groove where the upper tail coverts meet the tail. Thin the tail from this groove to the edges of the curved tail leaving the tail a maximum of 3mm thick throughout and with a slight curve at top and bottom

9 The next step is to sand your carving with 120-grit paper to blend in the lumps and bumps, and also to give you a better idea of the emerging shape. When it looks just about right, go over the bird again with 220 grit sandpaper. At this stage, you need to check to make certain that your bird is symmetrical. When you are done you should have a sleek smooth surface on which to add your details





10 The beak needs to come to a point, curving slightly downward at the end, and not too wide at the cheeks. Check your bird's beak against the top and side views of the plans and adjust as necessary. Draw in the line where the top and bottom parts of the beak meet. Later you will make the line with the wood burner. Check that both sides are symmetrical by looking at the bird head-on. The line goes under the beak at the very tip.

You need to give some attention to the sides of the beak where it becomes part of the head. This is a small area around the end of the split between the upper and lower beaks. This area extends almost to the start of the eyeball, and does not have feathers. Draw a very faint outline around this area, just a millimetre or so away from the beak split. Continue this line under the beak to 12mm from the tip both on the top and the bottom of the beak. This is where the feathers end and the beak begins, so remove a sliver of wood all around on the beak side, leaving the feathered edges sitting higher by a smidgen.

The top of the beak needs a groove on either side of the centreline going from the nose holes – nares – tapering down to near the tip of the beak. Use the drawing gouge for this job. Make these grooves deeper at the nares and taper to the surface at the tip of the beak. This indicates where the nares should go, but you will emphasise them later with the wood burner. Make slighter grooves on the lower mandible to match. Lightly sand to final form

11 Make sure the head is round over the crown and behind the neck. You should have cheeks below the eyes and a ridge above the eyes. There should be slight indents between the chin area and the start of the breast, and between the start of the head and the body.

Locate the eyes just above the beak line and 22mm from the tip of the beak. Check from the top and front to make sure they are positioned correctly. Then use the 3mm veiner to make a hole for the 4mm glass eyes. Press the tool end into the wood and rotate it in a circle. Make the holes at least 4.8mm deep. This is deeper than you will need, but epoxy putty will be behind the glass and will fill in any extra space. Do not permanently insert the eyes yet because you need to do the wood burning first, but you can trial fit them to make sure the holes are deep enough. The eyes should protrude just a tad higher than the eye groove. If more wood needs to be removed from in front of or behind the eyes, this is a good time to refine those areas. Sand around the eyeholes so that there are no rough edges where the wood meets the eye.

I won't give an exact feather count



because you may not be able to fit in the correct number. Let's start with the secondary feathers. The top secondary wing feather is the one closest to the centreline of the body. The rest of the secondary and primary feathers will lie under that top feather. Use your cutout pattern to mark where the individual primaries and secondaries are located, and where the wing coverts end. Sketch in the individual wing feathers with a sharp pencil using the illustration. Use your wood burner with the skew tip, or a sharp thin knife, to make stop cuts along each of these feather lines. Then make very thin, shallow slices into the bottoms of these stop cuts with a very sharp and thin blade. This will separate the individual feathers and make it look as though each feather overlaps the one below. Repeat with the rest of the feathers on each side.

Next, do the greater wing coverts in a similar fashion. They overlap in the same direction as the larger feathers. There is another set of wing coverts above the first layer, the lesser wing coverts, which overlap in the opposite direction. Don't forget the vane feathers at the bottom of the wings. They also overlap differently from the other wing feathers.

The tail feathers are almost all the same length and stack neatly, like a folding fan. The highest feather is at the centre top of the tail. The tail feathers are about 4.8mm wide at the tips and hardly taper at all. Draw the highest feather in and then reduce the rest of the top of the tail in steps down each side so that you end up with about six tail feathers on each half. Make a shallow stop cut using either the skew burning tip or the bench knife, and then use a knife to slice into the stop cuts from the outside edges in towards the centre. The bottom of the tail will need the opposite configuration with the outer two feathers sitting proud of the surface and the other feathers going deeper towards the centreline. Make a groove to separate the underside of the wing from the body. Use your knife to make deep V-cuts at the deepest areas, but keep in mind the thickness necessary for the wings.

Shape the feathers around the legs, keeping close to the legs in the front, and fluffing out somewhat behind the legs. Make some deep grooves with the drawing tool or knife to indicate loose feathers. Sand a little with 220 grit, if necessary, to emphasise or mute certain attributes of your carving. The wings and tail should be sanded a little to round the feathers to the body. This is your last opportunity to fix things that are not right. Once you start to wood burn you may find some slight changes you want to make, but basically your bird should be the correct shape now ▶

Next month, we will look at creating detail with wood burning and painting

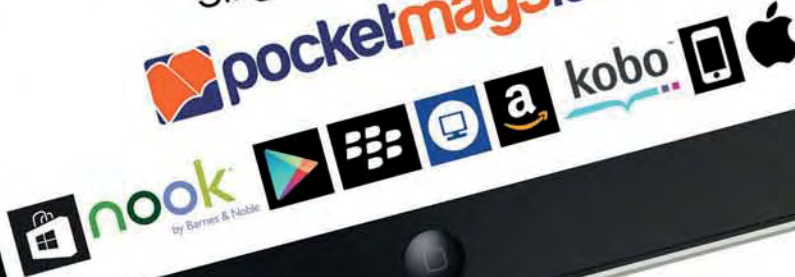
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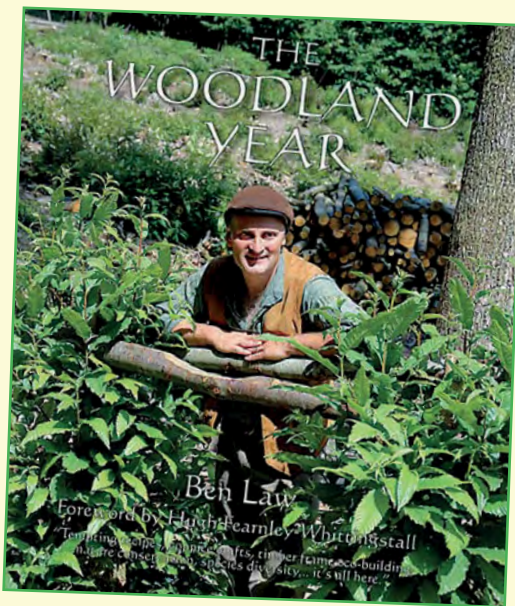
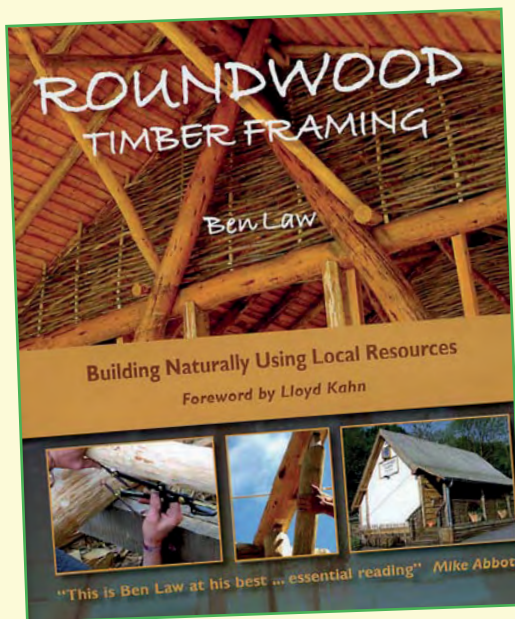
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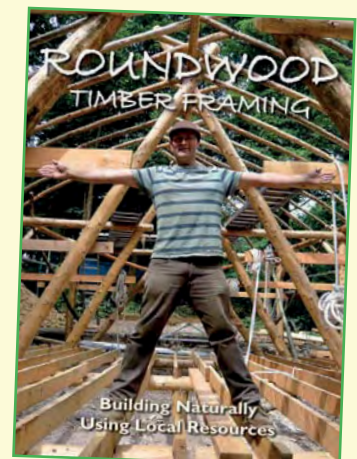
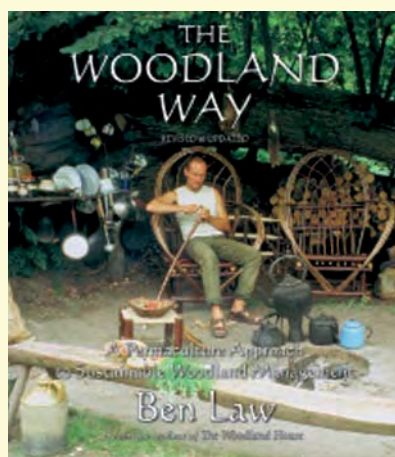
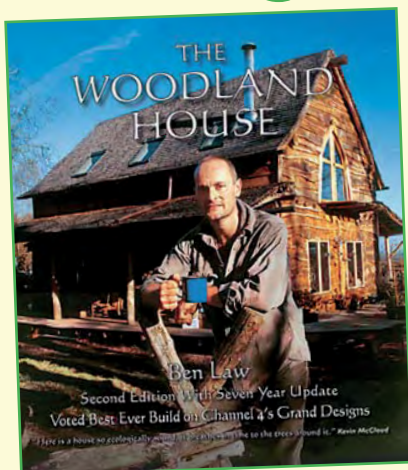
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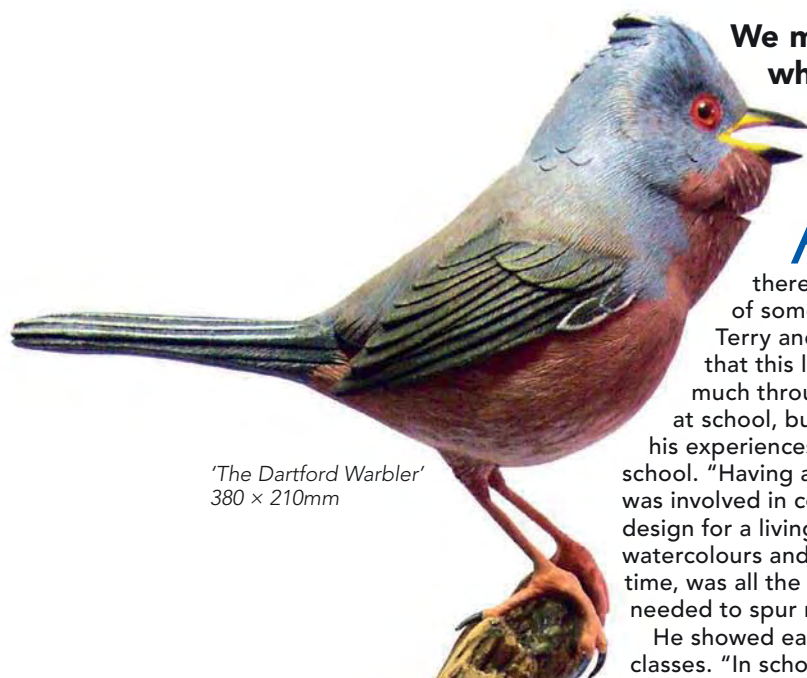


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Terry Everitt

We meet Suffolk-based artist Terry Everitt, who specialises in wildlife paintings and woodcarvings



'The Dartford Warbler'
380 × 210mm

As far back as he can remember there has been a link, of some kind, between Terry and art. He told us that this link was not so much through art lessons at school, but rather from his experiences outside of school. "Having a father who was involved in commercial art/design for a living, and painting in watercolours and oils in his spare time, was all the inspiration I needed to spur me on," he says.

He showed early promise in art classes. "In school my favourite subjects were sport, English Language and art, and although I left without qualifications to take up an apprenticeship in the printing trade, I always remember a conversation between my art tutor and my father regarding me staying on and going straight to A Level art, skipping the O Level. But after a discussion with my dad, the decision was made and off I trotted into the big wild world of work. I can't actually recollect having much of a say in it. Mind you, I was only 15!"

