

WOOD CARVING



HOT ROD SPOONS

David Western

PROJECTS TO CARVE Christmas angel • Dragon head • Tropical fish • Decorative frame • Wilson's bird of paradise **TECHNICAL ADVICE** Spacing and carving chip-carved letters • **FEATURE** Dick Onians shares his perspectives



www.turnerstoolbox.com
DAVID MARTIN

CREATIVE WELSH WOODTURNING LTD

TURNERS TOOL BOX . COM

WOODTURNING – WOODWORKING – WOODCARVING

TOOLS & ACCESSORIES

LOG ONTO

www.turnerstoolbox.com



Beber Kevlar Carvers Glove

This ambidextrous kevlar glove offers level four cut protection and has rubberised dots for extra grip.

Being ambidextrous the glove is suitable for left or right-handed carvers and available in small, medium and large.

Supplied as a SINGLE glove



Special Offer

For a limited time only
Purchase the

Flexcut 3 – Knife Starter Set
& Flexcut Knife Strop

&
Receive the
Beber Kevlar Carvers Glove
Free of Charge



Arbortech Fully Assembled
Mini – Carver Power Tool

Ready to use
Straight from the box



Full Face Visor
Bound with aluminium
for added strength

Woodcarving Tools & Accessories

For
The Beginner
The Novice
&
The Professional

Woodcarving Tools

By
Arbortech
Asahi Japanese Tools
Beber
Crimson Luthier Tools
Dalmann Mallets
Duragrit
Ellipse Respirator
Flexcut
Microplane
Proxxon
Robert Sorby
Stubai
Veritas



Next day delivery service
(UK)

&

We deliver worldwide

For more information or to place your order visit www.turnerstoolbox.com

Order online Open 24hrs – All at the click of a button and delivered straight to your door

Or place your order over the telephone, text or email

T: 01873 831 589 – M: 07931 405 131 – E: david.martin70@outlook.com



Guild of Master Craftsmen – PCI DSS Merchant Compliant Assured

Season's greetings


PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK BAKER/CMC PUBLICATIONS


I was laughing with a colleague yesterday about writing this leader. The laughing came about due to the fact that this is the issue of the magazine covering Christmas, but the time of writing is a hot, sunny day

at the beginning of September. Such a visual and mental disjoint is strange, but all too familiar to the world of publishing. That said, I have just seen some wonderful pictures of snow-covered peaks of mountains from my wife's recent trip to Canada, so I can easily visualise the temperatures decreasing and the hive of activity that starts about now as people begin creating things for Christmas.

I have long commented that Christmas seems to be the time that people have a lot of fun making humorous things. This year we show how to make a Christmas tree angel and I hope you have some fun with this as well as the things you are making. I am always intrigued by the ingenuity and carvers' sense of humour when it comes to making whimsical things. So please do share images of your work with me.

When it comes to carving, the number of people taking up knife carving is still rising at a huge rate and it feeds into a rise in the take-up of crafts that require little kit and space. The need to be creative is innate in people and this can be outworked in many ways. For me there is something primal about working with something from the land and fashioning it into something different.

Working with timber has been a lifelong journey for me and, while there have been times of frustration, I have enjoyed every moment of it. That said, I have also enjoyed and enjoy many other hobbies too.

I have long wondered how we can effectively spread this joy of being creative and encourage others to experience making and creating things too. I do not care whether that is cookery, painting, carving, pottery, calligraphy, textiles or one of many more options. All are wonderful things to explore and, as with many things, people comment they would love to have a try but are reticent for fear of making mistakes and looking silly in front of others. Some comment that lack of time is an issue and some will ask about the expense.

There is no one route to encourage people to try something that will work every time. What I do know is that free taster sessions, for any craft or hobby, usually yield a response. If they are well advertised people are usually willing to come along and see or try something and that is the first step in getting them to explore something they may well come to love. Most people do not know what is involved in crafts or hobbies. They may have seen the end results and beautiful items, but the processes are alien to them and until they can see others doing something that sparks off an 'I would like to try that moment,' they will be none the wiser.

So, while creating your latest carving wonders, have a thought about how we can encourage others to have a go. Maybe a few seasonal carved gifts for family, friends and neighbours will spark some interest.

Have a wonderful Christmas and best wishes, Mark

To get in touch, please email me:
markb@thegmcgroup.com

REAL DEALS FOR YOU

Available until 31st December 2018
or While Stocks Last

WORLD-CLASS BRANDS *to Light Up Christmas!*

More Than 30,000 Products From Over 250 Leading Brands

5m/16' Chrome
PowerBlade
Tape with 2m
Key Ring Tape
XMS18TAPEKEY



£14.99

KOMELON

AS SEEN ON
TV

5 Piece
Woodworking Kit
XMS18PLANE5



£49.99

FAITHFULL
QUALITY TOOLS

Einhell

18V Cordless Multi
Tool
XMS18MTCORDL



£89.99

AS SEEN ON
TV

£5.99
Each

Hi-Vis Retractable Knife
with 10 Blades
XMS18HIVISTK



Hultafors

WIN!
Pages Make Prizes
Competition
terms & conditions apply

We're giving away
over £5,000
worth of tools!

Visit www.realdealsforyou.com
for full details.
Terms & conditions apply.

19 Piece
HSS Drill Bit Set
XMS18HSS19



£12.99

FAITHFULL
QUALITY TOOLS

10 Piece Bungee Set
XMS18BUNG10



£12.99

Can't find what you're looking for?
We have access to thousands of tools
& accessories for every trade and task.



For more details on these premium products and fantastic savings, please visit
www.realdealsforyou.com to find your nearest Real Deals for You Approved Stockist.
Visit us today!



PROJECTS

- 5 Angel decoration**
Peter Benson carves a stylised Christmas angel
- 13 Decorative frame**
Mark Ivan Fortune guides us through the steps to create this unusual miniature decorative frame
- 21 Viking dragon head**
Steve Bisco is inspired by a historic woodcarving from the Viking Age
- 28 Tropical fish**
Andrew Thomas explores making a stylised reef-dwelling fish
- 38 Flower relief carving**
In this abridged extract from *The Complete Book of Woodcarving: Everything You Need to Know to Master the Craft*, author Everett Ellenwood shows how to carve a flower in relief
- 54 Birds of paradise**
Mike Wood provides a guide for carving a trio of Wilson's birds of paradise

KIT & TOOLS

- 72 The carver's toolbox**
A festive selection of products that may make excellent presents

FEATURES

- 18 Vikings!**
Steve Bisco looks at the artistic side of the most fearsome warriors of the Dark Ages
- 34 Joseph Murphy: woodcarver, sculptor and carpenter**
Anthony Bailey talks to Joseph Murphy – woodcarver, sculptor and carpenter. He really is all three...
- 44 Personal perspectives**
Dick Onians shares his personal perspectives on his carving history
- 63 The diary of a student woodcarver**
In this final article of the series, William Barsley takes you on a tour of the School Degree Show
- 80 The art of carving**
Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, India

TECHNIQUES

- 48 Hot rod spoons**
Dave Western shows how to create flame-inspired spoons
- 56 Going further into letter carving**
Murray Taylor explores the spacing of letters, the different methods of carving them and some project ideas

COMMUNITY

- 1 Choices and challenges**
The editor brings you season's greetings
- 10 News & events**
We bring you the latest news and events from the woodcarving community and take your letters from the forum
- 66 Meet the authors**
Meet this month's writers
- 67 Subscription offer**
Find out about our latest subscription offers
- 68 From the community**
We take your letters and showcase some of your work from the forum
- 71 Next issue...**
Can't wait to see what's in store for the next issue of *Woodcarving*? We reveal a sneak peek at what to expect
- 76 Advertising index**
Find all of our advertisers' details here

The North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show

Gt Yorkshire Showground Harrogate (HG2 8QZ)

16 November 2018 10am - 5pm

17 November 2018 10am - 5pm

18 November 2018 10am - 4pm

MyTime Media

www.skpromotions.co.uk T: 07946 855445

**Make life easy and pre-book
your tickets,**

Telephone **01749 813899**

Adult tickets £11.00 @ £9.00

Concession tickets £10.00 @ £8.00

For show details either visit

www.skpromotions.co.uk

or phone **07946 855445**

or Email exhibitions@mytimemedia.com

Should you not wish to receive further
information on our woodworking shows please
contact us.

Henry Taylor Tools

see how we forge
them on our website
or YouTube

Makers of fine handtools since 1834.
Each individual tool is hand forged by
our Sheffield craftsman. Choose from
our vast selection of Straight, Curved,
Backbent, Spoons, Fishtails, Allongee,
Long Pod, Micro or Sculpture tools.
They will perform and serve you well for many
years to come. See our website for a list of stockists
or simply contact the office

Henry Taylor (Tools) Limited
Peacock Estate, Livesey Street
Sheffield S6 2BL
Tel +44 (0)114 2340282
Fax: +44 (0)114 285 2015
email: sales@henrytaylortools.co.uk
website: www.henrytaylortools.co.uk

Angel decoration

Peter Benson carves a stylised Christmas angel

Every Christmas tree should, traditionally, have an angel. It could be attached right at the very top or, as in this case, suspended anywhere around the tree that seems appropriate.

The pattern shown can be adapted to suit your own requirements – it can be made larger or smaller, have a bracket or loop fitted to the back so that it will fit on top of the tree, and can be left plain or painted. The choice is yours.

One of the problems facing a carver with a subject as small as this is that, even with the finest of small tools, it can be extremely difficult to carve the detail of a face. One of two things will inevitably happen. Either something looking like an anatomical experiment by a mad scientist will result or the carver will go further and further back trying to get an acceptable face. Eyes, noses and mouths are difficult enough to get right in a head three or four inches tall, so how can one expect to succeed with one that is half an inch tall?

By all means try, as I did, but throw in the towel if you fail after a couple of attempts, or you will end up with no face left. You will probably have more success getting the basic shape of the face and head and then painting on the eyes and mouth with very simple lines. Remember that there are two limitations to the amount of success you can achieve. One is your own ability, experience and knowledge of the subject and the other is the tools that you have at your disposal. If your tool selection is limited so will be your chances of success.

In the end it is all about whether you are happy with the results of your efforts. If you are, then the exercise has been worthwhile.

Things you will need

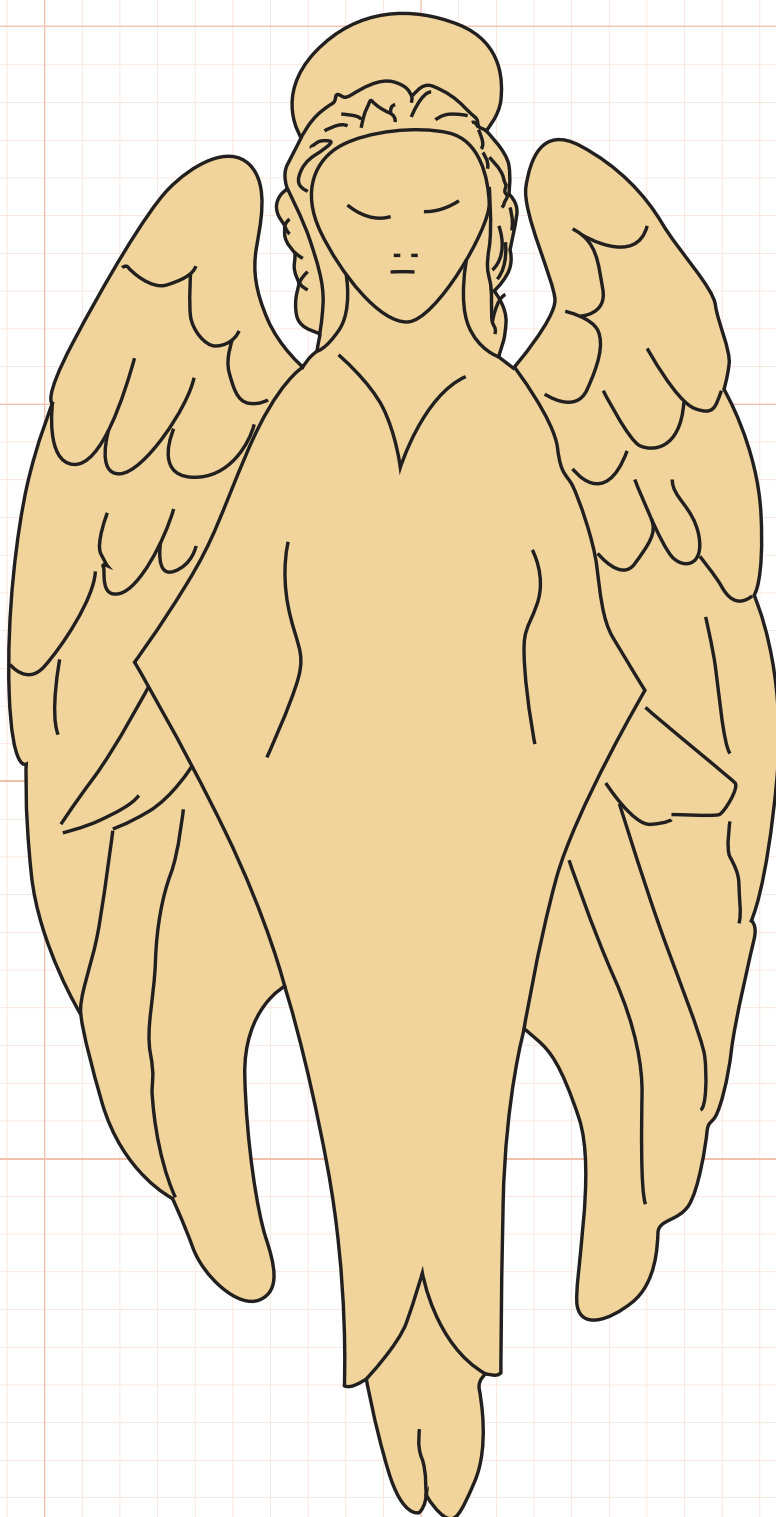
Tools:

- Safety glove
- Knife
- No.5, 6mm
- No.8, 3mm
- Small V-tool
- Paint brushes
- Acrylic water colour paints if needed
- Finishing oil
- Acrylic varnish or lacquer

Materials:

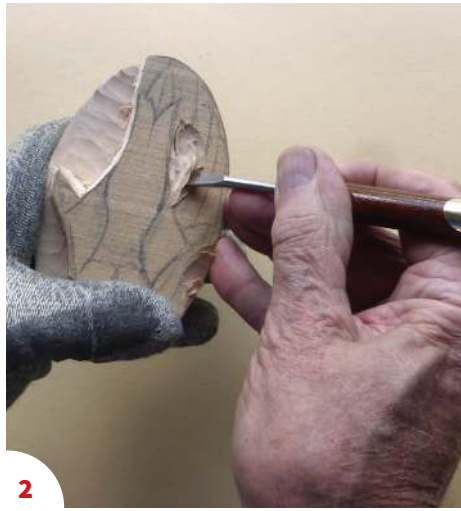
- Lime (*Tilia* spp.) 120mm long x 70mm wide x 20mm thick

TOP TIP: When working in some woods, particularly lime, drawing lines on your work with a pencil can result in the carving getting very dirty. You could use a fine-point marker pen but sometimes the ink bleeds. I find that a black biro can give a clear line that is easily carved off when you have finished with it.





1



2

1 Trace the pattern and scale it to the size you require before transferring to your piece of wood. The design was drawn to fit on to a piece of wood cut into an oval for ease of cutting out, so if you draw your oval round the pattern shown you won't go far wrong.

2 Cut round the body outline to a depth of around 18mm. This will leave around 6mm thickness for the two wings. Work on one side first giving a clear outline to the body so that it can be matched on the other side.

3 Remove the waste wood from the head down to the top of the wings to ensure that the maximum amount of wood is left for the head. Now cut down the other side of the body to match what has already been done.



3



4

4 Draw round the outline of the wings on the back of the carving and remove the wood that is outside the wings to a depth of around 5mm to form the basis of the angel's back. Make sure that you leave enough wood at the back of the head for the hair and halo.

