

WOOD CARVING

How to carve a Fieldfare



PROJECTS TO CARVE Mouse • Arts & Crafts-style lily dish • Leaf-faced man
TECHNICAL ADVICE Chip carved panels • What shall I carve • Celtic patterns
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Carved bowls


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I have been carving some bowls lately. Yes, you heard me, carving and not turning bowls. As most of you know, I love turning, but there are times when it is not the right approach for what is needed, as in

this case. Also, I wanted to try out some new carving tools and see how they fared.

The timber is spalted eucalyptus. I will be revisiting this subject in the future in greater detail, but some areas were seriously soft and others were coloured but sound timber-wise, so turning them would have posed a serious hazard. So, to get a more organic shape from these sections, carving gives far more freedom to work in ways and adapt and change things shape-wise as required.

One has far more versatility and freedom

in terms of shape when carving than turning offers on its own. I think that is why there is so much more hybrid turned/carved work now than there has ever been and its popularity is growing. People realise the beauty and speed of lathe work, but also want the freedom to do more to work than can be done on the lathe alone. There is also far more collaborative work between turners and carvers being created. I think this working together is a wonderful idea. The interchange of ideas is stunning.

Anyway, the carved bowls I have been working on were interesting timber-wise but are a real treat to work on. I have two on the go at the moment and other timber sorted for more complex bowls. These eucalyptus ones will have the natural trunk underside. I am having great fun making these. I love the susurrus hiss of a beautifully sharp blade cutting wood cleanly. Just the same as with turning, but with hand

carving there is no other sound to invade or hinder that beautiful noise of a perfect cut. Well, maybe apart from a dog stealing your mallet then playing chase. The handle was chewed, but it has a wickedly effective non-slip grip now, but that is another story for another day.

How many of you carve bowls from start to finish? I am not worried about them being done solely with hand tools. Using power tools can make life a lot easier and sometimes faster but of course one has the increased noise and wider dispersal of chips, dust and such like if one power carves, but I find joy in using such methods too.

If you want inspiration regarding carved bowls, look at the work by David Fisher. It is simply stunning and I love it. Website: davidffisher.com

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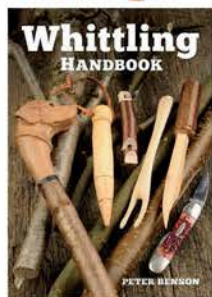
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Fieldfare

Mike Wood shows how to carve this striking member of the thrush family



The fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) is a migratory bird that breeds in Scandinavia, central and northern Europe and as far as parts of China. The fieldfare's name derives from the Anglo-Saxon word 'feldeware', meaning 'traveller of the fields'. They can be found feeding in hedgerows and fields and they also like woodlands. They are a highly social species with some flocks numbering hundreds of birds.

To avoid the harsh winters they migrate and large numbers come to Britain in October/November but are mostly returned

to their breeding grounds by April/May.

I chose to use jelutong (*Dyera costulata*) for this project. It is a timber that is easy to carve and holds detail, including fine pyrography markings. If you do not have jelutong, lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) would work well too, but you need to be a bit more careful with the pyrography. It takes just a little bit longer than jelutong to get the depth of the lines right.

While I use power-carving methods for the majority of the carvings I create, you can, of course, hand carve. Time should not be an issue for carvers, except when trying to make money

from carving, so take your time and use the methods that best suit you. You don't have to apply pyrography or colour to birds if you do not want to, but in the case of the fieldfare, without colouring the body form is hard to distinguish from other members of the thrush family.

For further information about the fieldfare visit

www.rspb.org.uk

www.bto.org

www.british-birdsongs.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Fieldfare

Things you will need

Tools:

- Personal and respiratory protective equipment
- Bandsaw, coping saw or fretsaw
- Carving knife
- Rotary power carving unit
- Coarse taper burr
- Medium flame or taper burr
- Bull-nose burr
- Round-nose burr
- Sanding drum
- Pyrography unit with scalpel nib
- Eyes

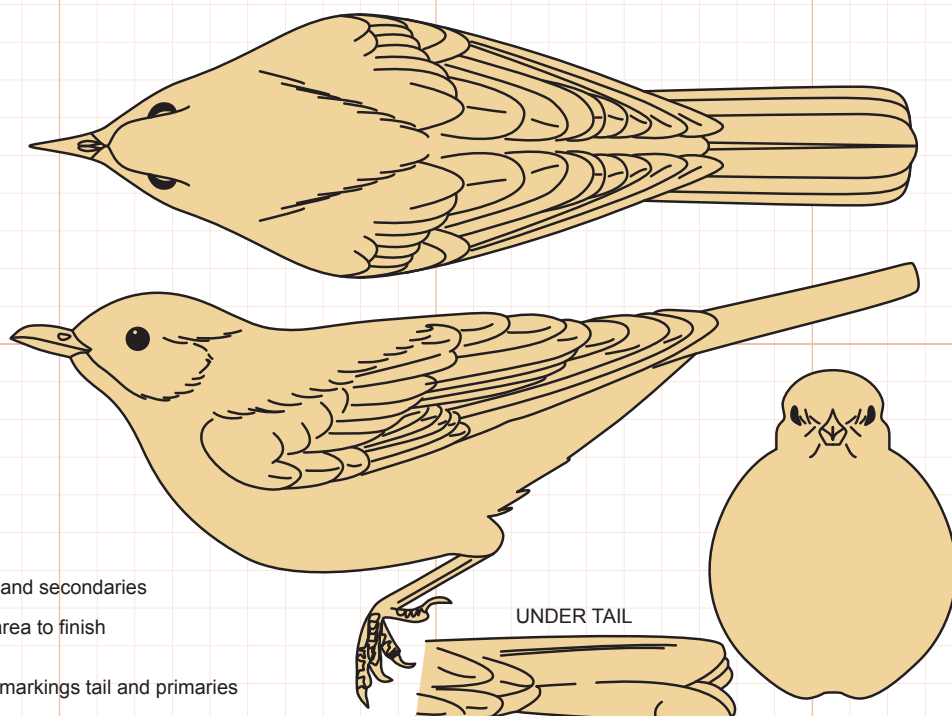
Materials:

- Jelutong (*Dyera costulata*)
- Paint brushes
- Airbrush
- Spray template
- Gesso
- Acrylic colours as per the colour palette below
- Cadmium yellow and cadmium orange acrylic paint for the apple
- Plastic wood
- Abrasives 120-240 grit



PAINTING SWATCHES

1. White Gesso
2. Raw Sienna Undercoat for back scapulars and secondaries
3. Burnt Sienna for thin washes over no.2
4. Burnt Umber for very thin wash over no.2 area to finish
5. Paynes Grey
6. Paynes Grey and white for head and rump
7. Paynes Grey and Burnt Umber for all dark markings tail and primaries



1 Start by cutting out your bird blank, leaving just a little bit of extra wood for shaping and refining later. While finished size isn't critical, this one is a life-like size, about 250mm long. Use the plans provided and scale them up to the size you require.

I use a small bandsaw to cut the outline of the blank, but you can use a coping or fretsaw. Whatever you use to create the blank, remember to support the work so it is effectively and safely held while you cut. The last thing you want is for the blank to rock in the cut.

I use jelutong for the timber, but lime would work well too. Since this is to be coloured, a plain, easily carved neutral timber is best, but if you want to leave the bird plain then you can pick a timber that suits your needs.



2

2 Once you have your rough-cut blank, start shaping it using either a knife, gouge or rotary carving unit with a coarse burr. You need to make sure you have all the main bulges, swells, hollows and essential lines and forms of the bird in the right places. Constantly check your reference material so that you have a full understanding of how the bird moves, its stances and such like to see the key defining aspects of the bird.

3 Once shaped, you need to sand the bird smooth down to 240/320 grit. You can do this by hand, or power sand with a soft sanding bobbin. I power sand and carve. If you do so, remember to wear personal and respiratory protective equipment. Once sanded, draw in the wing feather locations and also the cheek, eye, beak and tail feather detail.

FEATHER LOCATION & DETAIL

4 Using either a gouge or a rotary power-carving unit fitted with a ruby taper burr, as I am in the picture, outline the feather details just marked. Again check reference material for shape and structure then move to a point taper to refine the just-cut areas as required and also carve in the tail feathers.

5 After the tail feathers, move on to the cheek area. Now, use a ball-end burr to cut the eye socket then move back to using the ruby taper to create the feather detail around the eye and also the beak form and appearance.

6 Now you need to flip the bird over and use a coarse taper to cut grooves, which define the plumage structure and boundaries. Once done, sand it to create the soft, pillow-like effect of the feathers on the belly.

7 Draw in the undertail coverts and tail feathers and use the ruby taper burr to cut those feathers in.

8 In readiness for creating fine detail, sand the bird all over to remove any whiskers and sharp edges on the feathered areas. This provides a nice surface for fine detailing.

9 Use a fine bull-nose burr to create texture on the head and nape area as well as the body and wings.



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10 The texture applied must be deep enough to show through an application of gesso so it looks like fine texture and not too deep. If in doubt, try creating various depths of texture on a scrap piece of wood, and apply a coat of gesso. Once dry, see how deep you need to go to create the soft texture required.

APPLE, EYES & BIRD'S FEET

11 Now either turn or carve an apple, sand it and drill a centre hole at the end for the stem. I pyrograph the calyx/stamen. Then, sand a flat area so the apple sits at an angle when placed on a surface. The angle is up to you, so think about how the bird will sit on the apple later.


12

13

12 Now you need to either make or buy feet for the fieldfare. I make mine but feet are readily available online. To fit the feet, drill two holes into the main body in a suitable position and spaced appropriately. Check your reference material to help with this. For the eyes, you can buy or make them yourself. To fit them, place a small amount of plastic wood in the eye socket and press the eye into it. The squeeze-out can then be shaped to create the surround and blended in.

PYROGRAPHY AND GESSO

13 Draw in the relevant main feathers' forms. Then, use a pyrography unit with a scalpel-type tip to detail the main parts of the feathers, such as the central rachis and outlines of the feathers. The depth the lines are burnt to needs to be enough to show through after the gesso is applied, but some need to be deeper than others to create the right look. Refer to your reference material.


14

15

14 Burn in the barbs of the feather vanes.

15 Work all over until the burnt detail is done.

16 You should end up with something like this.

17 Now secure the legs in place using an adhesive or plastic wood. Using plastic wood allows you to mould and shape the intersecting areas between the main body and the top of the legs. This is done while the adhesive is still 'wet' so you can create fine texture. Once dry, apply a coat of gesso all over. Once that's dry, paint the legs burnt umber.


16

17



COLOURING & DETAIL

18 You now need to block in the main colours in the following sequence. Raw sienna is used to undercoat the back scapular's secondary wing coverts. Next, apply two thin washes of burnt sienna over the raw sienna coat. The head and rump are coated with a mix of Paynes grey and white and a mix of Payne's grey and burnt umber is used for all the dark markings on the tail and primary feathers. The underside of the bird needs to have a very light wash of burnt umber.

TOP TIP: Airbrushing can be useful, but if you are not familiar with it, everything on this bird can be done using hand-held paint brushes. I use both for maximum control.



19 Take a rigger paint brush and edge all the feathers with a thin 'dry' coat of white gesso. You need the white to highlight the raised sections of the feathers, not inside the burnt grooves, so have the paint as dry as possible to edge the feathers.

20 You can see how effective the dry coat is in adding highlights. Take your time – rushing will likely cause mistakes and inaccuracies.

21 Check your reference material to see how much edging is required for each type of feather. There is a fair amount of variance.

22 You now need to create the dark dots on the back. These can be done by hand, but are better done with an airbrush in conjunction with a pre-shaped template. Whatever method you use, apply multiple light washes to get the desired effect. Note how the dots have soft, graduated rear ends.

23 Create pointed variants of the dots on the breast and either side of the bird. These too are graduated at the back end and also vary in size. Make a few templates to help with this.

24 At this point create the eye shadow and the darkened band on the lower cheek areas.

25 When dry, dry brush in white highlights on the underside to soften the harsh, dark markings. Once again, check your reference material for the overall look required.




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INTERESTING FACTS

The fieldfare's preferred food is insects and worms, but if the ground becomes frozen they turn to windfall fruits, berries, nuts, seeds and other available items. Historically, fieldfares were hunted for food. Archaeological evidence shows they were hunted by the ancient Romans and, in parts of Europe, hunting continued until the early part of the last century.

26 The feathers on the back now need to be edged and highlighted.

27 Now put in the dark triangular patches on the head. These vary in size so use templates to help with this. Use a brush to create the highlights. Using a variety of brushes will help with creating fine and slightly thicker lines as required.

28 The beak needs to have a coat of cadmium yellow, which, once dry, is coated with a light, thin wash of burnt umber to tone down the colour.

THE APPLE

29 The apple is coloured yellow and, while still wet, it is coated with flow release – a wetting agent which increases the flow of acrylic paints – and red acrylic paint is applied to areas of the apple. While the paints are still wet, use a fan brush to drag the red over the apple to create the blushed, reddish look you require.

30 To make the apple look a little bit older, like a windfall that had been on the floor a while, I used an airbrush to create a few dark dots to indicate the start of the apple spoiling or being bruised.

TOP TIP: If you do not have a wetting agent to increase the ease of flow of the acrylics, you can create a similar effect by dry brushing the paint on. If you don't want a red and yellow apple, use a green or yellow/green colour combination

THE FINISHING TOUCHES

31 The very tip of the beak has a mix of burnt umber and Payne's grey applied to it, which is a solid coat at the tip and graduates to a soft-feathered coat so it blends into the beak about 25-30° of the way back towards the head.

The legs need to be given a coat of clear acrylic lacquer to create a light sheen on the legs. Do not make them glossy.

You now need to bore a couple of holes in the apple in which the spikes on the bottom of the bird feet can be fitted. These are glued in place with a fast-setting adhesive or epoxy resin.

While I pyrographed the apple calyx on the underside of the apple, you could drill a hole and fit a clove stud and glue it in place instead. The stem and leaf can be carved – I created mine from metal foil. But, if you want to, stems and leaves can be bought online. They are usually either cast metal or made from resin/plastic. The cast metal and resin ones can be over painted to the colour you want. ■

The Arts & Crafts movement

Steve Bisco looks at the ethos that inspired the Arts & Crafts style



William Morris's home, the Red House, a National Trust property, was one of the first houses to be built in the Arts & Crafts style, based on the traditional English rural vernacular

The Arts & Crafts movement, which started in Britain in the 1880s and spread its influence to Europe, the US and even Japan through to the 1920s, was more of an ethos than a style. At its heart was a belief that the rapid industrialisation of the Victorian era had undermined the skills of craftsmanship and broken the link between a product and its maker. A factory worker on a production line, repetitively carrying out a single operation, had little connection with the finished product. This was in contrast to the somewhat idealised folk-memory of the Medieval craftsmen and women working in their village workshops and cottages creating 'honest' products entirely with their own hands. The Arts & Crafts movement became almost evangelical in its opposition to the factory system and proponents devoted their lives and artistic endeavours to standing up for traditional values in design and craftsmanship and restoring the dignity of manual labour.

The movement was inspired by the



This William Morris wallpaper at Standen, West Sussex (National Trust), illustrates the stylised plant forms that were central to the Arts & Crafts style

medievalism promoted by the Victorian Gothic architect and designer AWN Pugin (1812-1852) and the radical social and artistic reform promoted by writer and art critic John Ruskin (1819-1900), but its leader and greatest influence was the artist, designer and social activist William Morris (1834-1896). Morris is best known to us today for his beautiful wallpaper

designs, originally produced in his own socially-responsible printing works, but his design influence was far-reaching and it would not be an exaggeration to call him the father of Arts & Crafts.

Morris's advice to 'have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful' became a mantra for the Arts & Crafts movement.

Morris was also closely associated with the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood of painters – Millais, Burne-Jones, Rossetti and others. When Morris married and built what can be called the first Arts & Crafts house, the Red House in Bexleyheath, Kent, the Pre-Raphaelites were frequent visitors and were closely involved in its decoration.

It would take a whole book to relate Morris's influence and achievements so we must move on. We must also skim over the influence of Arts & Crafts on architecture, which was profound. Philip Webb (1831-1915) was the architect of Morris's Red House and Standen,

West Sussex (now both preserved by the National Trust) and several other houses that typify the simple, solid, vernacular style that we recognise as the Arts & Crafts house style. Others, such as Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944), Mackay Hugh Ballie-Scott (1865-1945), and Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928), produced many more such houses that dominated architecture in the Edwardian period.

Morris, Webb and others founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in 1877, which is still today one of the most influential organisations in building conservation.

Although the ethos of the Arts & Crafts movement is easily identified, the Arts & Crafts 'style' is harder to pin down. It varies according to the craft and the medium. We have touched on the building style based on solid, simple and plainly-decorated exteriors in the local vernacular styles. The interiors are typified by fairly plain and simple woodwork (nearly always in oak), repoussé (punched out) metalwork in copper and pewter, and William Morris's wallpapers with their bold and stylised floral designs. Woodcarving is not always present, but is abundant in some places, such as Blackwell and Holker Hall, both in Cumbria.



This fretwork balustrade in oak illustrates the stripped-down simplicity of Arts & Crafts woodwork (Standen, West Sussex – National Trust)



Arts & Crafts furniture such as this elegant dresser had clean and simple lines and was nearly always in oak (Standen, West Sussex – National Trust)



Copper metalwork was widely used in the Arts & Crafts style, usually with repoussé (punched-out) decoration as in this wall sconce in Standen, West Sussex (National Trust)

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE BISCO – REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE NATIONAL TRUST



Cotswolds towns and villages such as Chipping Campden (above) became the epicentre of the Arts & Crafts movement in Britain

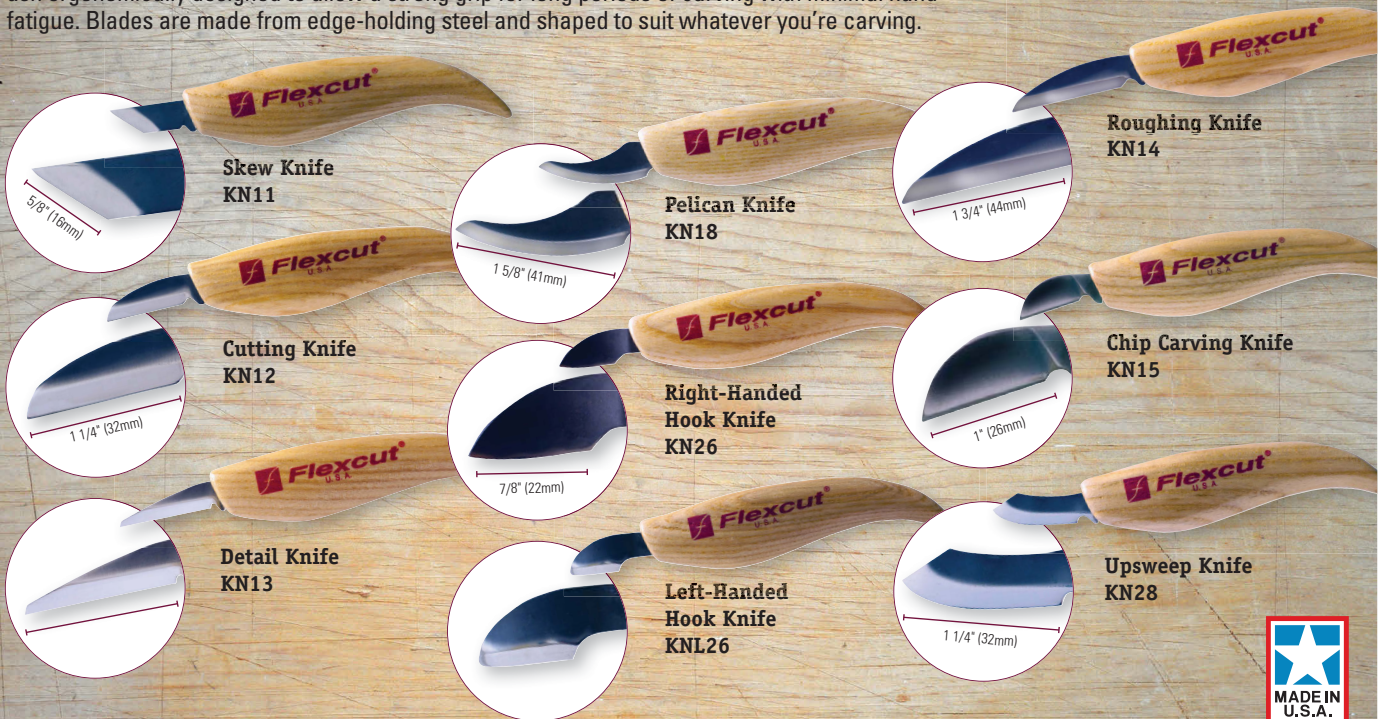
The style of woodcarving, metalwork, wallpaper and fabric design is closely related to its contemporary cousin, Art Nouveau. It is predominately based on the fauna and flora of the British countryside in natural or stylised form, frequently with the sinewy stems and sharp elbow bends so typical of Art Nouveau. The carving and repoussé metalwork are usually in low relief, and oak and copper are frequently used together. But whereas Arts & Crafts was driven by anti-industrial idealism, Art Nouveau embraced the mass market and churned out its products in volume for the ever-expanding Victorian and Edwardian population.

The Arts & Crafts ethos was translated into practical form by several idealistic guilds, including the Guild & School of Handicraft, founded by architect and designer CR Ashbee (1863-1942). Originally set up in the slums of Whitechapel in the east end of London in 1888, it later moved to the idyllic Cotswold small town of Chipping Campden where it was thought the clean country air would improve the lives of the craftspeople and their families. The venture ultimately failed partly because, as many later craftspeople have found, handmade goods are expensive to produce. The irony of the socialist idealism of the Arts & Crafts reformers was that only the well-off could afford to buy their hand-crafted products. But although the ideology may have succumbed to commercial pressures, the Arts & Crafts style is still much admired in the modern world. ■

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Water lily dish

Steve Bisco carves a jewellery dish in the Arts & Crafts style



The craftsmen and craftswomen of the Arts & Crafts movement (see pages 10–11) liked to produce objects that were both beautiful and useful, and they took their inspiration mainly from the flora and fauna of the countryside around them. Some of the plants, birds and animals they depicted were in a stylised form closely related to Art Nouveau, and others were portrayed in their natural form.

This dish is a depiction of a water lily leaf and flower in a stylised form, but with a nod and a wink to the natural plant. In nature, the lily leaf and the lily flower grow on separate stems and are only seen united when the flower drifts into the deep 'inlet' at the back

of the leaf, which does occur often enough for us to use it as a decorative motif. The flower therefore sits to the rear of the leaf and not in the centre. This helps the design by providing a larger area of dish at the front of the leaf.

The lily leaf, carved in oak, is basically flat with curled-up edges, much like the natural leaf which lays flat on the surface of the water and often curls at the edges. The flower, carved in lime, is a small and hollow bowl shape with multiple rows of petals, similar to the real flower. The six lower 'sepals' of the flower, which in nature are green like the lily leaf, I have carved as part of the oak dish. Oak was the favourite timber of the Arts & Crafts woodworkers, worked to a tooled finish with

a natural wax polish, as I have done here.