After leaving school he tried out as many different art media as he could, starting out with pencil drawings, then point-and-line drawings in pen and ink and later using watercolours. With his love of birds he found himself drawn to these as the subjects of most his work. He told us that with all this

art, he always strove to achieve fine detail: "The big attraction for me was the challenge of getting as much fine detail into each piece of work as I could, a trait that has lived with me to this day. My attempts at painting nice loose watercolour landscapes never really succeeded; they always ending up looking muddy as I overpainted them, trying to add too much unnecessary detail." However, not wanting to give up on watercolours completely, he reverted back to wildlife/birds as subjects. "This time my aim was to do studies of birds of prey and owls, using the watercolours very dry, which allowed me to put in plenty of fine details by layering colours on top of each other, building up the depth of the birds," he explains. Some of these paintings can be seen in the 'Paintings Gallery' section on his website.

In the 1990s, and now living in north Norfolk, Terry came to the conclusion that too many wildlife artists and not enough buyers could only mean one thing – a change in direction and medium had to be made, so he swapped his paper and paints for timber and knives. "The added bonus was that, if I could carve and burn in as much detail as possible, I could then use my fine detail painting experience to enhance the work further. This was a eureka moment for me and the start of my journey to this day!"

Woodcarvings

The majority of Terry's work is based around British songbirds, a subject close to his heart. "The essence of my work is to replicate them as best I can, but also to mount them in a way that shows the habitat and personality of the bird. My 'Barn Owl' comes to mind here with the peaceful serene look of the bird, also the 'Bearded Tit' holding on amongst the reeds and

in profile



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY EVERITT

Terry painting his peregrine falcon

the 'Dartford Warbler' up on high, in full song. These are the things that I've had the pleasure of watching out in the field and the memories that I've taken home with me.

Terry often receives requests for carvings of various other animals, but prefers to carve pieces based on his own experiences of watching birds. "I've been asked many times could you carve a so and so? Technically I suppose the answer is probably yes, but I personally believe that the correlation between the carver and subject shows itself in the finished piece of work. I have been told many times by followers of my work on social media and at exhibitions that they can feel the love and passion that goes into ➡



'Treecreeper'
460 × 180mm

'Barn Owl', English lime,
(*Tilia vulgaris*), 460 × 300mm





Carving in progress on the waxwing

➔ each piece, and they're right, that's what they see, and that's exactly what I put into each bird I carve."

Work ethos

Starting to work full-time on carving has given Terry a chance to produce a larger variety of work to put on his website and to take to exhibitions. He now makes birds in a greater selection of shapes, sizes and colouring, something which he purposely set out to do. He relishes the challenges this has brought: "Not only does this give the presentation at exhibitions that 'wow' factor, it also tests my painting and carving skills, especially the painting of a bird like the kingfisher with its iridescent colouring, a process that can ruin a great carving."

Terry gives careful thought to each subject he makes: "The most important factors for me when choosing a bird to carve are the form and shape of it, the pose and how I'm going to mount it. Would it look better with its head slightly turned? Will I be able to do the bird justice? I decide on all these aspects before starting my sketches." He explains that he doesn't spend too much time on detailed drawings when making non-commissioned carvings. "My main object is to make templates of two profiles which I then transfer to my piece of timber for cutting out." When doing commissioned work, however, he makes more detailed drawings to give the client a better idea of what to expect, although he told us that the majority of his clients trust him to do what he thinks is best.

Influences and inspirations

From an early age, Terry's father was a great influence on him. "Rather than wasting his free time watching TV he spent it honing his painting skills, and later on in his life carving decorative decoy ducks. He attained a really high quality of work, purely through his hard work, dedication and ethics, traits that have been passed down to me. I think one of the most important values I learned from him was that you only get out what you put in, something



'Pied wagtail'

I've put into practice myself since starting out on this carving journey."

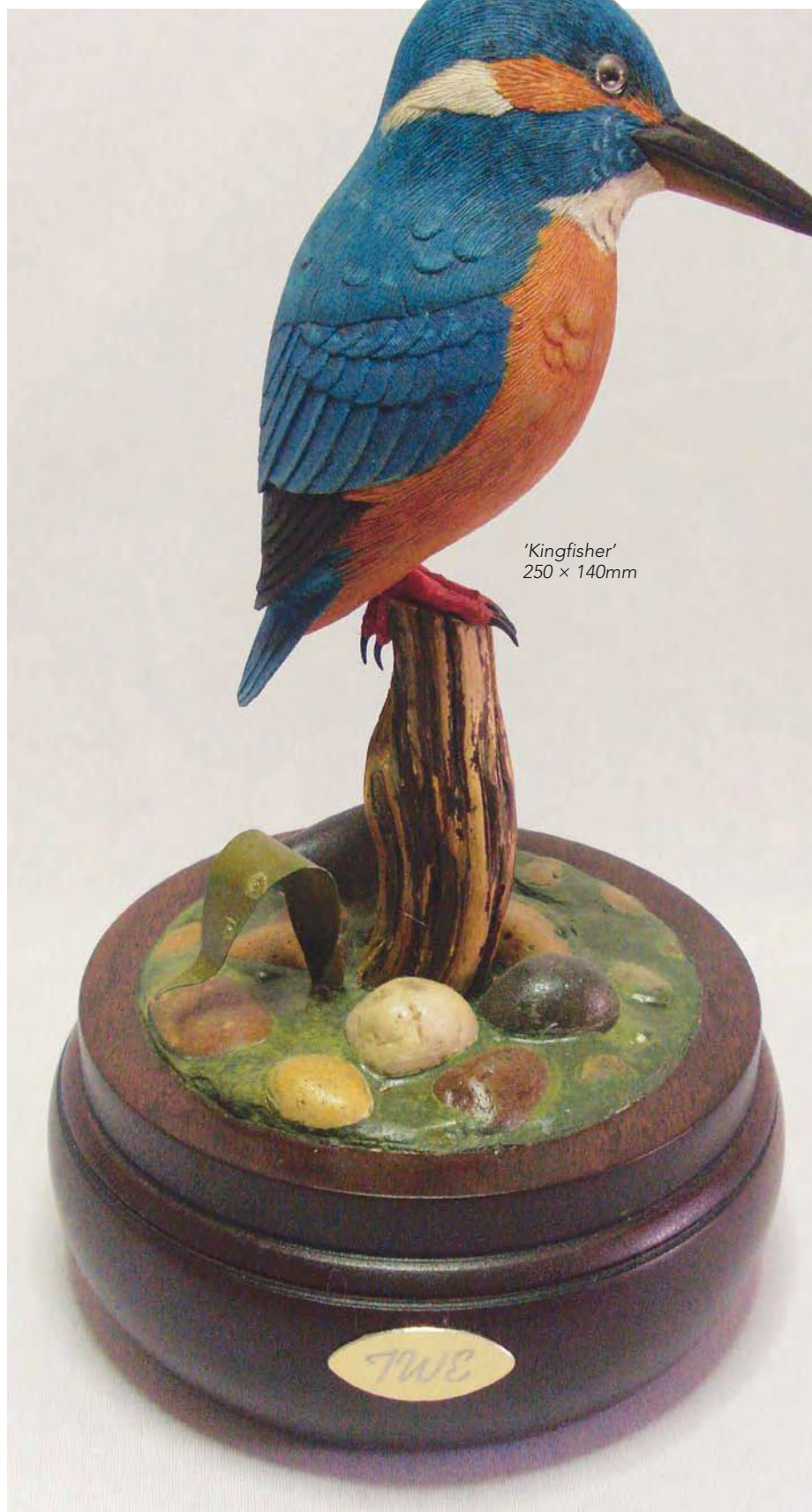
He explains that he has not been influenced by other carvers, preferring to cultivate his own style. "I've never looked at other carvers' work for inspiration or technical know-how. I firmly believe that your style and techniques for carving will, in time, surface naturally, you'll find the techniques that work well for you, you will create your own style. You have to ask yourself, why try to produce a piece of work that looks like someone else's? Individuality is what stands out amongst others! If you can't emulate another carver's work, you'll feel that you've failed. You haven't, you've just failed to make a copy! People want to buy original works of art, copies aren't original."

He is inspired by the responses to his work that he gets from clients and from people who have visited his website or follow him on social media. "Their enthusiasm and appreciation of my work makes me want to create better and more exciting pieces. I've

never felt the need for someone to stand over me pushing me on, the desire I have to do my best and succeed has always been the driving factor to any success I have had up to this point, and success can only be measured by the achievements you set yourself as an individual anyway."

Approach to carving

Right from the start, Terry has enjoyed the tactile nature of woodcarving. He says: "One of the first things I noticed when I changed from painting to carving was the great buzz I got from being able to feel the piece of wood in my hand during the carving, texturising and painting. Having got used to using really fine brushes, minimal paint and light delicate strokes on my bird paintings, I now realised how little contact there was between the brush and card, lacking a connection you could say. But now I had total control and feeling of every inch of the piece of work in my hand." When he began carving, Terry had to gather the bare amount of tools together with the minimum outlay. ➔



'Kingfisher'
250 × 140mm



'Goldfinch', 250 × 170mm

started out with, and the same needle files too. As Terry says, "it doesn't take a big cash outlay on tools to start carving, and patience comes at no cost. So if you have a piece of timber, some knives, needle files, some time and patience, then you've got what you need to start this wonderful hobby."

Future

Terry tells us that his major aim at the moment is to be able to continue working as a professional bird carver. "It's what I love, and I feel that it's what I'm meant to be doing. I started doing it full-time in the middle of one of the worst recessions in recent times, and I've managed to survive. It's been really hard going during this last 18 months but as I sit here, I have next to me a commissioned piece of work which is in progress. During the last 18 months I've also written an ebook, *A Bird in the Hand*, which is available on Amazon and a carving manual, *Secrets of the Bird Carver*, which is a beginner's guide to carving a robin. As well as these books, he has written several articles for magazines, which he enjoyed doing and hopes to get similar opportunities in the future.

He has ambitious plans for his next carvings. "I intend this year to put all my efforts into creating another four bigger, prestigious pieces of work like the 'Barn Owl' and 'Peregrine Falcon'. I hope to get out more to exhibit my work and meet up with some of the great followers I have on my social media sites, who inspire me to keep creating my works of art, and finally, improving the standard of my work!"

➡ "I didn't own any chisels so I used the craft and scalpel knives that I already owned, and to this day they still do the bulk of the work on my songbirds. My only extravagance has been a knife handle I had made, which only takes disposable blades. No time spent constantly sharpening blades here!"

He has recently started working on larger, more prestigious pieces such as the 'Barn Owl' and 'Peregrine Falcon'. Due to its size, the latter had to be worked on with chisels at the outset, but a lot of the reduction and all of the intricate feather work was still done with those same knives that Terry had

Contact

Email: terry.everitt@yahoo.co.uk

Web: www.terryeveritt.co.uk

If Aladdin were a carver, he'd love our cave!



For one thing, he'd agree with us, that all carver's have one thing in common - they're all different! They each have their own needs, wants, hopes and ambitions. And that's what we at The ToolPost try to match. That's why we don't offer a Hobson's choice of products, we offer a real choice. Of course, we only offer trusted, proven and reliable brands, from the world's "top drawer", but where we can offer a choice, we do.

Equally we appreciate that some carvers are whittlers - and some whittlers carve. Some like to use bench tools, with fixed handles, whilst others like the convenience of interchangeable handles. Some use power carvers and some wouldn't go anywhere without a knife in their pocket. They're all different, but they are all "right" and that's why we at The ToolPost are happy to go the extra mile to supply their diverse needs and wants.



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Robert Sorby

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Carving a... simple end pattern

Iain Whittington shares this project with us, which is perfect for bracket repairs or crown cupboard mouldings, or can be adapted to suit



PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAIN WHITTINGTON

You don't need many carving tools to be able to add a bit of character to a piece of work, or to be able to undertake a furniture repair that is 'in keeping' with the original. This small project is for the carving of an acanthus-style feature at the end of a piece of timber. It can be adapted to finish the end piece of something such as a cupboard crown moulding or also modified for use in a bracket repair. It can be achieved using a basic set of gouges and a bit of patience. The timber you select will be dependent on the intended final use, but in this case, I have used oak (*Quercus robur*) as the 'ends' are for an oak porch seat.

Things you will need...