5 Once you are happy with the level of the back, cut away the waste wood between the bottom of each wing and the lower part of the body. Mark a central line on the wings to make sure that the next stage maintains some degree of symmetry.

6 Slope each wing from the outside into the central line you have drawn, leaving the very outside edge untouched. Check as you carve away your line that you don't stray to one side or the other.



5



6

7 You can do some basic shaping to the body at the back as well as smoothing off the shoulder area. Try to maintain the shape of the wings on the back and shoulders.

8 Give the whole wing a gentle curve along its length with the top and bottom further forward than the centre. Slim down the whole wing until you are satisfied with the general shape and then you can start to tackle the head and body.

TOP TIP: If you are carving in relief from a pattern I recommend that you transfer your pattern to a clear acetate sheet, drawing it on with a fine-point permanent marker pen. This way you can offer it up to your carving and check that everything underneath is where it should be.

This may sound obvious but, when you are carving something like this that needs to be as symmetrical as possible around the centreline, life can be easier if you cut out a paper pattern folded down that line as this will ensure that both sides are the same. Even doing this part-way through a carving can help get both wings the same, for example.

Most novice carvers get fed up with hearing this but you must remember that the smaller your carving is the more important it is your tools are kept sharp with regular honing. Also, only carve in good light to ensure that you can see exactly what you are trying to do.



7



8

9 Using your knife, cut an angle on the top and back of the head that will form the halo. Make sure that you only take off enough to get a big enough flat for the size of circle you intend to draw. Be conscious of the amount you will need for the face and head.

10 Draw a circle on the flat you have created – a small coin is probably the best thing for this. Cut round this circle down to the surface of the head and draw another circle inside the first one, to give the appearance of the halo.

11 Now you can start to shape the body and sleeves. As this is to be a stylised angel, don't get too detailed at this stage. Keep the body very simple and don't even try to carve detailed hands. The arms are suggested by the shape of the sleeves and don't need elbows or wrists to be shown.

12 Moving back to the head, mark a line down the centre of the face and cut back each side to an angle of approximately 45° or so. This will result in a total angle of 90° at the centreline. Draw in the eyes, mouth and nose to give an indication of their location. Eyes should be halfway down the head, nose tip should be just under halfway down from the eyes to the chin and mouth is one-third down from the nose tip to the chin.

13 Before adding any detail finish off the lower part of the body. I have left the dress tapering to the feet but you may have a better idea. The feet, like the hands, are left as a basic shape for simplicity.

14 & 15 Draw in the feathers of the wings on the back and front of each. You will need two rows of short feathers at the top and then the long flight feathers going down to the bottom of the wings. You may prefer to paint the feathers rather than carve them but, if you choose to continue carving, outline each feather with a V tool and carve the feathers so that they appear to overlap each other.

On the back, the inner edge of each feather overlaps the outer edge of the next and on the front of the wing it is the other way round. Slim down the face and give the whole thing a good sanding.

I chose to try to carve the face but, even with the very small tools that I have in my toolbox, I found it very difficult to get it to look as I wanted it to. A very simple face shape with a few detail lines painted on would probably prove to be a better choice.

16 The finished angel. ▶



9



10



11



12



13



14



15



16

Superior Woodworking with the Sjöbergs Elite Workbench

Designed and built by Swedish craftsmen, this is European bench making at its highest level.

- Built from European beech
- Treated with a premium quality finishing oil
- Vices provide enormous clamping power
- Double row of dog holes working from each vice location
- 4 steel bench dogs which can also be used in the trestle
- Quick action holdfast for horizontal clamping or in the trestle legs for clamping large boards

★★★★★ 4.4 Stars

"...a joy to own and to use. It's rock-solid, easy to put together, just the right size, and looks more like a piece of furniture than a workbench – the quality is that good."



Sjöbergs Elite 2000

£1,899.50 Inc.vat Code 718151

Cabinetmaker's Workbench including storage unit SM04 and with **FREE** accessory kit worth **£115.50**

The Elite 2000 Cabinetmaker's package comes with a six-drawer, double door tool cupboard which slots underneath the bench and a **FREE** accessory kit containing quick action holdfast, jaw cushions and universal anvil.

Offer valid until 30th November 2018.



BriMarc
TOOLS & MACHINERY

Available from **BriMarc Tools & Machinery**
at **brimarc.com** or call **03332 406967**



City&Guilds
of London
Art School

WOODCARVING & GILDING COURSES

BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Our range of courses is designed to suit students from a wide range of backgrounds, and all can access bursary funding to cover varying portions of the fees. The courses are unique in that the teaching of the traditional craft skills of carving and lettercutting are complemented by the art skills of observational drawing and modelling. All courses are taught by practicing craftsmen and women which ensures that students leave the course well prepared for professional practice. Alumni regularly find work in the heritage sector and often set up their own businesses.

Visit our studios, meet our tutors and learn how you can carve out a rewarding career

Contact admissions@cityandguildsartschool.ac.uk | 020 7091 1683 | www.cityandguildsartschool.ac.uk

News & events...

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

BDWCA NEWS

The deadline for copy for this issue unfortunately came just before our Annual Show and Competition in Bakewell, Derbyshire, so news of that will have to wait until next time. However, I can tell you that a wide range of birds, including the nuthatches, which are the subject of the Regional Group Competition this year, are eagerly awaiting the event as I write.

We have many different categories in the competition, but one that I haven't mentioned for some time is the category that allows birds to be carved without the addition of 'true to life' representations of their legs, and that is the Slick Smoothie Shorebirds and Waders. This is an extension of the decoy style of carving, more commonly thought of as referring to the working decoy-style ducks and geese.

While realism and creative postures are encouraged in these shorebird decoys, and decorative painting to the artist's highest ability is encouraged, no burning or fine texturing is allowed,

and the entries must be mounted on a single dowel and simple base.

This category is, in fact, a very good starting point for a novice carver, especially if the subject is a sleeping shorebird such as a dunlin, and many new carvers have started with this bird before progressing to more advanced shorebirds, such as the avocet with its long curving bill.

Equally, this simple style lends itself to artistic compositions, either still using the single dowel leg, or with very simple legs, which are quite often made from metal coat hangers!

At our 2017 show the winners of the Advanced Slick Smoothie Shorebirds and Waders were: 1st, Grey Plover by Paul Dalby; 2nd, Knot by Steve Toher; and Highly Commended, Lesser Yellowleg by Terry Getley.

For further information on the BDWCA, as well as membership details, visit www.bdwca.org.uk. Membership includes three issues of our 28-page full-colour magazine, *Wingspan*.

PHOTOGRAPH © PAM WILSON FOR THE BDWCA



Grey Plover by Paul Dalby

PHOTOGRAPH © PAM WILSON FOR THE BDWCA



Knot by Steve Toher



Lesser Yellowleg by Terry Getley

PHOTOGRAPH © JANET WASH FOR THE BDWCA

Sussex Woodcraft Society

Sussex Woodcraft Society annual show will be held at the Henfield Village Hall on 22 December. This event includes a competition celebrating all of the talent in this broad-based club with members from all over Sussex and the surrounding area. There are categories for turning, carving, miniatures, spoon

carving, stick making and more. Visitors regularly remark about the range of items on display and the very high quality of the work. Some members also have stalls where they sell their work.

Web: www.sussexwoodcraft.co.uk

Oak processionary moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*)

The government agency Defra has introduced legislation, which came into force on Tuesday 21 August 2018, to protect oak trees against the imminent danger of introducing oak processionary moth or OPM (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) into the OPM protected zone through import and movement.

The legislation applies to all oak trees species in the UK, other than the cork oak, with a girth at 1.2m above the root collar of 8cm or more. Such trees represent the greatest likelihood of introducing OPM, hence the need for strengthened requirements. Existing requirements on OPM freedom continue to apply for trees with a smaller girth than 8cm.

The legislation prohibits the movement of plants into the OPM protected zone unless specific conditions are met. The legislation requires that imports into and movements within the OPM protected zone can only take place if the oak trees are subject to certain conditions. The action has been taken following a recent interception 'in trade' of OPM.

The caterpillars cause significant damage to oak trees and can pose risks to human and animal health. The Forestry Commission has operated an OPM control programme since 2013. OPM is an established pest in London and surrounding areas, but the majority of the UK is

designated a protected zone and it has strengthened protection to mitigate the risk of introducing OPM into the UK OPM Protected Zone.

If you spot oak processionary moth caterpillars do not touch them, make a report at: <https://treealert.forestry.gov.uk>



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA

2018 Events

• Woodworking & 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



Special award winner:
Otter Bowl by John C Sharp from the
International Woodcarvers Congress 2017

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARC FEATHERLEY

2019 Events

• CHANGE 2019 World Wood Day

When: 19-24 March 2019

Where: Austrian Open-Air Museum Stübing and Stefaniensaal in Graz, Austria

Web: www.worldwoodday.org/2019

• Midlands Woodworking Show

When: 22-23 March 2019

Where: Lincoln Rd, Winthorpe, Coddington, Newark, NG24 2NY

Web: www.nelton.co.uk

• 49th Annual Ward World Championship Wildfowl Carving Competition and Art Festival

When: 26-28 April 2019

Where: Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Hwy, Ocean City, MD 21842, US

Web: www.wardmuseum.org

• International Woodcarvers Congress

When: 8-16 June 2019

Where: Jackson County Fairgrounds, 1212 E Quarry Street, Maquoketa, IA 52060, US

Web: www.awcltd.org

• International Woodcarving Symposium Brienzen

When: 2-6 July 2019

Where: Verein, KUNA 3855, Brienzen, Switzerland

Web: www.symposium-brienzen.ch

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

For your passion
Woodcarving tools
made in Switzerland

More than 600 high quality products
www.pfeilttools.com

pfeil

F. Zulauf Messerschmiede und Werkzeugfabrikations AG
Dennliweg 29 CH-4900 Langenthal
P +41 (0)62 922 45 65 E-Mail info@pfeilttools.com www.pfeilttools.com



**THE FOLK SCHOOL
CHANGES YOU.**



Engaging hands and hearts since 1925. Come
enjoy making crafts and good friends on 300 natural,
scenic acres in western North Carolina.

JOHN C. CAMPBELL FOLK SCHOOL
folkschool.org  1-800-FOLK-SCH
BRASSTOWN NORTH CAROLINA

CALVO STUDIO

Wood Carving School



235 EAST MAIN ST, GLOUCESTER, MA, 01930, USA

Tel: 978-283-0231

Facebook: Calvo Wood Carving School

www.calvostudio.com

Decorative frame

Mark Ivan Fortune guides us through the steps to create this unusual miniature decorative frame



We are in an age of mass production and machining, where smooth, glassy surfaces can be achieved at the touch of a button. One can find much beauty where the human element is apparent – facets from the tool edge tell the story of the dynamic hands which created them.

The work of our fore masters, distressed by the process of ageing – crumbling gesso, flaking gilding, chipped polychromes and rich patinas, smoothed over by years of handling – conjure for us images of a golden age of craftsmanship shaped by the hand of man. Tooled surfaces lend life and vibrancy to your carving, they

tell the unique story of the person behind the tools who create them, giving them another level of tangibility, life and movement.

This decorative frame is made up of two layers, the decorative body and an outer frame which lends more depth to the piece. The decorative body consists of ribbons and scrolls loosely based on the acanthus leaf and finished in a slightly vernacular style where imperfection is celebrated.

For this piece, all the elements spring from the baseline, all ribbons, volutes and ears are concave and follow the sweep of a No.6 gouge.

Things you will need

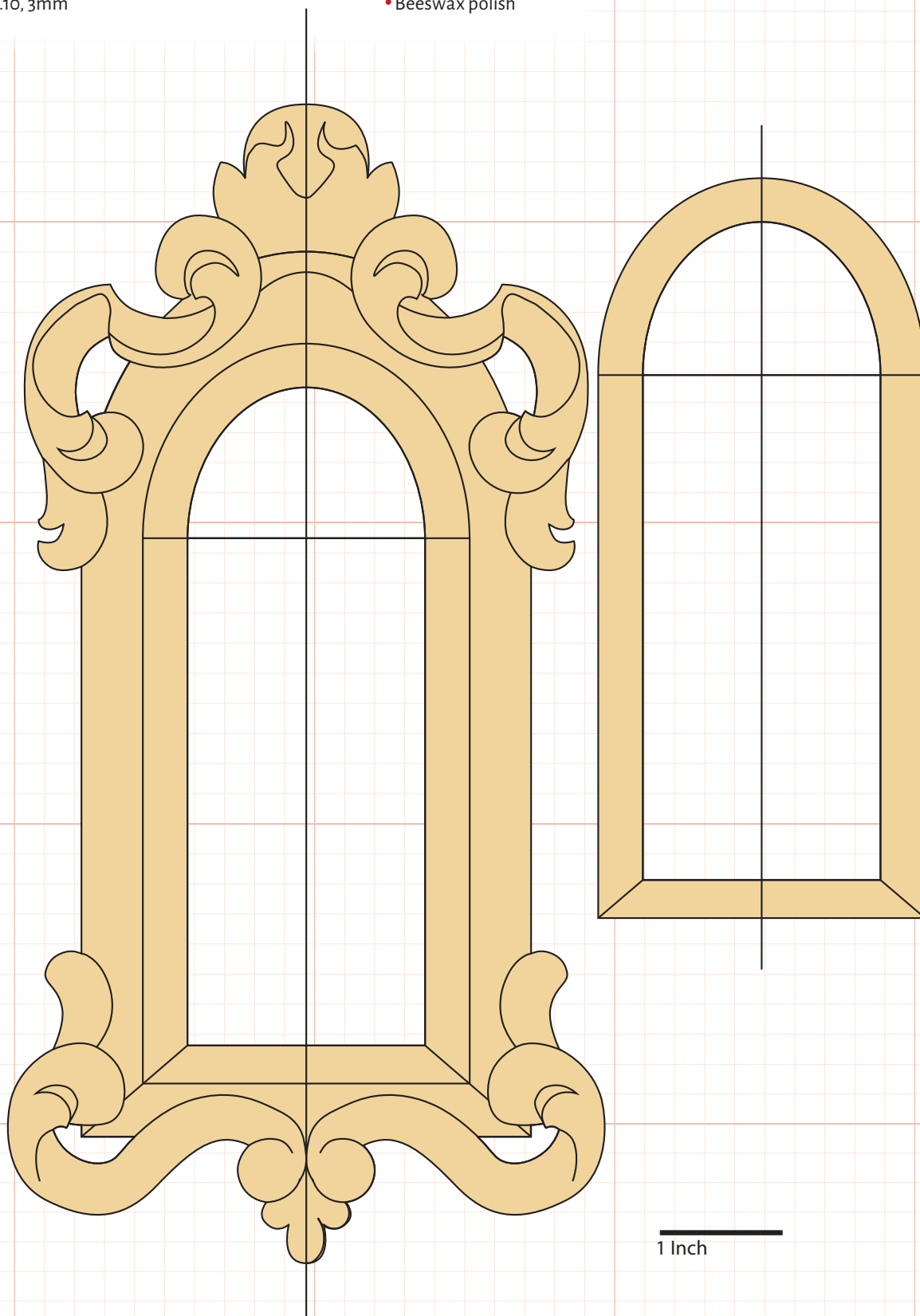
Tools:

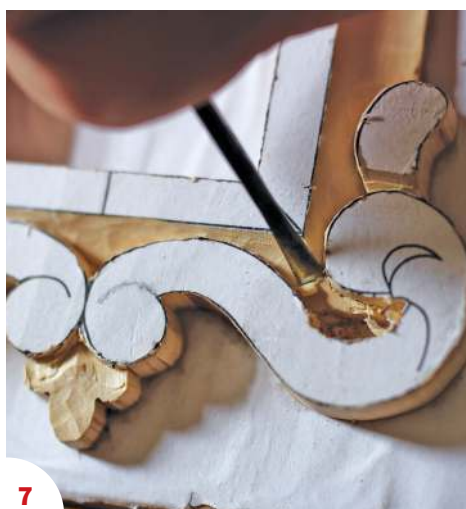
- No.2, 10mm
- No.3, 6mm
- No.5, 3mm
- No.6, 13mm
- No.6, 22mm
- No.7, 10mm
- No.8, 6mm
- No.10, 3mm

- No.11, 1.5mm
- No.26, 6mm
- No.39, 10mm
- Router (optional)
- Spokeshave (optional)
- Scroll or fretsaw
- Drill
- Paint scraper

Materials:

- Lime (*Tilia* spp.)
240mm x 150mm
x 10mm
- PVA glue (for gluing
to backing board)
- Wood glue
- MDF backing board
- Beeswax polish



**1****2****3****4****5****6****7****8**

1 Glue the main template to both sides of an 240mm x 150mm x 10mm board. Use the centreline to assist in the correct alignment. From the front side of the board cut out the opening.