The inner petals, which in nature are usually white, pink, or yellow, I have finished in copper leaf to enhance the Arts & Crafts period effect. Metalworking in copper, pewter, and wrought iron figured highly in the Arts & Crafts movement and metal smiths and woodcarvers would often have worked alongside each other. If you don't want to try copper gilding, you could use a good copper lacquer.

In the spirit of William Morris (see page 10) I have sought to make this dish useful as well as decorative. It can be used for holding necklaces, rings and earrings – the larger items on the broader surface of the leaf, and the smaller items inside the lily flower.

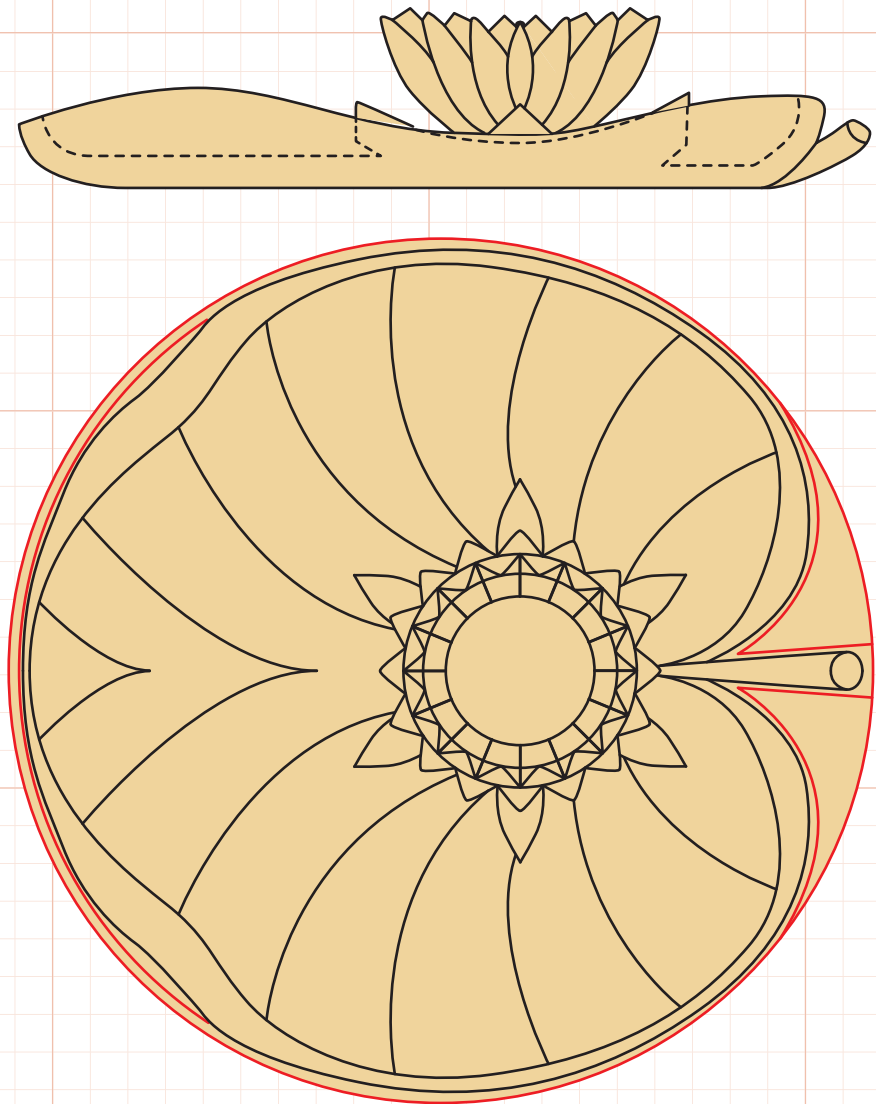
Things you will need

Tools:

- No.3 10mm & 20mm fishtail
- No.4, 6mm fishtail
- No.5, 7mm
- No.5 13mm curved
- No.8, 8mm
- No.8, 8mm curved
- No.9, 16mm curved
- 18mm spoon gouge,
- 8mm short bent gouge
- 10mm skewed spoon gouges L&R
- 12mm back-bent gouge
- Straight V-tool,
- Curved V-tool
- 16mm hooked skew chisel
- 10mm skew chisel
- 6.5mm flat chisel
- Cabinet scrapers
- Jigsaw/bandsaw or scrollsaw

Materials:

- Oak (*Quercus Robur*)
225 x 225 x 25mm
- Lime (*Tilia europea*)
80 x 80 x 35mm
- Clear wax polish
- Copper leaf
- Gilding paste
- French polish

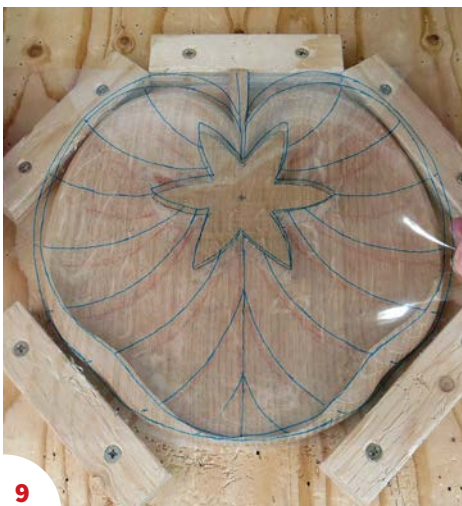


PREPARATIONS

1 Get a piece of oak 225 x 225 x 25mm and a small piece of lime 80 x 80 x 35mm. Make a full-size copy of the drawing, with the lily leaf 220-225mm across, and trace the pattern on to the wood using carbon paper.

2 Cut around the outer edge of the lily leaf with a jigsaw, bandsaw, scrollsaw or whatever hand saws you have. Take care not to break the stem when cutting. Fix wooden strips on the bench to hold it in place and put a couple of nails each side of the stem to stop the dish rotating. You are now ready to start carving.



**3****4****5****6****7****8****9****10****CARVING THE LILY DISH**

3 Start by isolating the outer edges and the six-pointed flower base with a V-tool. The V-trench will act as a stop line to prevent splinters running off into the bits we want to keep as we excavate the inner part of the dish. Use a No.9 gouge to cut deeper stop lines across the grain to protect the narrow cross-grain sections of the outer wall.

4 With the aid of the stop lines, you can use the gouge to excavate along the grain. Try to work to an even depth so the base is 10mm thick, and keep checking it with a depth gauge or double-ended callipers.

5 When the excavation is complete, carefully pare down the edges of the flower sepals to vertical with a sharp chisel to avoid breaking the tips. Now level out the 'floor' to an even 9mm thickness with a broad shallow gouge.

6 Re-draw the vein lines with a wax pencil while their ends are still marked on the outer rim. Now go round the outer rim and lower the sections at the front and sides as they are shown in the finished photos. The lowest parts should still have a lip of about 3mm above the floor of the dish. Mould the outer edges of the dish into the sides and round over the highest parts so they curl over on themselves.

7 Slightly undercut around the underside of the dish and round over the sides so they blend in with the top curls. This is best done in a bench vice with some padding to protect the carving.

8 To get a smooth finish on the curved surface of the curls it is best to use a curved cabinet scraper. Use the curves on the scrapers that best suit each part of the carved shape.

TOP TIP: Cabinet scrapers are a useful addition to the woodcarver's toolbox for creating a smooth glossy finish on oak and other hardwoods. They usually come in sets of three with various flat and curved profiles. By holding them in a near-vertical position on the wood and drawing them towards you, the burr on the scraping edge will scrape off thin shavings leaving a shiny finish that enhances the grain and medullary rays of the oak, unlike abrasives which dull the grain. Cabinet scrapers can be sharpened by pushing a fine metal file or hardened steel rod squarely across the scraping edge to create a small burr.

9 Before carving the leaf veins it is best to check that all your lines and outer edges are in the right place. Trace the pattern from the drawing on to a piece of clear plastic or acetate film and hold it in place over the carving so you can see how your lines are placed in relation to the pattern.

10 Carefully carve in the leaf veins with a V-tool, then use a shallow back-bent gouge to blend each section of leaf into the veins. Use cabinet scrapers to get a smooth and shiny finish in each leaf segment.

11 Now carve the sepals of the flower. Dish them inwards towards the middle and create a hollow in the centre for the lime section to sit in. Carve a shallow V in each sepal. Finish by slightly undercutting the sepals and creating a sharp edge against the leaf base.

12 Finally, carve the stem coming out of the back of the leaf with the traditional 'scooped' end as though it has been cut from the plant. The thin stem should be aligned along the grain, but you still need to take care not to break it.

13 The lily leaf is now complete. Give it two or three coats of a good wax polish to bring out the colour in the oak, but leave the middle of the flower sepals untouched so you can glue in the flower later.

LIME WOOD FLOWERS

Carving flowers in limewood is delicate work and can seem a bit daunting if you haven't tried it before. The benefit of lime (*Tilia europea*) is that it can be carved very thinly without breaking, provided your tools are sharp. By shaving away the wood in fine slices you can create thin overlapping petals with sharp edges. A 16mm hooked skew chisel is the most versatile tool for this type of carving.

CARVING THE LILY FLOWER

14 Cut the lime block into an 80mm diameter circle. Then cut the 16 indentations between the outer petals, looking rather like the cogs on a gear wheel, that will form the two outer layers of petals. The best work-holding method for such a small piece is to glue it to a piece of card which is glued to a backing board, and then screw this to the bench.

15 Use a spoon gouge to hollow out a bowl shape in the middle of the flower. It should be 45mm diameter at the top and about 27mm deep at this stage, leaving about 6mm thickness in the bottom.

16 Cut down the level of the outer petals so they alternate at 25mm and 18mm in height from the baseboard. Use a V-tool to divide the inner petals on the inside of the bowl, then slightly lower the level of each alternate petal.

17 Shape the eight highest inner petals so they curve slightly inwards at the top. The alternate eight petals are just small points forming an inside layer. Hollow out the bowl shape some more to make the petals look thin and delicate, but not too fragile.

18 Shape the outer petals to form two layers. Each layer must emerge at a natural angle from the base and sides of the flower so they all appear to wrap around and overlap each other. Undercut each layer until you can detach the flower from the card and backing board.



11



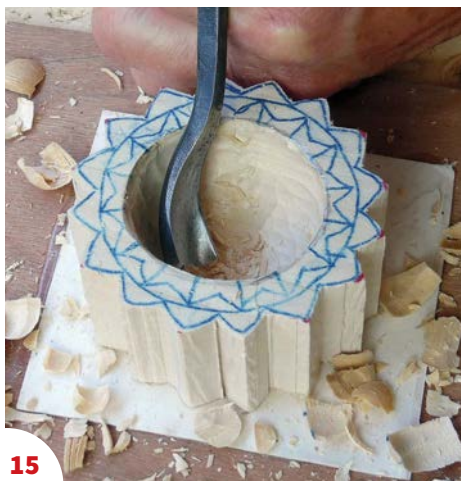
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19 Fix a small block of wood to the bench that will fit inside the flower to hold it still. Place the flower over it upside down with some padding in between. Now shave away the underside of the flower and the outer petals until you get a natural flower shape that will fit neatly inside the oak sepals on the lily leaf.

20 Give the flower a coat of acrylic sander-sealer to seal and strengthen the wood. Unlike oak, lime wood tends to have a 'woolly' finish and usually needs abrasives. Give it a light sanding so the petals and the bowl are smooth and clean. Adjust the fit in the sepals of the oak lily leaf until it fits perfectly, but don't glue it yet.



21



22



23

COPPER GILDING

21 Get some copper leaf and some gilding paste, available from most art stores or online. Give the flower an undercoat of a dark red non-gloss paint as a base for the copper leaf – acrylic paint is fine if you sand it smooth. When the paint is dry, give the flower a thin coat of gilding paste. Cut up some sheets of copper leaf into 25mm squares. You can do this with scissors while it's in its backing papers.

22 When the gilding paste has become dry but slightly tacky to the touch, about 10 minutes, pick up a piece of copper leaf in a folded piece of paper and lay it over a section of the flower. Press it down with a soft brush, and brush away any loose pieces of leaf. Continue over the whole flower (except the gluing area on the base) and go over any bare sections again with more copper leaf.

23 When the gilding is finished, give it a coat of French polish to seal and antique the bright copper leaf. Work swiftly and smoothly with a soft brush as the French polish dries very quickly and will form muddy patches if you go over it too many times. French polish is shellac dissolved in alcohol, so clean your brushes in methylated spirit.

24 With the flower glued in place, the water lily dish is finished. Here it is being used for jewellery, with small items in the flower bowl and larger items in the lily leaf dish. ▶



24

DID YOU KNOW?

Although the Arts & Crafts style originated in Britain, it also became popular in many other countries. America developed its own version of Arts & Crafts based around the 'homespun' plain furniture of the Shaker style and the folk crafts of the pioneer settlers. Whereas British Arts & Crafts tended towards the 'Tudorbethan' thatched cottage, America followed its own vernacular of the 'prairie-house' style. One of America's best-known architects, Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959), was a leader in the American version of the Arts & Crafts style.

News & events...

Bringing you the latest news and event details from the woodcarving community

BDWCA: Encouraging young people to carve

When the Editor, Mark Baker, phoned to 'encourage me' to write this latest news update, I was just driving home with my granddaughter (it was half term) who was going to spend a few days with me carving – and that triggered some memories...

Back in 2010, in Issue No.114, I wrote: 'Two days ago it was the monthly meeting of my BDWCA regional group. I had my six-year-old granddaughter with me so knew I wouldn't get much chance to carve, so just took with me my early stages carving of a robin (for our regional group competition) in the hopes that I could at least do some sanding. Which I did, initially, but then she wanted to have a go so, not wanting to inhibit a possible future carver, I first gave her a spare piece of wood to work with, but no, that wasn't sufficient, she wanted to be working on a real carving – my robin, to be precise. Out of my bag came my sanding bow and she happily worked away, checking regularly that she was doing it correctly.'

Fast-forward to late 2015 and the same granddaughter had a school art project to do, they could do anything they wanted, but it had to take at least four hours and they had to record the process, and she wanted to carve a bird. I pointed out that it would take a lot longer than four hours – not a problem, she said. And guess what she wanted to carve? Yes, it was a robin.

To be honest I thought that would be the end of it, but no, she was hooked. She became a member of the BDWCA – membership is free to those who are 17 years of age or younger – and in 2016 she carved and painted a blue tit, which won her a bronze rosette at youth level in our annual show. In 2017 her great spotted woodpecker also won a bronze. She is now working on her entry for 2018 (she is aiming for silver or gold with this one) and has developed her carving skills to include power carving, and this one will also be pyrographed.

Encouraging young people to take up and continue our art form is essential if it is to continue, but young people will also need older carvers to mentor them. Mentoring can be challenging, but very satisfying, so if you know a youngster who is showing some interest, put aside some time to encourage him or her!

For further information on the BDWCA visit, www.bdwca.org.uk.



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAM WILSON FOR THE BDWCA

Working on the great spotted woodpecker in 2017



FRANCES MILLBURN FOR THE BDWCA



PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANCES MILLBURN FOR THE BDWCA

2017, great spotted woodpecker awarded bronze rosette



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAM WILSON FOR THE BDWCA

First encounter, sanding a robin

2016, blue tit awarded bronze rosette

2018 Events



• Craft & Design Fair

When: 3-7 May 2018

Where: RHS Garden Wisley, Wisley Lane, Wisley, Woking GU23 6QB

Web: www.craftinfocus.com

• Makers Central

When: 5-6 May 2018

Where: National Exhibition Centre, Marston Green, Birmingham, B40 1NT

Web: www.makerscentral.co.uk

• Weald of Kent Craft Show

When: 5-7 May 2018

Where: Penshurst Place, Penshurst, Tonbridge TN11 8DC

Web: www.thecraftshows.co.uk/kent/spring/

• Weird & Wonderful Wood

When: 19-20 May 2018

Where: Haughley Park, Wetherden, Nr Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 3JY

Web: www.weirdandwonderfulwood.co.uk



• The Toolpost Open House

When: 2-3 June 2018

Where: Unit 7, Hawksworth, Southmead Industrial Park, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7HR

Web: www.toolpost.co.uk

• Tri-City Woodcarvers 21st Annual Rendezvous

When: 8-9 June 2018

Where: Benton County Fairgrounds, Kennewick WA 99336

Contact: Dean Herigstad (+1) 509-713-0108

• Cheshire Game & Country Show

Featuring the 14th English Open Chainsaw Carving Competition, featuring more than 30 over the top chainsaw carvers from around the world. Not to be missed.

When: 25-27 August 2018

Where: Flittogate Lane, Knutsford, WA16 0HJ

Contact: cheshiregameandcountryfair.co.uk



• Yandles & Sons Woodworking Show

When: 7-8 September 2018

Where: Hurst Works, Hurst, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6JU

Web: www.yandles.co.uk

• Wisconsin River Carvers 2018 Show

When: 15-16 September 2018

Where: The Holiday Inn, 1001 Amber Avenue, Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54482

Web: wisconsinriverwoodcarvers.org/2018show

• Bentley Woodfair

When: 28-30 September 2018

Where: Bentley, Halland, East Sussex, BN8 5AF

Web: www.bentley.org.uk

• World Stick Making Championship

When: 21 October 2018

Where: Bakewell Agricultural Centre, Agricultural way, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1AH

Web: <http://thebsg.org.uk>

• Woodworking and Powertool Show

When: 26-27 October 2018

Where: Westpoint Centre, Clyst St Mary, Exeter, EX5 1DJ

Web: www.wptwest.co.uk

• The Toolpost Open House

When: 3-4 November 2018

Where: Unit 7, Hawksworth, Southmead Industrial Park, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 7HR

Web: www.toolpost.co.uk

• North of England Woodworking Show

When: 16-18 November 2018

Where: Railway Road, Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate, HG2 8NZ

Web: www.skpromotions.co.uk

If you have something you want your fellow carvers to know, send in your news stories, snippets and diary dates to Mark Baker at Woodcarving, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XN or to markb@thegmcgroup.com

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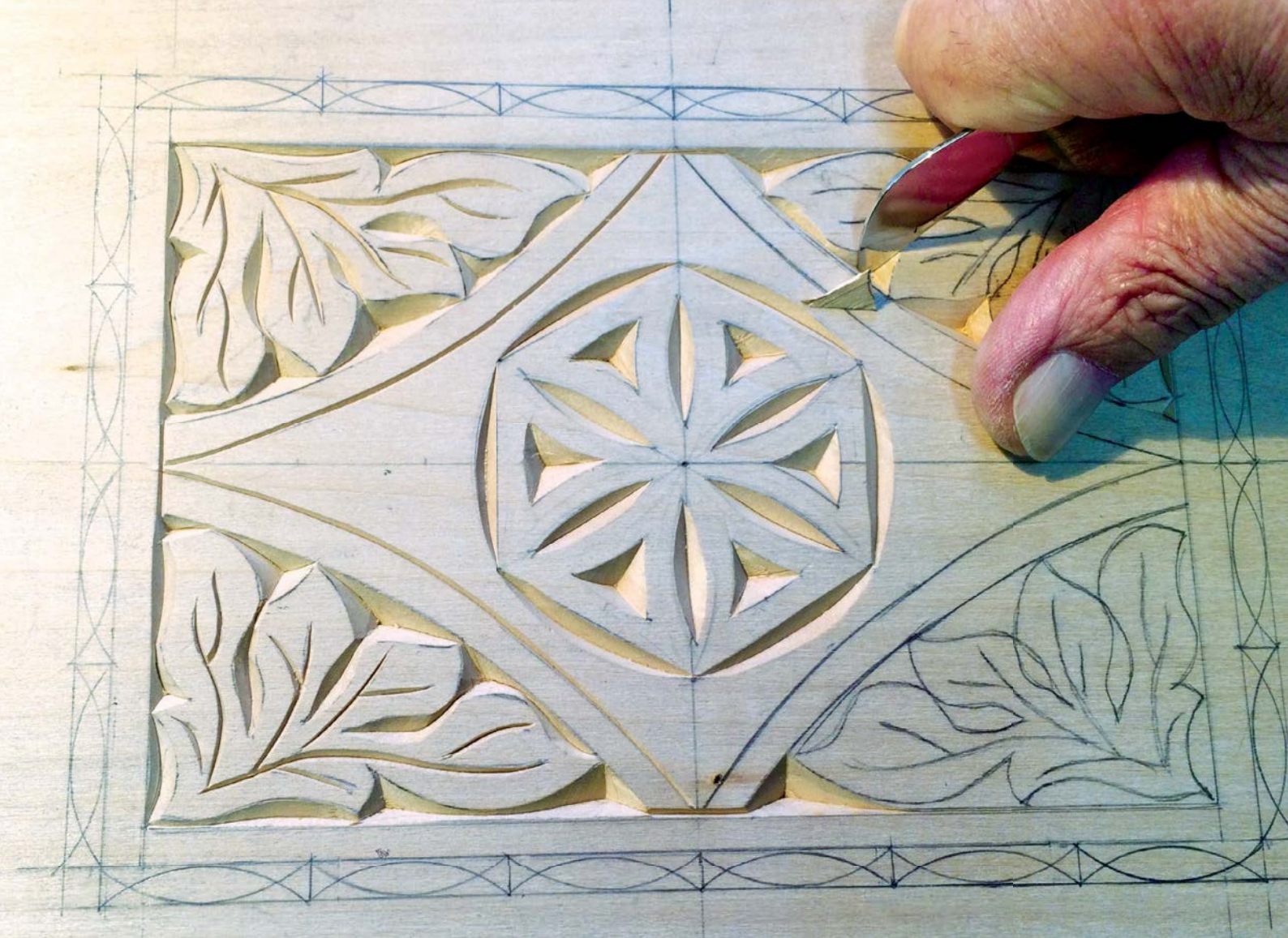
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Creating panels

Murray Taylor explores the drawing and carving of a variety of decorative panels

In this article, I will introduce you to a selection of panels, from the basic to the more advanced, look at ideas for a different style of chip removal and then move on to a project.

In many European countries decorative panels can be found in larger forms, such as ceilings, door panels, drawer fronts etc., and on smaller objects like box tops, the backs of spinning stools, name plates, planters and stick stands. Now, before we go any further I would like to explain that a panel in this context is an area of wood decorated with various patterns. They can be repeated geometric shapes, rosettes or free-form designs. They can also be grids – that is a lattice-work of square or diagonal lines, made with stab-knife marks, other decorative patterns or any combination of the above.

It would only take a stroll around any major European city to see wonderful examples of carved door panels, some using low or high relief carving and some with highly decorative chip-carved designs. For absolute excellence you should see the carved doors



A chip-carved panel in the seat of an old chair found in our local church

of Bath cathedral in Somerset, or the exquisitely carved doors of the cathedral in St Omer in France, both of which are favourites of mine and can be seen online.

Closer to home, you will find interesting examples in local churches, museums or even some old pubs. Further afield you might visit stately homes or just take a walk around your nearest city – you will be surprised at what you will find.