Tools:

Bandsaw, fretsaw
or coping saw
No.3, No.5, No.7 gouges
Pairing chisel
Straight chisel – or rasp
and file
V-tool
Oil and stain – optional

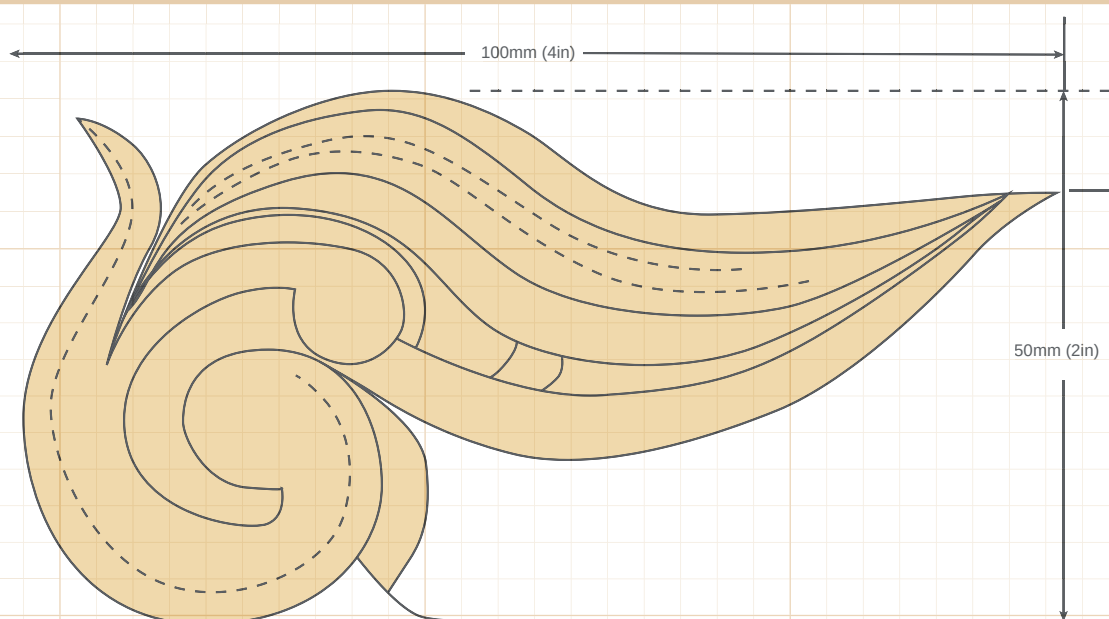
Wood:

I used oak here, but the timber you use will depend upon the project you tackle

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Iain Whittington is a retired army engineer who started woodworking as a lifelong hobby under his father's guidance in the family's garage where he picked up many new skills. Iain has shared some of his experiences by writing about woodworking, restoration and carving for various magazines.





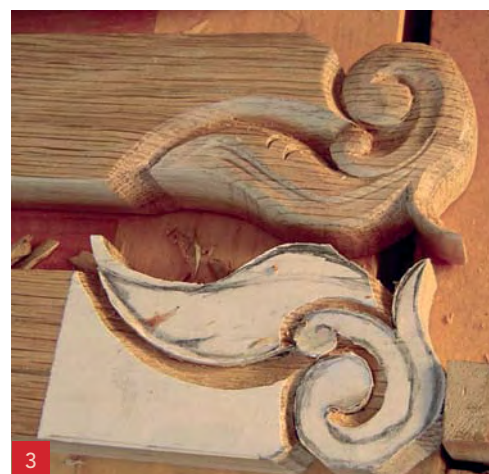
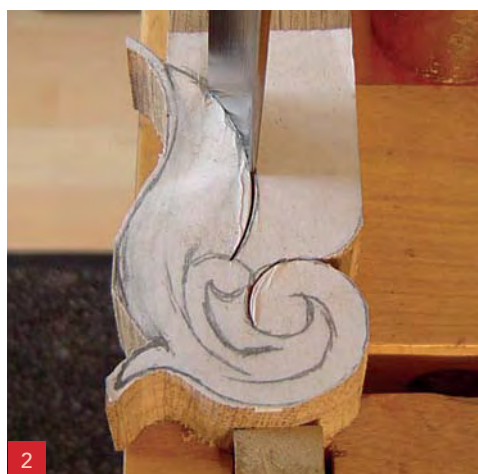
Setting in

This is the process of initially outlining the carving pattern with a series of vertical cuts that also serve as a stop cut to later work so that the surround will not accidentally chip out when you carve close to the edge of the pattern. Start by finding the tool that has the profile that most closely matches the curve of the pattern. For this vertical cut to be fully effective, you need to have a tool that has been sharpened with its cutting edge square, i.e. at a right angle, to the shaft. The process can be simplified if a V-tool is used first around the pattern to provide a groove in which to place the edge

1 Resize the drawing to suit your own project and then either trace it, or scale it on a computer to suit, then print out to size on a laser printer. With the pattern in place, the outline can be cut out using a fine blade on a small bandsaw. Don't forget to make a series of relief cuts to allow the waste to pop out

2 With the outside shape now cut out and leaving it clear as to where the carving is required, it's time to start on the carving itself. To stop the carving suffering from unwanted chips, the whole of the outside edge is 'set in' – see sidebar above. With a few tools and a bit of dexterity, a smooth curve can be set in using the rocking motion of a slicing cut, progressing along the curve using gouges from No.3 to No.7. Select the curved gouge that is nearest to the shape of the pattern – in my case it was a large No.5 – and make a series of stop cuts setting in the pattern

3 With the edge of the pattern now clear, use the same tool to slide a series of chips out along these edges to define clearly the shape and scope of the pattern





4



5



5a



6



6a



7



8



8a



9



10



9a



10a

4 You can now start on the detail. Unusually for a relief carving, this pattern has a third dimension, so the start is actually on the edge. Secure the carving on its side and make a good stop cut at the shoulder, before using a No.5 gouge to bring the side well down, taking care to reinstate the stop cut periodically, so as not to split the end grain. The knuckle of the edge pattern will need to be rounded with a straight chisel or rasp before you can lay the piece on its side again

5 & 5a With the edge defined, the transition between the two faces can be defined with a groove, excised with a No.7, but it will need to be worked down from both ends because of the change in grain around the knuckle

6 & 6a The other edges of the pattern can now be rounded over with a reversed No.5 before returning to round the inside edge of the knuckle in the same way, taking care to change the direction of attack to always cut with the grain. The shape is developed through a series of levels each bordering the one above, with a progressively shallower gouge

7 To finish, take a No.5 gouge and run the final top groove from the knuckle to the end

8 & 8a The inside edge defines the watershed for the pattern, with all to the inside now taken down below this line, either with a reversed No.3 gouge, or carefully pared with a back-bent fishtail

9 & 9a Now to work on the 'snail shell' that supports the top 'wing'. Start at the 'ear' with a short stroke of a No.5 before reversing the tool to pare a smooth round outer ovolo edge. Swap direction and come back at it from the other end. You can see here that the far side of the snail shell has been defined through the removal of a slice – a stab cut with a No.5 at the circumference, with an adjoining slicing cut to remove a smooth chip

10 & 10a It will still take several small slices to complete a smooth round rollover of the edge, which will then have to be repeated on the other side of the knuckle, taking the ovolo shape all the way into the centre of the snail shell, again with several changes of direction/grain en route

➔ **11** Again, as this is a three-dimensional carving, it needs to be turned on its side to have the knuckle edge rounded, either with a straight chisel or with a rasp and file to complete the smooth outline of the snail shell feature

12 An important factor you need to take into account with furniture ornamentation is its potential for damage. Here, where we are using a coarse-grained timber, the slender 'ear' needs to be cut back for strength using a small No.5 gouge to run it carefully into the finished convex ovolo curve of the snail shell

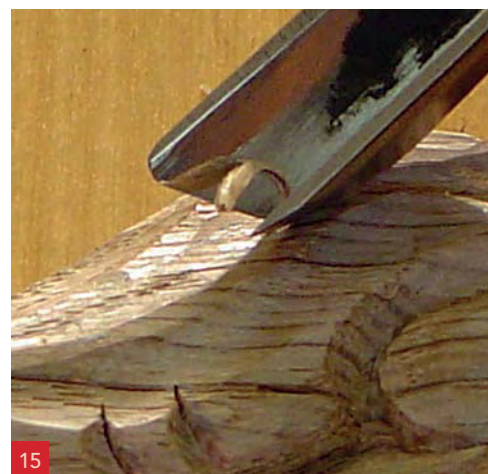
13 The outside edge of the wing was defined with a groove along the edge, a feature that is now developed with a further gentler groove on the inside slope, using a No.5

14 To give a low-relief carving some added depth and texture, small decorative effects are often added. Here, I added a couple of 'ears' on the long curve, made from a vertical stab cut and a subsequent slicing cut below, to ease out a clean chip

"Another common embellishment is decorative 'veining' made with either a V-tool or a 'veiner'"

15 Another common embellishment is decorative 'veining' made with either a V-tool or a 'veiner', to give highlights on the longer curved surface

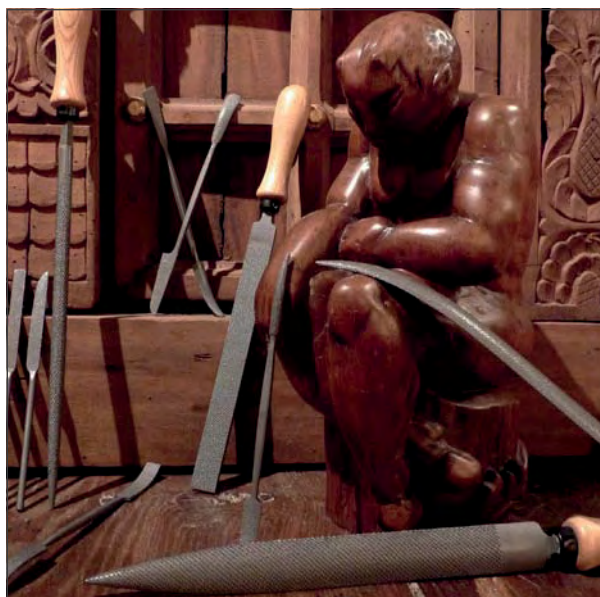
16 I seldom use an abrasive, such as sandpaper, to finish my carvings, as I think that abrasives round over the sharp edges that give relief carvings their highlights. However, I do often finish with a liberal application of oil, either the ubiquitous Danish oil for boxes, or, where food contact may occur, I use walnut oil. Where the carving is a component of a restoration project, the main piece will determine the use of stain and the final finish that you use. Do remember to test any stain on a trial carving, as the random grain exposed by a carving can cause unexpected difficulties in colour matching. Here is the finished end pattern ▶



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Beginners' series

Fruit panel

Continuing with his beginners' series, John Vardon shows you how to carve a simple fruit panel



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN VARDON

Things you will need...

Tools:

No.11, 6mm

No.2, 25mm

No.5, 12mm

No.5, 15mm

No.4, 6mm

Small 'V' gouge

Mallet and range of abrasives

G-clamp

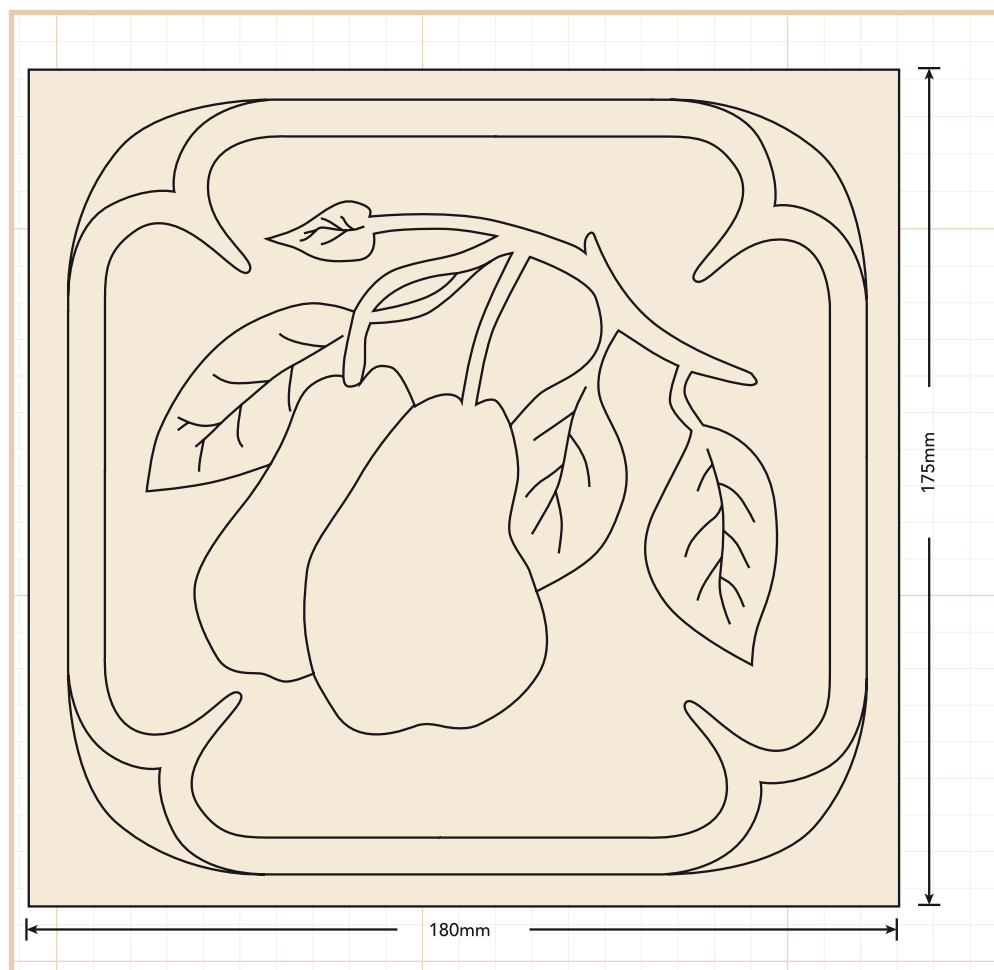
Finish of your choice

Wood: A piece of ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), or lime (*Tilia vulgaris*), measuring 180 x 175 x 25mm