2 From the back, route the sides of the opening to 3mm from the face. If you don't have a router you can achieve this by grounding out with your carving tools in the usual manner.

3 Cut out all components. The arch can be cut from the waste of the opening. Mark a baseline around the outer edge of the whole blank, 1.5mm from the back. Glue your blank to a MDF (medium density fibreboard) backing with paper sandwiched between.

Avoid using coloured paper when gluing your work to a backing board. When coloured paper is saturated with glue the pigment can leach into the grain of your carving. To remove a paper template, place face down on a damp cloth and, once softened, the paper can be peeled or scraped away. When gluing your blank to a backing board, mating surfaces must be coplanar – any gaps may result in breakage when the force of your edge tool is applied.

4 Stab the scrolls on their outer edges to prevent wood breaking away. With your V-tool separate the forms of the scrolls from the frame, using shallow cuts on the inner part of the frame. Angling down towards our baseline on the outer edge, tilt the V-tool so its cutting at almost 90° on the scroll side.

5 With your 2mm No.6, carve the two concave outer edges of the frame down to the baseline. Use rolling cuts to achieve a smooth surface. Stab the edges of the scrolls in a slicing motion to release the chips. Establishing the outer border of the frame first will act as a reference point for the rest of the carving and assist in achieving the correct depth when stabbing in the scrolls.

6 Continue carving the rest of the outer frame, stabbing and paring mostly with a 6mm No.3. Clean out the sharp corners with a skew using the previous step as a visual reference for depth.

7 Carve the corners of the frame down to the baseline with a 13mm No.6. Leave a diagonal ridge where the two planes intersect.

8 Now with the 13mm No.6 carve the four 'ears'. These should turn both outward and down toward the scrolls, striking the baseline at their lowest outer point. Be sure to leave enough meat to sustain the crisp V pocket on the inner.

TOP TIP: A paint scraper is a useful tool for separating a carving from a backing board. They can be much improved by bevelling a single edge just shy of sharp and rounding over the corners.

9 Begin the inner ribbons with a 13mm No.6, working in from both directions down to the baseline. Use the 6mm No.8 to carve down from the narrow shoulder. Clean up with a short bent 6mm No.26, leaving the flat ridge at the top. Work the outer part of the upper ribbon in a similar way but carving in both directions from the centre outward.

10 With a 6mm No.6 and working with the grain, carve the long ribbon down to the base on its outer edge, leaving a thin, flat ridge at the top. Stab the top of the volutes in a slicing motion with a 10mm No.7 as you go.

11 Stab the lower parts of the volutes with a 10mm No.7. Carve the trefoil in towards them, tapering out to the sides with a sharp central ridge.

12 Run the 22mm No.6 through the bosses, tapering downward and outward, giving them a concave form.

13 Now we move on to the hood. Carve down at an angle with a 10mm No.7, making a concave bowl. With an inverted 6mm No.3 working outwards from the centre, curve the ridge, stabbing in the scrolls as you go. Now round over the back with an inverted 13mm No.6 down to the level of the baseline.

14 Now turn your attention to the scrolls. Use a 3mm No.5 in a vertical slicing motion to stab the mouths vertically on the beak side. In a similar way on the head side, slice diagonally, following the curve down to the root, releasing the chip.

15 Round over the scrolls. This is best done by paring in a low angle from the side to avoid damaging surrounding detail with a 10mm No.4. Take your time to create a flowing, even curve that springs from the baseline.

16 Round the beak over into root of the trench, carving with the grain, reducing the height at the tip to allow for an even, flowing curve.

17 Lightly stab the tops of the ears with a 13mm No.6. With the same tool in hand taper both ears down and outward to the baseline. Following the template, stab in the nose with a 3mm No.5.





18



19



20



21



22



23



24



25

18 Remove the waste carving down to the baseline at the hood with a 6mm No.8. Leave a sharp ridge along the line of the ears.

19 Round over the back of the head with an inverted 6mm No.3.

20 Round in the two flanking beaks as before (steps 14 through 16). Then undercut the nose with a 6mm No.3.

21 With a 6mm No.8 carve a groove up the middle of the nose. Take a 6mm No.3, invert the tool and round over both sides of the nose, ensuring the two cuts flow into each other.

22 Strop your tools and make a final pass across the whole carving, tidying up any rough cuts. Clean the eyes beneath the beaks with a 13mm No.10. Now carve all the ribbons to a sharp edge. These will likely be very delicate at the ridge, particularly the two long ribbons at the bottom of the carving. Remove all traces of the template.

23 We will now turn our attentions to the components of the outer frame. These are best shaped with a spoke shave before gluing to the piece. Simply round over the face to an even curve. If you do not possess a spoke shave a small whittling knife will suffice.

24 Glue the components to the frame – clamping is not necessary here. When the glue has dried, make a pass with an inverted 13mm No.6, ensuring the components flow into one another.

25 With a paint scraper, gently lift the carving from its backing by working the scraper under the carving from all directions until it lifts.

26 Apply a thin, even coat of beeswax polish with a toothbrush. Allow to dry before buffing with a small piece of rag. Using the template, cut out a piece of stiff card and friction fit to the routed opening at the rear of the frame. ▶



26

Vikings!

Steve Bisco looks at the artistic side of the most fearsome warriors of the Dark Ages

© MUSEUM OF CULTURAL HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF OSLO



The Oseberg ship, built around 820AD, is one of three magnificent Viking ships preserved in the Oslo Viking Ship Museum in Norway

The warriors known to history as Vikings or Norsemen were a complex people. Living in what is now Denmark, Norway and Sweden, they hardly featured in recorded history until in the year 793 they suddenly came from the sea and ransacked the holy island of Lindisfarne in north east England, slaughtering the monks and local population. 'Viking', or 'wicing', was an Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'sea-raider', and so these brutal warriors who came in their long ships and terrorised the British Isles and the coasts of Europe were given that name. The Viking Age, as it has since been known, continued for around 250 years, with much of Britain and Ireland colonised by Vikings until they were finally driven out by the Normans (themselves of Viking descent) after 1066.

The Vikings' reputation for brutality was well justified, but there was more to them than just that. They were probably the greatest explorers of the Dark Ages, sailing

as far west as Newfoundland 500 years before Columbus 'discovered' America, and as far east as Byzantium (Istanbul) via the inland rivers of western Russia and coastwise around the Atlantic and Mediterranean. They had long-established trading connections to the Middle East, Far East, and even North Africa and many exotic artefacts are found in Scandinavian archaeological sites. They were also fine craftsmen and had an artistic tradition of their own that was influenced by the treasures they traded and pillaged. There were clear similarities to Celtic and Anglo-Saxon knotwork patterns as well as some eastern 'arabesque' influences in the swirling patterns. They retained their warlike pagan gods until late in the 10th century, but their conquest of parts of Ireland led them gradually into Christianity, at which point we see many stone Celtic-style ringed crosses appearing in Britain with Viking decoration on them.

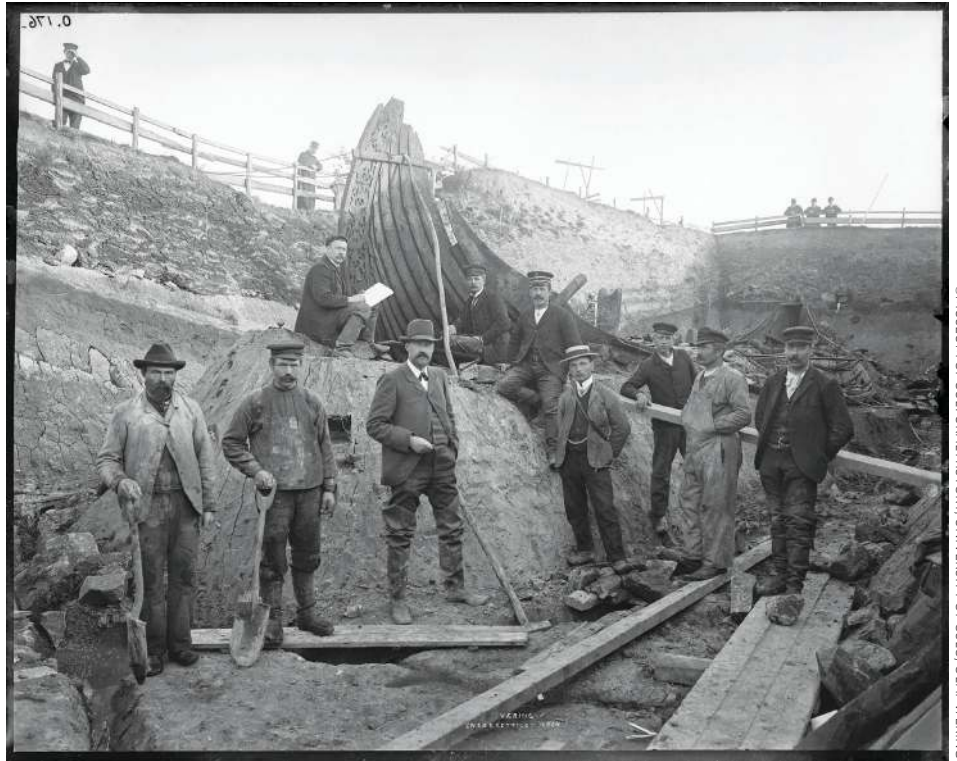
They produced metalwork and jewellery

in complex interlaced patterns, and created many carved works in wood and stone. Wooden artefacts rarely survived for long, except in a few exceptional cases where the wood has been preserved by being buried in boggy ground where the absence of oxygen prevented decay. The best examples we have come from the famous burial ships, where important leaders were ceremonially buried in complete ships, laden with rich and ostentatious goods that would declare their status as they travelled into the afterlife.

Ship burials had been used in previous centuries by other pagan cultures, and the Anglo-Saxon ship burials at Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, England, dating from 630AD are the most famous. However, unlike the Sutton Hoo ships, three Norwegian Viking ships were buried in boggy sites and were discovered in modern times in a remarkable state of preservation. They now reside in the Oslo Viking Ship Museum and are a 'must see' for any visitor to the Norwegian capital.

The best preserved is the Oseberg ship (named after the place it was found), discovered and excavated in 1904. Carbon dating and tree-ring analysis indicate that the oak-hulled clinker-built ship was built around 820AD and the burial took place in 834AD. The grave contained many treasures (also in the museum) and the remains of two women. One woman was probably a Viking queen (she had to be important to warrant a ship burial) and the other may have been an unfortunate slave servant who was sacrificed to accompany the queen through the afterlife.

The prow of the Oseberg ship, and many of the wooden artefacts found within it, are magnificently carved in a variant of the Viking interlaced style that is called the 'Oseberg style'. Its principle features are swirling patterns of serpent-like creatures that interlace around their own and adjacent bodies in low relief. Their upper surfaces are frequently flat with very fine cross-hatching to provide texture. Most of the patterns include a notable feature called the 'gripping beast', which is typical of much Viking decoration. The serpent-like 'gripping beasts' clasp on to their bodies and tails, either with their mouths or with little human-like hands.

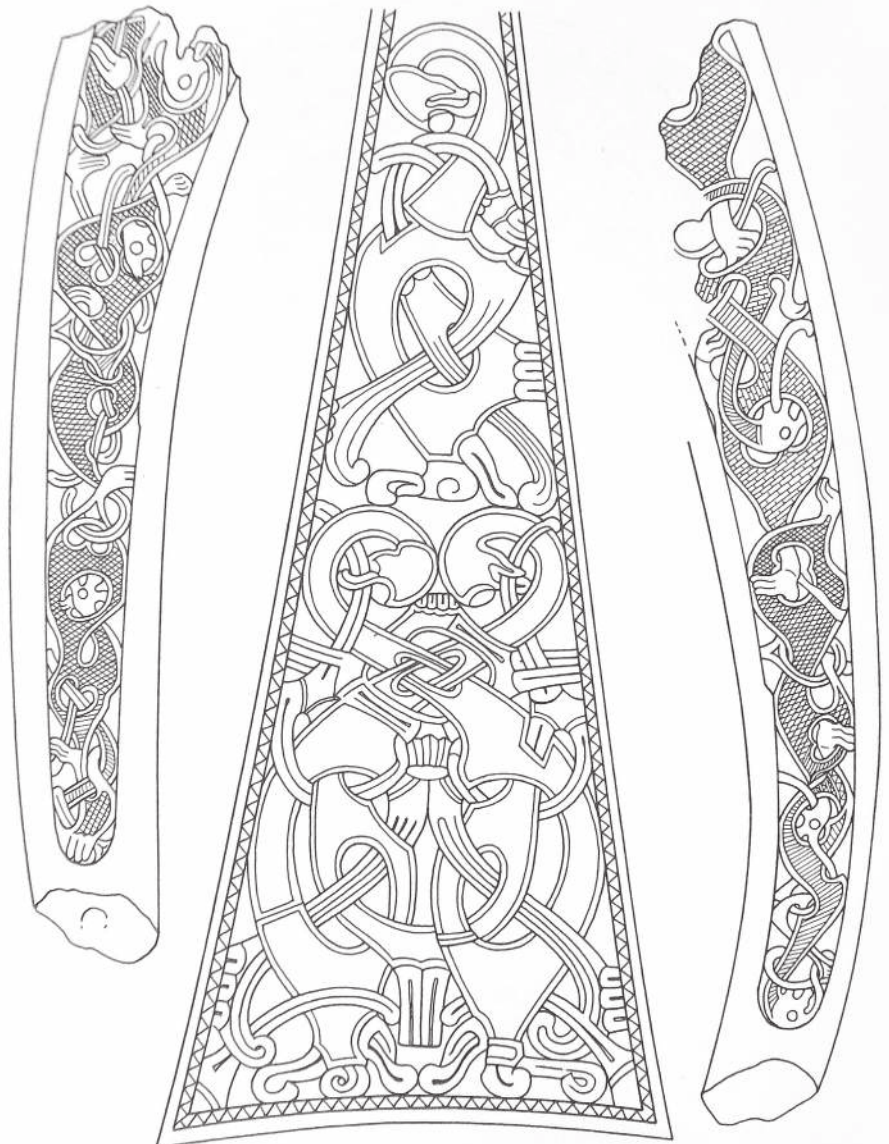


The Oseberg ship was ceremonially buried as a funeral ship in 834AD and was discovered and excavated in 1904



Magnificent Viking carving in the complex 'gripping beast' style is preserved on the prow of the Oseberg ship

The grave goods found in the ship are displayed in the museum and contain some striking carved woodwork, such as a very ornately decorated cart believed to be much older than the ship itself. Probably the most striking and best-known pieces of all are five animal (possibly dragon) heads believed to be parts of a ceremonial piece of furniture, such as a chair. One of these heads is the subject of our carving project in the following pages. ■



This drawing of the sternpost decoration (Viking Designs, AG Smith/Dover Publications) illustrates the writhing 'serpent' pattern with the typical 'Oseberg style' cross-hatching and the multiple small hands of the 'gripping beast'

Improve Your Wood Carving... Instantly.



Beginner 2-Blade Craft Carver Set™
Contains 2 carving blades, an ABS handle. Two basswood blanks. A DVD with step-by-step instructions.



11-Piece Craft Carver Set™
Contains 10 carving blades, manual, carving blank, 11 pocket tool roll, ABS handle.



5-Piece Craft Carver Set™
Contains 4 carving blades, manual, carving blank, 11 pocket tool roll, ABS handle.