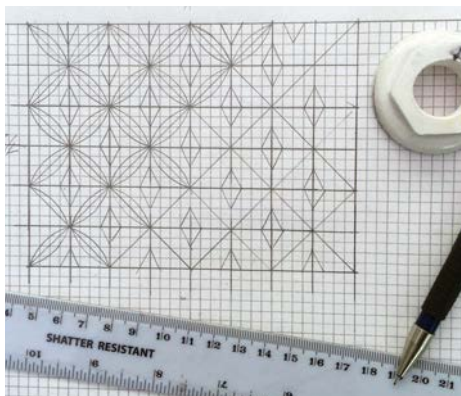


A panel on the Old Court House, not 100 yards from my home

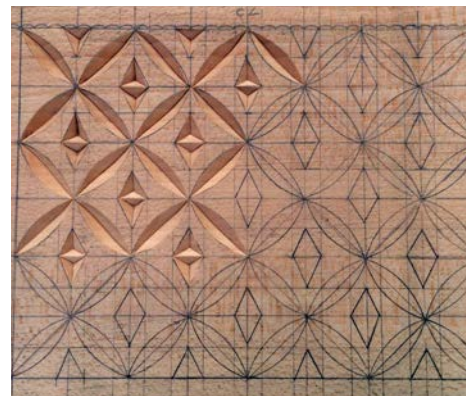
Developing a panel

You will notice that the design for the panel is made up of two and three-cut chips that we have covered previously, and it should be noted that the scalloped lines from the 4mm marking template are still clearly visible along the top and left-hand side. The reason for this is a practical one. Often while carving you will find that your markings can become faint as your hand rubs on them – this is because you should have used a soft 2B pencil. By leaving the template markings it is easy to correct this and re-mark the pattern.

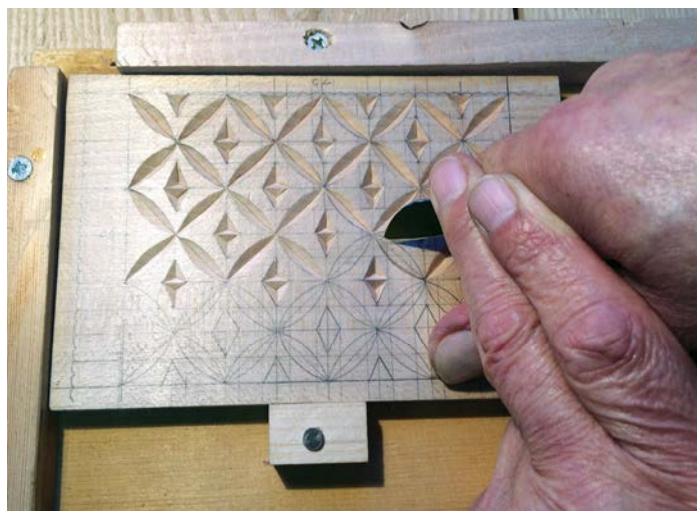
In this particular pattern you can see that the main element is a square consisting of 8 x 4mm divisions, this is broken down into 4 x 4mm divisions, the diagonals of which form the basis of the two-cut lozenge chip.



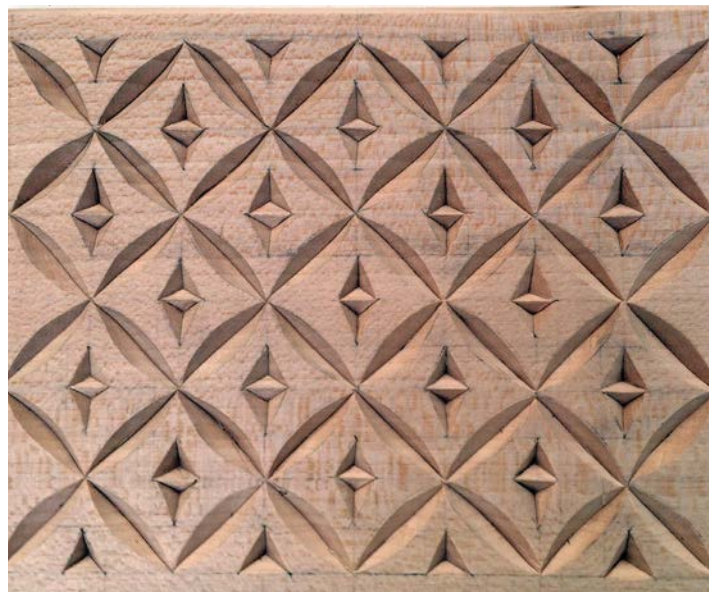
Developing the pattern on 4mm graph paper



The pattern transferred to the wood using the 4mm template



If you have trouble removing chips using one hand, secure your work and use your free hand to apply pressure to the blade



The finished panel with the edges trimmed and pencil marks removed

Composite panel

For the next panel I have used a series of two and three-cut chips, a rosette and a border. This design was drawn directly on to the wood without previously planning it on paper but note that all the marking out comes from the two centre lines. I would suggest at this stage that you do plan your panels on paper first.



A composite panel drawn directly on to the wood



Another panel of two and three-cut chips drawn on to the wood



The carved panel

Geometric design

Now we move on to geometric grids. The first is based on a 90° lattice. I have shown it drawn on 4mm graph paper and have given you two size options.

It can either be based on a 24mm square or on a 32mm square, both divided into 4mm divisions, and these would have a circle of 12mm or 16mm radius respectively. I have also shown how you could leave a

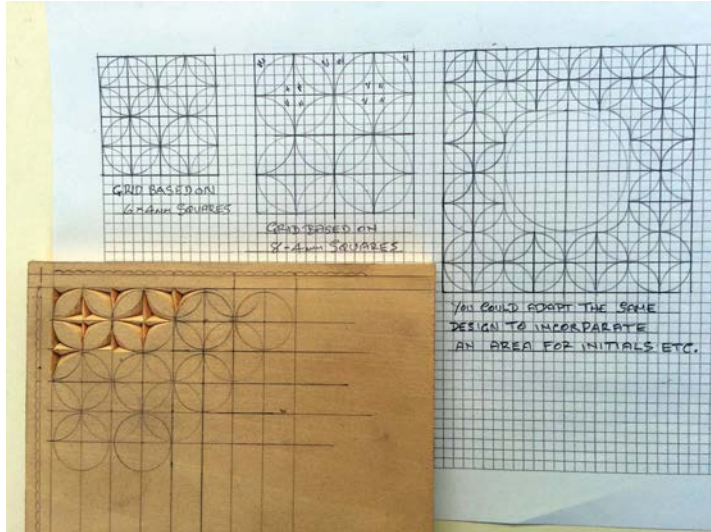
centre section for a motif or initials.

There is a fundamental difference between marking out square and diagonal grids. It should be readily apparent that the horizontal and vertical divisions on the square lattice are the same, however this does not necessarily hold true for a diagonal lattice.

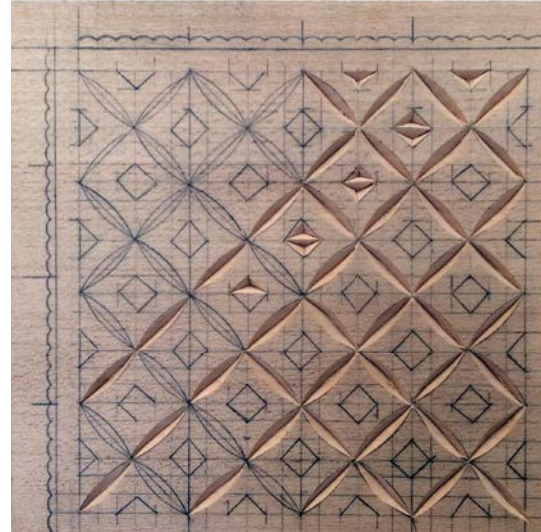
Once you have decided how many horizontal divisions you will make in your lattice you

must divide the available vertical space into the same number of divisions. This will not be the same measurement. It takes a little more planning than for the square grid but is not difficult once you get the hang of it.

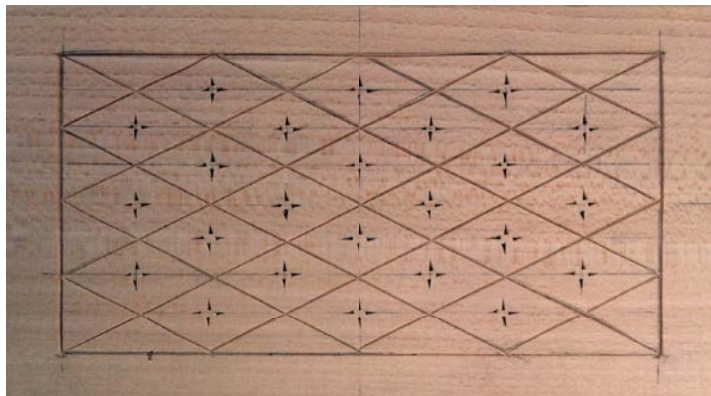
I hope that the various examples of panel layouts that I have given you will act as food for thought and encourage you to try out your own designs.



A drawing showing the 24 and 32mm grids and a partially carved example



An alternative grid based on a 24mm square using a washer to mark out the lozenges



Two examples of diagonal grids with stab-knife markings

New cuts

At this stage in my introduction to chip carving I am going to introduce you to some new cuts that have not been covered so far and yes, shock horror, not all chip carving is done with just two knives.

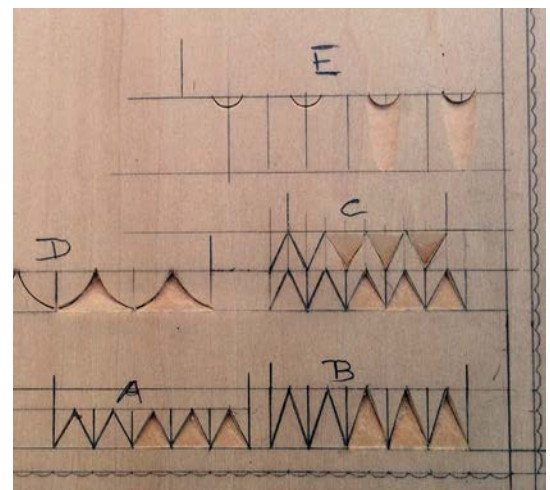
If we look at the first of the new cuts, in section A, they might at first glance appear to be a standard three-cut chip, but closer examination will show that the two cuts going up to form the apex are not cut at the normal 65° but rather at 90° to the surface of the wood using your regular chip-carving knife. The third cut, however, is a slicing cut made with the straight-bladed knife.

The next example, figure B, is produced by a similar process. The 4mm scallop markings made by the template will enable you to judge the size of the chips. Now move on to example C and here we encounter a problem, the 90° cuts are made in the same way

as before, but as we move away from the edge of the board it becomes very difficult to make the slicing with a knife so here we introduce the skew chisel.

Now we come to example D and here I am introducing something quite new to your chip-carving repertoire – the use of a gouge. In this case I have used a No.5, 10mm to make the first cut and a skew chisel for the slicing cut. You could use any suitable gouge and adjust your chip size accordingly,

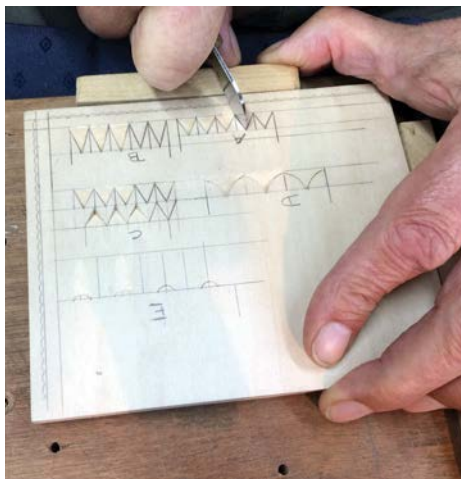
Finally, we come to example E, which is a little different. Here both the vertical and slicing cuts are made with a gouge. In this case I have used a No.7, 6mm for the vertical cut but have chosen a slightly wider No.7 for the slicing cut. In this way it is easier to make the slicing cut get right into the corners of the vertical cut. You could, of course, use any suitable gouge that you already have.



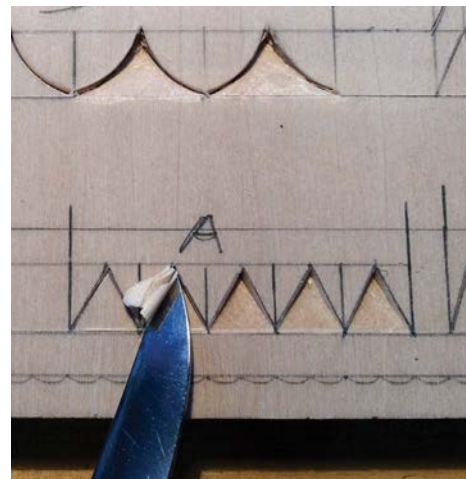
A sample board of five new chip cuts



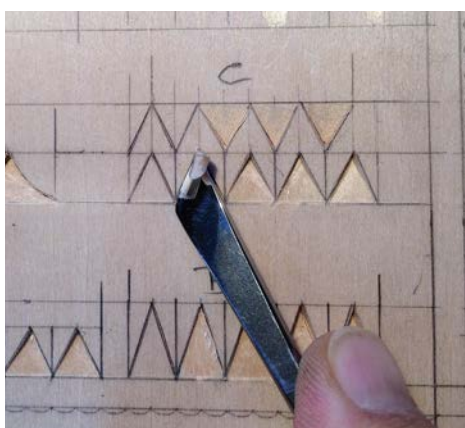
Some possible additions to your toolkit. From left to right: a straight-bladed chip-carving knife, two skew chisels, and three gouges, a No.7, 6 and 9mm and a No.5, 10mm



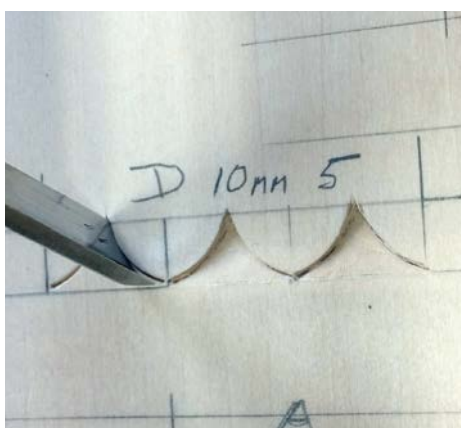
The first cut at 90°



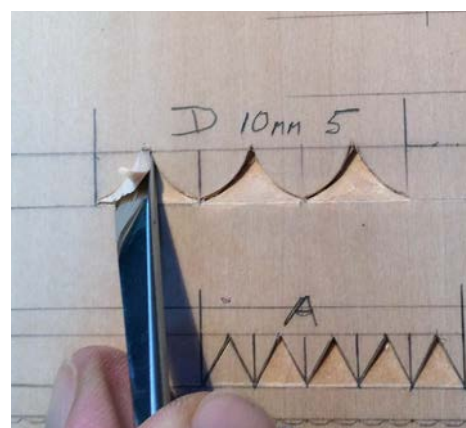
The slicing cut



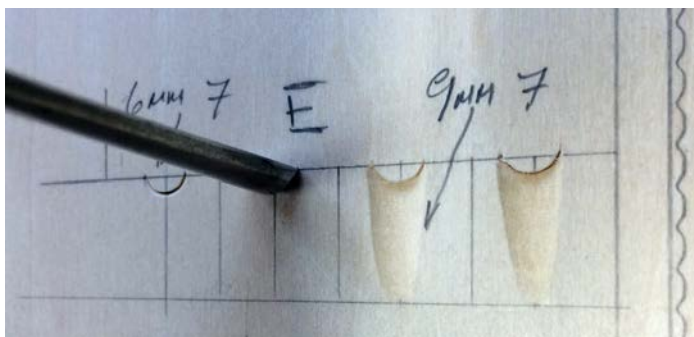
Using the skew chisel to make the slicing cut



Using the skew chisel to make the slicing cut



Making the slicing cut with a skew chisel



Making the vertical cut with a gouge



Making the slicing cut with the No.7, 9mm

New tools

You may have noticed that the three gouges in the picture appear to be a little short – no, you are not seeing things, there is a reason. Most of my carving is done sitting down and I find the full-sized gouges cumbersome for this work, so what I use is a well-known make of palm tool blades fitted with a 115mm beech handle. This gives me a lightweight tool that is ideal for carrying to demonstrations.



Here I have personalised the box with a panel in the Japanese style. The lettering is simply formed with three-cut chips



Here is another idea – some chip-carved lettering and some foliage work drawn but not yet carved

Toolbox

The project for this issue is more open ended than usual. The idea occurred to me when I bought a really tough toolbox that would stand up to the rigours of travel to shows and clubs. There was a plastic label on the top of the box, which on removal left an unsightly residue which I could not remove so I had the idea of doing two jobs in one – personalising the box and covering the sticky mess left by the label.

The two panels are obviously designed for this particular box, but the idea of this project is to personalise your toolbox in any

way that fits, or you could go all the way and make your box to suit your needs.

A box I made some time ago, the box and hinges etc. were my design, the carved designs were inspired by the work of Wayne Barton.

Once I got into the personal box theme the ideas just began to flow and I got to thinking of all those practice panels that I had from demonstrations and teaching sessions that were gathering dust at the back of my workshop, so a few dovetails later and another one-off box emerged.

I realise that this project idea is a little unusual, but as most projects are very specific I thought that ideas and not instructions would give a lot of scope, whether you are personalising an existing box or making one from scratch. It is always a good feeling to have your chip-carving tools in a box that is personal to you.

In the next issue, my final article on the Introduction to Chip Carving will cover various aspects of free-form design, yet one more new tool, and some project ideas.



Top panel with hinges



Side panel



Back panel



Side panel



Back of box



End panel, box made up of practice boards

Next month

In the next issue, my final article on the Introduction to Chip Carving will cover various aspects of free-form design, yet one more new tool, and some project ideas.

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Little mouse

Johan Roudy carves a ready-to-leap mouse



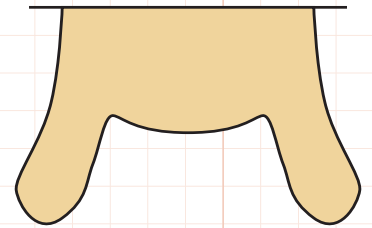
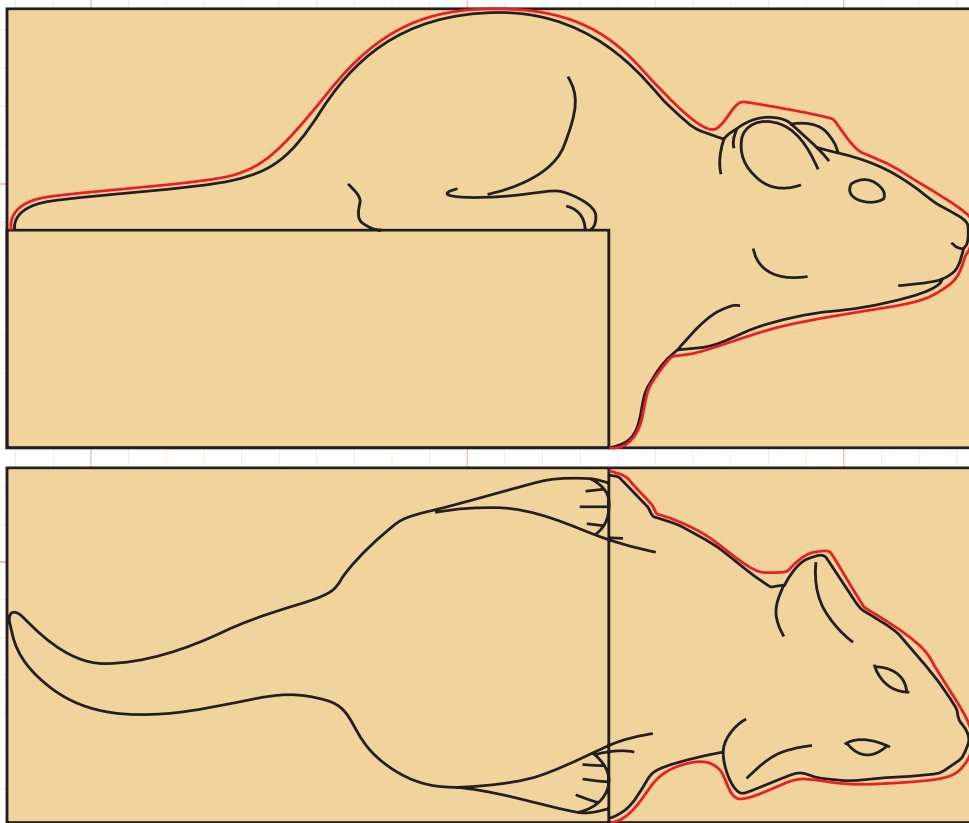
This mouse was a really fun project to carve. The base is left during almost all the carving process to allow the piece to be clamped on the bench more easily. Once the carving is done, it is carefully cut so that the mouse can rest, for example, on the edge of a shelf. My Japanese saw was quite handy for that step. A clean and accurate cut can be achieved both along and across the grain. It is important to carve the body large enough compared to the head to achieve a good stability and avoid the

carving falling too easily. Also, I had to change the direction of the tail compared to the pattern to get rid of a knot in the wood.

I chose a piece of walnut (*Juglans* spp.) as it has a nice grain and colour and is one of the preferred choices for carving. My intention was not to carve the fur, but walnut could have held such fine details.

I hope you will enjoy this project as much as I did and will find a nice place in your house for this cute little mouse.





Things you will need

Tools:

- No.3, 4mm & 16mm
- No.4, 6mm & 16mm
- No.5, 6mm
- No.8, 4mm & 8mm
- No.11, 5mm V-tool
- Scroll saw
- Japanese hand saw

Materials:

Walnut (*Juglans* spp.)
45 x 55 x 120mm

1 Draw the pattern on to the wood, in side and top profile. Use the scrollsaw to cut out the side profile of the mouse. Put the cut-off back in place with masking tape and cut out the top profile of the head. Screw the blank to a piece of wood that you will clamp on the bench. Remove 2-3mm on each side of the body up to the height of the back paws and the tail. Then start to round the back with a flat gouge, saving the start of the tail.

2 Draw the centreline of the head. Using a No.11, 6mm, remove some wood in front of the right ear to achieve a good symmetry of the head. Separate the ears by carving a groove connecting the curve of the back and the top of the head. Use the same tool to clean the back of the ears and shape the neck towards the sides.

3 With a No.11, 6mm and flatter gouges, refine the jaw and cheeks, turning around the ears area. From the pelvis towards the neck, remove some wood with a No.4, 16mm to give the body the shape of a pear. In the top view, as the head is slightly turned to the right, the left side of the body has a sweet curve while the right side looks more like an S shape.

4 Mark the lower side of the eyeball with the No.11, 6mm and round it with the No.4, 6mm.



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10



11



12

5 Set in the eyes with a No.8, 4mm and clean all around using a No.8, 8mm. Round the eyes with a small flat gouge and dig the corners with the veiner to let the brow bone show. As the head is slightly turned, the grain direction won't be identical on both sides.