This is a simple relief carving suitable for the beginner and introduces you to use a few basic gouges, thinking in three dimensions and holding the carving securely. The carving should take about two days to complete. The gouges referenced in the box on the left are those used, but any suitable gouge could be used. Using big gouges often gives you better control. Ensure they are sharp not only at the start, but also throughout the carving. The fruit panel relief design is based on

a carving in Tyntesfield House, which is owned by the National Trust. Their website is: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/tyntesfield.

The design could be modified to show alternative fruit, e.g. apples, and it also allows the carver to include alternative shapes of leaves, etc. The principles for carving would be the same, however. I recommend you read through the entire article before you start carving, so that you have an understanding of those various steps.

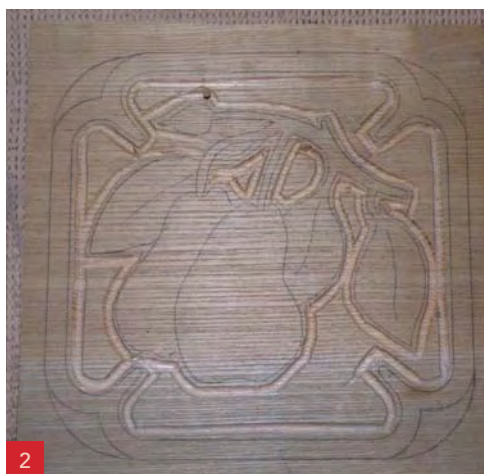
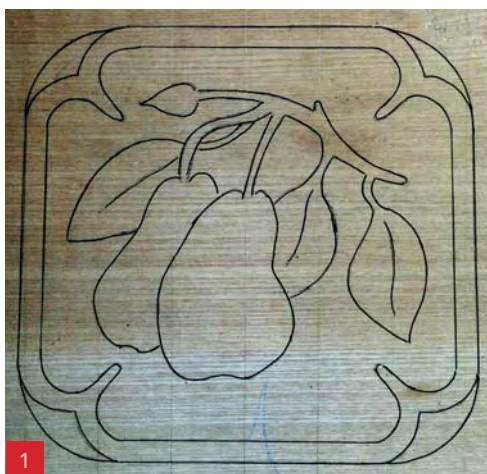
**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

John has been carving for the last 19 years. He is an enthusiastic amateur and likes to carve mainly in relief. John is a member of the Solent Guild of Woodcarvers and Sculptors and is currently its Secretary. John also demonstrates once a month, together with other carvers, at the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum near Chichester. Together with Jess Jay they run two carving courses at the Museum.

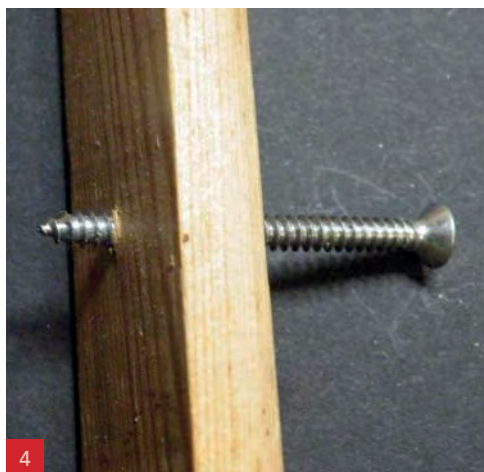
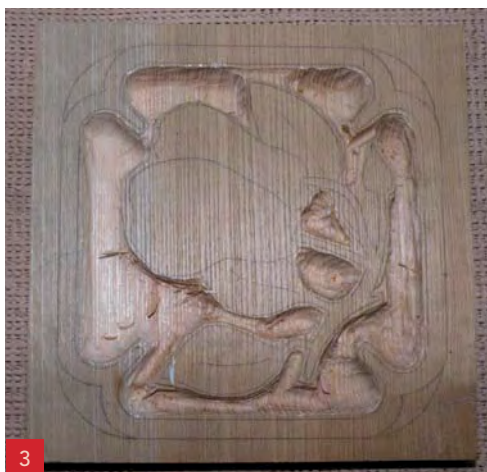


1 For this project a piece of ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) was used, but any hardwood will do. The actual size of the panel can vary. Scale the design as required

2 Draw the design on the wood, but do not put in every detail, e.g. leaf veins. However, do not forget these details and redraw any design lines that may be carved away. Secure the carving with a G-clamp. Using a No.11, 6mm gouge, carve a groove around the outline about 2mm inside the inner boundary and 2mm outside the fruit, leaves, stem, etc. Some carvers will stab the outline with an appropriate size gouge and mallet, but this is like using a gouge as a wedge and compresses the wood either side of the gouge. Also, the stab may 'creep' along the grain into areas that should not be carved



3 Using a No.5, 12mm or similar, remove the wood between the fruit, leaves, etc. and the boundary to a depth of about 10mm. Care must be taken at the corners and at the stems. Using a No.5 rather than, say a No.2 gouge will be easier. Also, take care in regions of short grain. It may not be possible to carve all areas until the fruit, etc. have been carved. Leave the boundary vertical at this stage



4 To check the depth construct a simple depth gauge. The one shown comprises a flat piece of wood with a screw inserted with the point at the required depth

➔ **5** This is then laid on top of the carving and any high areas will be indicated by scratches on the surface of the project. An alternative to using a screw is a matchstick, but this would not scratch the surface – which may be desirable in some cases. The screw or match can be moved up or down to the required depth



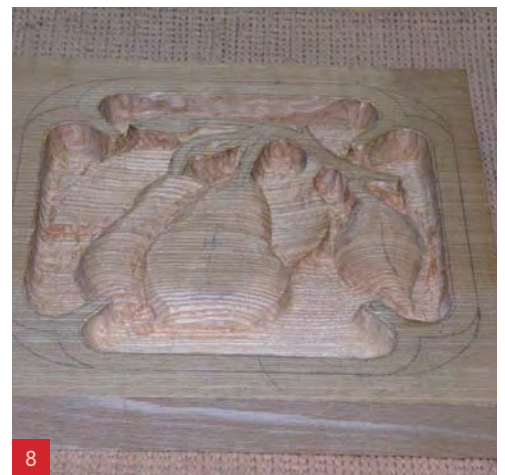
6 You now need to start to carve the fruit, leaves, etc. Decide on the various levels of the fruit and leaves; I find marking the high and low spots with 'H' and 'L' useful. Carve a groove at the boundary of the two fruits and leaves using a No.11, 6mm straight gouge. The groove should be on the outside of the items that are on top. The shape of the leaves should also be decided, i.e. are they flat, concave or convex? Mark the centreline of the fruit and leaves

"Continue carving to obtain the desired shapes of the fruit and leaves"

7 Using a No.2, 25mm gouge, carve the fruit and leaves to the required shape. Using the No.5, 12mm may be easier and quicker near the edges of the fruit, where the greatest amount of wood is to be removed. As this is a relief carving the fruit will be 'flattened'. Turning the gouge over will help to achieve the required rounded shape you require here



8 The left-hand fruit in this example is partly behind the right-hand fruit and therefore must be lower in this region. Away from the right-hand fruit, the left-hand fruit could be higher due to its shape. It may be necessary to reduce the background further to accommodate the shape of the fruits. Undercutting the fruit will further highlight the shape of the fruit, however, do not undercut at this stage. Continue carving to obtain the desired shapes of the fruit and leaves. Other – narrower – gouges may need to be used

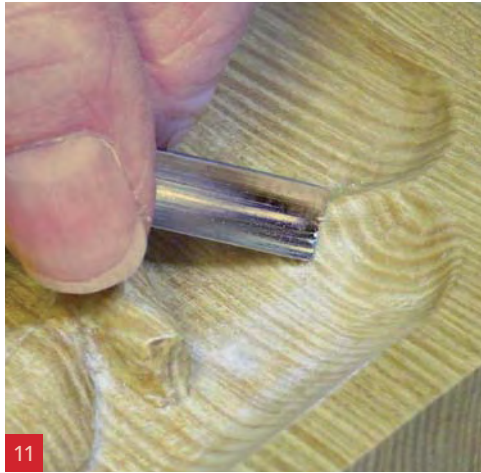


9 Now, using appropriate smaller gouges, shape the branches and fruit stems to the required shape and depths. Again, using the gouge upside down will help here – except in any concave regions – such as where a leaf stem blends into the branch





10



11



12



13



14

10 Mark in the position and shape of the veins of the leaves. Using a 'V' gouge or veiner cut the veins in, leaving the wood either side of the veins intact. You need to be careful using a 'V' gouge or veiner as one side of the gouge will be working with the grain whereas the other side may be against the grain

11 Now shape the outside boundary; in this example it is made concave. Use a No.5, 15mm straight or curved gouge and carve along each boundary. I found this easier than carving down. Note: if a different radii is required, then a gouge to suit the radii should be used. 'Rolling' the gouge around the corners will help to get the required shape. Care should be taken at the corners in particular not to break off the little spikes or cusps. It may be beneficial to carve in from the end of the cusp. The width of the cusp is fairly narrow and to accommodate the curvature, it is necessary to lower the inner point of the cusp to about half depth. It may also be desirable to shorten the cusps

12 Now to 'tidy up' as required. Holding the carving at different angles will help. It is only at this stage where any undercutting should be carried out. Using a small gouge, e.g. No.4, 6mm, undercut the branches to provide the roundness. The left and middle leaves – in this example – should be undercut to enhance their convex curvature and thickness. No undercutting of the right-hand leaf is necessary as it is convex and the edges are 'into the background'. Slight undercutting of the fruit will enhance their shape as well as some rounding along the fruit edge

13 Nearly there! You should now go around the whole carving again tidying up where necessary. Leaving some of the items 'tool-finished', e.g. branches, may be preferred. Unless you are leaving areas 'tool-finished', try and get as smooth a surface as possible with gouges rather than spending lots of time sanding. The carving should now be sanded, going through the various grits of abrasives

14 Finally, finish the project with a sealer and wax, acrylic varnish or other appropriate finish of your choice. Your final piece should look like this ▶

Introducing... Waterside Woodcarvers

Waterside Woodcarvers, based in Hampshire, tell us a little bit about themselves

For centuries, the skill and patience of the woodcarver have been much admired and in the 21st century, that skill is no less evident. Here in Hampshire, there are several well-known professional carvers, but there are also groups of friendly, enthusiastic men and women who meet and carve together to enjoy their hobby.

Waterside Woodcarvers is one such group, which takes its name from the area where the New Forest meets the western edge of Southampton Water. It was formed back in 1983, when a group of night school students decided to take the craft a stage further and now the group has about 25 members with abilities ranging from complete beginners to highly skilled carvers. We used to call ourselves the 'Waterside Guild of Woodcarvers', but felt the word 'Guild' implied an exclusivity that might be off-putting to a potential recruit.