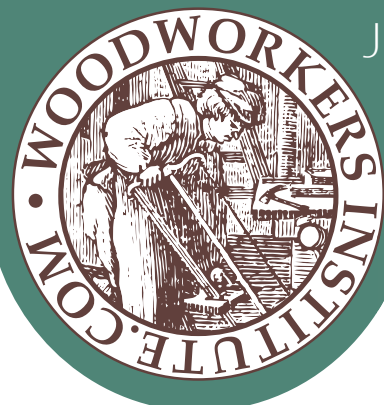
Carvin' Jack®
A complete carving kit in your pocket

Each Carvin' Jack® includes a sheath and a custom SlipStop® for maintaining the sharpest possible edge.

BriMarc
TOOLS & MACHINERY

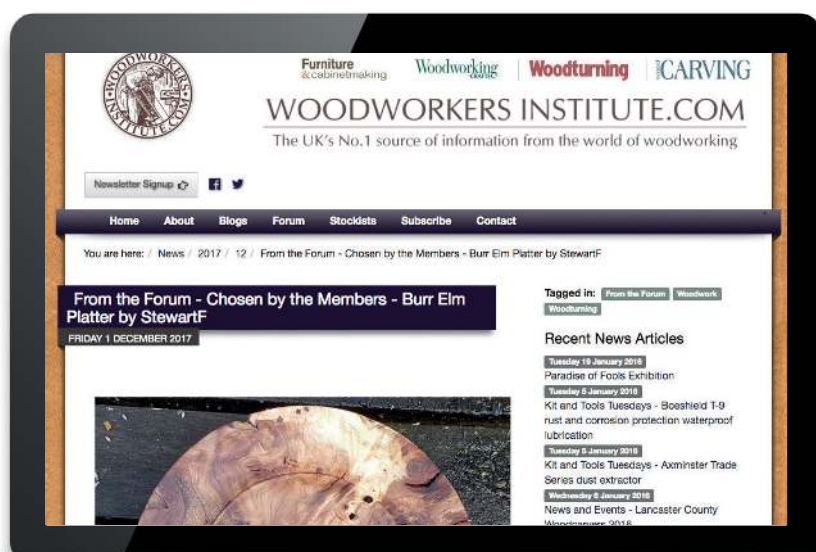
To find your nearest Flexcut stockist, visit brimarc.com or call 03332 406967

Flexcut
CARVING TOOLS



Join us on Europe's largest woodworking website offering expertise and a vibrant community

- Latest news • Projects
- Reviews • Techniques
- Competitions • Blogs
- Forums • Giveaways



woodworkersinstitute.com - Home of the market leading woodworking magazines

Viking dragon head

Steve Bisco is inspired by a historic woodcarving from the Viking Age



Not having any maple, I have used a block of limewood (*Tilia* spp.) 150 x 120 x 210mm which is similar in size to the original. I would not recommend making it any smaller as the fine texturing would become impossible. To achieve a similar 'aged' finish I used a mid-oak woodstain and a light brown wax polish.

As the head is the main point of interest, I have not replicated the long wooden neck in its original form. Instead I have made up a simplified stand from 25mm board cut in a shape resembling a ship's prow. I have finished this with black ebonising lacquer, but you can choose whichever mounting method and finish you prefer.



The original dragon head in the Oslo Viking Ship Museum, with its long neck and the remains of a shaft mortised through it

This project is based on one of the five carved animal heads found in the 1,200 year old Oseberg Viking ship burial described in the previous pages. I am nominally calling it a dragon head as all Viking creatures are difficult to identify and the University of Oslo cautiously refers to them as 'animal heads', but dragons figured strongly in Viking mythology and they look as much like dragons as anything else. I am also not the first to call them dragons, so we will go with that.

The five Oseberg animal heads are all different and appear to be the work of five different carvers. The one I have chosen is the best preserved and, apart from having parts of its ears and a few teeth missing, is in a remarkable state of preservation. Like the other heads, it has a long neck with a shaft mortised through the lower end at right-

angles (see photo right), which suggests it was attached to the front of something, like a throne, ceremonial cart or part of a ship – we will never know. The carving is very finely executed in the Oseberg style (see page 19). It has cross-hatching and texturing so skilfully executed in microscopic detail you'd think it had been done by fairies, and it is very hard to replicate. It certainly grabbed my attention when I visited the Oslo Viking Ship Museum.

The timber used for the Oseberg head is, despite having spent 1200 years buried in boggy ground, a rich golden brown. Wikipedia says it is maple (presumably Norway Maple – *Acer platanoides*) but this is not confirmed in the Viking Ship Museum information, which just describes it as 'a hardwood'. Maple is not especially durable, so its preservation in the ship grave is even more remarkable.

BACK TO THE DARK AGES

When copying a woodcarving made 1200 years ago you can't help but wonder about its creator, who lived in a world very different from our own where life was short and violent and artistic design centred on the mythology of pagan gods and monstrous creatures. Thankfully we don't have to live in that world, but in making this carving we have to follow the same carving processes and resolve the same practical issues as our Viking did. The complexity of the carving indicates quite a sophisticated set of tools. Many of the cuts could not have been made without a good selection of gouges and a very fine V-tool. This was not a primitive knife-and-hatchet job but very fine work by a skilled craftsman with a good set of tools. Making this copy allows us to shine a small light into the world of our Dark Ages predecessor.

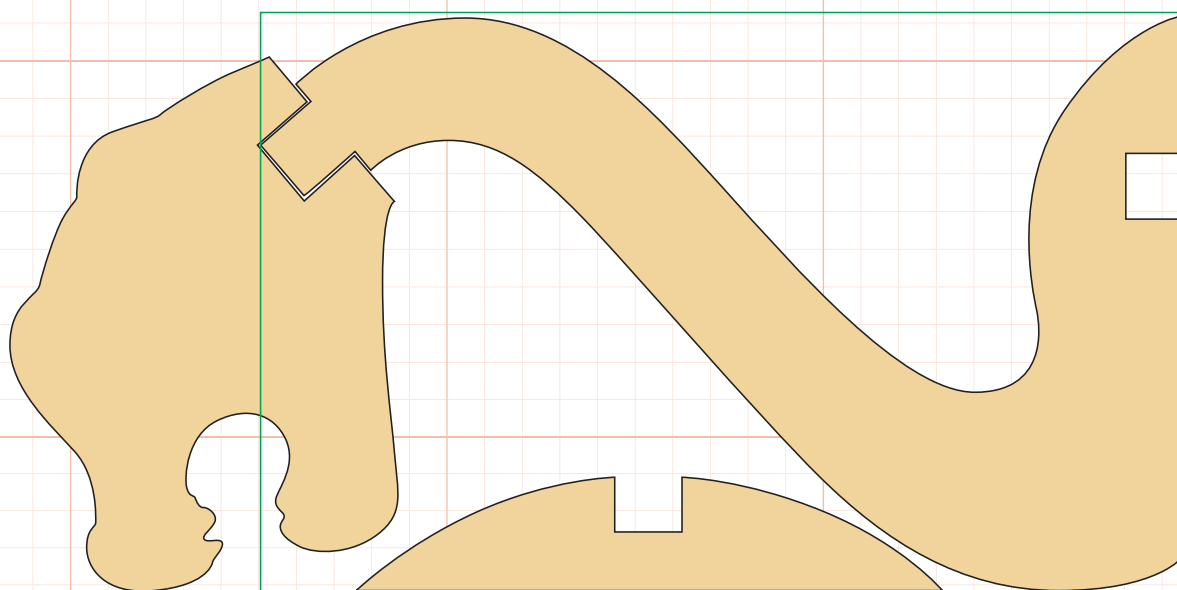
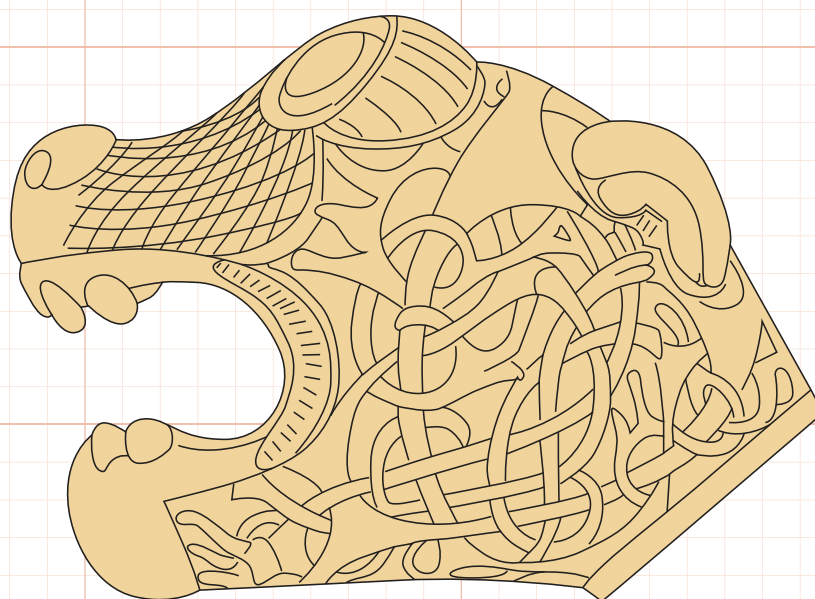
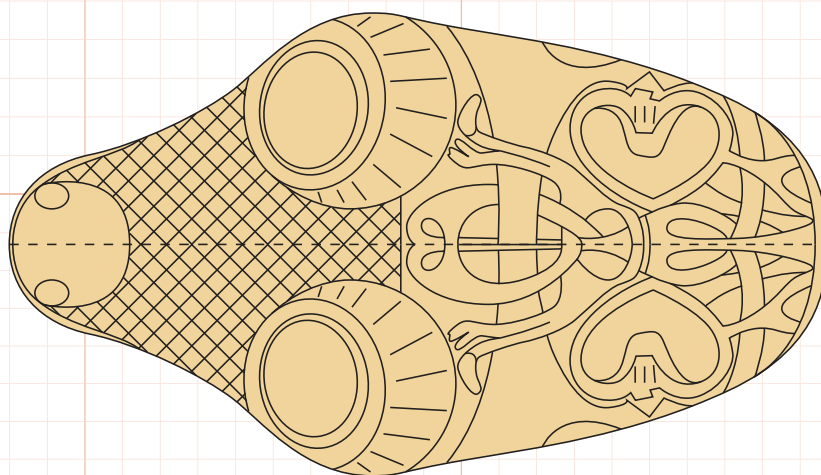
Things you will need

Tools:

- No.3, 20mm fishtail
- No.3, 10mm fishtail
- No.4, 6mm fishtail
- No.9, 20mm
- No.3, 10mm
- No.8, 8mm
- No.8, 8mm curved
- No.5, 7mm
- No.5, 5mm
- No.5, 3mm
- No.9, 3mm
- No.9, 16mm curved
- 10mm short bent,
- 10mm skewed spoon gouges L&R
- 2 & 6mm straight V-tool
- 2, 3 & 6.5, 20mm chisel
- 10mm skew chisel
- 16mm hooked skew chisel
- Bandsaw
- Padsaw
- Round rasp
- Curved riffler
- Drill
- 25mm & 32mm spade bits

Materials:

- Head: Lime (*Tilia* spp.)
150 x 120 x 210mm
- Base: Any suitable board
360 x 225 x 25mm
- Woodstain Georgian mid-oak
- Light brown wax polish on head
- Ebonising lacquer on base





1



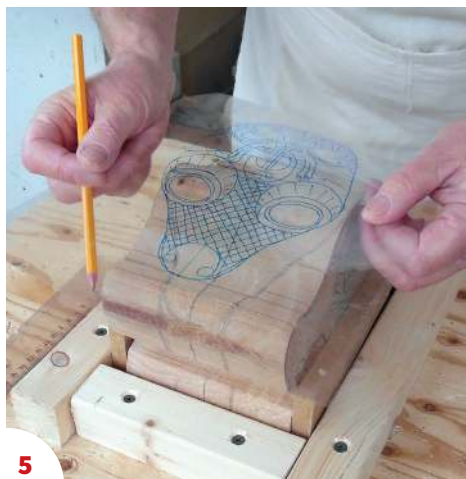
2



3



4



5



6



7



8

PREPARATIONS

1 Get a block of lime 150 x 120 x 210mm for the head and a piece of any suitable board, I used Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), 360 x 225 x 25mm for the base. Make a full-size copy of the drawing and trace the pattern on to the base using carbon paper. Do the same on all four sides of the head, taking great care to align the tracing accurately on each side. Also get some transparency film and trace the top and side head patterns on to it (they will help preserve the pattern as we carve).

TOP TIP: Be inventive with your workholding to keep the work secure and still while you are carving. An unsecured piece poses risks to you and the work. You may have a proper carving clamp for figure carving, but if not use blocks and battens screwed in various positions as you work around the piece.

SHAPING THE HEAD

2 On the side profile of the block, mark the position of the centre of the roughly circular mouth on both sides, taking care to line them up exactly. Using a 32mm spade bit (unless your block size is different to mine) carefully drill in from each side to the centre to open the hole through. Refine the hole with a round rasp to get the required mouth profile.

3 Using the top and bottom profiles of the head, carefully make a few crosscuts with a saw at intervals from the edges of the block back to the pattern line. These will help to shape the top profile later.

4 Cut around the side profile of the head. A bandsaw is the best tool for this, but if you don't have one use whatever saws you have and chisel the edges back to the line.

5 Fix some wooden blocks on your bench so you can secure the head block on its side and standing upright, with a little packing and a few wedges around it when needed. Draw a centreline around the head and, using the saw cuts made earlier and the transparency, redraw the top and bottom profiles of the head.

6 Chisel wood away from the sides back to the top and bottom profile lines, and check across with a ruler for alignment.

7 Use the top and side transparencies, and the finished photos in step 19, to fix the size and position of both eyes and draw them in. Carve away the square edges to form the three-dimensional shape of the eyes and the top of the nose. Add some extra fixing blocks to secure the irregular shape of the head as you work.

8 Now work backwards along the top of the head and neck, rounding off the square edges. Cut around and between the curiously-placed ear lobes so they protrude above the sloping sides.

9 The thickest part of the head lies on a line from just under the eyes back to the centre of the neck. The sides and underside below this are slimmer than the top part of the head, so keep shaving away the wood down to the underside and around the chin.

CARVING THE DETAIL

10 We need a smooth surface to carve the detail on, so sand it smooth with 120 and 180 grit abrasive. Re-draw the pattern around the mouth, nose and chin using the side transparency. Carve the gums to the correct position and hollow the inside of the mouth with a spoon gouge. This is a tricky area to carve. The original has tear-out evident in this locality too. Make it as clean or 'authentic' as you like.

11 Carefully carve the teeth (four upper and four lower). Notice how they are set back slightly into the gums. The teeth protrude across the grain, so take great care. A curved riffler is useful to refine the shape with less risk of breakage. Hollow out the mouth again inside the teeth. The dentistry is best carried out in a bench vice.

12 Now use a fine 2mm V-tool to carve the decorative detail around the mouth. Hollow out the nostrils with an 8mm No.8 gouge.

13 Mark in the area of diagonal cross-hatching on the top of the nose. Note how the lines curve slightly with the contours. With the fine V-tool, cut in the border rings around the eyes then, very carefully and neatly, carve in the diaper pattern of the cross-hatching.

14 There is no easy way to transfer the knotwork pattern on to the three-dimensional surface of the head. You have to draw it in by hand using the transparencies and the finished photos as a guide. Use a light-coloured crayon to sketch the flow and position of each 'ribbon' then, when you are happy with it, use a darker one to define the edges and show the crossovers. To clarify the maze of lines, colour in the background areas that will be chiselled out. The side, top and underneath patterns must all join up.

Using very sharp chisels and gouges, cut out the background areas to a depth of 3mm. Some of the 'ribbons' are very narrow and may break out if you cut straight down, so cut along the edges first with the small V-tool and then work back to a neat vertical edge. Mark the overlaps in the 'ribbons' with the V-tool.

15 When you cut out the area around the ears, hollow out and form the ears to their finished shape.

16 Before adding the more delicate fine details, cut the mortise in the neck to exactly fit the thickness of the board of your stand – preferably 25mm. You can drill a hole of this diameter first, then square it up to a neat and accurate mortise.