6 Shape the nose with the V-tool and pare the muzzle with the No.3, 4mm. Carve a hollow with a No.11, 6mm from the eye to the jaw to separate the muzzle from the cheeks. Switch to a No.5, 6mm and flat gouges to round the cheeks and refine the nose. Under the muzzle, mark the mouth with the V-tool.

7 Flatten the front of the ears with a flat gouge and draw their shape. Remove the waste all around in the direction of the neck, and use the No.8, 8mm to hollow the inside. Once done, refine the edges and the connection to the head and neck.

TOP TIP: Cutting the pattern on face and side profile (or top and side profile here) is a good way to quickly remove some waste. However, if some elements of the carving are not in the same plane as the cut, like the head of the mouse, the resulting shape appears too massive and it can be somehow confusing. Keep in mind that there is still some material to remove to rough out the carving.

8 On each side of the tail, remove the waste behind the back to reach the background level. Note how the back paws are running under the body towards the rear. Round the tip of the paws using a No.5, 6mm, and mark the edge of the legs on the body by carving a groove with No.11, 6mm.

9 Shape the legs with a flat gouge and the paws with the No.5, 6mm. Use the V-tool to undercut below the leg. Clean the rear and round the tail roughly.

10 Remove the waste between the front paws to reach the background level and start to shape the throat, which is slightly convex, and the arms.

11 When close to the final shape, unscrew the carving and cut the background. I chose to set the mouse in the bench clamp and to use the Japanese saw, keeping it flat on the bench. Cut under the body, along the grain first, then cut behind the front paws at a straight angle. If necessary, clean the saw cut with abrasive set on a flat sanding block or a scrap.

12 Round the chest towards the body, and refine its connection to the front legs. To work safely, take support on the bench and hold the mouse firmly in one hand. I hold the gouge in the other hand and use the hollow of my shoulder to push the tool. Always make sure your fingers are not in the trajectory of the gouge and don't try to remove too much wood at a time. Use a carving glove if you have one. The tail can be refined and rounded with a small riffler or sandpaper. The mouse should be ready to finish. I applied three coats of shellac to enhance the colour of the wood. ▶



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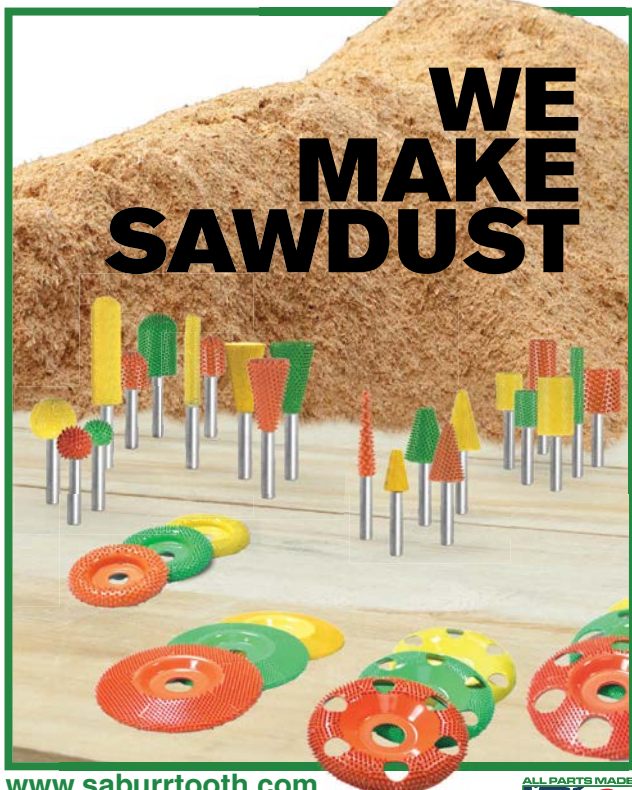
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Tusked ocean wonder

In the final part of the bull walrus project Andrew Thomas explains how to finish this wonderful animal



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW THOMAS
In the last issue of *Woodcarving* I described the techniques of how to carve the details of the Walrus head, including the tusks and surface anatomy of the skull. We continue now with part two of the project, how to carve the flippers and body. The objective of the project is to produce a lifelike representation of the Bull Walrus, which will require the reader to make an independent study of these details. Google images, Pinterest and Instagram are all very good websites to carry out this research, which will also link the reader to other websites

of specific in-depth information. Just like humans, there seems to be no end of variations between each animal, their colour, skin texture, wrinkles, size and posture. It is therefore good practice to take one's own research information and apply that to the carving, especially the size and shape of the flippers, and the wrinkles around the body.

Before you start working on the project, read through the complete step guide and study the stage and finished images to see how the carving develops.



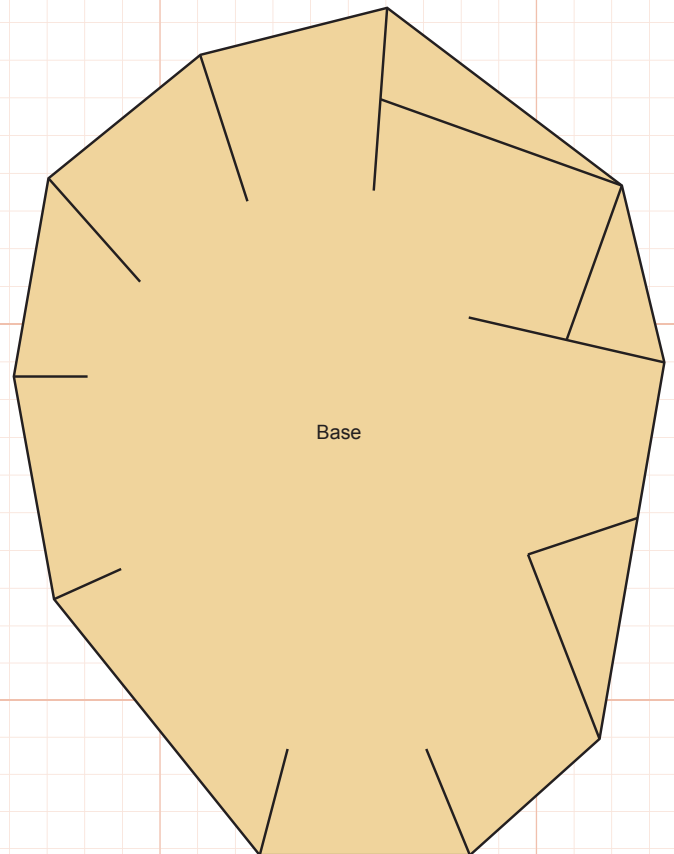
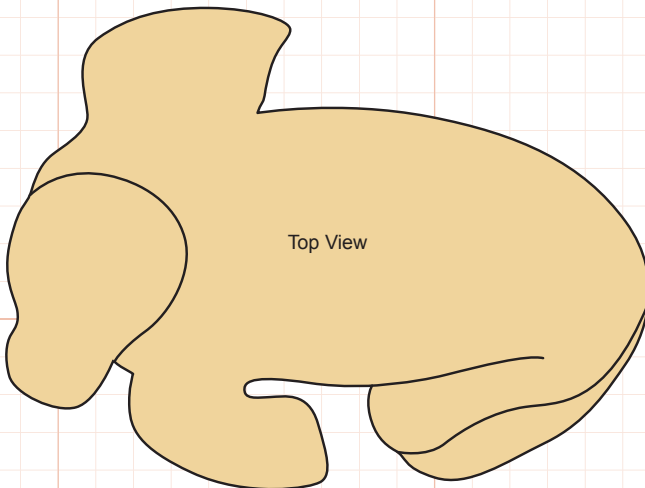
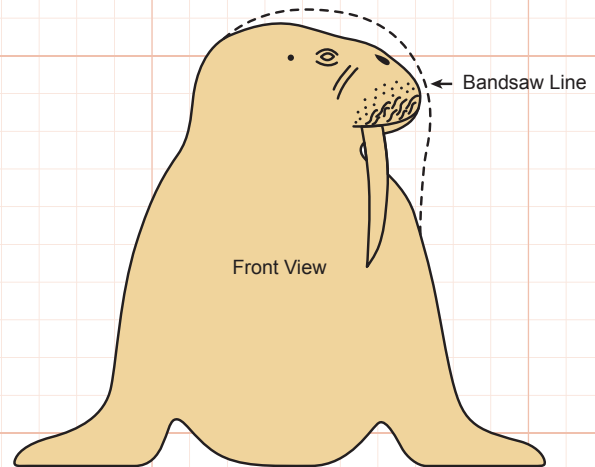
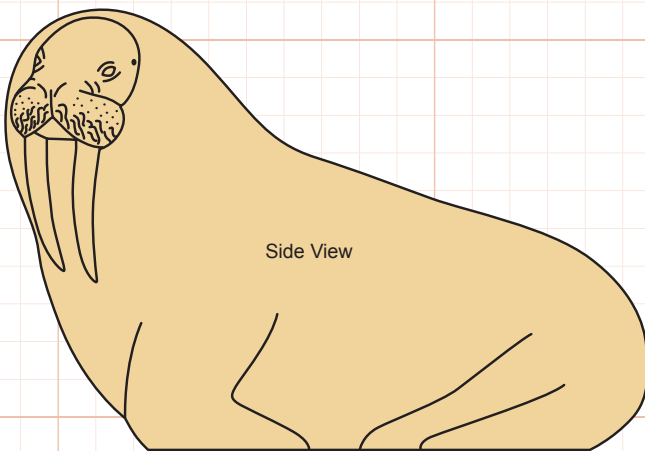
Things you will need

Tools:

- No.2, 2mm – Flippers
- No.2, 5mm – General shaping
- No.2, 10mm – General shaping
- No.2, 20mm – General shaping
- No.2, 40mm – Body
- No.7, 4mm – Flippers
- No.7, 6mm – General shaping
- No.7, 20mm – Rear of body
- No.8, 4mm – Digit tips
- No.8, 18 – Roughing out, body
- No.9, 7mm – Lower edge work
- No.9, 10mm – Flippers
- No.11, 1mm – Flippers, creases
- No.11, 2mm – Flippers, creases
- No.12, 6mm – Lower body edge
- No.15, 3mm – Flippers, creases
- Knife – Creases, flippers,
- Rotary Burr – 6mm bullnose or conical TCT burr
- Rotary Burr – 1mm diamond smoothing burr

Materials:

- Walrus: English lime (*Tilia vulgaris*) 200 x 130 x 150mm
- Tusks: English lime 42 x 15 x 5mm
- Base: American black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) 250 x 190 x 20mm
- Wood bleach
- Danish oil
- Clear wax
- Briwax medium brown



**1****2**

1 The first job is to curve the square body, down over the shoulders, back and rear end towards the base, but do not attempt to achieve the realistic finished shape at this stage. Then, measure and mark in position the chest, legs and flippers from the front and side views. Pare the wood back to these lines but, again, do not attempt to shape them yet.

2 The hind flippers of the walrus are often seen turned forwards when they are resting on land, which is how the example is being represented in this article. This adds life and movement to the composition and should be studied carefully before attempting to carve them. At this early stage of work on the body, they only need to be marked in position. Do this then remove the area of waste wood between the front and hind flippers.

**3****4**

3 The front flippers of the walrus are very large and have five digits, which expand massively and contract to a cluster of wrinkles and creases. They can therefore be represented anywhere within this range of expansion, but do not strive to produce them all at the same width and symmetry as this will subtract from the real-life appearance that is trying to be achieved. Using your reference material to help you, draw the left flipper in position.

4 Remove the waste wood around the edge of the flipper and then form its sleek, natural shape, from the base up to the body.

**5****6**

5 Use a small veiner or knife to separate the digits, then curve each one into these creases or knife slits. The end tips of the digits can be shaped rounded in appearance, which is achieved with a No.8, 4mm. All the details are then smoothed naturally together with grit 150.

6 The front inner side edge of the flipper can now be carved in position. Use a 6mm bullnose or conical burr to create the space between the body and flipper, naturally separating and refining them to their correct size and angle. Do not attempt to pierce all the way through to the opposite side of the flipper at this stage, as this can be completed easily from the underside when the form is cut off the base.

**7****8**

7 The front right flipper is produced in the same way as the left side, but is positioned slightly more forward and with the flipper expanded slightly wider than the opposite side.

8 Next, we move back to the body and continue to develop its shape, from the central highest position, down to the base. Do this with a large No.2 gouge.

TOP TIP: When working on any areas such as the walrus body, where the aim is to produce a natural flowing curve over the surface, there is no other tool more efficient than a No.2, 40mm. This can be used upside down so that its shallow sweep lends itself to the contour being created. Every carver should have one of these in their toolkit.



9 The position where the body meets the base is next to be addressed. This lower edge should roll inwards, slightly underneath the mass of the body above it. Use a V-tool held on its side, cutting inwards towards the body at the level of the base. Then, curve the body down into the V-tool cut. Repeat this procedure until the lower edge flows underneath the body at a natural angle. The V-tool cut can then be extended around the rear end and forward to the side of the hind flippers.



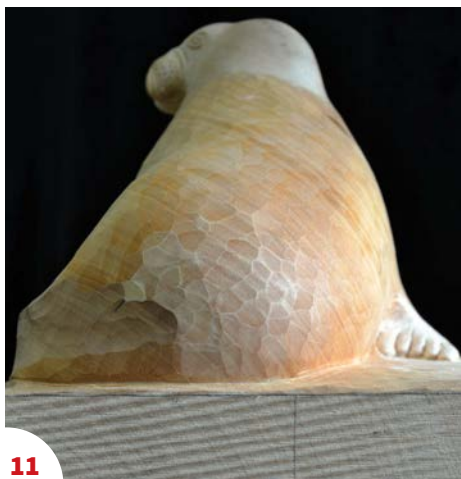
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10 The angle of the back and rear end must now be shaped in relation to the hind flippers, which are positioned to the left side of the body. This posture naturally raises the left hip and drops the right one, creating an angle down the lower half of the back to the rear end. The hatching shows the area to be worked upon, preferably with a large No.2 gouge.



10

11 The angle of the body when completed should look like this.



11

12 We now turn our attention to the hind flippers, their positioning and detail. The first job is to pare away the corner of the body where the flippers emerge and curve around. Make the first cuts with a No.7, 20mm to remove the bulk of the mass, then swap to a No.9/10mm to create a tighter curve into the corner where the flippers rest against the body.



12

13 Blend the depth of the back evenly down over the hips onto the hind flipper area. Then draw the line of separation between them.



13

14 There are many variations of how the hind flippers can be positioned to the side of the body, which should be carefully researched if desired. The technique to produce them should be similar. Use a V-tool initially to make a deep groove separating the two volumes of the flippers.



14

15 Pare back the wood on the upper volume to the depth of the V-tool cut. Repeat steps 14 and 15 until the lower flipper is approximately half exposed, creating the appearance of the upper hind section resting naturally on top of the lower one.



15

16 When you are satisfied with the overall separation and arrangement of the hind flippers, swap the V-tool for a razor-sharp knife and carve a deep slit along the line where the upper one rests on the lower one. Then, pare the lower edge of the upper section into the knife slit to create the realistic crease between these two sections. Repeat the procedure if necessary.



16

TOP TIP: The carver's knife is an extremely versatile tool, which can create very realistic details that V-Tools and Veiners simply can't achieve. It isn't the easiest of tools to master but with safe practice and perseverance, one can apply its use very effectively for many jobs. I personally recommend the shorter bladed ones, which offer a better degree of directional control.



17



18

17 Now apply the same technique again, using the V-tool and knife, to create a realistic crease between the upper hind flipper and the body.

18 The arrangement of the flippers in the example have been created with the upper section's five digits overlaying and eclipsing the lower one, which only exposes the two outer digits. Draw these details carefully in position and then remove all of the waste wood around them, down to the surface of the base, leaving them blocked out ready for their detail.

19 Use the small veiner to separate each of the digits and a No.8, 4mm to produce the rounded tips. Curve each digit into the grooves in the same way as you did for the front flippers. Repeat this procedure if necessary and then smooth them naturally together with grit 150 abrasive.



19



20

20 We now move on to the surface anatomy of the body. The front section of a real-life bull walrus shows immense body volume, which protrudes between the shoulders and neckline in the form of a bulging mass. This detail adds dynamic life to the composition and is very simple to produce. First, measure and mark these hatched lines on to your form. They travel around the neckline and between the rear edge of the front flippers, upwards and over the back.

21 Use a No.8, 18mm to carve a deep channel along the hatching, around the neckline and shoulders.



21



22

22 This deep channel is then merged naturally into the surrounding areas of the head, neck, shoulders and body. Repeat steps 21 and 22 until the body mass appears lifelike. Then skim carefully over the complete form to tidy up any uneven depths, which will prepare the surface for sanding.

23 Before the next stages of creating the surface anatomy, it is important to sand over the complete form to produce a smooth and flush surface for the detail to be applied to. Use grit 100 to completely remove all of the tool marks, followed by grit 150 to further smooth the surface.



23



24

24 The walrus ears are small, spherical openings with no external flaps, barely visible in real life, and are located just behind the eyes. Draw these in position and check for symmetry. Use a 1.5mm rotary diamond burr to make these tiny apertures by pushing the burr gently into the ear positions, down to a depth of 2mm. Use a piece of grit 240 abrasive to smooth the surrounding areas into the holes, naturally bringing them to life.

TOP TIP: Bull walrus are often seen with a heavily textured skin, especially from the shoulders to the head. These appear as crisscross wrinkles and little bumps, which seem to be orderly but do not have any regular pattern. If you wish to create this texture, study these real-life details and use the tools listed to produce them.



25 The creases on the real-life walrus vary enormously, depending on the size, sex, age and posture. The reader can make as many or few as they wish, and either copy the example or modify it. Study your reference material to understand how they flow around the flippers, neck and body and then draw these lines on to the form. Several tools can be used here to create slightly different effects across the surface. Shallow creases are made by using a combination of small veiners and V-tools, followed by grit 240 to naturally smooth the edges into the channels. The deeper ones are produced by using a knife to slice along the line.



26 The edge next to the knife slit is then carved at a steep angle into the slit. This is smoothed naturally into the body with grit 240, before a final slice is made again with the knife to deepen the crease and add more shadow to the visual effect of the natural crease. If more depth is required, simply repeat the process. When you are satisfied with the balance of the creases over the body, sand the complete form with grit 240 and 400.



27 The carving is now complete and can be cut off the base. Ensure that you leave a little extra depth of approximately 2mm underneath the form, so that no damage occurs to the fine edges of the flippers. Do this, and then use a knife and gouges to carefully cut around the footprint of the form and to curve these lower edges realistically underneath. The gap between the body and the front flippers can now also be easily resolved. Check all details and sand through all grits.

28 The example was finished with boiled linseed oil, and then a week later with medium brown Briwax. The tusks were finished with Rustins two-part wood bleach and clear wax, which produced an effective and realistic contrast to the main body.

29 I have supplied a template of the base that was used in the example, but I would encourage the reader to design and make their own, adding their personal and creative signature to the project. ▶



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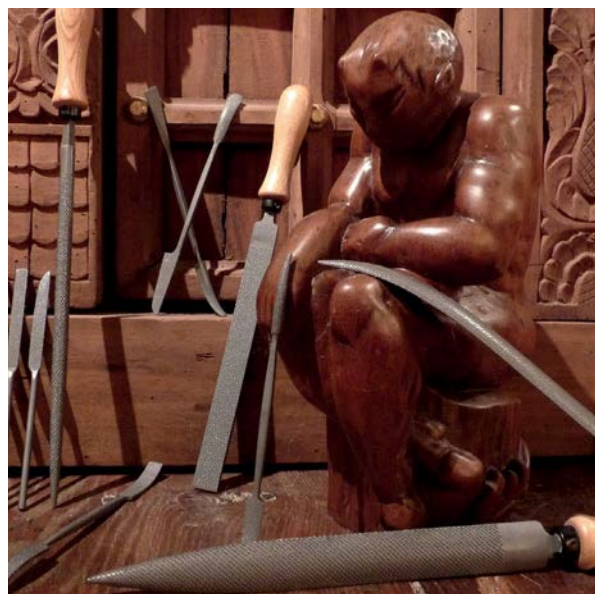


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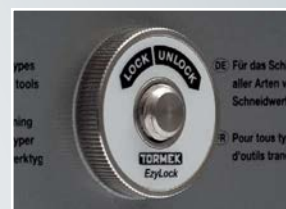
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLIE OLDHAM UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED THIS PHOTOGRAPH BY NIEL MUNN PHOTOGRAPHY

Tradition and the future

Anthony Bailey talks to Charlie Oldham, an 'old school' master craftsman now passing on his skills to a new generation of woodcarvers

Charles Oldham follows in the grand tradition of English woodcarving, restoring work by master carvers of the past, and creating new works using those same skills. He specialises in restoration, architectural woodcarving, letter cutting, carved and gilded ornament and gesso cutting. He has carried out work for private and public bodies and individuals, including the National Trust, conservation firms, restorers, antique dealers, architects, builders and joiners. He has also created new or reproduction frames for artwork and mirrors, and carved wooden sculpture.

As well as conserving the objects he restores, Charlie believes passionately in preserving the ancient skills he learned from an older generation of carvers.

In turn, he is now passing on his knowledge by offering regular midweek woodcarving classes based around his other commissioned work. You may remember Sarah Goss woodcarver (*Woodcarving*, issue 159) who he taught and they still keep in touch.

Time served

Charlie served his apprenticeship in three London workshops run by master carvers of the time, following an art school education in the 1970s. Setting up his own first independent workshop in 1988 in Deptford in south east London, his work was soon recognised, and he was welcomed into the Master Carvers Association in 1990.

Specialising mainly in 18th-century ornament, he has worked on some major restoration projects, such as Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, Spencer House and Kensington Palace. For the National Trust, he carved a life-sized sculpture of a pony for the carriage museum at Arlington Court in Devon.

While based in Frome, he was involved in carving replacement ornaments for the refurbishment of the Dower House in Bristol; Tredegar House, Newport in South Wales; and in Redland Chapel, Bristol. A commission to carve eight coats of arms for a display in Oldham Borough Council's office then led to Charlie being accepted as a member of the Society of Heraldic Arts.

Time to teach

Old School Carving was set up in 1998 by the amazing and inspirational sculptor Anthony Griffiths (BA Hons), Anthony taught woodcarving at Walton, Somerset until July 2017 and continues to teach in Stackpole, Pembrokeshire, at the The Carving Room. In 2017, Charlie relocated his workshop to Walton, where his work includes teaching regular woodcarving classes as well as carving new pieces. He still finds time to restore pieces for the antique trade and work on interior design projects and occasionally fine Chippendale Rococo mirror frames.