We meet fortnightly at Oak Lodge School, with its fully equipped workshop and all the necessary tools and enough experience within the group to encourage the most timid of beginners. The beginner's piece is usually a half dolphin, which is given to the novice as a bandsawn blank for them to finish under the guidance of the more experienced members.

Our meetings

We hold a monthly social meeting, where the members are pleased to hear speakers on crafts, travel,



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF PAUL HUMPHRIES

As much chatting as carving goes on at the club meetings!

natural history and general interest – many of which are illustrated with film or slides. We have a small portable shop selling sundries like abrasives, polish and second-hand tools and we produce a quarterly newsletter reporting on our recent activities and future events. To provide inspiration, we keep a large collection of old copies of *Woodcarving* magazine. Occasional 'carve-in Saturdays' involve practical work in the morning, followed by a fish 'n' chip lunch with a speaker or social event in the afternoon.

of woodcarvings on the south coast this year'. To this, we invite other guest groups, including Oaklands – who were featured in *Woodcarving* magazine about a year ago.

We have been running this exhibition for many years and the star of the show used to be a carver named Jean Gordon, who turned to carving at the tender



'Sandal' by
Roger Elliott

Exhibitions

Exhibitions, large and small are staged annually. This year the main venue being St Thomas's Church Hall, High Street, Lymington on Saturday 23 August for our annual exhibition, which we proudly boast as being 'probably the largest exhibition



'Penguins'
by Pippa Smith

Click here
for extra
images



'Beginner's
Dolphin' by
Kathy Hammond

age of 70; she produced the most detailed and exquisite figurines and was published in many magazines over the years, but she sadly passed away recently, at the age of 96, which goes to show that you are never too old to learn. Enter the date in your diary for the exhibition, it is well worth a visit!



'Swallow' by
Paul Humphriss

The millennium

In the late '90s, the nation was flooded with suggestions for millennium projects, the Waterside Woodcarvers being no exception. Ours was one that actually came to fruition. It was agreed that each member would produce a carving of something you would see on the Waterside. 'What has Lawrence of Arabia – T.E. Lawrence – got to do with the waterside?' I hear you ask – well, he was involved in the development of RAF marine craft with Mr. Scott-Paine in Hythe in the early 1930s. The carving itself now takes pride of place hanging in the nearby Hythe Library, it is well worth seeing if you are in the area.

Competition

Once a year, members are invited to compete with one another by entering their carving in a competition, judged by their fellow members, to see who shall be acclaimed trophy winner for that year – always a keenly fought contest with many of the carvings kept 'under wraps' until the day. We also have an annual 'Block Competition', where we each receive identical lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) blocks of 100 × 100 × 150mm and are asked to turn them into carvings based on a theme, which has previously been voted on. Again, these are judged among ourselves and it's always surprising to see just how different interpretations can be.

All in all we are a happy, contented bunch, always on the lookout for new members – preferably of the younger element – but that is the hope of many organisations today. We can all dream, can't we! ▶

Details

Contact: Roger Elliott
Address: 52 Julian Road, Sholing,
Southampton, Hampshire, SO19
8LZ
Tel: 023 8044 7166



Becca Newman working on her wood spirit

NEXT ISSUE HOBBYMAGAZINES.ORG

wood **CARVING**

**Duane
Cartwright
carves a
decorative
lime rose
piece**



PHOTOGRAPH BY DUANE CARTWRIGHT

**Steve Bisco shows you how
to carve a husk drop**

**Part 2 of Andrew Thomas'
swan project**

**Carve a bear with
Sharon Littlely**

**Beginners' project: carve
a harvest mouse with
John Vardon**

**The small-scale playful
carvings of Steve Tomashek**

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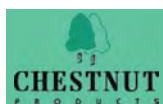
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Carved cabriole leg

– part 2

Dennis Zongker completes the cabriole leg with a carving of an acanthus leaf

In the last issue of *Woodcarving*, I described how to carve the ball-and-claw foot of the cabriole leg. We continue now with part two of this project; carving the acanthus leaf into the front knee and shaping the leg to its finished size.

When designing this cabriole leg I needed to bring in a design element that would help balance the lion's foot into the 18th

century. The goal was to fit the shape of the leg so I designed an acanthus leaf with the upper leaves having a wing shape. Carved acanthus leaves were commonly used to decorate furniture during the Queen Anne and Chippendale periods and the cabriole leg has certainly taken its place in the world of beauty and design.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DENNIS ZONGKER

Things you will need...

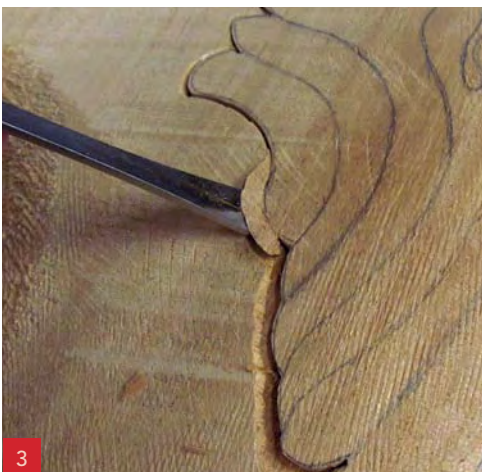
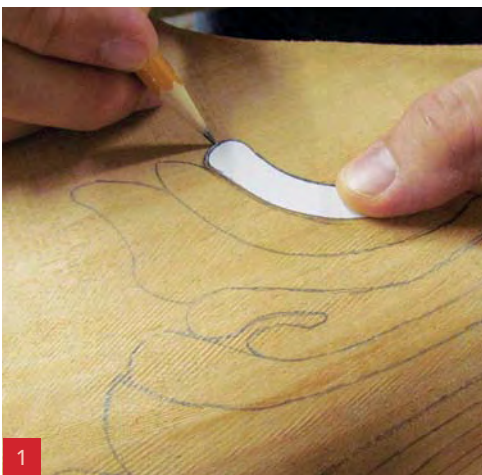
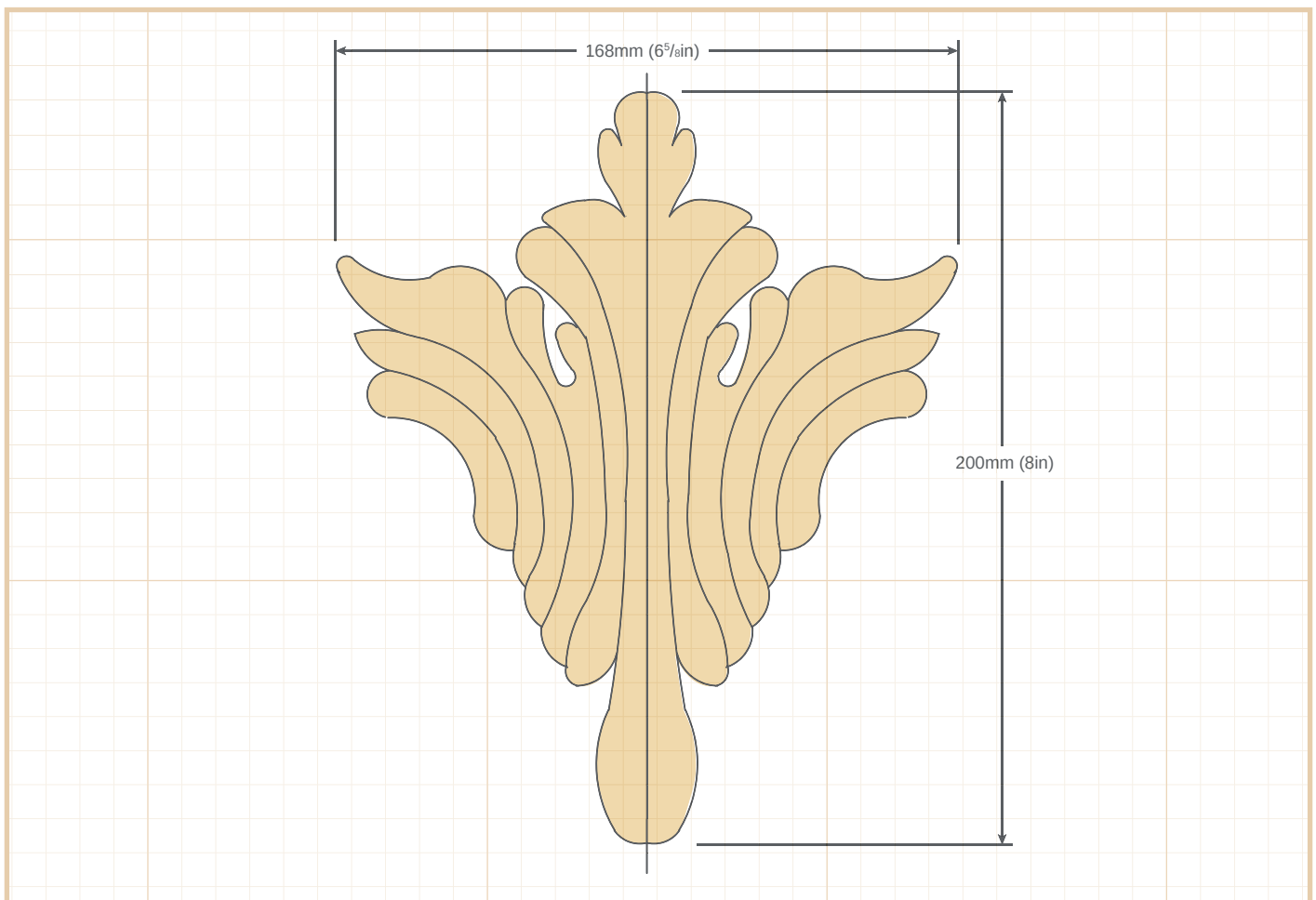
Tools:

No.2, 12mm	No.7, 16mm
No.2, 14mm	No.7, 10mm
No.2, 20mm	No.8, 3mm
No.3, 5mm	No.8, 4mm
No.3, 8mm	No.8, 7mm
No.3, 12mm	No.8, 18mm
No.3, 16mm	Medium wood rasp
No.3, 25mm	Fine rasp
No.5, 8mm	Fine-tipped needle files
No.5, 12mm	Detail riffler files
No.5, 16mm	150 grit sponge block
No.6, 5mm	
No.6, 12mm	Wood:
No.7, 4mm	Mahogany (Khaya
No.7, 6mm	ivorensis)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dennis Zongker has been a professional custom furniture maker for over 28 years and is co-owner of Zongkers Custom Furniture in Omaha, Nebraska. He teaches woodcarving and marquetry classes at Midwest Woodworkers. To see more of Dennis' work, visit www.zongkers.com



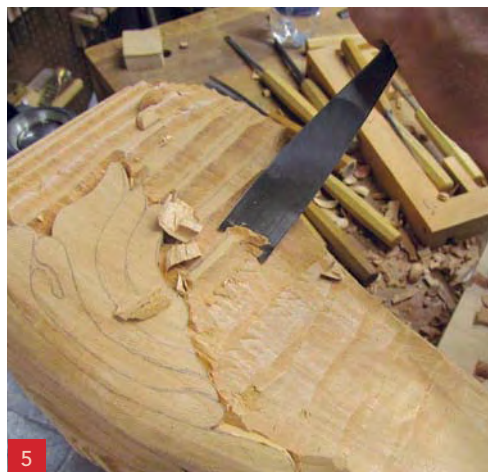


1 Print a photocopy of the acanthus leaf scaled to the size needed to fit the right proportion onto the corner of the cabriole leg. Cut out the centre of the leaf and the remaining five sections to the left or right of the template. These cutout pieces can be used on either side by flipping them over. To draw the acanthus leaf onto the wood, place the centre cutout template equally centred onto the front corner of the cabriole leg with the top of the template 50mm down from the top of the leg. Hold down the template and trace around the outside. Place each of the five remaining paper templates and outline around each one on both sides of the acanthus leaf

2 Start by stab cutting around all the outside edges using various carving gouges. Stab cut at a 90° angle approximately 3mm deep around the entire outside edge of the acanthus leaf

3 Starting 6mm away from the outer edges of the entire acanthus leaf, keep the gouges at a 35° angle and remove the waste wood. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you have cut in 10mm deep

➔ **4** Remove the waste wood around the leaf using a mallet and a No.8, 18mm gouge. Start at the outer edges where the aprons and the inside corners of the legs are located and carve towards the leaf on both sides of the legs. Carve these depth cuts 25mm from each other. These cuts will give you the depth needed to be equal to the thickness of the acanthus leaf