9



10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17



18

ADDING THE FINE DETAIL

17 We now finish off the very fine detailing on the front diaper pattern. On each of the diamond shapes cut earlier, carve two very fine cuts across it with the 2mm V-tool, alternating the direction on each diamond.

The bulge behind each eye is divided into 'leaves' about 8mm wide with a rounded top end, and each leaf is subdivided by two fine V-tool cuts.

18 We now come to the fine detailing on the 'straps' of the knotwork. First carve a narrow border along both sides of each strap, taking care to emphasise the crossovers, then add the very fine texturing to each piece. The broader areas have fine cross-hatching in a square or diaper pattern, and the narrower strips have various patterns of parallel lines and cross cuts. All the cuts are made with the 2mm V-tool. Try to vary the patterns on the narrow strips so you can follow the flow of individual ribbons.

19 The carving phase is now finished. The four photos show the top, bottom and both sides of the finished head. Use these for reference when carving and when drawing the pattern in step 14.

FINISHING

20 Now we need to make the new lime wood look like the Viking original. I used Georgian medium oak woodstain, put it on with brushes to work it into the textured surface. When dry, I brushed a light-brown wax polish sparingly into the carved detail and buffed it up with a cloth to a soft sheen.

TOP TIP: When you use a woodstain on a carving, test it first on a piece of the same wood to make sure it gives the effect you want. Dyes can be scarily dark when wet but will usually dry much lighter. It must be applied to clean, bare wood, and the dye may be absorbed differently on end grain and side grain. You will normally need some kind of polish or lacquer after the woodstain to bring out the colour and give it a gloss or sheen.

21 Cut out the stand shape from the 25mm board with a jigsaw or bandsaw. Cut the tenon at the top end to fit the mortise in the head, and cut out the slots in the joint of the stand and cross-piece so they fit together accurately. Smooth the edges with a spoke-shave if necessary and sand the pieces thoroughly. Give it a coat of sander-sealer and another light sanding before painting.

Finish the stand with three coats of ebonising lacquer, following the manufacturer's instructions. Put masking tape round the top tenon to keep the bare wood clean for gluing.

With all parts finished, glue the head on to the stand. Slot the crosspiece into the base of the stand and the Viking dragon head is ready to be displayed where it can frighten children.

22 The finished dragon's head on the stand. ▶



19



20



21



22

TORMEK®

T-8



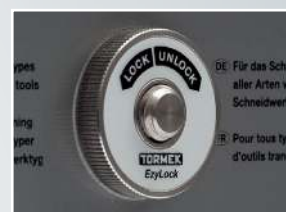
GIVES THE SHARPEST EDGES. BUILT TO LAST.



The specially developed rubber on the zinc drive wheel ensures a constant speed, even under full load.



The sleeves are integrated in the fully cast housing, which minimises play for the Universal Support.



Stainless steel main shaft with EzyLock makes it easy to change stones without using any tools.



The powerful industrial motor is a true workhorse.

THE TORMEK T-8 is a high quality machine which sharpens your edge tools with the highest precision. Water cooled sharpening is gentle on the steel and the edge is continuously cooled by water — there is no risk that the steel becomes over-heated and loses its hardness.

This machine is built for continuous use. Its unique drive system is efficient and manages to hold a constant speed, even under full load. You get a sharpening system that will sharpen your edge tools razor sharp, making them a pleasure to use.

The Tormek jigs give you full control over the sharpening, see all at tormek.com



The **Square Edge Jig SE-77** makes it easy to sharpen chisels and plane irons.



With the **Gouge Jig SVD-186** you can easily follow curved shaped tools and v-tools.



The **Short Tool Jig SVS-38** gives you support to sharpen the smallest tools.



The **Profiled Leather Honing Wheel LA-120** hones away the burr from the inside of the bevel.

TORMEK®
Sharpening Innovation

AUTHORISED SKILL CENTRES

Axminster Tools & Machinery,
Axminster, EX13 5SN. 01297 302370

Axminster Tools & Machinery,
Basingstoke, RG22 6HN. 01256 637477

Axminster Tools & Machinery, **Cardiff**,
CF5 6EH. 02920 025000

The Toolpost, **Didcot**, OX11 7HR.
01235 511101

RDG Tools on Line, **Hebden Bridge**,
HX7 5AD. 01422 884605

Axminster Tools & Machinery,
High Wycombe, HP12 3FF.
01494 885480

Classic Hand Tools Ltd, **Ipswich**,
IP6 9EW. 01473 784983

Yandle & Sons Ltd, **Martock**, TA12 6JU.
01935 822207

Axminster Tools & Machinery,
North Shields, NE29 7UJ.
0191 500 5966

Norfolk Saw Services, **Norwich**,
NR3 2AW. 01603 898695

Axminster Tools & Machinery,
Nuneaton, CV10 7RA. 02476 011402

Romford Tools Ltd, **Romford**, RM1 2EP.
01708 765489

Westcountry Woodworking Ltd,
St Austell, PL26 7SR. 01726 828388

Axminster Tools & Machinery,
Sittingbourne, ME9 8QP.
01795 437143

B McNamee & Co Ltd, **Strabane**,
BT82 8EL. 02871 882853

D & M Tools, **Twickenham**, TW1 4AW.
0208 892 3813

Axminster Tools & Machinery,
Warrington, WA2 8NT. 01925 595888

The Woodsmith's Store, **Whitley Bay**,
NE26 3TN. 0191 2524064

Frank Clark Ltd, **Cork**, Ireland.
021 454 2222

The Carpentry Store, **Naas**, Ireland.
045 883 088

John J Ronayne Ltd, **Thurles**, Ireland.
0504 21033

Tormek has Authorised Skill Centres in the UK and Ireland, where you can speak to a factory trained person who will demonstrate how easy it is to sharpen with Tormek.

Come and see why Tormek is No1 for all sharpening.



When you
need a reliable
tradesman for
work on your
home...

...choose a member
of The Guild of
Master Craftsmen.



For a tradesman you can
trust – and a job done well.

findacraftsman.com

The only place to find members of The Guild of Master Craftsmen exclusively

Free Lime Blanks with Pfeil and Flexcut

see Website for details*



Huge stocks of 1st
grade Lime Blanks



The Ultimate
Hand Carving Tools.
(Full range of Pfeil in Stock).



WE ARE EASY TO FIND:
1½ miles from the M6, J40.
Take the A66 towards Keswick,
turn left at first roundabout,
follow the Brown Signs to
The Alpaca Centre.

Open 8am to 5pm daily.
10am to 5pm Saturday.
Closed Sunday.

G&S SPECIALIST TIMBER

The Alpaca Centre, Snuff Mill Lane, Stainton, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 0ES.
Tel: 01768 891445. Fax: 01768 891443. email: info@toolsandtimber.co.uk

* Terms & Conditions apply.

Tropical fish

Andrew Thomas explores making a stylised reef-dwelling fish



During my teenage years, I spent most of my summers going with good friends on many sub-aqua diving trips and experienced immense pleasure from being at one with the ocean and its abundance of incredibly interesting creatures. This really gave me the inspiration to travel further afield to the Tropics, where I have visited many sensational islands and their coral reefs, full of vibrant colour and bountiful life.

This project is based on one of my favourite tropical marine fish – the Moorish Idol, which is black, yellow and white in colour, with the most incredible fluid lines that allude to its elegant agility and speed through the water.

The design has been slightly modified to accentuate the aquadynamic shape, especially the philomantis extension, which is the dramatically elongated trailing crest of the dorsal fin. The details of the eyes and pectoral fins have also been abstracted, which add to the dynamic energy of the composition.

The timber used for the project is a beautiful piece of tulipwood (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), which is strong enough to hold the fine details of the subject, has suitably interesting markings and was very reasonable to purchase. It can normally be sourced with both the beautifully contrasting colours of the creamy sapwood

and black through to olive heartwood, so do shop around to find something equally interesting, which will really enhance the aesthetic appeal of the finished subject.

Due to the narrow 1 inch depth of the subject/timber, it will need to be attached to your woodcarving vice on the side of the wood, as there is not enough depth to fix it securely to the underside. You will therefore need to allow at least an extra 3in on the plank to facilitate this issue.

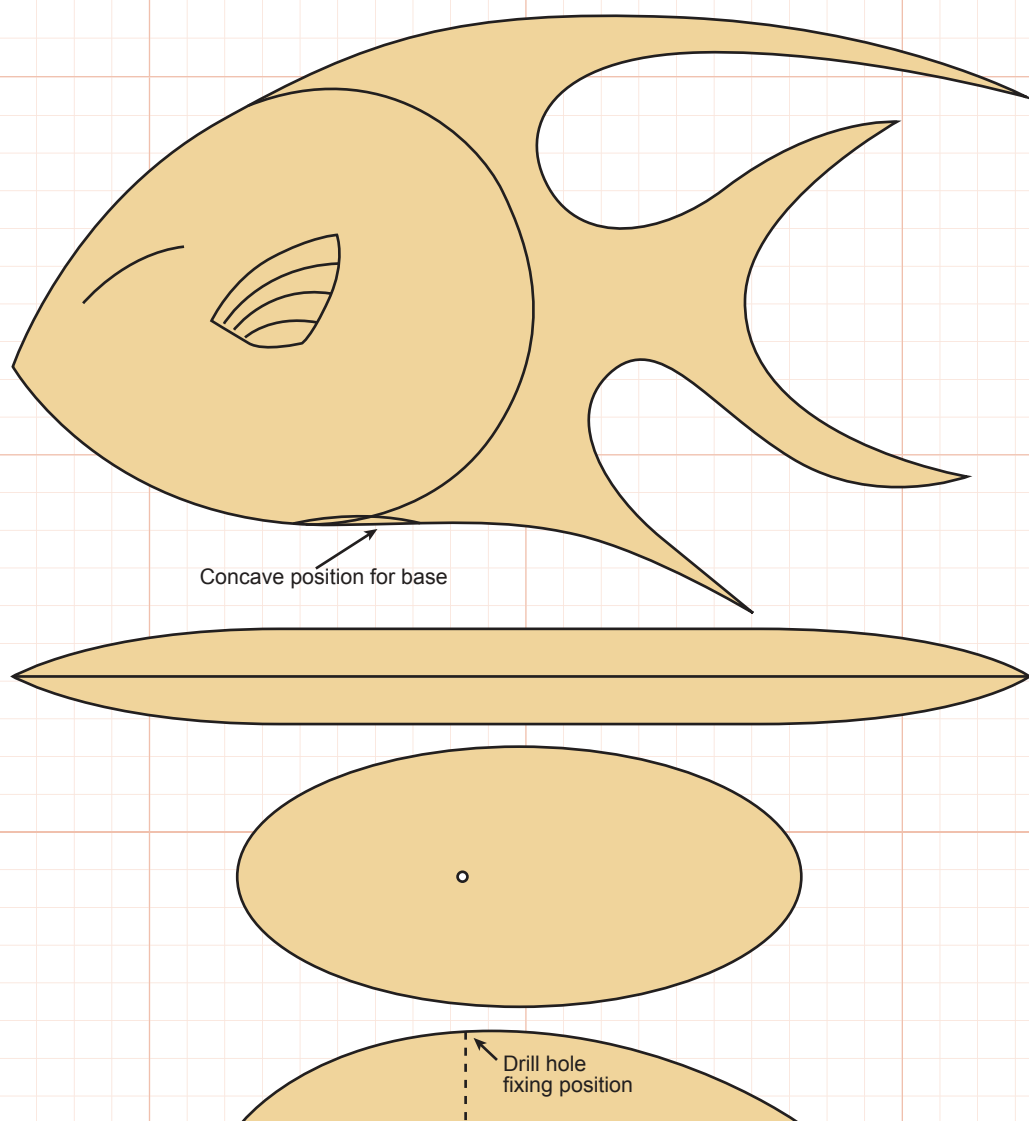
Before you start working on the project, please read the complete step guide and study the stage and finished images to see how the sculpture develops.

Things you will need**Tools:**

- Swiss gouges
- No.2, 5mm
- No.2, 10mm
- No.2, 20mm
- No.3, 20mm
- No.5, 20mm
- No.7, 20mm
- No.9, 10mm
- No.12, 6mm
- Knife
- Saw
- Drill bits: 2 & 4mm
- Woodscrew: 4.0 x 30mm

Materials:

- Fish: tulipwood – dimensions: 270 x 160 x 25mm
- Base: tulipwood – dimensions: 150 x 70 x 25mm
- Boiled linseed oil
- Medium-brown wax



1 To allow good access to work along the lower edge of the fish, it is advisable to make a tapered cut downwards from the fish into the block that will be secured to the faceplate, as exemplified in the image. Also, ensure that a solid section of 30-40mm wide is left uncut that attaches the fish to the faceplate base. Please be aware that, although this section is more than strong enough to work on the form, due to the grain direction, any heavy mallet work used could risk the piece snapping off along the grain where the fish meets the base. Scan or photocopy all the scale drawings provided, enlarging them to the correct size for your wood, and print them out on to card to use as templates and reference. Transfer the side view on to your block of wood, with the grain direction running horizontally through the block. Ensure that there is a spare section of wood underneath the form that will be used to attach it securely to your vice. Cut out the design and then measure and draw a centreline around the complete edge of the wood.

2 Using the template to assist you, draw the pectoral fins in their correct positions on both sides of the form. Check from various angles to ensure perfect symmetry and adjust if necessary.

3 Using a No.12, 6mm V-tool, carve a deep groove precisely around the very outside of the pectoral fin line.

4 Now use a No.5, 20mm gouge to pare away the surface of the wood adjacent to the V-tool cut, down to the depth of the V-tool cut. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until the pectoral fins project approximately 3-4mm higher than the body.

5 In this project, the shaping of the pectoral fins should be approached in the same way as a relief carving, that being to give them the impression of depth. This is achieved with a No.2, 10mm gouge, to create a subtle curvature across its surface from the position where it emerges from the body out to the highest point along the rear edge. The detail and undercutting will be covered in steps 14 and 15.

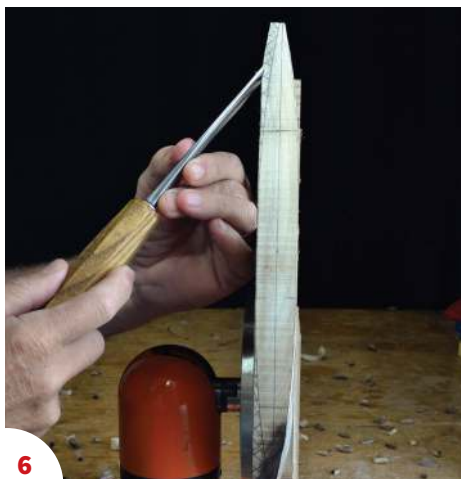
6 The top view profile could not be cut to shape when the form was originally bandsawn, because the base needed to be left flat to attach it to the carving vice faceplate. This profile, therefore, has to be shaped by hand, but bear in mind that, at this stage, you only need to produce the overall dimensions of the form, which will be refined later in steps 9-13. Using the template provided to assist you, measure and draw the top profile along the body. Use a No.2, 20mm gouge to pare the wood back to the profile line.

7 The tight curves at the tail end of the fish will need to be carved with a No.7, 20mm gouge, which lends its sweep to these awkward areas.

8 The thickest area of the body is around the pectoral fins, which gradually taper off as the body flows outwards to the edges. The area from the philomantis extension, down through the tail fins to the lower fin are much thinner and therefore far more material is required to be removed from around these areas. Using the template again to help you, draw the semi-circular shape in position on both sides of the form, and check for correct alignment.

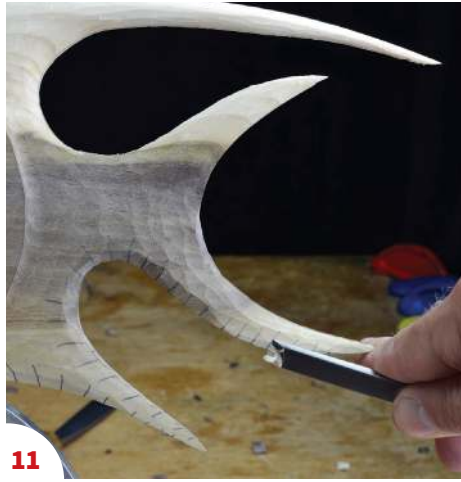
9 Use a No.9, 10mm gouge to carve a deep groove around the outside of the semi-circular line, being careful to follow the grain direction, and changing when necessary.