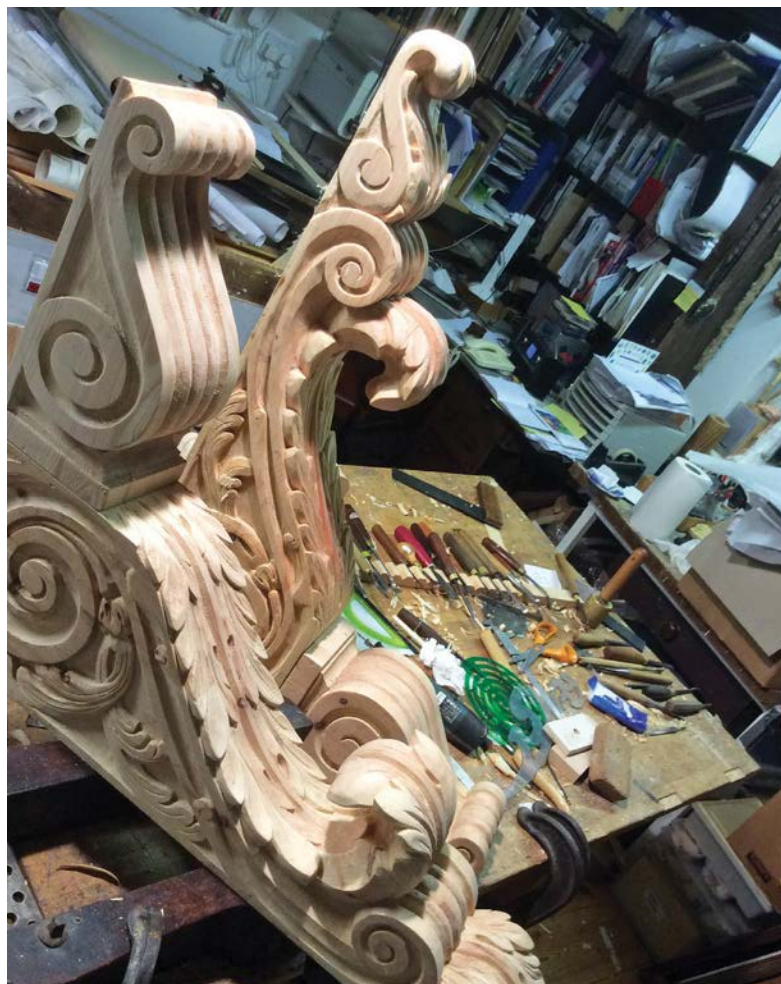
The fully equipped studios are former classrooms, with excellent light and space and good facilities for woodcarving in a safe working environment.

Courses

The courses are suitable for beginners and carvers at all levels, encouraging students to learn basic carving techniques or new skills for those who already have some carving skills. To progress, students can master the basic language of sculpture – composition, form, volume, space and shape.

Animals, figures, abstract forms, plants and flowers have all been carved on these popular courses. The aim is to complete a woodcarving, either in the round or in relief from a flat plank. Towards the end of each term there is a talk for all newcomers on how to sharpen their tools and look at the different makes and types of carving tools on the market.

Charles maintains a range of reference books and photos to inspire students. Clay and modelling materials are provided for creating models as are a variety of hard, soft and fine-grained wood to work with.



Georgian-style porch brackets

Q&A

→ What got you interested in carving?

I started carving at school in woodwork class when I found the carving chisels.

I made a small horse carved in teak, then a small figure of a boxer.

Who are your influences?

Working in the English trade, obviously Gibbons and the 18th-century boys William Kent, Mathias Lock, William France and Thomas Johnson.

In sculpture there is so much, I'm now looking at everything since Rodin, and also love the west coast of North America Haida culture, New Zealand Maori work and African Yoruba culture.

Currently I'm working on contemporary post-conceptual pieces in collaboration with modelmakers and cabinetmakers.

I am enjoying working as an artist and tutor as well as being a craftsman and I love running the woodcarving classes here in my studio in Walton.

What was your biggest mistake?

My biggest mistake is underpricing (we can all agree with that one...)

What has been your oddest experience?

It was getting stuck in a lift with a client



Ornament for over door

when delivering a coat of arms, and then getting rescued by the fire brigade.

And the most memorable?

It has to be working in Kensington Palace and meeting the Duchess of Cambridge, also St Giles House, meeting Nick Shaftesbury.

Do your carvings ever fall by the wayside?

There are lots of unfinished pieces, but they are not given up on.

Your favourite kind of woodcarving?

My favourite type of woodcarving is relief work in lime wood, pictorial reliefs in sweet chestnut and letter cutting, as well as designing and making new work for appreciative clients

Things must have changed since you first started?

When I started in the trade I was told to forget about anything outside of the 18th century. I worked at carving fireplaces and mirror frames and architectural ornament, but expertise was valued then and I still

PHOTOGRAPH BY JANKEMP PHOTOGRAPHY



My Design Will Kent-style consul tables



PHOTOGRAPH BY DOMINIC BROWN PHOTOGRAPHY

Painting stage for Oldham Metropolitan Borough Coat of Arms

do a bit of that, but most of it is now done in Indian factories and in Indonesia.

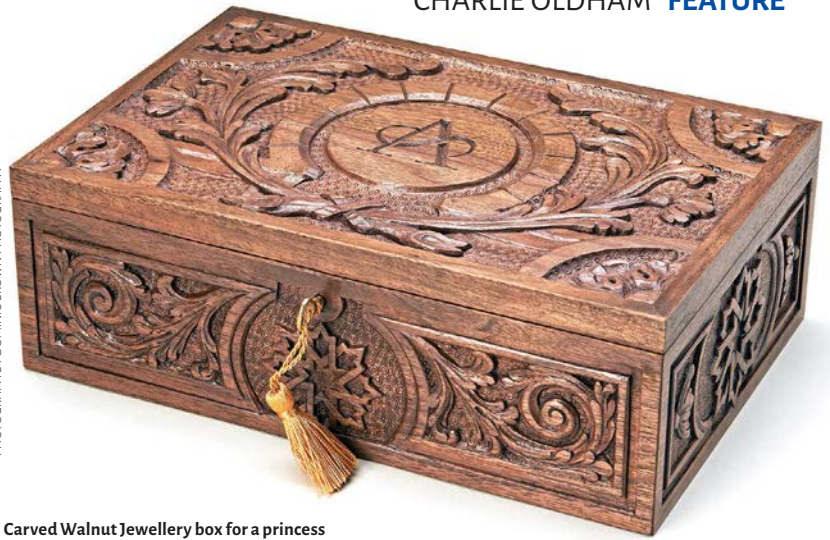
A lot of architects, some antique dealers and conservators, now consider themselves to be the experts and have little respect for experienced tradesmen, which can make life very difficult. Also scanning technology and CNC work is often used instead of old-time craftsmanship. However, there is also now a much bolder approach to design ideas moving away from the 18th-century heritage obsessives and there is really interesting work going on.

Everyone has a favourite piece of kit. What is yours?

My favourite pieces of equipment include some of my old carving chisels, my brass carving mallet, my patternmaker's vice and my Italian riffers.

What direction do you think carving should take?

I would like to see the evolution of new styles, a fresh look at 20th-century European work, Brancusi, Barlach, Henry Moore, Mestrovic, Dobson, Gill, and Ernst Blensdorf.



Carved Walnut Jewellery box for a princess

Finally, have you got any advice for our readers?

Spend time on your drawing, don't rush it, use sharp chisels and get a rhythm, the feel of the grain. Look at all wood sculpture. Don't try to be commercial, carve for the joy of it. The best bit of carving advice from Alec Ossowski: 'You are always learning.'

Thank you Charlie Oldham for some very interesting and useful answers and good luck with your teaching venture. Visit his website: oldschoolcarving.co.uk ▶



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Working on part of a carving based on a painting by Guy Coheleach with his kind permission

What shall I carve?

Peter Benson looks at choosing a subject for carving

One of the most common difficulties hobby carvers face is choosing what to carve and how to portray the chosen subject. In most cases I suspect they take the line of least resistance and copy something they have seen in a magazine or on the internet. There is nothing wrong with this if you are only trying to hone your skills, but you do miss out on what is the real joy of carving – the satisfaction and pleasure when you finish a carving that started only as an idea in your head. Not only that, you miss the opportunity of going where the wood pattern and grain lead you, or taking advantage of ideas that come to mind while carving. There is no doubt that ideas change in the time taken to complete a piece of work and, very often, by paying attention to these, the final piece can not only be slightly different from the original but an improvement.

Why, then, do so many carvers copy pictures (often very poor ones at that) or the work of others? I think it is in the mistaken belief that they haven't any creative ability – what absolute nonsense. I accept that seeing a

picture or sculpture by someone else can get the mind working, but without original thought the resultant piece of work is only ever going to be a poor substitute for the original. Taking that initial leap of faith is probably the most difficult part but, from then on, the process can be very rewarding and enjoyable. There is no shame in failure. Each time you fail you learn something and progress. Your pride may be hurt a little but that is all it is. Pick yourself up and modify your carving if possible, if not, start again. I very much doubt that any of the great masterpieces were produced at the first try.

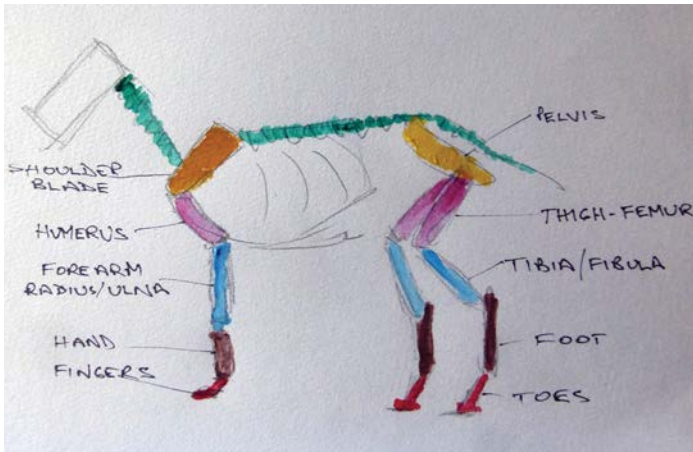
You may find some of the suggestions that follow help you on your way but, if not, please consider doing your own original work – if nothing else you will avoid the minefield that you enter with copyright legislation when you copy photos or the work of others.

So, where do we start?

Basically, the general rule is that you should only carve something you like and have a reasonable knowledge about. At one time,

when I was asked to do a particular subject as a commission, I spent months learning as much about the subject as I could before even thinking about a design. Many of my subsequent carvings were done using what I had learned for the first. Although this doesn't mean that you have to keep carving the same thing, the research you do for one person or animal will be of use when you carve anything similar in the future. The skeleton of the human figure varies little from one to the next, at least from the carver's point of view, and the proportions are very easy to remember. The female is around seven-and-a-half heads tall and the male is eight heads tall. From this information it is not difficult to work out all the other proportions and modify for individual variations.

Similarly, once you understand the basic skeleton of one mammal it is only necessary to make, sometimes, very small adjustments for other examples. My advice would be to learn as much as you can about skeletal structure before setting out on carving living creatures.



The legs are at different heights and the body is at an angle



The legs can easily be adjusted and the body is square on

Ideas

Many of us have a head full of ideas for carvings that we want to do while others struggle to think of anything that they would like to work on. If you have this problem, look at as many pictures as you can or trawl through the Internet. There are thousands of pictures of everything under the sun something is bound to inspire you eventually. Many of these pictures are copyright-free and you can work with these to develop your own carving. However, do not ever use pictures that are subject to copyright except with the express permission of the copyright holder.

If copyright-free pictures, or images or sketches you have taken/done yourself are going to be the basis of your carving, make sure there is no perspective or foreshortening that distorts the shape of the subject.

Remember that if your subject is a four-legged animal, all four legs have to be the same length and all meet the ground at the same level. You will almost never see this in a photograph – those legs further away from you will appear shorter. If you are taking your own pictures of an animal for reference, either get down low and take the picture at ground level, ensuring that the bottom of all four feet are at the same level or, alternatively, take a photograph from a distance using the zoom on your camera. This will minimise any foreshortening effect or perspective. You can always get closer for any detail you require. However you get your pictures, avoid any that are taken from an angle – photographers love three-quarter view pictures which can be a nightmare for carvers. Use only those taken side-on or directly from the front.



Chance is our dog – from this angle the legs are different heights



Very close to being usable

Maquettes

Once you have chosen your subject and, perhaps, the pose, check that it can actually be carved in wood. This may not always be the case. There may be areas where it is impossible to get a tool or make any sort of clean cut. It is a good idea to avoid areas where you need to cut directly into end grain as it is very difficult to achieve a clean finish – there are few tools that can be used with a pull cut that would be needed in this case. Check that you have suitable tools to get into any difficult-to-reach-areas. If not you may be advised to modify your design.

The easiest way to carry out all the necessary checks is to make a simple model, or maquette, of your proposed subject. I find that, by doing this, I can select the tools I need, try them on the model and make any adjustments that I feel necessary. The easiest way to do this is to use modelling clay or plasticine.



Create a maquette RIGHT: Carved cheetah



This way you can minimise the problems that you may encounter in your final carving. You can also carry out much of the necessary basic research to ensure that the anatomy and proportions are correct. Don't worry too much about the detail at this stage because it is more necessary to get the basic form right before any attempt is made to add any detail. Most novice carvers will be tempted to add detail far too early in the mistaken belief that it is the detail that gives the carving 'life'. As an example, a hand must look like a hand before the fingers are detailed or it will never look right, and a face can even have expression without carved eyes and mouth. You can always draw detail in if you feel it is necessary to give a particular feel to a carving.

If you are not sure about any particular detail of your carving, don't experiment on the actual carving – try doing it on a separate piece of wood or even try modelling it. The classic example of this is adding eyes to a face. Many carvings are ruined because several attempts have been made to get the eyes right going further and further back into the face until the end product looks like something from a horror movie. It may only take, perhaps, an hour to get it right on a piece of scrap wood, but it will save a lot of heartache and effort to right the damage you could do to your precious carving.

Visualising designs

My own feeling about any design that I wish to carve is that I need to get a clear picture of the finished piece in my head. Sometimes this can take a considerable time and, often, some sleepless nights, but I know that it would be pointless to start on anything until the picture is established. After many years of practice I am now able to visualise the finished result of any carving I intend to do once a decision is reached. Not everyone can do this as it can take a very long time, but you should be able to get some idea what your carving is going to look like, even if it is only a vague shape. By doing your research this will become clearer as you go along. Don't ignore what is right in front of you. You are walking around in what is the best reference for carving human figures – your own body. Your family and pets can also



A basic face shape with no detail carved

add to the information you need – use them.

If you really think about your design you will probably have an idea what colour the finished piece should be – dark or light – and this will guide you to the correct choice of wood. You might also get a feel for whether a strong-grained wood would enhance or detract from the design. A very intricate carving generally looks much better in a wood with little obvious grain pattern, whereas something stylised or abstract can look much better with some noticeable grain showing.

Finally, you learn most when you are looking around you as well as when you are actually carving. When you are travelling about, look at what is around you, when watching television, look at faces and what

makes different expressions and moods. If you see any pictures that grab your attention or that you think might be of use later on, collect them in a folder for future reference.

Most of all, keep carving. If you can't think what inspires you to undertake a major project, carve something simple. Christmas figures or small animals and birds are quick and easy to carve, yet they make very acceptable gifts for friends and family, and you will learn something from every one you do.

A great friend of mine who is an amazing carver once said to me that there are four things a carver should always remember. Keep your tools sharp and practice, practice and practice.

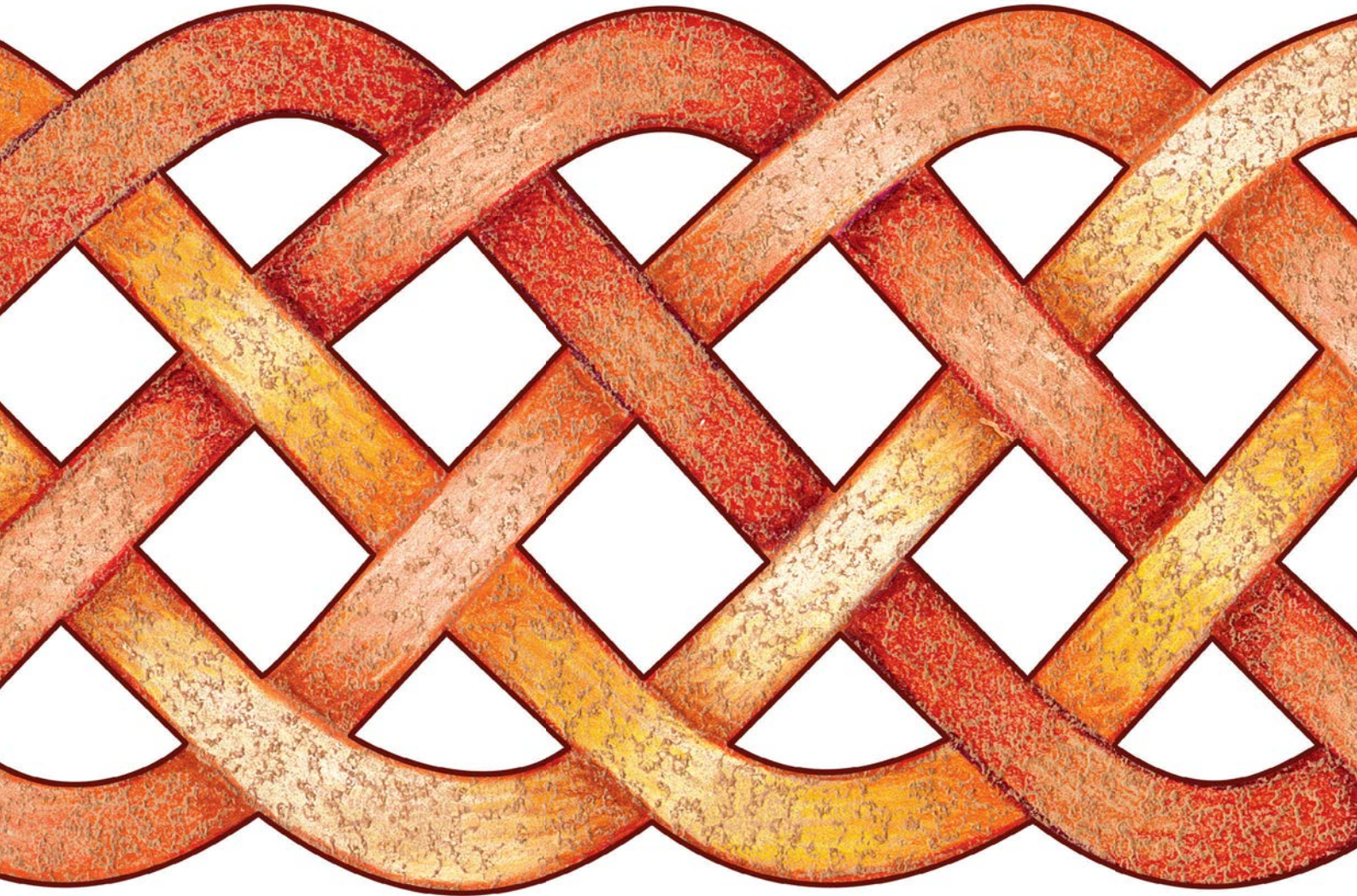
You can't go far wrong with that. ▶



The pictures show simple rough carvings of a hand with any finger detail drawn in with a pencil to be carved later. If this is carved too early the hand can easily lose any real life and credibility

Celtic line & knot patterns

This extract from the *Great Book of Celtic Patterns*, by Lora S Irish explores twists, braids and knitted lines



These excellent design motifs belong to the pre-Christian Celtic era. However, because the pre-Christian era covers such a broad span of time and development, I decided to narrow the focus of this book to Celtic art from 700AD to 1150AD. During this time the Vikings invaded the British Isles and influenced Celtic art.

The modern Celtic art so popular today can be traced back to the interlaced knot patterns that appear on the early illuminated manuscripts, a direct result of the influence of the Viking culture on the British Isles.

Interlacing and interlocking line designs come in a variety of twisted, braided, and knotted patterns, known as straight-line designs. The simplest type of straight-line design is a twist. Adding additional lines turns a twist into a braid. Other types of straight-line designs include standalone patterns, such as one-line knots and multiple-line knots. The

most complicated types of straight-line design are tangle designs. In this chapter, we'll take a look at how to create each of these designs.

Repeating patterns in straight-line designs

Although some are complicated tangles of interlaced loops, most Celtic-style knot designs use a rhythmic repeating pattern to create the final line work. Those repeating patterns can easily be seen in straight-line designs. Celtic lines can also be made up of interlocking, self-contained knot patterns and inserted knot units. Free-flowing lines interlace whereas independent self-contained knots can interlock.

Within any Celtic knot, twist, braid, or tangle, the lines that create those knots follow an over-and-under pattern of weaving. Each line will cross over another line at an intersection. At the next intersection this

same line comes to, it will be woven under the crossing line. So each line will go over one line, and then go under the next line. If the intersections of a line continue throughout the design in this over-and-under pattern, that pattern is called a perfect weave.

For some patterns, because insertions have been added or because the knot pattern is used to frame an inner design, that over-and-under weaving pattern can be broken or disturbed. You will find several patterns in the pattern section where one line is forced over two or more intersections or forced under two or more intersections. These types of non-continuous woven designs are called imperfect weaves.

Discovering the repeated knot or interlock pattern will allow you to easily adapt that knot design to corners, circles, and free-flowing artwork in the following chapters. Let's take a closer look at each of these designs.

Twists

Twists are the simplest line designs for Celtic knot patterns and are created when two or more lines are laid one over the other to create an interlacing pattern (see **fig. 1** and **fig. 2**). Twist patterns always repeat the over-and-under rhythm. A twist pattern is easily adapted to specific measurement needs in pattern work since each twist unit is identical to all

other twists in the line. You can vary the height and width of the twists, and each pattern can contain several different height and width variations (see **fig. 3** and **fig. 4**). Several sets of two-line twists can be combined or laid over each other to create more complicated-looking designs (see **fig. 5** and **fig. 6**). Twisted line patterns, as with any Celtic knot design, can use both

curved sides and angled sides (see **fig. 7**). Twists are perfect for straight edges, curved or circular designs, and curved corners. Simply add or subtract twists from a twisted line pattern to adjust that pattern to fit your particular project requirements. By dropping a twist, you decrease the length of the line pattern. If you add twists, you increase the length of the design (see **fig. 8**).

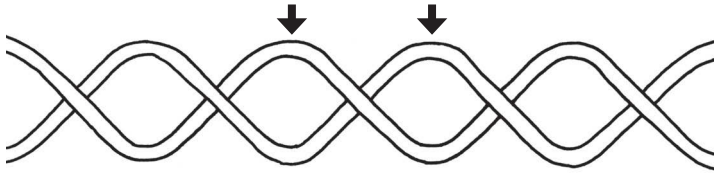


Fig. 1. Two lines twisted one across the other over an even spacing creates the most basic of interlocking line patterns. Notice how the top line always falls over the bottom line or, in other words, how the left line always crosses over the right line

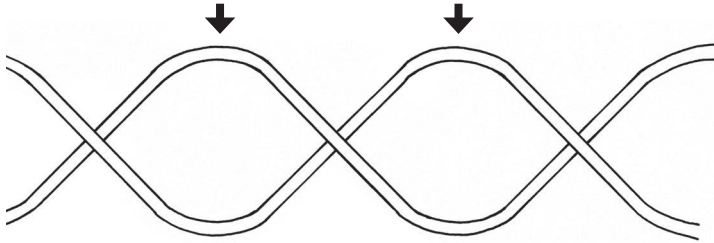


Fig. 2. The size of the line pattern can be changed by widening the spacing or by widening the height of the curves within the twist, but the over-and-under rhythm of the line remains the same.