5 Use a mallet and a No.3, 25mm carving gouge to remove the remainder of the waste wood between the depth cuts. As you get closer to the acanthus leaf, tap your mallet lighter so that you do not carve into the edges



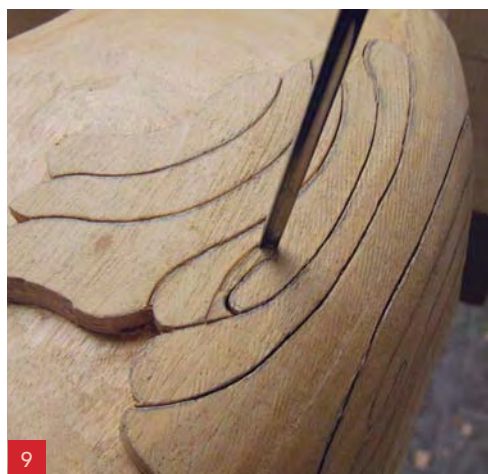
6 Flatten the leg around the acanthus leaf and lower ankle section of the cabriole leg using the No.3, 25mm carving gouge



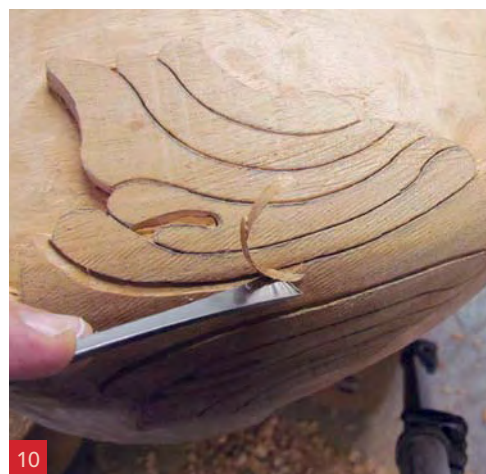
7 Use a medium wood rasp to smooth out all of the carving marks. Blend together below the acanthus leaf and ankle of the leg



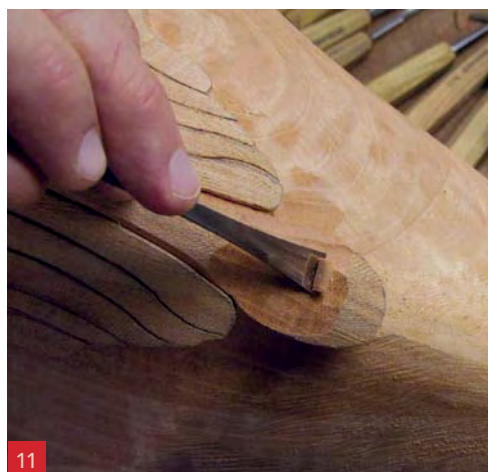
8 To give the leg its final size and shape, use a finer rasp to smooth out all the coarse cuts that are in the wood on both sides, back and front of the leg



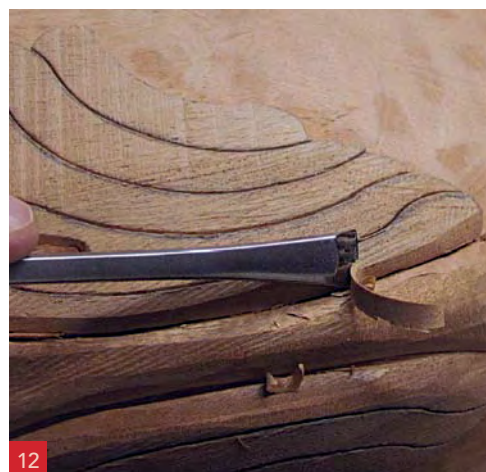
9 Follow the pencil lines that make up the acanthus leaf by using various carving gouges. Use a mallet and stab cut into the wood at a 90° angle going about 1.5mm deep into the wood. On the smaller eye of the leaf use a No.8, 3mm and a No.8, 7mm carving gouge, making sure you tap lighter than before



10 Starting with the centre leaf and using the corner edge of a No.3, 12mm carving gouge, follow the stab cuts by shaving off a little at a time to separate each leaf. Gradually carve a small arch onto each edge of the leaves



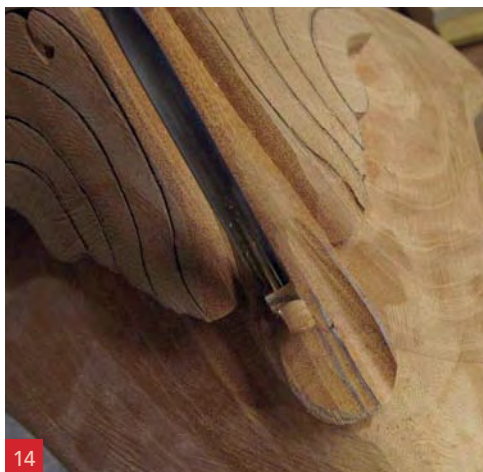
11 With the same No.3, 12mm carving gouge, carve in a gradual sweep into the lower face of the centre leaf



12 Shape the centre leaf to have an arch on its face, the two opposing leaves will also have opposing arches. To radius the corners, use the No.3, 12mm gouge upside down to form the arches. Once you have carved down to the depth of the stab cut, repeat the stab cuts on both sides of the centre leaf, then repeat the carving of the radius into the edges of the centre leaf



13



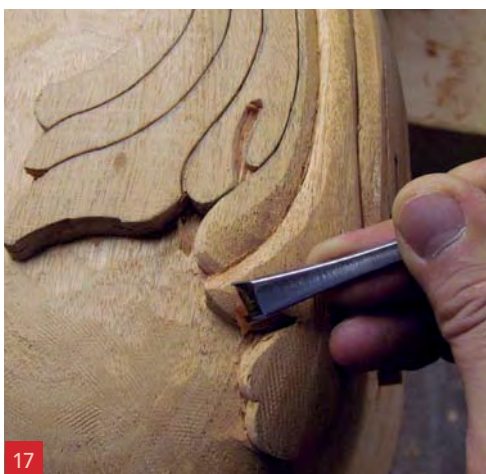
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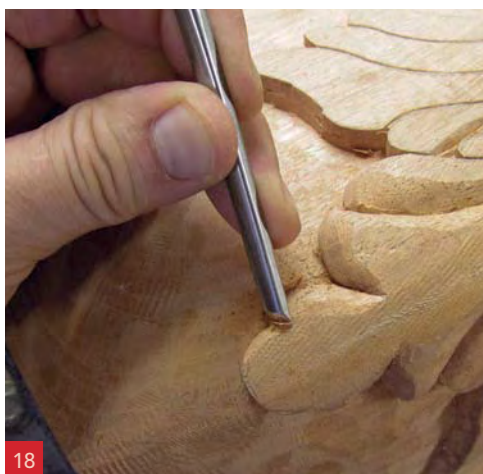
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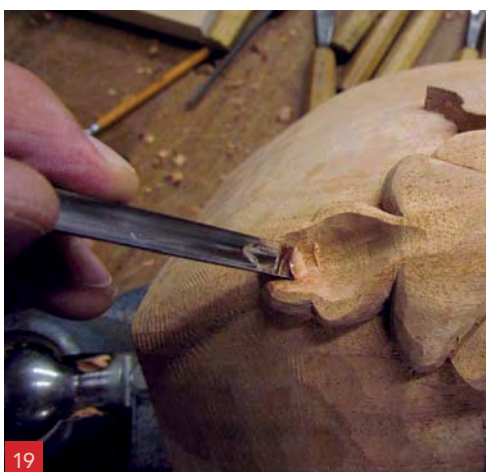
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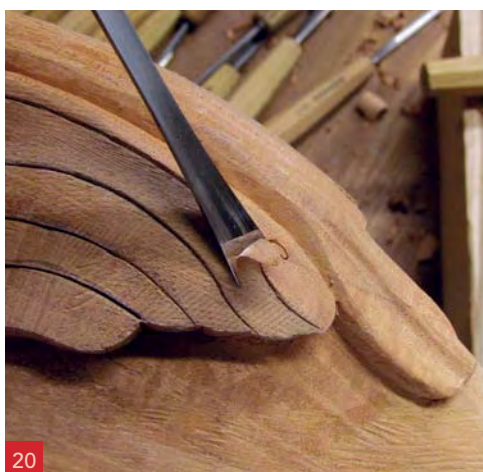
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13 Once you are satisfied with the shape of the centre leaf, you can then draw two lines spaced 3mm wide down the lower centre to form the lower stem

14 To carve in the sweeps on both sides of the stem use a No.7, 6mm gouge. Start by slowly carving just above both opposing leaves with a shallow sweep. Then carve deeper as you get closer to the bottom of the stem

15 Carve into the sides of the stem with a No.8, 4mm carving gouge. This cut will give a sharper sweep at the base of the stem

16 To blend the stem to the lower sweep, use a No.3, 5mm carving gouge to shave off any carving gouge lines or high and low spots. Then flip the gouge upside down and radius the outside edges of the lower leaf

17 Start carving the top section of the centre acanthus leaf by arching the top edge on both side petals. Use a No.3, 12mm carving gouge upside down to shape the arch until it blends to the legs

18 To carve the top bud, start with a stab cut into both sides and shape the small petals using a No.6, 5mm carving gouge upside down. Then radius the edges around the top bud with the same gouge upside down

19 Hollow out the bud using a No.7, 6mm gouge. Angle your gouge to a 60° angle and cut straight into the wood. You can change directions to blend the centre of the stem into the hollowed-out bud. Carve around the edges leaving a small 3mm ring. This will give the bud edges good detail while keeping the carving durable on a piece of furniture

20 Use a No.3, 16mm carving gouge to carve a gradual slope from just below the mid-section to the lower tip of the five leaves on both sides

Top tips

1. When carving furniture, always take care not to go too thin on any section on the carving. You can still carve good detail without going too thin, which will keep the carving durable on a piece of furniture

➔ **21** Next, re-stab cut into the same cut lines. Then, use No.3, 12mm and No.5, 12mm carving gouges turned upside down to carve the arches into the lower section of the leaves

22 For the very tips of the leaves use No.3, 8mm and No.5, 8mm carving gouges to round and clean up the edges

23 On the upper part of the wing/leaf use a No.3, 12mm carving gouge upside down to radius the top closest to the centre. Then flip the gouge back over to carve the concave section of the wing

24 To carve the detail into the eyes of the acanthus leaf, start by stab cutting the smaller inside radius with a No.8, 3mm carving gouge. Then, on the larger radius just above the eye, use a No.8, 7mm gouge and on the two straight sections use No.3, 12mm and No.5, 8mm carving gouges. Repeat the stab and relief cuts to remove the waste wood until you have reached around 6mm deep

"Repeat the stab and relief cuts to remove the waste wood"

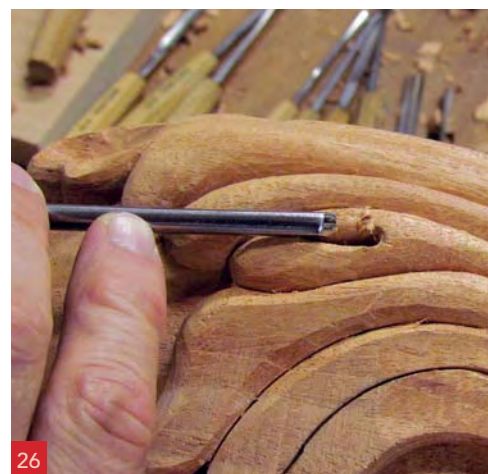
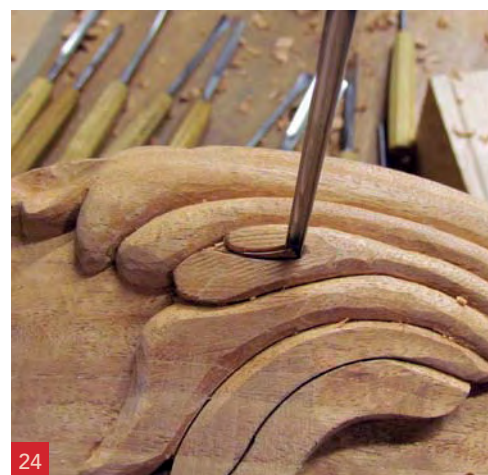
25 Use a fine-tipped needle file to help clean out the waste wood in the smaller areas