TOP TIP: No.9 gouges are the only tools in the range that have a semi-circular sweep. These can be used for a multitude of different tasks and are well worth having in your tool kit. I recommend sizes 10mm, 7mm and 5mm, which are more often than not used in conjunction with each other on many projects.





10



11



12



13



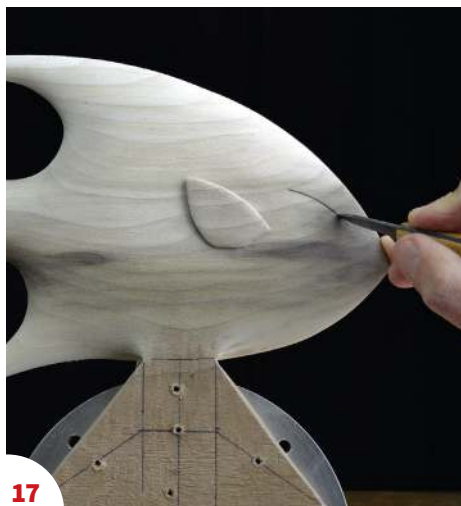
14



15



16



17

10 Use a No.3, 20mm, to start paring the wood down to the depth of the groove and across the surface to the rear end. Repeat steps 9 and 10 on both sides until the tail end is at least 4-5mm lower than the mass of the body.

11 The objective of the next job is to create the illusion that the tail and lower fins are very thin, as in real life. This is accomplished by refining their shape from the centre position of each detail, outwards to the centreline on the edge, from both sides, to produce a very sharp line all the way around the centre of the edge. The upper philomantis extension can be rounded as it flows towards the thin end. Do this all with the No.2, 10mm.

12 The thickest area of the body can now be tapered, from the position of the semi-circular line, gradually working inwards around its circumference towards the thickest position of the pectoral fins. This should also blend evenly on to the tail end that has just been carved in the previous steps.

13 Your fish should now look something like this.

14 The next job is to undercut the edge of the pectoral fins to create some shadow between them and the body, producing the visual effect of separation between these two volumes. Using a razor-sharp knife, cut a deep slice along the left, right and lowest edge, angling the cut inwards into the fin.

15 Then use a No.2, 5mm gouge to pare the edge of the fin into the knife cuts. Repeat steps 14 and 15 another one or two times until the undercut produces an effective amount of shadow to create the visual effect of separation between the body and fins.

16 The fish can now be sanded with grit 100 abrasive to remove all tool marks, blend the surface depths evenly together, and to refine the sharp, fine line around the edge.

17 The simple but effective details of the abstracted eyes and pectoral fins can now be applied to the form. Using the template to assist you, draw the eyes in their correct positions and check from all angles to ensure their symmetry. Use the knife to cut a deep slice along the lower edge of the eye line.

TOP TIP: Knives, by their very own anatomy, are a difficult tool to use and require much practice to master. I recommend the shorter, thinner blades with the cutting edge as close to the hand gripping position as possible. These short blades help with easier directional control and have a comfortable balance, which helps users to develop their skills and confidence in a far more safer and accurate way.

18 Use the No.2, 10mm to pare the wood directly below the knife cut into the knife cut. Repeat steps 17 and 18 until you have a depth of approximately 2-3mm, which holds a good amount of shadow to create the desired effect of the eye.

19 Use the template again to help you position and draw the lines on to the pectoral fins. Use the knife to cut along the lower edge of these lines, and the No.2, 5mm to pare the wood below the cut into the cut – 1.5mm depth is sufficient here. The carved areas of the eyes and pectoral fins can now be sanded evenly into the knife cuts with 150 grit abrasive.

20 The final job to do before the fish is cut off the base, is to shape as much of the lower edge as possible and sand through the other abrasive grits. This must be accomplished with a delicate touch so as not to put too much pressure on the fish, snapping it off the base prematurely. First, measure and mark 5mm outwards from both sides of the centreline on both sides of the edge, giving you a 10mm central piece underneath the fish.

21 Use the No.9, 10mm gouge, carving directly underneath the design line of the fish on both sides until you reach the depth of the mark you made in the previous step.

22 Now, very gently, use the No.2/20mm to make shallow cuts along the lower edge, curving this end of the body naturally inwards to meet the No.9, 10mm gouge cuts.

23 The lower edge of the fish's body should now look similar to this and can be sanded with 100 grit to blend the depths evenly together. The fish is now ready to be sanded through the final abrasive grits.

24 Dust off the wood with a clean, soft brush and then brush or pour hot water over the complete surface and leave it to dry. Work through 150, 240 and 400 grits, removing all of the scratches from each previous grit and repeating the hot-water process in between. When you are sure that the abrasive work is completed to a fine finish, use the saw to cut the fish off the base.

25 Secure the fish in a woodworker's vice using some dense foam or polystyrene to protect the surface from any damage. Use the No.2, 20mm gouge to pare the wood evenly down to the design line at the lower edge.

TOP TIP: The woodworker's vice, in addition to a work positioner/woodcarving vice, is an essential piece of kit for the woodcarver. This can be built into the design of the wood carver's bench, which will facilitate moving efficiently from one device to the other. I would recommend at least 9in-wide jaws, opening to 12in minimum, for effective use on most projects. This will also add a good deal of weight to the bench, which is a welcome bonus.



18



19



20



21



22



23



24



25



26



27



28



29



30



31

26 Draw a centreline along the lower edge connecting the two sharp lines of the body together. Measure and mark the position where the fish will be attached to the base when it is mounted and use a 2mm brad tooth wood bit to drill a 10mm pilot hole for the fixing screw.

27 The lower position of the fish can now be shaped on both sides, continuing the natural contour, flowing from the belly down to the sharp centreline on the edge. Sand this lower edge of the fish through all the grits, using the hot-water technique in between each grit.

28 The position where the fish attaches to the base will need to be made slightly flat and concave in shape, to follow the convex curvature of the base. Using the template to help you, mark this in position, which is approximately 30mm in length. Use either the knife or the No.2, 10mm to carve the wood to form this shape.

29 The base for the fish is simple in its form so as to complement the composition rather than distract from the fish. This can obviously be adapted to accommodate the reader's own design ideas, but note that the mounted fish must be at least 28mm higher than the surface to ensure that the lower fin is not in contact with the surface.

Using the scale templates provided, transfer the side and top views of the base on to your block of wood and check for correct alignment. Mark the precise position where the fish will be attached to the base. Drill and countersink a 4mm hole in this position. Bandsaw both profiles and then mount the base on to another piece of timber to raise it off the faceplate, then secure to your vice. Mark a centreline through the wood and then use your largest No.2 gouge to form an even contour all the way around the surface. Sand through all grits as outlined above. Place the fish in its mounted position to check that the concave area carved in step 28 sits perfectly on the convex area of the base, and adjust if necessary. Use a 4.0 x 30mm woodscrew to fix the two sections together.

30 The finish used for the fish and base was chosen to enhance the beautiful colour tones and figure in the timber. Boiled linseed oil was applied initially and left for a week or so to dry before several coats of medium-brown wax polish were used to seal the grain and give a fine finish.

31 Mount the fish on the base and display with pride. ▀

TOP TIP: You may wish to make several of these fish in various sizes and display them together to produce a greater impacting composition. Or why not play with the design and adapt it to create your own individual fish forms, which will also be a lot of fun to do.



Joseph Murphy

Woodcarver, sculptor and carpenter

Anthony Bailey talks to Joseph Murphy – woodcarver, sculptor and carpenter. He really is all three...

Joseph is based in London and Oxfordshire, working between both places. I caught up with him at his studio not far from the Elephant & Castle, in Kennington, South East London. Joseph's work varies greatly according to what commissions happen along, but currently he is also developing new concepts for combining his carpentry skills with woodcarving.

I asked Joseph when and how he started carving and why. "Because my dad was an art teacher which obviously influenced me greatly. I had a set of eight or nine carving tools bought for me when I was about sixteen rather than 'just two gouges and a flat one'. I started with by getting an NVQ level 3 in site carpentry doing a three-year carpentry apprenticeship with

George Wimpey Homes, that was back in 2006. As a result of talking to someone who did restoration, it seemed they got to do much more interesting work on the City & Guilds carving course at London Art School. So I went there for three years and learnt carving, gaining an NVQ Level 3, as well as still doing carpentry & joinery work. Stone is easier to carve than wood, so I decided to stick with wood! I also worked with clay casts to create bronze castings that were in an exhibition – FBA Futures at Mall Galleries, the other exhibition was – RBA Rising Stars exhibition in Lloyds. I have been freelance since my apprenticeship and worked for a number of companies as well as private clients doing gilding, designing, conservation and building."



The Fishmongers
coat of arms in
yellow pine



Carved dragon in jelutong

Examples of Joseph Murphy's work are:

- Carving and Gilding a Dragon for The Lord Mayor's Show 2014
- Bridge Ward Club Float. Carved with Cassidie Alder and Timothy Fielder
- Carving for The Palace of Westminster - restoration of Pugin gothic tracery in the Sovereign's Robing Room
- Carving for The Wallace Collection – for the conservation department at City and Guilds of London Art School
- Manor Park Construction - conservation of historic oak frame work with Anthony Luttrell
- Joe has also been the lucky beneficiary of a number of awards and burseries –
- The Joiners and Ceilers Prize For Woodcarving – City and Guilds of London Art School – Excellence in Woodcarving 2015
- The Joiners and Ceilers Annual Woodcarving Competition – Excellence in Woodcarving Second Prize 2014
- The Honourable Society of Knights of The Round Table Prize – Woodcarving Award 2013
- Apprentice of the Year – Carpentry Category George Wimpey 2004

Clearly Joseph Murphy has what it takes to be an excellent craftsman in his field, but I wanted to know more about what makes him tick.

So, what was the very first complete piece you made? "I did a little mask short course in Sussex at West Dean, I was the only guy on the course as it happened."

Which are the major influences on your work? "I love classical and renaissance carvings, nature, human forms, figurative modelling as well as contemporary styles."



Acanthus decoration in progress



Sansovino style frame in pine TOP RIGHT: The same frame prepared for gilding

Frame gilding in progress

Tell us what are your biggest mistakes...

Over complicating things, knocking things and having to over glue them back on. Perhaps my biggest mistake was a piece of letter carving of the years 2000-2009, the 2000 wasn't right, I had to fill and re-carve it, such was the small margin of error, but you learn from your mistakes.

My main challenge is working with clients who have a different idea to you. I was asked to carve a fashion piece for a fashion student which had to fit around the human body. The head was laminated aeroply around a former for the head, then I added a section of jelutong (*Dyera costulata*) and put a profile on it, then fabric was stretched over the person's face, but this student's requirement was very vague and hard to create what they were really happy with.

Future development

I want to create designs for stairs, fireplaces and other pieces of joinery like porch brackets or something more modern to go into people's houses – nice pieces that are affordable, but with low relief carving for added detail and interest and sold as a package.

What has been your oddest experience in carving?

Making a frame for a fashion student; they have some unusual ideas shall we say?

However, my most significant piece of carving has been creating a painted and gilded coat of arms with lettering for the Fishmongers Hall, that commission came through the college, it had certain prescribed things that had to be included, plus some scope for detail. It was hung in the hall for current prime warden, each new incumbent has their

own coat of arms to be added during their term of office.

Have you ever given up on a project?

No, not since I knew how to plan things out properly!

Favourite type of woodcarving?

German renaissance or late gothic Tilman Riemenschneider (1460-1531) and Veit Stoss (1450-1533) in particular. I'm now more and more interested in doing work that I can design as opposed to restoration or copying designs.

Favourite piece of equipment

A shorter set of chisels – definitely a 7S 14 fishtail carving tool and clamps, especially f-clamps.

The future

Lots of exhibitions to get better known, and progressing to doing more sculpture.

Likes and dislikes

Maybe restoration, it's difficult to get into restoration as a one-man band, it's mostly the bigger outfits working for the National Trust and other public bodies. I do find the carving community is really good, all a friendly helpful bunch.

Advice

Do it all the time, keep practising and lots of drawing too – and sharp tools of course. ▀

To contact or find out more about Joseph Murphy
visit: www.englishwoodcarving.com

Classic Hand Tools[®]

Pfeil Carving Tools

We hold the largest stock of Pfeil wood carving tools & accessories in the UK.

Over 2000 tools in stock

Pfeil catalogue on request.

Chris Pye Carving Tools
Kirjes Sanding System
Norton Sharpening Stones
Gransfors Bruks Carving Axes
Ron Hock Carving Knives

Flexcut
Arbortech
Abranet Sanding
King Arthur's Tools
Woodcarving Books
Auriou Rasps & Rifflers

NOW IN STOCK - SABURR TOOTH CARBIDE BURRS
1/8" & 1/4" shanks - all shapes • 2" wheels for Arbortech
4" wheels for Angle Grinders

Free catalogue on request.

CLASSIC HAND TOOLS

HILL FARM BUSINESS PARK, WITNESHAM, SUFFOLK IP6 9EW

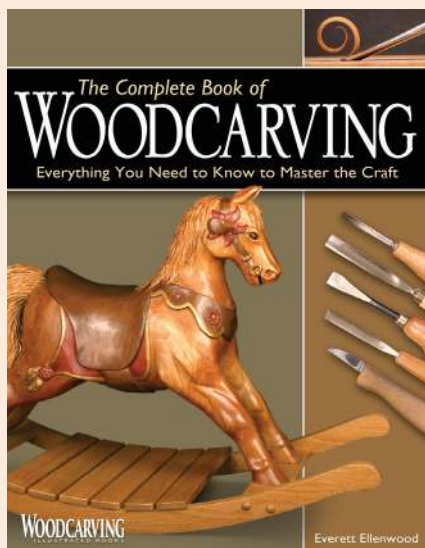
Email: sales@classichandtools.co.uk

Phone: 01473 784983 Fax: 01473 785724

www.classichandtools.co.uk

Flower relief carving

In this abridged extract from *The Complete Book of Woodcarving: Everything You Need to Know to Master the Craft*, author Everett Ellenwood shows how to carve a flower in relief



Book offer

The Complete Book of Woodcarving,

ISBN: 9781565232921

Price: RRP £14.99, offer price £10.49 plus p&p

To order please call 01273 488005

or go to www.thegmcgroup.com

and quote code: R5365

Closing date: 25 January 2019

Please note: p&p is £2.95 for the first item and £1.95 for each additional item

Relief carving is removing wood from around the object you're carving to create shadows so it looks as though it's standing off the surface of the surrounding wood.

Black-and-white photos use varying shades from black to white to create a picture. In relief carving, you're using shadows to create the picture. Rendering a three-dimensional object in a collapsed form such as this takes practice and skill. The subjects are endless. This flower may look simple, but depending on the amount of surface detail you give it and the amount of undercutting and shadows you create, the end result may be astoundingly complex.