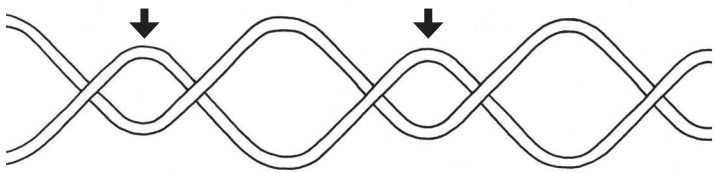


Fig. 3. This line has a simple repeat of one large twist followed by one small twist, creating a rickrack look. Again, the over-and-under rhythm of the line remains



Fig. 4. The number of small and large twists within one line can be easily changed, making this pattern type extremely versatile

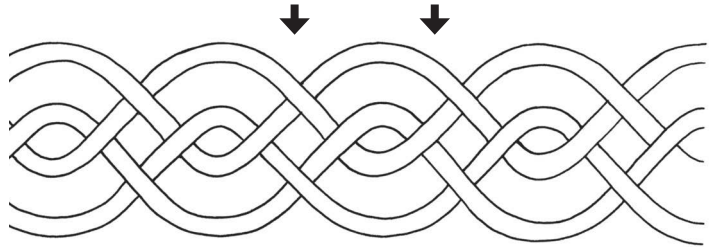


Fig. 5. For this pattern, two sets of twisting lines have been interlaced. Each set contains the identical one-large-twist-and-one-small-twist pattern. Even in the four-line twist, the rhythm of the interlacing remains the same in every repeat of the pattern

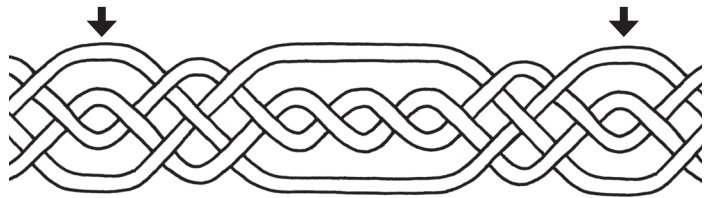


Fig. 6. Here, the two sets of twisted lines are different from each other. The outer twist contains a one-large-twist-and-one-medium-twist pattern, while the inner twist is created with a three-small-twists-and-one-medium-twist pattern

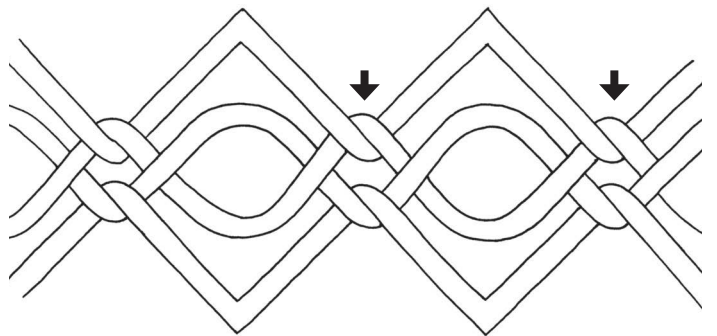


Fig. 7. This pattern uses two sets of identical twist patterns. Each twist contains one curved side and one angled side to make the diamond edges

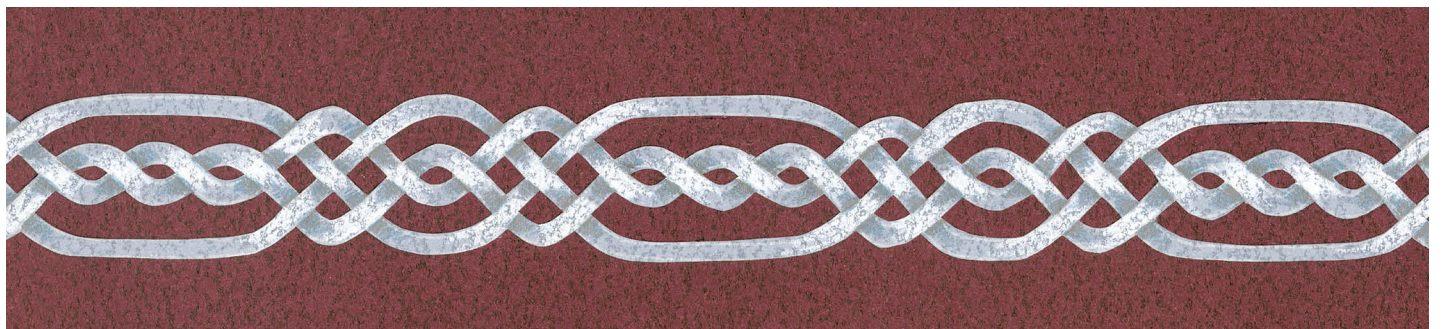


Fig. 8. This sample has three twists within one larger twist area. The number of times that you repeat the twist pattern determines the length of the line

Braids

Interlacing three or more lines creates a braided pattern, which is slightly more complicated than a twist. Here are samples of basic three- (see **fig. 9**), four- (see **fig. 10**), and five-line (see **fig. 11**) braids. Usually, braids are worked with an evenly repeated spacing, but you

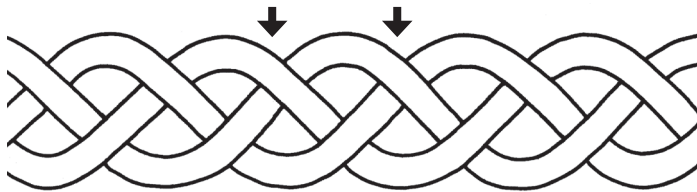


Fig. 9. The three-line braid is the most basic interlocking line pattern

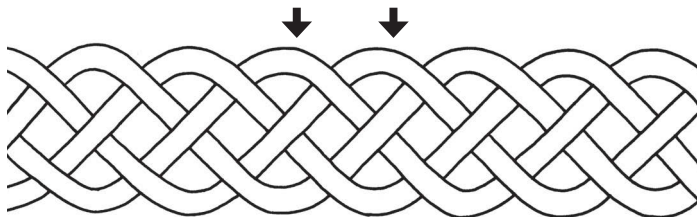


Fig. 10. Working a braid with four lines adds an X pattern to the centre of the braid

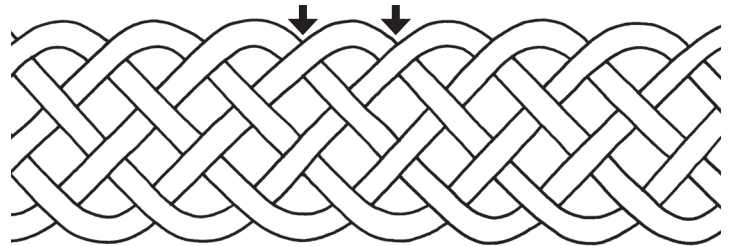


Fig. 11. The five-line braid begins to take on the look of latticework. The more lines you add to a braid, the larger the centre of the latticework becomes

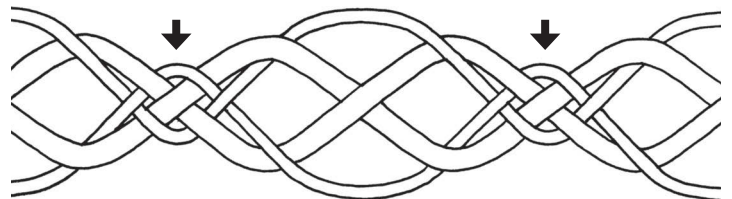


Fig. 12. This pattern uses one pair of thin lines in contrast to the second pair of thick lines. Even though it follows the four-line braid weave, by changing the size of the loops in different areas, the overall look of the braid is altered



Fig. 13. Twist and braid patterns can vary in the number of lines used, in the size of each loop area used, and even in the thickness of the lines that are interlaced

Knotted lines

Once you've mastered twists and braids, knotted lines are your next challenge. When making knots, the line turns back upon itself to create the interlacing. Knots can be created using only one line or using multiple lines, and they can be as simple as one loop or as complex as multiple loops that become tangles.

If you wish to completely fill an area or move from one design pattern into

another, the knotted line is an excellent choice. Let's take a look at the three types of knotted lines: one-line knots, multiple-line knots, and tangles.

One-line knots

The one-line knot pattern is a common theme in Celtic work. It can be as simple as a one-line twist (see **fig. 14**). The look of the knotted line

can be quickly changed by adjusting the shape of the loops and by adding angles within the loops for variety (see **fig. 15** & **fig. 16**). You can thread the line through the loops of a knot as many times as you wish to create larger knot patterns (see **fig. 17**). Very simple looped knots can often create beautiful repeated patterns that flow throughout the artwork (see **fig. 18**).

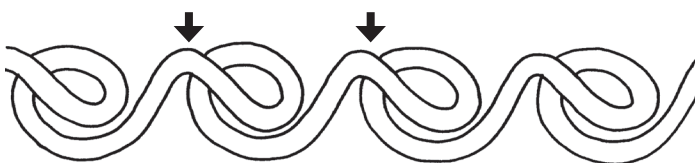


Fig. 14. This simple knot pattern turns back upon itself in one loop, still repeating its over-and-under rhythm throughout the line. You can see that the upper line of the loop always lies over the curved area of the loop

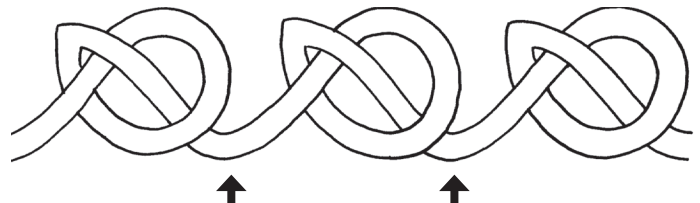


Fig. 15. For this sample, the line creates a loop, as in **fig. 14**, but then is threaded through the opening made by that loop. This is a half-hitch knot

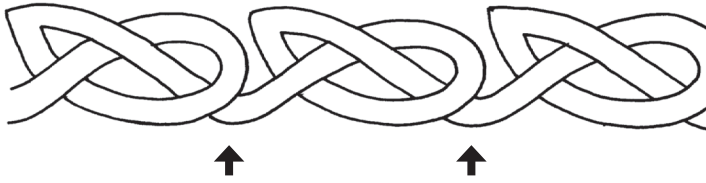


Fig. 16. In this pattern, the knot has been stretched to make a long knot, plus one of the loops is angled while the other retains a curved profile

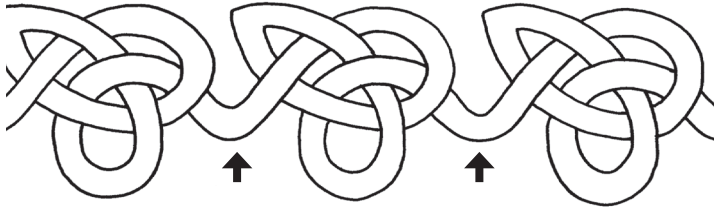


Fig. 17. Even though this knot interlaces three times through its loops, the over-and-under rhythm remains the same in all of the knots

Multiple-line knots

Line knots can also be created using multiple lines. In a two-line simple knot pattern, the size of any loop within a knot can be adjusted to make room for new interlaced lines. These multiple lines can follow either identical patterns (see **fig. 19** & **20**) or varied patterns (see **fig. 21**) to complete the finished knot.

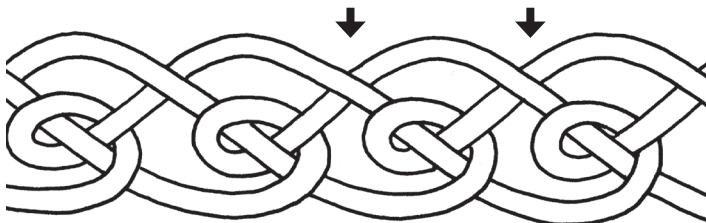


Fig. 19. The two-line simple knot pattern is made using the two identical, simple loop knot lines. The end of one line is then threaded or interlaced through the loop of the second line

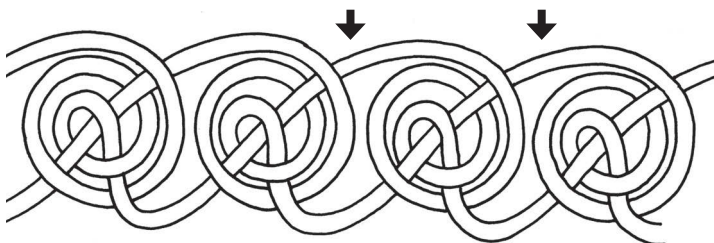


Fig. 20. This is a variation of fig. 19. The lines create a spiral look by adding circles around the basic loop. Two identical lines are used to make this design

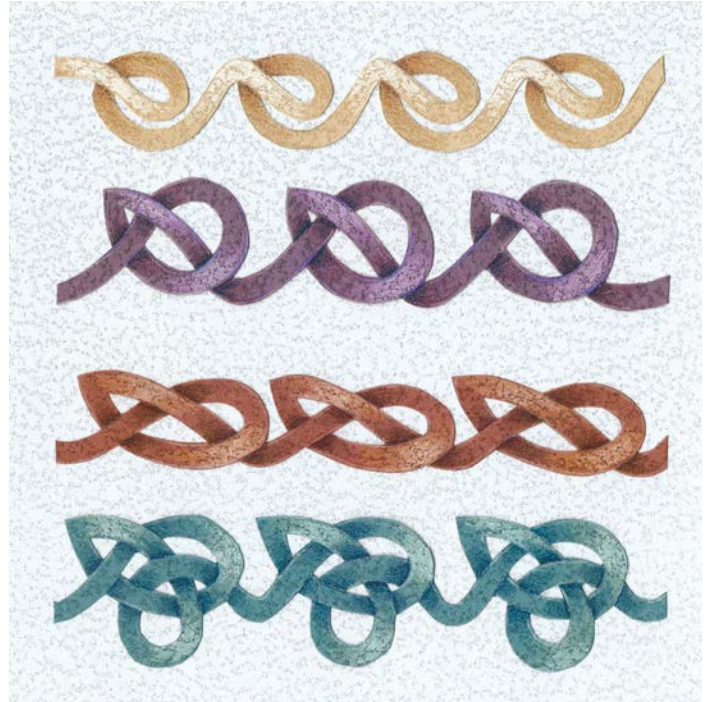


Fig. 18. Because these samples use simple knots, your eye can quickly follow the over-and-under rhythm that leads into the next knot

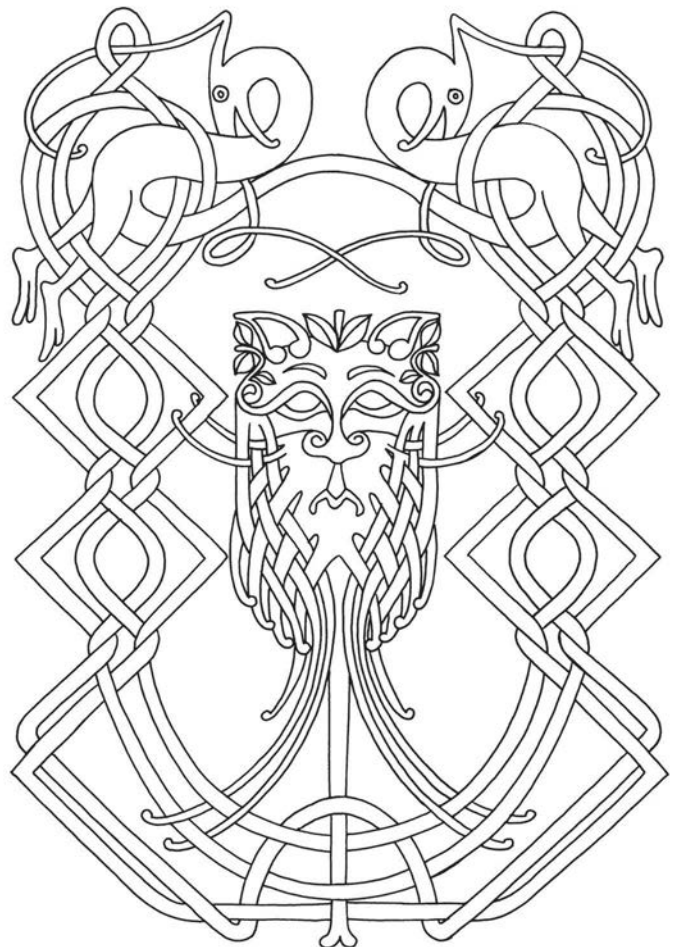


Fig. 21. This Viking King and Horse Panel shows a multiple-line design created with varying knot patterns

Tangles

So far, the patterns in this chapter have featured repeated patterns, which were created with lines that cross over once then continue on to a new knot or twist. Tangles, however, twist, turn, and fold upon themselves without any predictable

pattern and can turn back into the knot multiple times (see **fig. 22 & 23**), making them the most difficult type of knotted-line work. Tangles are perfect for filling in large areas of work or for enhancing motifs such as animals (see **fig. 24**).

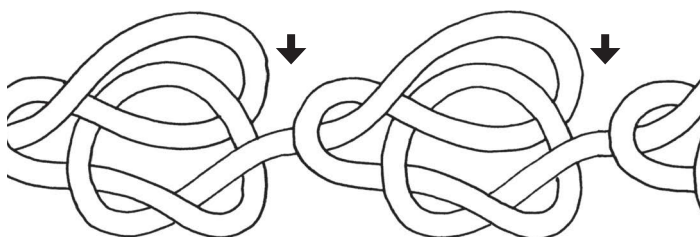


Fig. 22. This pattern sample is made up of three identical tangles. Within the actual knot pattern, the line turns and interlaces itself over and over again until the knot area has been filled

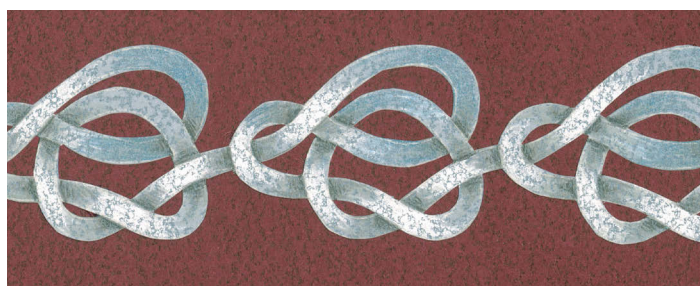


Fig. 23. The shaded version of this knot pattern shows both the under and over interlacing of the pattern as well as how the knot is repeated to create the final line

Inserted units

Some Celtic knot patterns have inserted units that are self-contained. These inserts enhance a simple twist, braid, or knot pattern. Circles (see **fig. 25**), figure of eights, and diamonds are some commonly inserted units. Inserted units can be used at every intersection to enhance a corner or central point in the line.

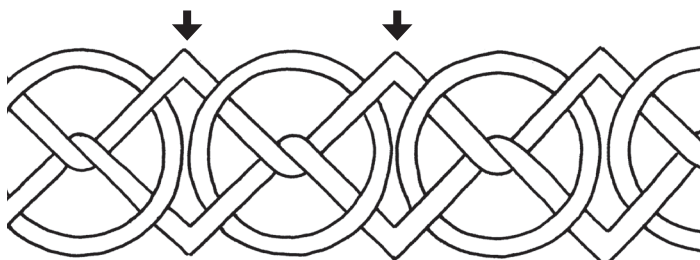


Fig. 25. This pattern is a simple twist design using two lines. A circle design has been added at the intersections of the twist

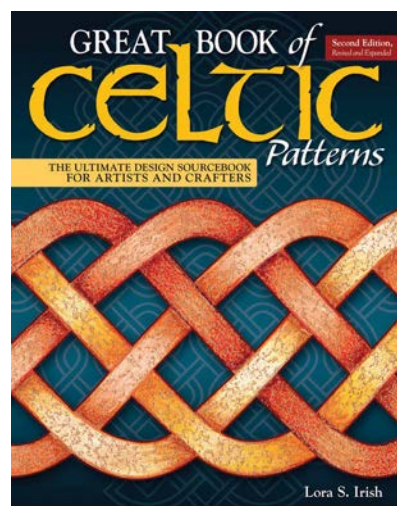


Fig. 24. This Viking animal sample shows how a tangle knot can be used to fill the space of a design. The tangle is created using four interlaced lines. One line is the basic spiral knot created by the dragon's body. That body spiral interlocks with a two-line mirror-image knot. The fourth tangle line is from the elongated muzzle and also laces with the two-line mirror-image knots

Interlocking units

Just as self-contained units can be added to a line design, several self-contained units can be interlocked to create the knotting pattern of a line. With interlocking knots (see **fig. 26**), each knot is woven into the knot behind it and the knot ahead of it to continue the line movement.

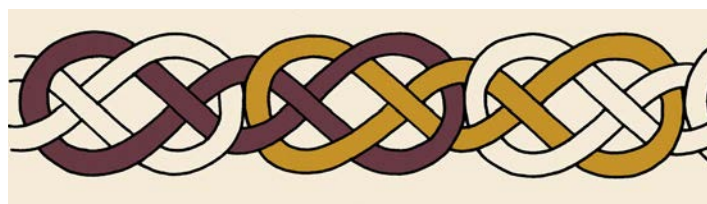


Fig. 26. This pattern is created by interlocking one self-contained unit with another. Each unit connects to one unit on one side and another unit on the other side. Repeating this pattern keeps the line growing

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Leaf face

Duane Cartwright shows how to carve a fun leaf-based face



I thought I would carve this fun leaf face as it makes a great weekend project, plus it's a great way to practise carving various facial features in different styles and expressions. The advantage of carving a face on a leaf or even a green man is if you carve a wonky nose, for example, it can often add to the caricature of the carving, rather than looking odd or wrong as it would on a bust of a family member you're attempting to carve. That said, it's always best to practise a new technique or method on some scrap wood before committing to your carving project itself.

There are as many different shapes of leaves as there are faces and no two are the same, which makes them perfect to blend together in a fun, creative way.

The shape of the leaf can have an adverse effect on how the face may look – a long, thin leaf can limit the amount of room for the facial features, which would either have to be a small face placed

somewhere on the leaf or a long, thin face working with the features of the leaf. A big, broad leaf will allow for more types facial features and expressions, which can work with the features of the chosen leaf.

If you decide to design your own leaf face using a different leaf shape it's worth considering which way up the leaf is going to be, as its veins and stem can all affect how the face will look. For example, here the leaf stem is at the bottom so the veins will point upwards, which can help to give the face a smiley look. If the leaf stem is at the top the veins and tip of the leaf will point downwards, which could help in carving a face with a frown. So try to incorporate the leaf's veins into the facial features, or the face could look like it's just been placed on to the leaf rather than being part of it.