26 Next, use a No.3, 5mm carving gouge turned upside down to shape and radius the outside edges

27 On the outer ends separate the leaves from each other as you did in step 10 by using a No.3, 12mm carving gouge upside down and carving arches on the faces of the last two remaining leaves on both sides. Then with a No.5, 8mm carving gouge, radius and clean up the top and bottom ends of the leaves

Top tips

2. By using needle files or detail riffler files you can carve into the smaller areas, such as the eyes of the acanthus leaf and edges of the leaves; this will help to create a feeling of shadow by going deeper into the wood





28



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28 On the very last leaf, carve a concave cove into the outer edge of the leaf using a No. 5, 8mm carving gouge

29 Clean up all the carving gouge marks left on the leg itself. Use No. 2, 14mm and No. 2, 20mm carving gouges to shave the wood as flat and clean as possible

30 Use an assortment of detail riffler files to clean up all the carving gouge marks in the acanthus leaf. This is a great way to smooth the carving and also gives the project crisper details

31 After all the carving marks have been cleaned up, sand the entire leg, foot and acanthus leaf with a 150-grit sponge block. I only sand enough to smooth and blend the wood evenly, this way I do not remove any detail, leaving the carving clean and crisp

32 Here is the completed coffee table showing the corner view of the top edge and carved acanthus leaf on the cabriole leg. To give the coffee table and carving a deep rich look, I used an alkaline dye wood toner then applied a dark reddish brown stain. Then used a pre-catalysed lacquer finish for the clear coat to protect the wood



32

Technical know-how:

Carving animals & humans

Peter Benson shares his top tips and techniques for carving animals and human figures

These tips are by no means comprehensive and may not be of use to everyone. They are simply based on various things that have come to mind, problems I have had or results that have been achieved when trying to help students. Readers may have come across these themselves and may or may not agree with my suggestions or find them useful. Whichever applies, I hope they prove to be of interest and hopefully of value.

TIP 1

Collect as many photos of your subject as possible – it doesn't matter what the pose is, each one will hold some information that will be of value.



A carving of a seated hare bandsawn from the front and side

TIP 2

Study these photos in order to understand the structure of your subject. Take as many measurements of the subject as possible so you can see the relationships between various parts of the body.

TIP 3

List these measurements and scale them to suit the size of your carving. Keep them to hand throughout the carving process.

TIP 4

A maquette is always useful to get the overall shape clear in your head, from all angles. It can also be useful as a working aid to try out ideas as you carve.



This shows the difficult angles confronting the carver

TIP 5

Remove as much waste as you can with a bandsaw or coping saw before you start carving and reduce the block until you can see the overall shape of your subject. Do not start adding any detail until the form of the subject is very clear.

TIP 6

Draw in the skull and backbone before locating the shoulder and pelvic girdles. Remember that these will be symmetrical about the centreline, at right angles to it and will move as the centreline moves.

TIP 7

I always recommend that the skull is set out before anything else. If this is drawn on at a later stage and is not correct then the whole carving will not be right. While setting out the skull don't forget that it is rigid, it cannot bend.

TIP 8

If your outline has been bandsawn and the head is turned at an angle, it can be quite difficult to see the various correct angles. Try drawing the head inside a box and move this box around until it looks right. Draw a centreline through the box and you will see the shape of the head much more clearly.

TIP 9

If you are turning the head on an animal on all fours remember that the head and neck will stick out beyond the side of the body so you will need to allow extra wood on the side to which the head is turned. It may mean that your centreline will need moving over slightly, towards the other side in order to find enough wood.

TIP 10

If you are carving a four-legged animal then try to arrange it so that the grain runs along the direction of the legs. This can apply to any vulnerable area of a carving – you just have to choose which area concerns you the most.

TIP 11

When carving a standing human figure it is important that the posture is correct and it is also important to understand how the centre of gravity affects this. In most cases, it is possible to make adjustments when the figure is finished by altering the level of the base or the



The head marked out in a box shape to show the angles desired



The head roughly carved to set all the angles prior to continuing with the rest of the carving

soles of the feet. These can only be fairly minor adjustments and the following information should be studied.

TIP 12

Any standing figure should really balance on its feet and care should be taken to understand that this can be achieved by making sure that the centre of gravity is correct. A vertical line, dropped down from the vertebra at the base of the neck, should hit the ground dead centre of the weight bearing foot at the instep. If the weight is born equally on both feet, then the line will fall between the two. This will apply in all but exaggerated body positions. It can easily be checked on a volunteer. I cannot stress enough the importance of using real-life references when embarking on a carving.

TIP 13

Many carvers set the head incorrectly on the shoulders of a human figure because they carve the neck upright. Look at people: the neck will nearly always slope forwards, holding the head much further forward than expected. I picture this by asking myself where a drop of water, sitting on the end of a nose would land if it fell. Most will answer that it would land on the chest or stomach. It should land somewhere in front of the big toe. Before anyone disagrees with me, there will always be exceptions.

TIP 14

If you have difficulty carving hands or eyes then ask yourself how many of these you have actually carved. Can you really expect to get it right after even five or six attempts? You need to practise these and can do so quite easily by creating study sticks. These are odd scraps of wood on which you practise carving features and anything else that you find difficult. I have used them for the ears of horses and dogs as well as for the hands and feet of human figures. If you don't want to go to those lengths you can always use Plasticine.

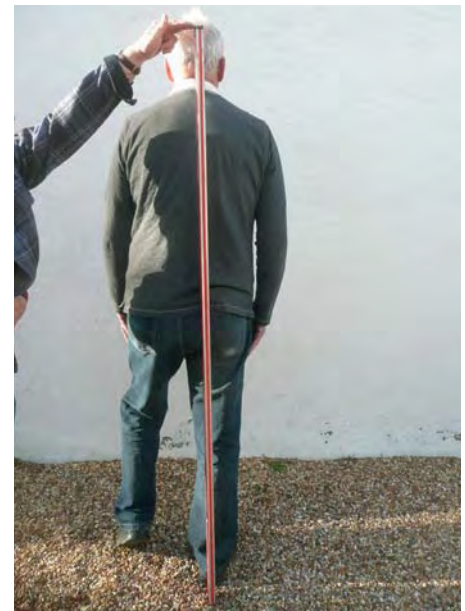


A group of six different hands carved in a couple of hours in scrap wood – time well spent

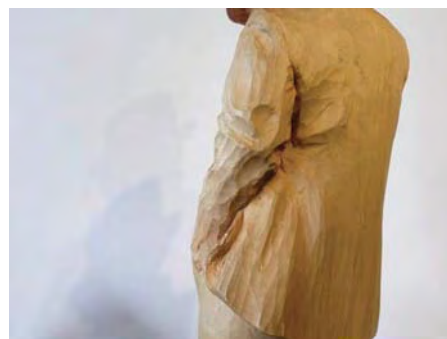


PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER BENSON

The centre of gravity weight on both feet



The centre of gravity weight on one leg



Arm flattened when lying against body



The same effect when parts of the body overlap

TIP 15

Another area that often goes wrong is when adding a hat to a carving. A hat can actually help to get the shape of a head right as it is easy to look inside it to get the correct profile. However, if a hat is on a head it needs to 'contain' the



A practice head carved in a hat. This was done in an hour or so in jelutong and can save many hours of carving time. Time spent on practice pieces like this is never wasted

top half of the head, not sit on top like Stan Laurel's. Remember, the bottom of the brim is almost on the top of the ears and they should be halfway down the head.

TIP 16

Remember that, when arms or legs are crossed or heads are resting on hands, there is a degree of distortion involved. Each touching part is squashed or flattened to much less than the original thickness – drapery will similarly be flattened.

TIP 17

In the same way, when snakes are shown coiled their bodies are flattened where they touch but will be wider in the direction that is not touching. This will avoid the bodies looking too hard or rigid.

TIP 18

Finally, do not try to carve from memory. Even the most accomplished artists don't do this – they use photos, maquettes, sketches, measurements and observations of the live subject. There is a huge difference between what you think a subject looks like and what it actually looks like – it is just the way we are made. ▀

Colmcille wood carving project

Rosaleen O'Callaghan tells us about the Colmcille wood sculpture project



John Stevenson at work on his carving

When Derry was designated the UK City of Culture 2013, the fact that funding would be available for various artistic projects was an opportunity too good to be missed. Woodcarving tutor Liam Kennedy put the proposition to Eden Place Arts Centre leader Judi Logue, who jumped at the idea. The project was left to Liam while Judi secured the funding. Initial meetings were held with enthusiastic woodcarving class members and ideas suggested until it was agreed to produce carvings based on the life of Saint Colmcille, the patron saint of Derry.

Research and design

With the subject matter agreed on, research was carried out, resources pooled and ideas developed. Rosaleen O'Callaghan took on much of the research and identified nine areas of the saint's life worth highlighting. Pictures were sourced to match this storyline but some needed modification, so local artist Maire Mullan improved the existing pictures and produced additional drawings to complete the set.

Materials and carving

Oak (*Quercus robur*) is synonymous with Derry. The Irish word for Derry



The carvings are now on permanent display at the Eden Place Arts Centre



Aileen MacManus at work on her carving

is 'Doire', which means oak grove. Unfortunately, oak of the required size was not available locally, so sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) was chosen as a suitable alternative. Once the wood was cut to size and prepared, the project was up and running. Rather than cut across the weekly classes at the centre, most of the work was done by the carvers at their homes, with regular 'check-in' sessions to make sure progress was constant. The carvings were completed by mid-May, in time for the Colmcille Festival on 7-8 June. They were secured to the gable wall of the centre's exhibition hall and were unveiled by the Mayor of Derry at the



A team of carvers was assembled to work on the project

start of the Festival. The carvings are now a permanent attraction on the Derry Tourist Route.

Credit has to be paid to the carvers who embraced the project so enthusiastically, some were pushed out

of their comfort zones and responded with distinction. The carvers involved were Jimmy Smyth, Aileen MacManus, Connell McGinley, Helen Shiels, Masoud Baghi, Johanna Kelly, John Stevenson, Desi McKinney and tutor Liam Kennedy.



1. 'Birth of Colmcille'

The first carving in the series was made by Desi McKinney and depicts the birth of the saint. Colmcille was born on 7 December, 521, at Rath Cno, County Donegal. In a vision, his mother Eithne was told to bring a flagstone from Lough Aikkbon to Rath Cno, where Colmcille would be born. The stone is known as 'Leac na Cumhadh' (Stone of Sorrows)



2. 'Childhood education'

The second carving was made by Aileen MacManus and shows Colmcille with his foster father and teacher, the priest Cruithneachan Mac Ceallachain. The priest was responsible for Colmcille's religious education as well as teaching him the skills of a nobleman such as marksmanship, riding and swimming



3. 'Ordination of Colmcille'

Carved by John Stevenson, the third image shows the saint's ordination. After years of study, Colmcille entered the monastic school of Clonard presided over by St Finnian, who was known as the 'tutor of Irish saints'. It may have been at Clonard that he was ordained priest or later under the tutelage of St Mobhi at Glasnevin



4. 'Foundation of Derry monastery'

The fourth carving was made by Jimmy Smith. Shortly after his ordination, Colmcille returned home where he was inspired to found a monastery on the island of Derry. The southern half of the island was covered by a grove of oak trees whose beauty so appealed to Colmcille that he would neither fell a tree nor lop a branch to make way for his church. The monastery was built on a clearing by the water's edge and was made long and narrow, running north to south, to preserve the trees



5. 'Copying the Cathach'

This carving by Connell McGinley shows Colmcille writing the Cathach. According to legend, Finnian of Movilla had brought a new version of the Psalms from Rome, which Colmcille secretly copied. He then refused to give the copy to Finnian, but Diarmuid, High King of Ireland, ruled in Finnian's favour



6. 'Battle of Cul Dreimhne'

The next carving in the series, made by Liam Kennedy, depicts Colmcille's reaction to Diarmuid's ruling. He rallied his powerful O'Neill cousins into battle against Diarmuid in 561. In some accounts, Colmcille stood at the rear of the army praying, but in other versions, he was in the midst of the affray and was wounded. Colmcille and the O'Neills were victorious



7. 'Exile to Iona'

This carving was made by Helen Shiels and shows the saint's voyage to Iona. To atone for the lives lost in the battle against Diarmuid, Colmcille determined to win as many souls for Christ in foreign lands as had been killed in the battle. At the age of 42, he left Ireland and, along with 12 companions, built a church on the island of Iona off the west coast of Scotland



8. 'Legend of the crane'

This scene was carved by Masoud Baghi and illustrates a prophecy made by Colmcille. He told a servant they would receive an exhausted guest on the island who must be fed and nursed before she could return to Ireland. The 'guest' was a crane



9. 'Death of Colmcille'

The last carving in the series was made by Johanna Kelly and commemorates the death of the saint. Colmcille died on 9 June, 597, and was buried in St Oran's church on Iona. In the 9th century, his remains were brought back to Ireland and are said to be buried in Portadown

About Eden Place Arts Centre

Woodcarving classes at Eden Place Arts Centre in Derry take place on Monday mornings and Friday nights from September to June. All are welcome

Web: www.facebook.com/pages/Eden-Place-Arts-Centre/104020566330068

20 minutes with...