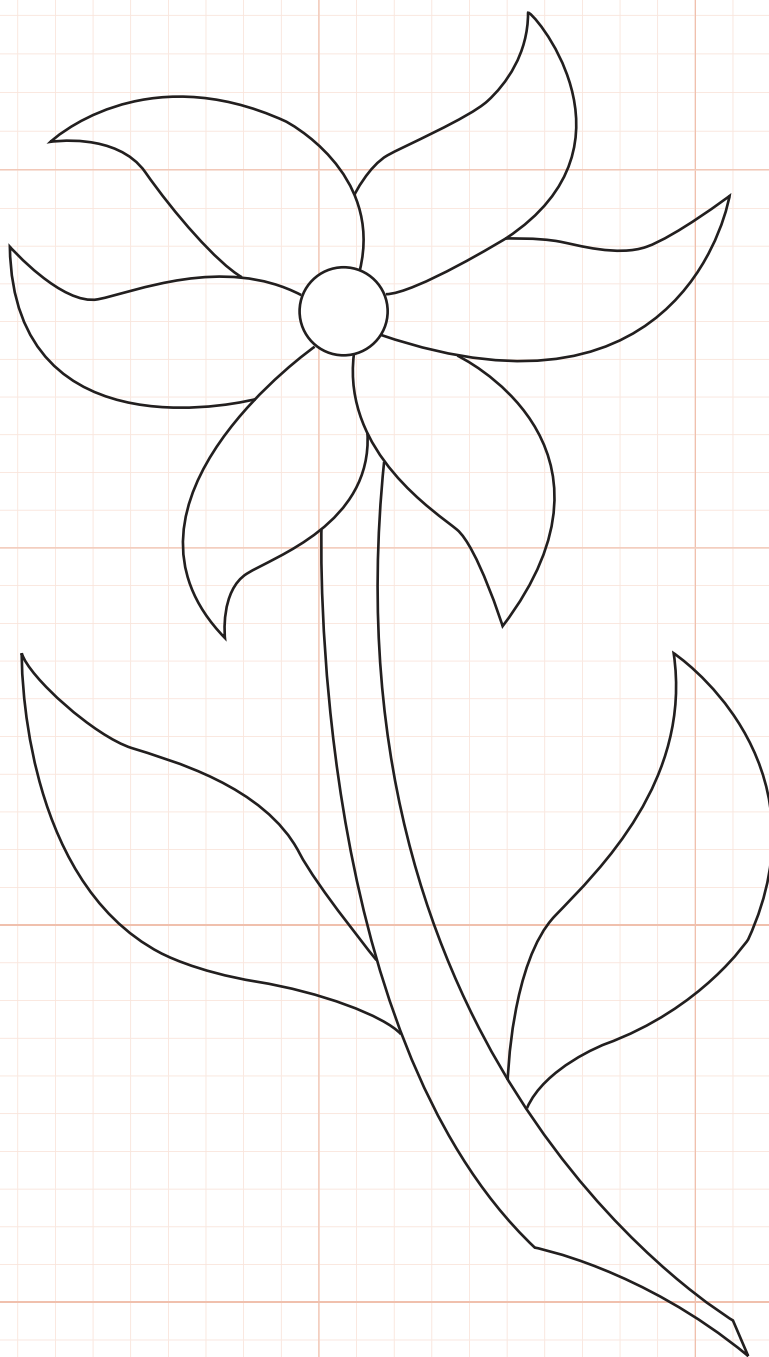


Things you will need**Tools:**

- Carving knife
- V-tool
- No.3, 13mm
- No.5, 13mm
- No.9, 10mm
- Flat skew (optional)
- Dental tool (optional)
- Hand grinder (optional)
- Carbon or graphite tracing paper
- Pencil
- Hammer
- Nail
- Sandpaper (320 grit)
- Toothbrush
- Tape
- Lighted magnifying glass
- 3M pad

Materials:

- Basswood board, 125 x 180 x 20mm
- Copy of pattern
- Varnish, linseed oil, or paint (optional)

**1**

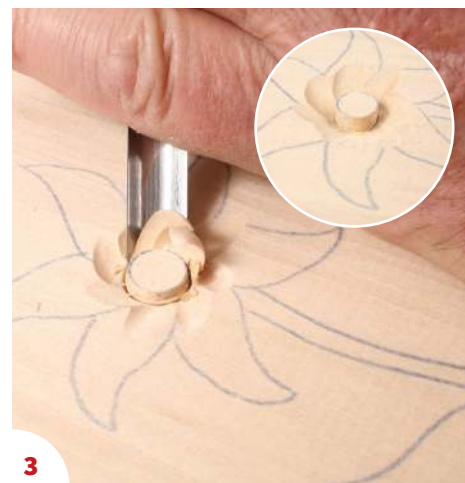
1 Set up your workstation. It can be any flat surface. If you carve on a kitchen or dining room table, make sure you have a protective surface under the piece you're carving. The protective piece should be larger than the piece you're carving and be set on some non-skid material or a terry cloth towel so the surface of the table doesn't get scratched. Attach the pattern. Make a copy of the flower pattern. Centre the pattern on the board and tape the top edge of the pattern to the board. Insert tracing paper. Place carbon or graphite tracing paper between the copy and the board. Trace the pattern on to the board. Check to make sure you've copied the entire flower on the board then remove the pattern and the tracing paper.



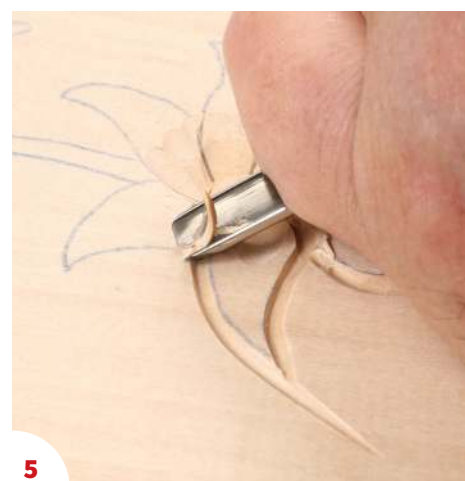
2 Make the centre button of the flower using a No. 9, 10mm. Place the tool's cutting edge on the circle. Tilt the handle over the piece you're going to carve and sink the tool into the wood. Lift about one-third of the front edge of the tool out of the wood. Continue cutting the centre. Slide the tool forward in the cut and sink the tool back into the wood. Continue this process until you've cut a complete circle.



3 Remove the wood from around the centre of the flower. Start about $\frac{3}{8}$ in from the circle stop cut and push the gouge up to the stop cut. Rock the tool from side to side so you remove wood up to the stop cut. Do this all around the stop cut. Make the stop cut deeper and remove more wood and work once again around the button until you've cut into the wood about 10mm deep all around the centre of the flower. Again, remove the wood from around the centre of the flower.



4 Round the button. With the concave side down, place the gouge at the bottom edge of the centre. Push it through the wood, rounding the surface of the piece. When you reach the centre of the button, begin to slowly raise the handle while you continue pushing the gouge through the wood. Finish one side. You should end with the handle straight up at the edge of the button. You now have one side of the button rounded. Round the other side. Turn the piece around and round off the other side of the button. Check your work – it should look like this. Before you move on to the next step, redraw the petal segments.



5 Remove the wood from around the flower. Use your V-tool to remove wood around the flower, starting with the petals. Remember, always cut away from the piece you want to save and towards the waste area.

6 Continue around the entire flower. Keep the same depth of cut so the entire flower will be the same distance above the background.



7 Remove the background wood. Use your No.9, 10mm to remove wood all around the flower background.

8 Make stop cuts with your knife. When you've completed roughing out the background, use the carving knife and make stop cuts following the pencil lines. Remove more background. Use your No.9, 10mm gouge and remove wood up to the stop cuts.



9 Clean out tight areas with your knife. In areas that your gouge can't reach, make stop cuts with your knife. Continue cleaning up the background. Tilt the knife so the blade is parallel to the wood surface and slice the wood from between the petal and the leaves. It's areas like this where a flat skew is helpful. You can also use the V-tool to clean around the flower. Remove wood from between the leaves and flower.



**10****11**

10 Flatten the background. Use a No. 5, 13mm and flatten the background all around the flower. To get a clean cut, you must always see both edges of the gouge.

11 Contour each petal. Now use your 13mm No. 5 gouge to make one edge of each petal look as if it is lying behind the petal next to it. Refer to the pattern and the completed carving photo for reference. Overlapping the petals gives more life to the carving. Shape each petal. With your No. 9, 10mm gouge, shape each petal by cutting from the tip of the petal to the button. Let it flow to give each petal some character. Look at a real flower to see what petals look like.

**12****13**

12 Remove the wood from the stem so it looks as if it's coming from behind the petals.

13 Shape the stem with the carving knife. How the grain runs through the stem will determine which direction you need to cut. Turn the board if you need to cut the other way.

14 Shape the leaves. Give each leaf some contour to make them look real with the No. 9, 10mm. Look at the leaves of real flowers for reference. Cut from the tip of the leaf towards the stem. Give them some movement because leaves don't lie flat.

15 Clean up the loose chips with a toothbrush. The bristles are stiff enough to remove loose chips, yet not so stiff as to scratch your carving.

**14****15**

16 Smooth the petals. Use a No. 3, 13mm to clean up the petals so they have a smooth surface. Notice how I'm holding the tool. Get down near the cutting edge so you have good control of the tool, and do small slicing cuts.

17 Check your work. A lighted magnifying glass helps you see details as you clean up your carving.

**16****17**

18 Undercut the petals. Cut at an angle under the petal with the knife. Then, cut flush with the surface of the background to release the chip. If the chip doesn't fall out, don't pull on it. Make the cut again to sever all the wood fibres so the piece will fall out.

19 Remove hanging 'fuzzies'. A dental tool works great to remove hanging pieces from the undercuts. You can also use folded 320 grit sandpaper.

20 Shape the stem end. Using the knife, cut the stem so you expose the end of it. A simple cut like this adds another dimension to the carving.

21 Add texture to the button. To add some texture to the button in the middle of the flower, use a nail and hammer. Lightly tap in the dimples.

22 Add veins to the leaves. Using the V-tool, add a vein down the centre of each leaf.

23 Clean the carving. A 3M pad works great to clean up the background and undercuts. You can do this by hand or attach a section of pad to a hand grinder for quick removal. To use a hand grinder, cut a piece of pad about 38mm square and attach it to a mandrel. Put a small washer on both sides of the pad to give more gripping area in the mandrel. You don't need to cut the pad round – it will round as you use it.

24 Decide whether or not to use finish. You can leave the carving unfinished, as shown here, or you can finish it with varnish, linseed oil, or paint.

Creating more shadows

To create more shadows and make the petals and leaves look as if they are off the surface of the background, remove some wood from under their edges (undercut). However, make sure you have all superficial carving completed before you undercut. Once you remove wood from under any area of your carving, you can't change the surface because there will be no wood under it to support changes.

Undercutting petals

You can undercut any petal that has long wood fibres running lengthwise through it. However, if the tips of the petals are located where short fibres run through them, don't undercut the tips of those petals because they will easily break. If you number the petal with the gouge under it as 1 and count clockwise, you can undercut the ends of number 1 and number 4 because they have the fibres running the full length of them. If you undercut the ends of petals 2, 3, 5, and 6, which have very short fibres running through them, they could break at the tip. These petals can still be undercut on the sides. I normally flow the tips of the petals toward the surface of the base. ▶





Happy Holidays!

From
SABURRTOOTH®
 SUPERIOR POWER CARVING TOOLS

NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE
www.saburrtooth.com

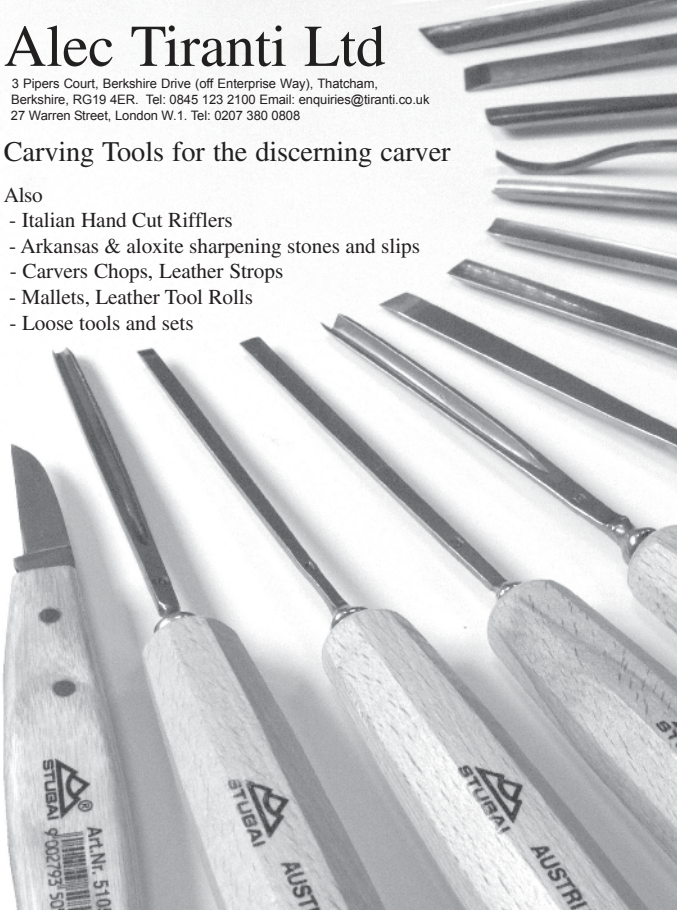
Alec Tiranti Ltd

3 Pipers Court, Berkshire Drive (off Enterprise Way), Thatcham,
 Berkshire, RG19 4ER. Tel: 0845 123 2100 Email: enquiries@tiranti.co.uk
 27 Warren Street, London W.1. Tel: 0207 380 0808

Carving Tools for the discerning carver

Also

- Italian Hand Cut Riffles
- Arkansas & aloxite sharpening stones and slips
- Carvers Chops, Leather Strogs
- Mallets, Leather Tool Rolls
- Loose tools and sets



www.tiranti.co.uk

Spoon carving, furniture making/restoration, box making, wood carving, boat building, pyrography, green woodworking, tool sharpening, turning, longbow making, timber framing and so much more!



What skills would you love to learn?

Craft Courses.com

Find thousands of creative courses around the UK

Gift vouchers available

Search by your postcode or available dates

Teach craft? Join us at CraftCourses.com/register

Ideal gift! Vouchers can be redeemed on ANY course



Personal perspectives

Dick Onians shares his personal perspectives on his carving history

Mark Baker has asked me to write some articles reflecting on my experience as a carver and sculptor, so I thought I should recount where I started and what I have learned on the way – the potted autobiography of a compulsive teacher and sculptor.

In the 50 years that I have been teaching woodcarving, various students have told me that they came to it from making model aircraft. In a way this was also my introduction to shaping wood with knives and razor blades. What I describe below, my journey into woodcarving, will be familiar to many carvers. I had a small penknife when I was eight or nine but, as most boys do, I lost it. I continued to make flying models and then solid models. Balsa wood is unforgiving and did not, in my hands at least, lend itself to crisp cutting across the grain, so sandpaper was part of my repertoire. Balsa had no interesting figure so my models were all painted, but I did learn very early how to cut wood without

doing myself serious damage. At school, when I was 10 or 11, an enlightened master taught us basic woodworking skills. He did this by getting us all to make guns which fired cardboard discs. In those days, milk bottle tops were cardboard discs instead of aluminium foil or plastic. So we learned the use of the plane, the tenon saw, mallet and carpentry chisels, hammers rasps and drills. It did not feel like learning. Childhood should be like this. My brother and sisters and I climbed trees and fell out of them. From this we learned spatial awareness and also about what risks we could take. We had some frights and cuts and grazes but we survived. Very importantly for someone with a future in sculpture I learned about three-dimensional forms by embracing branches and tree trunks. My drawing career started with sketching various aircraft in different attitudes. The drawings were not good but I learned an enormous amount about foreshortening and perspective as well as control of line on paper and eventually in wood and stone.

First carvings



Willow spiral & very small spiral

When I was 15 I was given a good penknife, made by Joseph Rodgers of Sheffield. I worked out in my head how to carve a spiral, using a mahogany spacer from a cigar box. A more complicated one in willow carved – and broken later – is shown in the picture. I was so pleased with the first effort that I carried it about in my jacket pocket. Amazingly it survived for several months and when it broke I glued it and have kept it ever since in a small pill bottle. This taught me something about the strength and weaknesses of a brittle wood.

Aeroplanes now became less important. I carved small figures in chalk from the beach and the garden but the next step was to freely carve a pig in mahogany or utile.