The main thing is to have the facial features work with the various parts of the leaf so they blend together seamlessly, so it all looks as if it was created by nature itself

Things you will need**Tools:**

- No.2, 5mm skew
- No.2, 20mm
- No.3 18mm
- No.3, 6mm fishtail
- No.5, 4mm & 16mm
- No.7, 6mm
- No.8, 18mm
- No.9, 7mm
- No.11, 3mm
- No.39, 2mm
- Bandsaw
- Carving knife

Materials:

- Bass wood (*Tilia americana*)
- Sanding sealer
- Microcrystalline wax
- Abrasives 120, 180, 240, 320 grit

**1****2**

1 Start by printing out the pattern at the required size for your chosen piece of timber, then either glue or trace the pattern on to the wood. Now use a bandsaw or jigsaw to remove the waste wood. With the leaf shape cut out you can now mount it on a carving vice. Either use glue and paper to attach a scrap piece of wood to the back of the carving to fix a vice to, or use a peg board or similar to secure the project ready for carving.

2 Use a large deep No.8 or similar to carve out and hollow the eye areas by about 5mm deep or so, then carve down the sides of the nose and under the nose area, clearing the waste so only the nose and brow are at the original level.



3 Using the pattern as a guide, draw a vertical centreline down the nose and a horizontal line across the eyes, then draw on two rough circles for the placement of the eyes. Dividing callipers can help ensure the eye circles are the same size and the gap between the eyes is roughly equal to the width of the eye.

4 Using a No.9, 5mm, carve around the eye sockets and out the corners of the eyes and face, giving the top of the cheek some shape. While carving around the eye sockets carve the inside, outside and under the eyeball deeper, than around the top of the eyeball. Using a medium No.5, cut down from the brow into the root/bridge of the nose, level with the horizontal line that goes across the eyes. Using the same gouge, slope the nose back from the apex into the bridge, giving the nose its profile.

5 Slope and round over the eyeball into the corners (see arrows). Getting the rough shape of the eyeballs before carving in the detail will make for a more realistic eye. Keep the eyes round, the same size and circumference.

6 Roughly shape the nose by using a medium gouge to round it over, removing the flat area on the apex/tip of the nose, then draw a ball on the apex and two half-circles, one on each side for the nostrils. Using a deep No.11, carve around the nostrils to give the nose its shape.

7 While carving in the nose use a No.9 to carve in the nasolabial folds (smile lines), then blend in the folds and carve out across the cheeks to give the face its contours and shape. Use a No.6 to carve in the philtrum up to the nose, then use a veiner or similar to clean up where the philtrum joins the nose. Don't worry about the shape, you'll refine it later.

8 Using appropriate gouges for the nostrils, start to cut them in, defining their shape. Make sure that both sides are equal, then continue shaping the nose and cheeks. Redraw the rough placement of the mouth, then use a shallow gouge to carve in the top lip. Carve up from each side of the nasolabial folds to the nostrils to help give the philtrum its shape, which is wide at the lip and narrow at the nose.

9 Use a V-tool or a knife to separate the lips by creating a stop cut between them. Reverse a shallow fishtail gouge and use the corner of the chisel in the stop cut to carve in the top lip into each corner of the mouth. Use a deep gouge to carve in the bottom lip. Start by carving under the bottom of the lip, then carve from each corner of the mouth out and under the bottom of the lip and down towards the chin area. Use a shallow gouge to round over the bottom lip to give it its final shape.

10 Draw the horizontal centreline across the eyes. Then use dividers to mark the centre of the eyes and draw on the shape of the top eyelids. Use your best-fitting gouge to cut in a stop-cut. A few millimetres back, carve up to the stop cut. Then use a skew to downwards cut from inside the top eyelid towards the cheek, keeping the rounded shape of the eye.



3



4



5



6



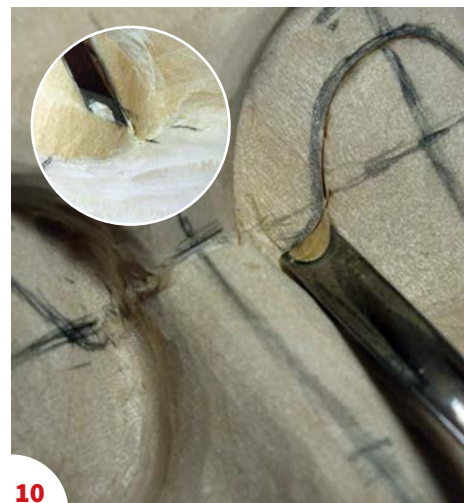
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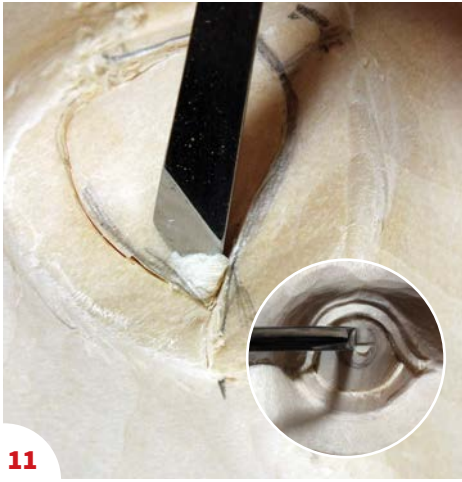
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12



13



14



15



11 Once both eyes are cut, draw on the position of the lower eyelids and use your best-fitting gouges or a knife to carve them in. Then, using a skew chisel or similar, carve down into the stop cut, carve in deeper into the corners of the eyes, but keep aware that the eyes need to keep their round shape. Now you can carve the upper eyelid into the superior palpebral sulcus. Draw on the placement of the pupil – the placement of the pupils on the eyeball will effect the overall look of the face, so make sure you're happy with the position and both pupils are the same size and look in the same direction. Once happy use a skew chisel to cut in, creating a section of the circle. Then use a small 6 gouge or similar to carve in the pupil up to the stop cuts just created.

12 Take a look at the carving in a different light and from different angles to see how it looks. This will help to show up any areas that may still require attention. Once you're happy with how your carving looks you can either carve in the leaf veins and any wrinkles around the eyes you want to add, or you can sand the carving through the various grades of abrasives and give it a good brush down before moving on to the next grit size. After sanding you carve in the leaf veins – this way they will remain crisp.

13 With the front of the carving finished you can now start to back carve. Start by drawing a line at about 4mm from the front around the edge of the carving – this will be the rough thickness of the leaf. Too thin and you'll make the edge weak, too thick and the leaf could look chunky. Try to keep the thickness in proportion to the size of the leaf. This line will help while back carving to keep the edge an even thickness. Now use something soft to rest the carving face down while back carving. Stop and check regularly that the back follows the contours of the front and thickness is good.

14 With the back carved and the side of the carving nice and thin, it's easy to use a knife or skew chisel to clean up any saw marks around the edge of the leaf's blades. Just be aware of the grain direction of the leaf's serrated edge or you could break a tip. If you sanded earlier you will need to sand around the sides to finish off. Once you're happy with how the carving looks it's time to apply some sanding sealer all over to seal and protect the carving.

15 Once dry, cut back and apply your chosen finish, then attach a picture hook to the back and your leaf face is ready to display and bring a smile to everyone. ▶

TOP TIP: Try carving more than one leaf face, but with each face try a different facial feature or expression, example a different shaped nose or mouth, a few simple changes can make a massive difference even when using the same pattern or design. Also try carving the leaf with different thickness of timber as the thicker the wood the more undulations and contours you can carve into the leaf.



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THE DIARY

of a student woodcarver

William Barsley talks about finishing his Roald Dahl commission and the challenges of turning carving into a career

This series follows my journey as I undertake a three-year diploma in Ornamental Woodcarving and Gilding at the City & Guilds of London Art School, turning my passion for woodcarving into a full-time profession.

With only two terms left, everyone is working hard to squeeze the most out of their remaining time at the Art School and to produce some exceptional work for the degree show this coming June. It has been a new experience for me to focus on just two big carving projects this year, and it has allowed me to focus on quality rather than quantity in my work.

The Roly-Poly Bird

As one of my final-year projects, I have been working on a commission to carve the newly registered heraldic crest for Roald Dahl's grandson, which depicts the Roly-Poly Bird on a cirlet of medieval clouds. It has been the most challenging carving I've worked on, and I was relieved to finish on time, just before Christmas. Due to the nature of the commission and the character of the bird, I wanted to add a wow factor to the piece, which I tried to achieve with the feathers. They were designed to look fairly realistic, but in keeping with the playful character of the bird. There are approximately 450 feathers in total, which you can imagine took quite some time to carve.



Finished Roly-Poly Crest

Lost wax technique

As you see in the photo, the bird is designed as if in flight, with the weight of the body supported by its tail. Creating thin, twisting tail feathers that would support the weight of the bird proved quite the technical challenge. Carving them in wood was the initial idea, however, due to the grain, the feathers would be prone to breaking. Discussing this with the tutors, we decided to cast the tail in bronze using the lost wax method to achieve greater strength.



Wax mould of the tail feathers attached to wax runners and cup

Although not directly related to woodcarving, I want to tell you a bit about the process of casting the tail in bronze. The Art School has a brilliant metal foundry open to all students and big enough for a project such as this. The technique I decided to use is commonly called 'lost wax casting' or 'investment casting' and is a fascinating process that dates back some 6000 years or more. Put simply the process creates an exact copy of your sculpture by pouring metal, such as bronze, gold or silver (the metals most commonly used) into a mould. The wax component is used to make the initial model of your sculpture, either by creating the work in wax to start with or by pouring wax into an existing mould of your work. In this case the technique was perfect for creating an exact copy of the Roly Poly Birds tail, which I had modelled first in clay.

The process of casting the tail began by cutting off the tail feathers from my clay model of the bird and making a silicone mould, into which hot wax was poured to create a replica. The tail was then attached to a wax cup with runners, through which the molten bronze would run. This was then coated in six layers of ceramic shell that formed a fireproof casing around the wax,



Cutting off the clay tail feathers



Wax tail and legs coated in a ceramic shell

onto which a cement paste was applied for further strength. The wax was then melted out, leaving a negative of the tail inside. Once baked, the ceramic shell was ready for the bronze to be poured inside. At this stage the casing actually began to crack, which was very worrying (this was most likely due to the very cold weather at the time), however it held together with some wire strapping and extra cement paste. Standing the mould in a sand bin to keep it steady, the molten bronze was finally poured into the

cup and left to cool before breaking it out.

I knew the bronze would take a fair bit of cleaning up, chipping off the ceramic shell and filing down any imperfections, but I didn't realise it would take quite as long as it did. This was a great lesson to learn – to make the wax as perfect as possible prior to casting, as you can imagine it is much easier to do this in the wax. Casting was a lengthy process and hard work, but it was very rewarding seeing the final result and learning a new skill at the same time.



Finished carving of the Roly-Poly Bird



Back view of the Roly-Poly Bird prior to painting

Painting the bird

As you can see in the photo, the final carving is painted to match the vibrant colours of the Roly-Poly Bird, as seen in the Quentin Blake illustrations from Roald Dahl books such as *The Twits*. Although the bird's bright colours are part of its identity, and heraldic crests such as this are often painted, it was a still a strange feeling to paint over the beautiful wood and bronze. There is something pleasing about keeping the natural colour of a carving and many

hours can be spent debating the best finish for certain projects. However, in this case, not only did the client want it painted, but it fitted with the character of the bird. I used a paint called Plaka, which gave a vibrant matt finish and could be used on both the wood and bronze. Toning the piece was crucial as there was a danger of losing the detail of the carving, but it does take longer than expected, which was a useful lesson to learn for future projects.

From student to carver

Continuing the theme in my last article, I want to touch upon some of the challenges I've faced and advice I've received in making the transition from student to professional carver. As with many traditional crafts, making a successful career from your passion can be difficult, and not always as straightforward as it sounds.

One of my biggest worries in pursuing a career in carving is that it could spoil my love for the craft. Many craftspeople I've spoken to say that, once a craft becomes your livelihood, you run the risk of becoming confined and disheartened by the usual business worries of project deadlines, meeting client demands, and maintaining a successful business. This, of course, all depends on the mindset you have and the business plan you develop. Often one's passion for the craft and desire to simply carve all day can mean less time devoted to the business side of things, but a healthy balance of both is needed. Another good lesson I've learned is about valuing your work. Almost every professional carver I've spoken to has told me they undervalued themselves when they first began their careers, giving me the simple advice that I must make sure to price my time and skills appropriately from the beginning. This can be much easier said than done when trying to get commissions, but it has been an encouraging and valuable lesson to learn.

Given the wide range of careers and



Painting the Roly-Poly Bird

opportunities within this wonderful craft, as well as the potential challenges, I am excited to see the nature of the path that carving will take me down.

In the next article, I introduce my second final-year project – an ornamental mirror of hops – and update you on the progress of my fellow students. ▶

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Passion for carving

Mark Baker talks to Dave Wilkins

I retired as a police officer in 2002. I have been married to Patricia for 49 years and we have three children and four grandchildren. While working as a police officer I made walking sticks – my dad was a hobby woodcarver and so is my younger brother, Andy, who started carving before me, so you could say that it ran in the family.

I dabbled in woodcarving to make the handles for walking sticks but, in truth, was unsuccessful. I used the wrong

wood for carving the stick heads – I tried carving an eagle and a duck in oak. I used the wrong tools – I only used rasps to start with – and failed to carve any handle that I would now consider to be acceptable for a walking stick.

I started hand carving using traditional tools as a result of wanting to create a better quality of stick, and it was in 2003 the realisation struck me that I could not carve, so I enrolled

in a woodcarving adult evening class.

The tutor was Peter Benson and we were fortunate enough to have professional woodcarver Jonathan Fearnhead as a deputy when Peter was not available. As woodcarving evening classes go I had struck gold and that is an understatement. Learning to use the right tools the right way was a total revelation and made life so much easier. I also developed a greater understanding that what I had previously

been carving was what I thought was there rather than what was actually there. I learned to carve something well, you must look at the subject matter very closely in order to understand it properly.

Influences

Originally my tutors had an influence on my style of carving, but as time has gone by I've found that different styles – whether relief, in the round, lettering, green wood, netsuke or caricature – have all taken their turn in subject areas I have tried.

It is interesting now to realise how research, the different styles of finishing, the size of the carving, the wood used and many other factors need to be considered, and to some degree be in place before the first cut is made.

Recently my wife and I have holidayed in Italy, and particularly Florence and Rome. She is a lover of Art and I've learned lots from her. When I first saw the works of Michelangelo I realised that for a carving to say something it needs to be 'alive', and that can involve just a little detail such as the glance of the subject's eye, a way of standing or sitting, the lay of the clothing or the portrayal of movement.

Challenges and mistakes

At the beginning of my carving journey

it was thinking that I could run when I couldn't even crawl. Failing to research and failing to take advice from the people who know about carving and buying chisels and equipment that I probably don't need.

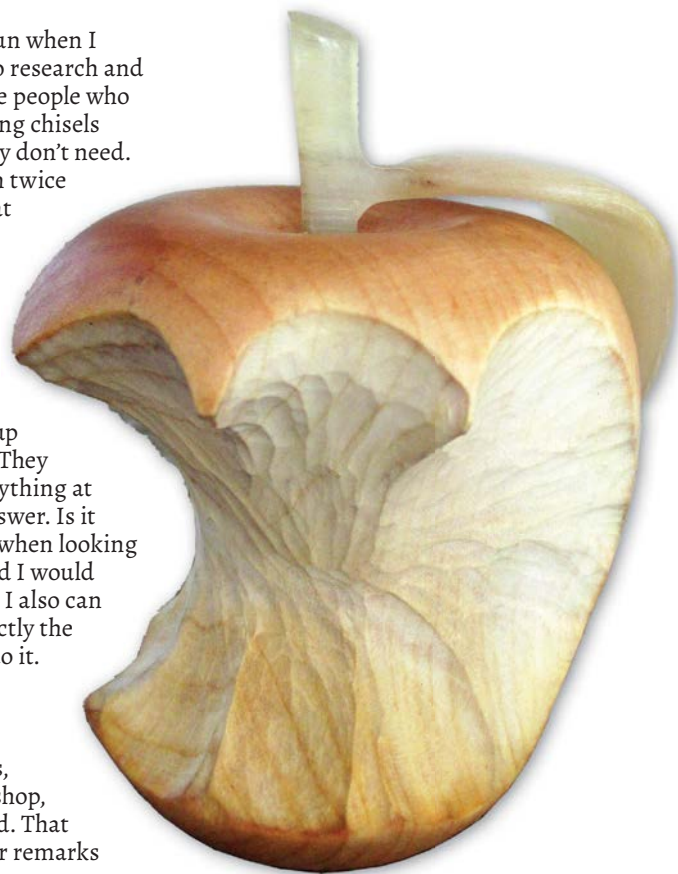
I have rebuilt my workbench twice since 2002, and I now feel that only refinement may be needed in the future – but only time will tell.

Development

What do Messrs Benson, Pye, Onians and others of their ilk 'see' when they pick up a carving that is in progress? They seem to be able to assess everything at once and then provide the answer. Is it possible to have their insight when looking at a carving? I believe it is, and I would like to reach that point where I also can pick up a carving and see exactly the next thing to do and how to do it.

Giving up on a project

When I first went to classes I took along some of my efforts, which I still have in my workshop, but they will never be finished. That is not due to any comments or remarks from others, but because they serve me well as stark reminders of what not to do.



Apple in lime (*Tilia europaea*)



Dave Wilkins in his workshop

I do, however, have a number of projects which are in transition, and await an enthusiastic revisit. I firmly believe that to proceed without knowing what you wish to achieve and what your next step is only serves to create problems later, and possibly ruin what may be a good carving.

Favourite type of carving

I love carving Christmas characters and stick handles, because other people appreciate them and that is reward for the work and effort. Even the Christmas characters require practice carving and readjustment to be correct. They are small and need detail, and I love working close with my small chisels and my knives. The stick handles, which are generally an animal, bird or dog head, require lots of research and lots of photographs in order to carve them lifelike and appealing.

The future?

I would like to learn and understand more about carving so I can get even more enjoyment from it. Knowing and understanding grain, the patterning of different woods and the effect it produces are magical. Therefore anyone who carves wood, or cuts wood with an edge tool sees that result. I would like more people to realise that wood is beautiful – after all it has been on this planet for a long time.

Likes and dislikes

I like looking at carvings, understanding how the appearance was achieved, especially the shadow. I like how the choice of wood affects the result, the motivation of the carver, and how together they display the effort, all the research, and the work that is put in to get to the completed carving. They show a part of the carver. I can't think of anything that I dislike about carving, except that I think we do have preferences.

What helpful advice do you have for others carving?

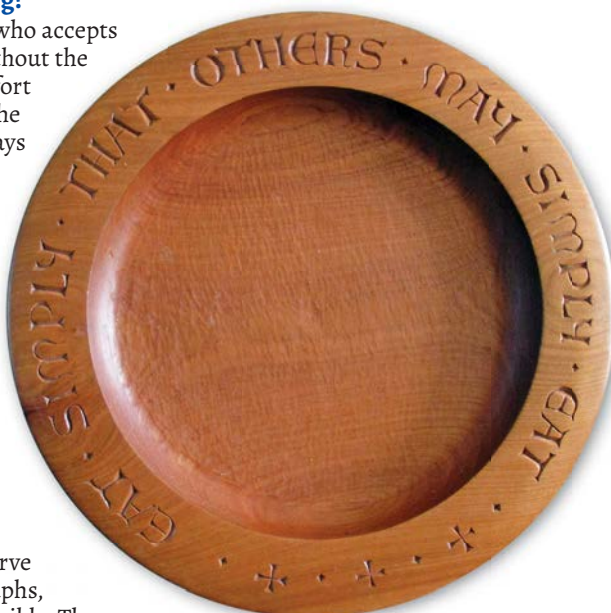
I struggle with a carver who accepts copying others' work without the understanding of the effort that has been put in by the originator. Copying always carries the possibility of recreating somebody else's mistakes. Make your own mistakes, not someone else's.

Top tip for other carvers

Research, research and finally research. If you do not know your subject, its bone structure, its lifestyle, its living environment, you will not be able to carve it. Get as many photographs, pictures, drawing as possible. There is no such thing as too much research. ▀



My first big carving, inspired by a project by Chris Pye in the book *Wood Spirits and Green Men: A Design Sourcebook for Woodcarvers and Other Artists* by Lora S Irish



Fruit bowl in cherry (*Prunus sargentii*)



Cock pheasant head in pear (*Pyrus communis*)

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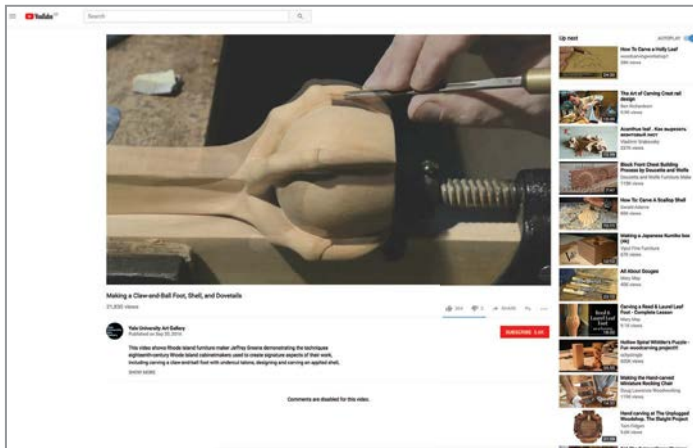
From the community

Here is a personal selection of letters and websites that caught the Editor's attention this month

ON THE WEB



YouTube

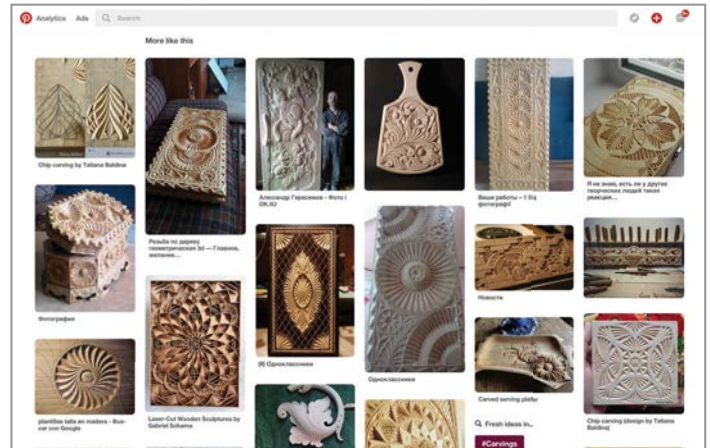


Making a claw-and-ball foot, shell, and dovetails Furniture-maker Jeffrey Greene shows some of the signature

This clip shows Rhode Island furniture-maker Jeffrey Greene showcasing some decorative techniques 18th-century Rhode Island cabinetmakers used on their work. There is no sound, but Jeffrey clearly shows what is happening at any one moment and it is a real treat to see a master at work.