Angelo Ponticelli

We spend 20 minutes finding out more about the work of Italian woodcarver Angelo Ponticelli



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANGELO PONTICELLI

Angelo Ponticelli is an Italian carver, born in Naples in 1978, but now living in Friuli – Moggio Udinese, northeastern Italy. He started to carve in 2007 and day-by-day he develops his skill through studying, experimenting and discussion with other Italian and international carvers.

Angelo spends every moment of his spare time enjoying his hobby, which he hopes will be his full-time commitment, sooner or later. He prefers to carve local traditional woods, like walnut (*Juglans regia*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), cherry (*Prunus spp.*), linden (*Tilia vulgaris*) and pine (*Pinus spp.*). He says that carving makes him feel at peace with the whole world, nature and himself and every time

he looks at one of his works, it reminds him of the positive vibrations he felt while carving it.

Why do you carve?

About 16 years ago I discovered the carving art in Aosta Valley in northwestern Italy. Since that very first moment I have found myself deeply involved in everything related with working with wood and I decided that I would try to be a woodcarver myself.

How did you learn your skill?

In the beginning I attended some courses, but I still learn every day by practising carving and discussing with people who share my passion. I have

to mention my tutor, Maestro Giusto Rilevanti, who taught me the basic skills, techniques and, above all, the love for carving.

What inspires your carving?

I really feel that every single piece of wood I am going to carve is telling me its special story, giving me unique positive vibrations. I used to say that the core of my wood is like the heart of a person. Actually, the word 'core' and the Italian word for heart, 'cuore', are quite similar!

What are you currently working on?

At the present I have an interpretation of Klimt's 'The Kiss' that is ongoing.



A carving inspired by Gustav Klimt's 'The Kiss'

Which tool could you not be without, and why?

Take everything but leave me the gouge! In my opinion it is the most vital tool for carving.

What do you think has been your biggest achievement?

I am extremely proud of a couple of Baroque-style cassions and a clock carved with some dragons – see photo below right – I have spent months working on them, but they deserved it all.

Whose work do you most admire?

I really love all my Maestro Giusto Rilevanti's masterpieces.



'Elk'

Describe the view from your workshop/bench.

I am a lucky man: I am a proud owner of a former hunter's hut surrounded by wild woods. It is a magical place to be and carve, just in front of my beloved mountains.

What are your interests outside of carving?

I use all my spare time for carving, but I try to also find time for football matches and mountain trekking.

Do you communicate with many other carvers?

I have links with many carvers from various countries. For keeping in touch

with them, I created a Facebook group – so far we are close to 800 members!

What is your best piece of advice to other carvers?

My humble advice to other carvers is to keep on carving, because a piece of wood carved with love will never let you down – it will always teach you something new and positive. ▀

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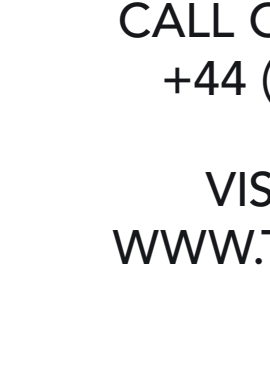
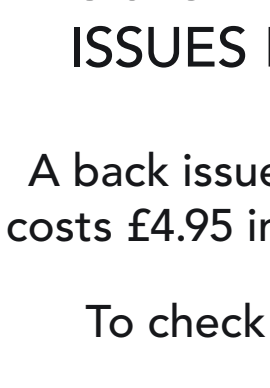
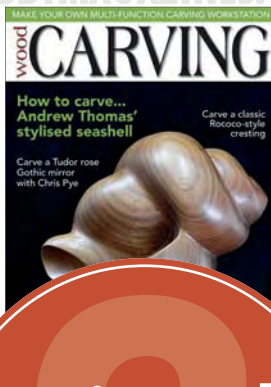
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This six-piece set includes all the commonly used carving tools as well as a carving knife. All tools are handmade to the highest quality and are designed especially for professional carvers. The blades are made of chrome-vanadium tool steel and are heat treated to the hardness of 61-62 HRC. The edges are sharpened and lapped with abrasive paste and finished with an arkansas stone.

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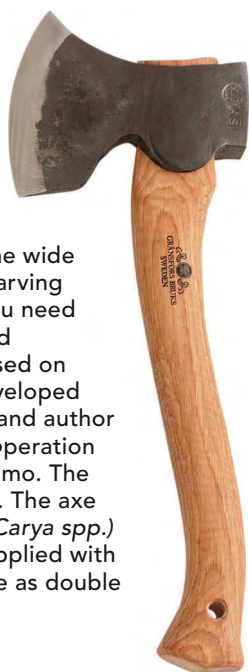
Contact: Tomaco

Web: www.tomaco.co.uk



Swedish carving axe

This Gransfors Bruks chop axe is perfect for hewing bowls and other wooden objects, artistic woodcarving and architectural work. The characteristic curved shape of the cutting edge, carried well above the head's eye, the position of the edge in proportion to the handle, the rather thick bit and the big angle of the wide bevelled face makes the axe a good carving tool. To get the best from this tool, you need to cut on the bevelled face with curved movements. This new axe pattern, based on old Swedish carving techniques, is developed by Wille Sundqvist, master craftsman and author of *Swedish Carving Techniques*, in cooperation with craftsman adviser Onni Linnanheimo. The handle is 'rugged' to give a good grip. The axe has a 100mm face, a 355mm hickory (*Carya spp.*) handle and the head weighs 900g. Supplied with protective leather sheath and available as double grind, right- or left-handed.



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BOOK REVIEW

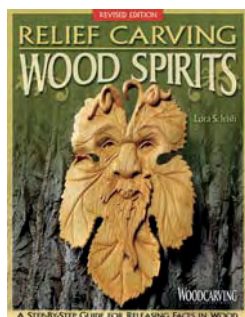
Relief Carving Wood Spirits by Lora S. Irish

This 135-page book of relief carving wood spirits is a step-by-step guide for releasing faces in wood. With their legendary connection to nature, Lora S. Irish teaches you how to create realistic facial features – detailed in the 'understanding facial anatomy' section – in wood, to create a perfect wood spirit to decorate your home or garden with.

The book includes a short chapter that explains the history and legend of wood spirits so you can find out a little more about the subject, especially useful for those who have not particularly looked into carving wood spirits before. The author addresses those who may be new to relief carving, providing a quick guide to the processes which must be undertaken: preparing the wood, roughing out, smoothing, detailing, cleaning up and finally, finishing.

The guide also includes a complete overview of all the different woods that could be used and of all the necessary tools. The guide also provides some mini-tutorials and patterns for the wood spirit carvings. All in all, a great book and well worth a read.

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HONESTAR ERRATUM

In issue 138, we featured the HoneStar but printed the incorrect image of the product. The correct image can be seen here. The tool is especially suited for honing flutes of gouges or carving tools, is unbreakable and consists of a steel base coated with a super abrasive CBN grit.

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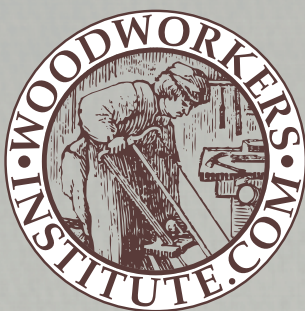
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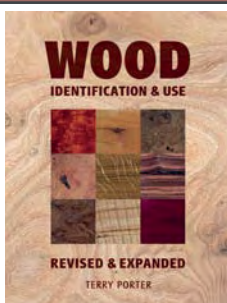
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Duomo di Milano

The cathedral of Milan holds over six centuries of carvings, so we take a closer look

Standing at the heart of Milan, Italy is the Duomo di Milano – the cathedral of Milan. The streets surrounding the structure circle and spoke away and Duomo Square is dominated by the magnificent building. The cathedral of Milan is the second largest Catholic cathedral in the world – only Seville cathedral, southern Spain is larger. Milan cathedral is 157m long and around 40,000 people can fit comfortably inside.

The cathedral was commissioned in 1385 by bishop Antonio da Saluzzo, who was eagerly supported by the first Duke of Milan, Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Originally, the cathedral was planned to use fired bricks, but in 1387 the Duke insisted on marble and the then more up-to-date international Gothic style. Visconti envisioned the creation of the world's largest church, wanting to create a majestic power symbol, so he gave access to his marble quarries, granted tax exemptions and invited architects from across Europe to aid in the building of the cathedral. Construction began in 1386 led by chief engineer Simone da Orsenigo, but it would continue for centuries, right up until 1813 and the final finishes were applied as late as 1965.

The grounds on which the cathedral was built had previously housed Saint Ambrose basilica at the beginning of the 5th century – the 'basilica' having recently been identified as a church. A second basilica was added in later years, but due to fire damage in 1075, the two basilica were rebuilt as the cathedral. Over the years, thousands of specialised workers became involved in the 'fabbrica del Duomo' – the construction of the cathedral – which meant the initial design was constantly altered. The overall look of the cathedral today can certainly be categorised as the Gothic style.

Not only is the pink-hued, white marble façade spectacular, but the interior is stunning too, with hundreds of carved



The Duomo di Milano stands in the heart of Milan, Italy

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

statues, a myriad of half bust sculptures and numerous stained glass windows. The cathedral spreads over a surface of 11,700 square metres and 'preserves the memories of the city'. Within the cathedral walls there are five large naves, divided by 52 pillars, to represent one for each week of the year.

These pillars support the cross-vaulted ceiling of the cathedral. Of the hundreds of statues, some in particular should be noted: a statue of St. Bartholomew by Marco d'Agrate and three grand altars designed by Pellegrino Pellegrini, all of which include some works of art of their own, such as the renowned 'Visit of St. Peter to St. Agatha Jailed' by Federico Zuccari. Other masterpieces within the cathedral include a Renaissance marble altar in the right transept and the Trivulzio Candelabrum, the base of which was crafted in the 12th century and features imaginary animals, vegetables and vines. It can also be noted that there is a spot above the apse that is marked with a red lightbulb. This is supposedly the spot where one of the nails used in Jesus' crucifixion was placed.

This grand cathedral in the heart of Milan is still not finished, as even now some uncarved blocks remain to be turned into sculpture. ▀



The cathedral is home to hundreds of carved sculptures



The carved faces are incredibly realistic

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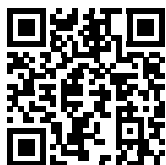
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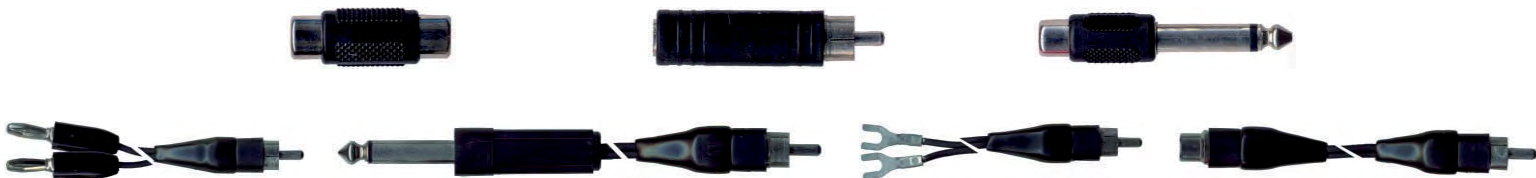
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