<http://bit.ly/2BqL3So>

Pinterest

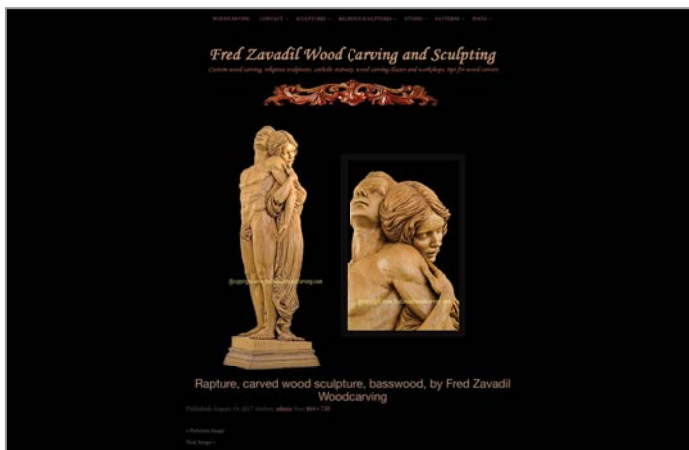


Chip carving

If you are interested in chip carving and want to see how it can be used to maximum effect, then look at this Pinterest link. There are myriad examples of chip-carved items and patterns and I am sure that these will inspire you to explore this wonderful art form for yourself. If you are trying chip carving, send me some pictures of what you are making and let me know how you are getting on.

<http://bit.ly/2mkbla3>

Website



Fred Zavadi

Fred Zavadi is a highly acclaimed carver. On his website he shows many of his carvings and also work in progress. Fred also has some YouTube clips which you can find by searching the web. Fred has a huge range of diverse work and the site is well worth exploring.

<http://bit.ly/2F3H3Ho>

FROM OUR FORUM

www.woodworkersinstitute.com/forum



Easter bunny

Claude posted: This is an Easter bunny with basket of candy. Carved from bass wood and about 100mm tall.

Ian thorn responded: Very clever Claude love the setting in the shavings.

<http://bit.ly/2stj2x>

If you are interested in the possibility of your piece appearing here, or would simply like feedback and advice on your work, visit www.woodworkersinstitute.com and click on the forum button.

The firewood challenge

Towards the end of 2016 our chief BWA demonstrator, Bob Russum, set the members of the BWA Yorkshire Wooldale Carvers of Holmfirth a challenge to carve something from a lump of firewood from a bag of logs he had purchased from a local supermarket.

The results were to be gathered together and displayed on the BWA stand at Great Yorkshire Show in July 2017.

He emptied the bag on the floor and invited members to select a piece. About half of the group took a lump and got to work.

Despite being kiln dried, the silver birch (*Betula pendula*) was at times not easy to carve, having a tendency to split unexpectedly,

but as can be seen the final results were of a very high standard and extremely varied, ranging from a caricature of tennis player 'Angry' Murray to a quiet monk, a tealight holder, a woodpecker and chick, a couple of cats, an otter, some lovespoons, Yorkshire roses and numerous other very imaginative ideas.

The display drew much interest and many favourable comments from visitors to the show and proved the exercise to have been well worthwhile. It was not only challenging but very rewarding and goes to show what can be produced at very low cost with a little imagination.

John Milner, wooldalecarvers@gmail.com



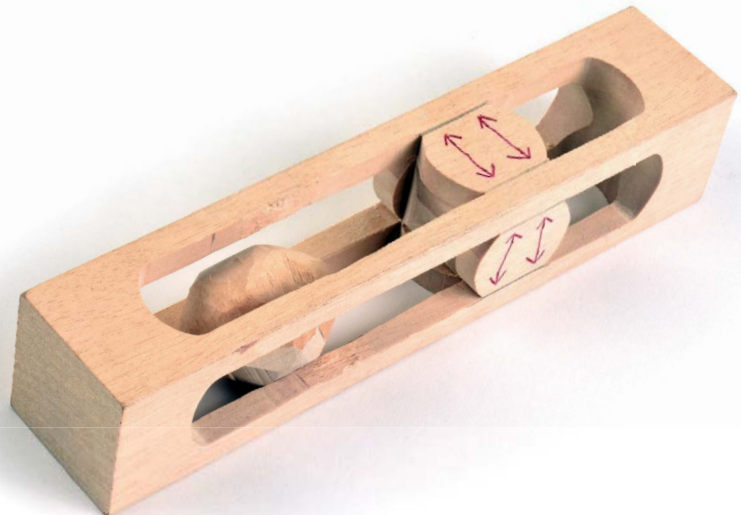
Alternative methods

I have been an avid carver for many years and have always enjoyed trying new things. Two items I have enjoyed carving are the linked chains and bass in a cage. It was during carving those projects I wondered if there was a different and possibly easier way to tackle these than the traditional methods.

The samples attached are of the partially-formed link chain, to show how they are marked out and the cut using a coping, fret or scrollsaw. It is a very effective method of preparing the blank ready for separation of the links and shaping process. You can also see how the caged ball can be prepared in a similar way ready for final carving.

I know there is much enjoyment gained by hand carving the whole process, but likewise, enjoyment can be found in problem solving, using a combination of processes and possibly making life a little easier to create the desired end result.

Neville Wood



If you have something you want your fellow carvers to know, send in your letters and stories to Mark Baker at *Woodcarving*, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XN or email markb@thegmcgroup.com

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Our contributors



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art@3dsculptor.co.uk



Duane Cartwright is a self-taught woodcarver based in Devon. He has been carving on and off for 16 years. His interest in carving began while undertaking an apprenticeship in antique furniture restoration. duanescarving.blogspot.co.uk



Johan Roudy is a French woodcarver who started the craft in 2005 as a hobby, but turned professional in 2012. Self-taught, Johan is inspired in his work by nature and has a great interest in ornamental carving. johan-roudy-woodcarving.blogspot.fr



Mike Wood has been carving all his life and professionally since 1986. Carving mostly birds, he is self-taught and takes great inspiration from the American bird carvers. www.mikewoodbird.co.uk
mikewoodbird@btinternet.com



Murray Taylor was a jeweller and silversmith before retiring 15 years ago and devoting time to woodcarving. Murray has made three DVDs related to woodcarving, one of which is on chip carving, and he is involved in teaching and promoting chip carving. murraytaylor@hotmail.co.uk



Peter Benson has travelled the world teaching and judging woodcarving of all standards for the past 20 years. He has written two books on the subject. bencarve@btinternet.com



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The carver's toolbag

Bringing you all the latest tools, machinery and products to meet your carving needs

All prices are correct at the time of going to press but are subject to change without notice. Photographs courtesy of the manufacturers/retailers, unless otherwise stated

Mark Baker tries out the latest power carving cutter from Arbortech

The ball gouge is 90mm tall and fits on to a 100 or 115mm angle grinder. The cutter is secured in position via a shield, which is held locked in place with a machine screw. The kit features a hex key, which has a looped handle end that acts as a tensioning rod. When the handle arm touches the main hex-key stem, it does not need tightening any more. The cutter is 30mm in diameter and is a circle/disc made from high-speed steel (HSS). It features a grooved recess straight behind the cutting edge and the cutter is placed at an angle on the shaft.

Arbotech says: 'When in use the cutting ring is self-sharpening. While one side of the ring cuts, the opposite side of the ring is polished. By simply loosening and rotating the ring, you will achieve a freshly sharpened edge. The previously used edge then undergoes self-sharpening, more than doubling the life of the cutting ring.'

Fitting

Fitting the ball gouge to the angle grinder was simple. It just screwed, via a threaded hole at the end of the ball gouge, on to the threaded shaft of the angle grinder. In the package there is a brass adapter to suit another size of the angle grinder thread required. The ball gouge was secured in place using a spanner (not supplied) and by locating the jaws of the spanner on to the two machined flat areas on the lower end of the shaft, locking the angle grinder spindle lock, and tightening the ball gouge in place.

Using the ball gouge

Now I will be absolutely honest. When I first saw the ball gouge in use at an event some time back, I was not sure about the projection of the blade 90mm from the grinder and also the control one truly had when using it.

So, after securing a section of tree to the bench with clamps – I would always secure work unless I can guarantee it is so heavy it cannot move – I donned safety glasses and ear plugs, switched the grinder on and used a two-handed grip. I don't advocate ever using a single-handed hold on a 100/115mm grinder. Then I approached the work cautiously and made my first cuts.

I have to say that I need not have been worried. The cutter angle on the shaft and the way the cutter self-limits the cut depth possible results in a surprisingly gentle cut. Yes, I did anticipate a potential grab if I inadvertently presented it wrongly to the



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK BAKER

work. In fact, a catch didn't happen at all in any of the cuts I made. The cutter effectively shear-cuts the material when being arced or pulled across the work. I found that I could make heavy or the most delicate of cuts easily, but it can also remove wood exceptionally fast, so gentle and controlled movements is the way to go for maximum control.

Conclusion

Arbotech says: 'The cutting action produces fine shavings rather than dust.' I found this to be mostly true but it is very much dependent on the timber being worked. Yes, the cut is delicate and it does produce fine shavings but how much dust produced in relation to shavings is much dependent on what timber is used.

I also used oak (*Quercus* spp.), ash (*Fraxinus* spp.), pine (*Pinus* spp.) and some exotics. While the surface finish was the finest on the densest, most close-grained timbers, even

on the pine, the finish was surprisingly smooth even working against the grain. Again, cutting with the grain resulted in the best cuts. By making controlled micro-cuts arcing the cutter into the wood and then out you can create a dimpled or rippled texture on the surface of the work.

Power carving is not for everyone, but if you want to venture into this area, or already do power carving, this tool is very effective, easily controlled and is well-worth exploring.

Prices

Arbotech ball gouge: £83.40

Arbotech replacement ball gouge cutter 30mm: £22.19

Contact: Brimarc Tools & Machinery

Web: www.brimarc.com

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BRIMARC

Narex bent gouges

Narex offers a large range of bent gouges in different lengths, sizes and profiles to suit the carver's various needs. The steel used for the blade is a chrome-silicon alloy with a hardness of 59HRC and each comes ready-honed for use.

Prices start from: £12.95
 For the UK contact: Tomaco
 Web: www.tomaco.co.uk
 For distributors in other countries contact
 visit: www.narextools.cz/en/distributors

**Glue Monster wood adhesive**

Bond has added two new products to its range of adhesives. Glue Monster wood adhesive is a one-part, ready-to-use PVA timber adhesive with an EN 204 D3 rating. It is suitable for a variety of general purpose joinery applications and delivers impressive results when used on hard and softwoods, decorative laminates and chipboard blockwood, as well as other types of engineered timber panels. It is also water resistant. The Beast is a one-part polyurethane super-strength adhesive with an EN 204 D4 rating. It is solvent-free, completely waterproof, permanently flexible and cures in just 20 minutes. In addition, it can be overpainted or stained once cured. The Beast is also highly versatile and can be used to effectively bond a whole range of common household and construction materials. These include ceramic, stone, concrete, plaster, wood, chipboard, laminate, metal, glass, leather and most plastics.

Price: £1.90
 From: www.bond-it.co.uk

**Non slip mat 610mm x 1220mm**

Self adhesive backed sheet.
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 Can be used to refurbish pushblocks or lining the drawers of workshop tool chests etc: £7.66
 For those that do not want adhesive-backed non-slip matting, Trend sell a 610 x 1220mm non slip mat for: £13.08

Contact: Trend Machinery
 and Cutting Tools Ltd
 Web: www.trend-uk.com

**Honing compounds**

Hewn & Hone has just introduced three new honing compounds. These are the same compounds Nic Westermann uses to hone. The coarsest grade is the grey in colour and is not really a finishing compound but is designed to remove scratches out of edges left from 320-1,000 grit belts or stones. It will leave a slightly frosted look to a bevel. Blue is a medium grade compound that can be used after the grey compound and will leave a very sharp, polished edge or can be used to remove scratches from 600 grit down to 2,000 grit abrasives to refine the edge/bevel further prior to final finishing with a finer abrasive. White is an ultra-fine compound designed to give the ultimate edge on well-prepared bevels.

Price £4.00 each
 Contact: Hewn & Hone
www.hewnandhone.co.uk



Conversion chart

2mm (⁵ / ₆₄ in)
3mm (¹ / ₈ in)
4mm (¹ / ₃₂ in)
6mm (¹ / ₄ in)
7mm (⁹ / ₃₂ in)
8mm (⁵ / ₁₆ in)
9mm (¹¹ / ₃₂ in)
10mm (³ / ₈ in)
11mm (⁷ / ₁₆ in)
12mm (¹ / ₂ in)
13mm (¹ / ₂ in)
14mm (⁹ / ₁₆ in)
15mm (⁹ / ₁₆ in)
16mm (⁵ / ₈ in)
17mm (¹¹ / ₁₆ in)
18mm (²³ / ₃₂ in)
19mm (³ / ₄ in)
20mm (³ / ₄ in)
21mm (¹³ / ₁₆ in)
22mm (⁷ / ₈ in)
23mm (²⁹ / ₃₂ in)
24mm (¹⁵ / ₁₆ in)
25mm (1in)
30mm (1 ¹ / ₈ in)
32mm (1 ¹ / ₄ in)
35mm (1 ³ / ₈ in)
38mm (1 ¹ / ₂ in)
40mm (1 ⁵ / ₈ in)
45mm (1 ³ / ₄ in)
50mm (2in)
55mm (2 ¹ / ₈ -2 ¹ / ₄ in)
60mm (2 ³ / ₈ in)
63mm (2 ¹ / ₂ in)
65mm (2 ⁵ / ₈ in)
70mm (2 ³ / ₄ in)
75mm (3in)
80mm (3 ¹ / ₈ in)
85mm (3 ¹ / ₄ in)
90mm (3 ¹ / ₂ in)
93mm (3 ³ / ₄ in)
95mm (3 ³ / ₄ in)
100mm (4in)
105mm (4 ¹ / ₈ in)
110mm (4 ¹ / ₄ -4 ³ / ₈ in)
115mm (4 ¹ / ₂ in)
120mm (4 ³ / ₄ in)
125mm (5in)
130mm (5 ¹ / ₈ in)
135mm (5 ¹ / ₄ in)
140mm (5 ¹ / ₂ in)
145mm (5 ³ / ₈ in)
150mm (6in)
155mm (6 ¹ / ₈ in)
160mm (6 ¹ / ₄ in)
165mm (6 ¹ / ₂ in)
170mm (6 ³ / ₈ in)
178mm (6 ⁷ / ₈ in)
180mm (7in)
185mm (7 ¹ / ₈ in)
190mm (7 ¹ / ₄ in)
195mm (7 ³ / ₈ in)
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)

Axminster LED Stayput strip light

Mark Baker tries out a new LED light from Axminster Tools & Machinery



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK BAKER

Having effective lighting in a workshop is a must, and since we require our workshops to be multi-functional, how to effectively light specific work areas is an issue we all face from time to time. The rise of light-emitting diode (LED) lighting has resulted in an increase in the availability and options for lighting for workshops.

I came across this unit from Axminster Tools & Machinery the other month and have been trying it out since. The name Stayput refers to the flexible/bendy arm on which the lights sit. And, as the name suggests, it is meant to keep the light in the position you want it. The base has four holes so you can screw it to a surface. Axminster does offer optional extra fixing methods, including a bracket, magnet or a screw clamp.

The LED strip is protected by a polycarbonate shield, the Stayput arm is 500mm long, the light output is 14W output and you can adjust the light output from 10-100%. The electric cable is 1.8m long.

In use

The lamp came ready assembled and, once out of the packaging, it was a case of fixing it to a suitable surface in the position required. I placed the strip-

light to the side of the carving/general purpose area and screwed it to a shelf. This enabled me to arc it over the bench and sit just under the wall units.

The first thing of note was that the Stayput arm did stay put exactly where it was positioned with no drooping. The strip light lit up the work area well and my being able to adjust the light output is a boon. Being able to position the head exactly where I wanted to angle from directly overhead or to create an oblique light source is ideal.

Conclusion

The lack of heat is a real plus when the lights are placed close to work or one works under the light. The light is a clear, bright, almost blue-tinged light, that effectively illuminates the work area. I also didn't find the light tiring on the eyes. The whole thing is well made and sturdy. While it is not inexpensive, it certainly does the job it is intended to do very well indeed without fuss. Certainly worth looking at.

Price

Price: £79.99

Contact: Axminster Tools & Machinery

Web: www.axminster.co.uk

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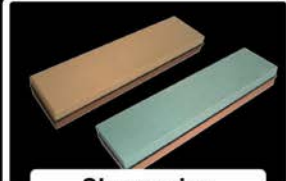
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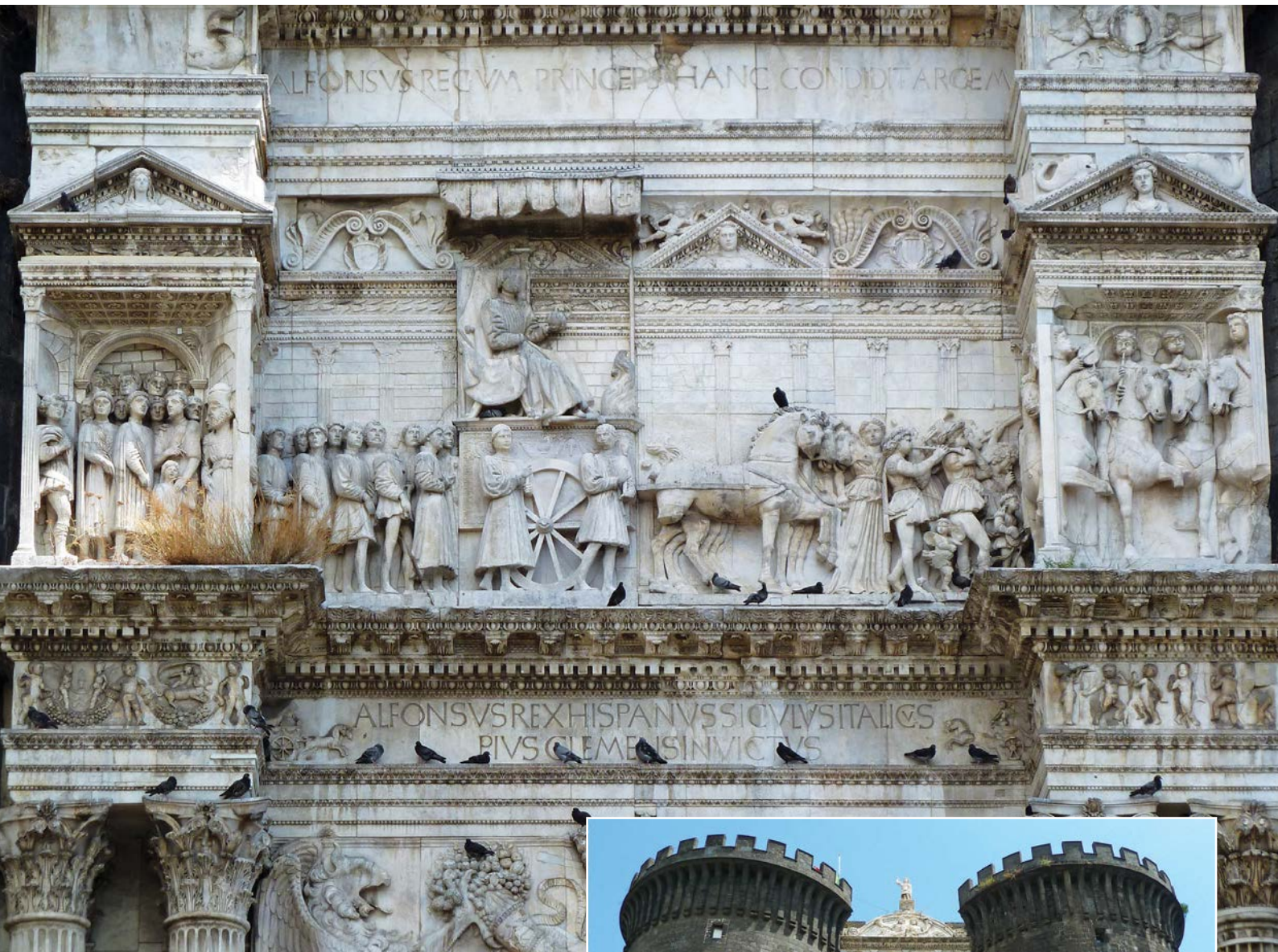
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Castel Nuovo, Naples

This month we take a look at the triumphal arch on this medieval castle



The Castel Nuovo (New Castle) was built in Naples in 1279 after the capital of the Kingdom of Naples moved from Palermo to Naples. In 1443 Alfonso V, King of Aragon, successfully invaded Naples and moved his court to the city. The triumphal arch was commissioned to celebrate this event and was added between two of the castle's western towers in 1470. The design has been attributed to different artists, including Pietro di Martina and Giuliano da Maiano, but it is now believed to be the work of Francesco Laurana. Also known as Francesco de la Vrana, Laurana (ca. 1430–1502) was born in Dalmatia but began his career in Naples. He is considered to be one of the most important sculptors of the 15th century. The Castel Nuovo arch is made of white marble and is 35m tall. The lower arch is flanked by Corinthian columns and is decorated with a horse-drawn chariot leading Alfonso into Naples. The carvings on the upper arch include lions, statues personifying Alfonso's virtues, Alfonso dressed as a warrior, and statues of St Michael, St Anthony the Abbot and St Sebastian.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK BAKER



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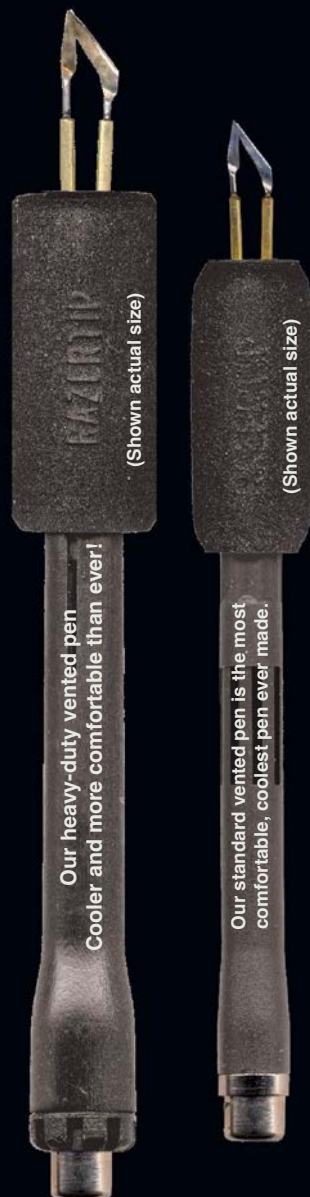
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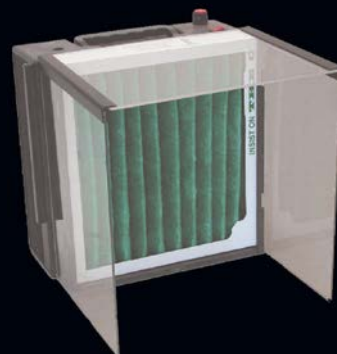
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