I don't remember ever stopping to look at a live pig but made it up from half-remembered images and cartoons. I knew pigs had curly tails so furnished it with the only spiral form I knew how to make. That tail did not last long and the legs, being short-grained, have broken and been repaired more than once in the past 60 years. If I see someone now trying to carve something where the grain is too short for the durability of the piece, I suggest various means of support or even realigning the design so that the grain is along the weakest parts. Where this is unavoidable there are various ploys, such as reinforcement with bamboo – kebab sticks work well. If you look at ancient stone figures you will see how thin ankles are supported by flowing drapery or by a convenient and often improbable prop, such as a dolphin or dog or club. If nothing else offers, a tree stump or lump of rock suffices. Bird carvers know about this and often employ vegetation. Carving in relief avoids the difficulty. This, then, was my introduction to the use of tools and some of the properties of wood and of work in 3D.

Influences

Another major influence, although I did not realise it at the time, was the random



Whittled pig, C. 1956



Walnut book cover by AHL, Dick Onians' great granny, c.1900

collection of carvings in wood and stone in our house. Many of these were the result of my father's visits to antiques shops. After the Second World War tastes had changed and houses were smaller with less space for elaborate pieces. Many of these carvings were oriental – Indian, Indonesian or Chinese – often with great movement in the compositions. Years later I remember my brother, who had become an art historian, pointed out that in several of my early figure carvings I had used the same rhythms and balance. We are usually unaware of the impact on our lives of our early experiences. As a background for a future in art, the presence of good-quality work in the home, or at least available in museums and other public buildings such as churches, is a great help. You won't be able to match the best

work but it is better to emulate that than to copy poor design and technique. It is for our inspiration that *Woodcarving* magazine shows important historical pieces.

Secondary school

At secondary school art was rationed as the school was academic. There were two boys in my class who had art in their backgrounds. The rest of us fended for ourselves, attempted drawing portraits and played with scraperboard and powder paint. Between O and A Levels, when I was 15 or 16, we were allowed to do some woodwork. For me this meant that I did a bit of turning and made a newspaper stand from plywood. I remember the woodwork master showing me how to sharpen a straight chisel.

When we are young we always assume that if the tools do not work well for us we must be doing something wrong. For general woodwork the sharpness of the edge is not as important as it is for carving, especially in soft wood. We were shown how to create a burr on the edge but then we were shown how to remove it by stabbing it into a piece of soft pine. I now know that this technique leaves a roughness on the chisel edge which slows the carving and, on soft wood, leaves a faint bloom which can only be eliminated by much painstaking sanding with progressively finer grits and an attendant loss of texture and life from the surface. If we think about it, most of what a carpenter or joiner makes is going to be painted or hidden in a joint, so surface texture is not important. Of course, sanding a board or turned object is comparatively simple, but a wood carving benefits from chisel cuts which reflect light in different ways and prevent it looking like plastic. I shall return to this theme later in this series. →



Swan – first carving done with proper chisels. Made from pine c.1962

Evening classes

After school I whittled my way through university. It was not until I was doing a teaching certificate at London University that I found an evening class in woodcarving. I had suspected that special chisels existed, but the experience of carving with proper tools, correctly sharpened, changed my life. I discovered in later years that the teacher of the class, Robert Dawson, had been taught by William Wheeler at the City & Guilds of London Art School.

The kind of carving that HG Wells's *Kipps* and my great grandmother did in classes at the end of the 19th century, the carving of the walnut book cover, were similar to those that one finds in Paul N Hasluck's *Manual of Traditional Wood Carving*, first published in 1911, now available from Dover Publications. Their patterns did not encourage original design and were very much of their time, but they did teach an appreciation of design and technique. I joined the class, as I believe many readers of *Woodcarving* do, because I wanted to develop carving as a hobby. I was shown the scrap box and selected a block of pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). I cannot remember whether I drew profiles on the block but, having spent many hours watching swans taking off from and landing on water, I knew exactly what I wanted to do and just got on with it.

Mask

The next carving in African mahogany (*Khaya ivorensis*) was a primitive mask which I made up as I went along with help from Bob Dawson.

Magical lure

A further piece, also in mahogany (*Mahogany* sp.), was a recreation of a magical lure described in a poem by the ancient Greek poet Theocritus. It is a wheel with a wryneck fastened to it. I have never brought myself to drill holes through the bird for a thong to go through.



Mask

In the poem a witch rotated the wheel holding the cord on each side. When the two ends were pulled straight the wheel spun in the opposite direction and wound itself up again while the witch chanted – in ancient Greek – ‘Wryneck, bring my man to my house’. (There was a gimmick like this – not the Greek poem – in the 1960s in some breakfast cereal packets).

The wryneck, a member of the woodpecker family, was used because it waggles its tail end in an alluring manner during courtship. Sandpaper was inevitably used extensively on these pieces. I knew no better then. Now I prefer to leave the wood straight from the chisel. However, on a piece of wood with a strongly interlocked grain, sandpaper is the sensible finish.

The evening class was held in a secondary school so the benches we used were for carpentry and, on the whole, for shorter people than I. That's the way it was. It never occurred to me to work at a different height until I went to the City & Guilds Art School. It was brought home to me in a serious way when, after carving a long inscription



Lunx wheel

on the top of my bench, I found, after three weeks, I could not stand up straight for several days. This is a problem for tall people in school workshops. It does not surprise me that many carvers in amateur classes carve sitting down. However, this is a pity as they inevitably work on small things, and cannot apply much force or move easily around their work.

Limited time

At this point I was appointed an assistant master in a grammar school in the Black Country teaching English and Latin. Carving was confined to holidays. Nevertheless, it was now so important that I squeezed it in when I could find time – not that there was much of that for the first two years while learning how to teach on the job, preparation and marking being a large part of it.

When doing teaching practice I had been advised to stay in the first post for no more than three years as I should by then have repaired the damage I had done in the first two years and begun to deserve my position.

As it turned out, after two years I realised that carving was so important in my life that I had to learn how to do it properly and thought that I should go to art school.

Art school

The art master, Paul Rudall, was very encouraging. When I pointed out that I could not draw he looked at some of my carvings, including a mother and child, carved in English oak (*Quercus robur*), I had done in my spare time and said that I certainly could as I was already drawing in three dimensions. This was a revelation to me so I next asked the only art student I knew, who was studying sculpture at the Goldsmiths College (now a University) where she thought I could study woodcarving, but when I visited the first place she had mentioned I was not inspired by the sterile glass and steel architecture or the limited display of amateur carvings. The only other institution she knew about was the City & Guilds of London Art School. I arranged to visit it and was shown around by William Wheeler. The whole place felt lived in, the studios being in a late 18th-century terrace with more studios in the gardens behind.

Decision made

As William Wheeler walked me around the studios we came across one young man who was carving a cornucopia. Wheeler asked him how he was 'cornucoping' and I knew this was the man for me. He was teaching real stuff and he had a sense of humour, so I signed up there and then and started as a student at the beginning of the autumn term. He, like my colleague in the Black Country, was not worried about my limited drawing ability.

Just before starting at the school I spent much of my capital on travelling in Greece. While there I found time to whittle a Greek helmet from memory in a piece of acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) that I found left on a firewood pile. Where the penknife was not enough I used a riffler that I had been introduced to when I was in the evening class. I was lucky that, from the beginning, I used the hand-cut rifflers and rasps, which we can still buy from Auriou, Tiranti and Classic Hand Tools. Experience has shown that they are far superior to the machine made ones.

Course

The woodcarving course had been launched in 1946 by William Wheeler to train carvers to do replacement work in bomb-damaged London. Wheeler had trained at the South Kensington School of Woodcarving and at the Royal College of Art and had been working as an ecclesiastical sculptor, also teaching classes in Croydon. The Art School had been founded in the wake of the Great Exhibition of 1851 by the City & Guilds Institute when there was a strong demand for carving and sculpture. Apart from the usual painting classes it taught sculpture at a very high level. Among its aims was to train craftsmen as artists and artists in craft, largely for the Royal Doulton factory in Vauxhall. This legacy is still with us. It is important to note that apprentice carvers in wood and stone usually followed day release classes in an art school where they learned drawing and how to model in clay, as opposed to being set tasks by the master, whose main interest was good throughput from the workshop, not teaching. This seldom happens now. The history of carving in the 20th century shows



Mother and child

a steady decline after the First World War. The last original style was Art Nouveau. ➔



Dick at work



Hot rod spoons

Dave Western shows how to create flame-inspired spoons

I will readily confess that I am not much of a car guy. In fact, I would be hard pressed to tell the difference between a Carrera and a Cortina. I do, however, have something of a soft spot for hot rods and their thumping big motors, gleaming mag wheels and those fabulous fuzzy dice hanging from the rear-view mirror. I especially love them when they sport deep, luxuriant paint jobs and those marvelous hot rod flames.

So it was a wonderful and fortuitous accident when a yew wood carving I was working on yielded an off-cut scrap with a grain pattern and colour that looked exactly like a flame. That scrap got me to thinking about those hot rods and whether or not I could come up with a design that would look good as a wood carving.

After several false starts, I think I finally have this flame caper figured out and I hope you will get as much fun out of making these flames as I have been having. It's not without its challenges, but making them is an endeavour which brings lots of satisfaction and results in a really rock 'n' roll project. Whatever you

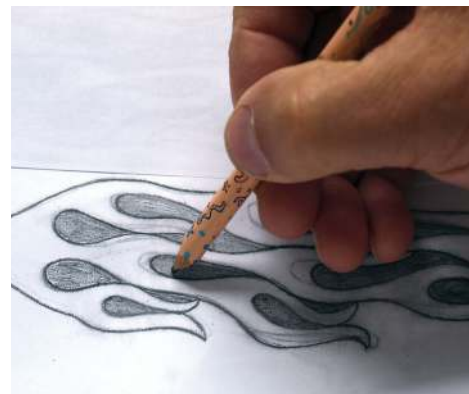
have in mind, rest assured it will look great on the dashboard of your '57 Bel Air Chevy.

Design

As a spoon maker, creating a hot rod spoon seemed the easiest and most logical option for me. You could incorporate these flames into myriad other projects, though. From letter openers through to brooches and fretted box panels, there's really no end to the opportunities to put some flames to good use. What's most important is ensuring the flame design you use looks good and has that hot rod feel.

You can copy my patterns at the end of this article, source ideas from the internet or have a bash at drawing your own. They are straightforward to draw, but there are a number of things you should keep in mind. To get the best effect, make sure your flames vary in width from widest at the origin to narrowest at the tip. A uniform width is lifeless and uninspired. Too much variation makes the flames appear a bit chunky and listless. You will also want to ensure that your lines follow fair, swooping curves without sudden

changes of direction or kinks. Try to maintain a teardrop-type shape with each pair of flame tongues and vary the length of each tongue slightly to avoid the design becoming too repetitive and symmetrical. You want the flames to look as though they are 'licking', so a sense of movement is critical to the success of your design. Paper and pencils are cheap, so feel free to experiment until you get it right.

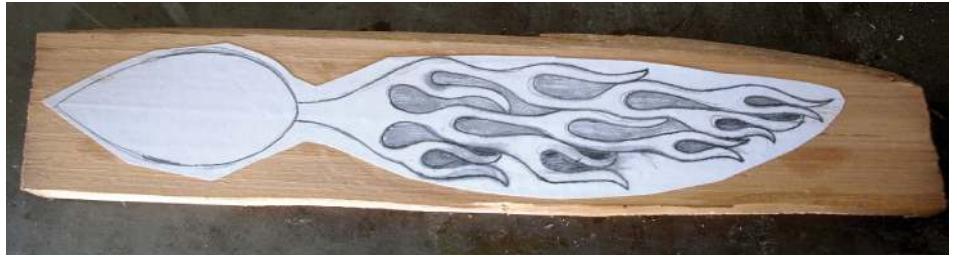


Drawing an initial pattern

Transferring design

Once you have settled on a design, make a few photocopies then glue one on to your workpiece. This will save you a great deal of re-drawing time and will ensure you have clean, accurate lines to work from. Sometimes, I will move the photocopy

around on the timber until I am confident I have found the best grain or the most suitable area for carving. Try to avoid knots and checks for this project as you will be cutting to some fine points and you don't want to risk a breakage.



The template in place ready for cutting

Cutting out

Due to the sheer number of curves you have to negotiate to make a flame, you are best off cutting these patterns with a scrollsaw. Failing that, you'll be spending a lot of time with your jeweller's saw. For swift, accurate cutting, it is hard to beat the scrollsaw though.

If you decide to go the hand-cutting route, make use of a full array of drill bits to help get you started. If you can drill to the curve line at the bottom of each

flame pairing, it will save you a load of time and effort trying to negotiate your hand saw around the tight curves.

With your rough-out cutting complete, you should have nice, crisp cuts that accurately follow your drawn lines and are 90° to the face of the project. Wandering angles and edges just mean more clean-up at the knife-work stage and more time wasted on unnecessary work.



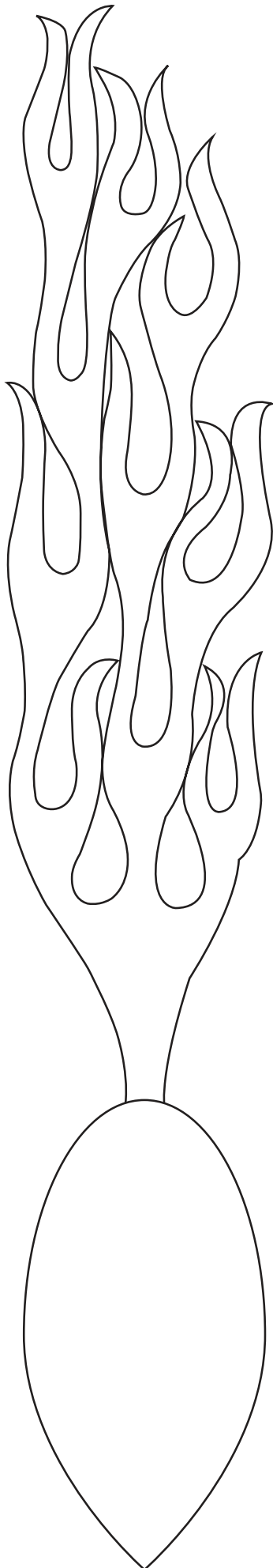
Cutting out on a scrollsaw



Drilling holes ready for cutting



The cut out sections ready for carving



The basic hot rod template

Rough shaping

I like to add a bit of 'movement' to my spoons by carving a bit of a curve into the handle and tilting the bowl a few degrees. It adds some extra work, but results in a much more dynamic piece. Leave the back flat at this stage to facilitate easier clamping and to leave a bit of extra material for structural strength while carving out the front details. I use a bandsaw to quickly cut this material away, but a wide chisel or a block plane will also work well.

With the curve shaped, I often go the extra mile and dome the handle slightly by cutting away some material either side of the design's centreline. I use a 25mm chisel to slowly pare away wood, being very careful not to chip any of the delicate flame tips in the process.

If you are good with a hand plane or an orbital sander, you can also use those methods, but I find the odds of chipping out seem to increase the more rapidly I attempt to remove stock. So go gently and take your time when shaping to minimise mishaps.



Roughly marked top face of the bowl and spoon curvature



This shows the curves of the spoon handle in both planes

Shaping the bowl

Before the spoon gets too far along, I like to get the bowl carving out of the way. Use a padded clamp to secure the piece securely to the bench then use gouges or bent knives to clear excess material away. I aim for a nice, fair curve that is neither too deep nor too shallow. It's all a bit subjective, so go to whatever depth appeals to your eye. Carve with caution to avoid hollows or bumps, feel the curve frequently with your fingers and take shallow cuts.

Because I intend to mimic the ultra-smooth finishes of hot rod paint jobs, I intend to heavily sand both the bowl and handle. I use a range of abrasive grits beginning at about 120 and

working up to 320 in steps. Spend the time and energy necessary to ensure super-fair curves and no scratching. Avoid the temptation to sand cross grain as it will only leave ugly scratches that are a nightmare to remove.

Whether you carve a spoon, a letter opener or some other project, make sure that if you commit to sanding, you take it through to a fine conclusion. Leave no bumpy areas and certainly make sure that scratches and blemishes are dealt with before a finish is applied. I find that getting to 320 grit is generally good, but many carvers who work with glassy surfaces recommend going even higher – some past 600.



Carving the bowl of the spoon



Sanding to a smooth finish



The end result of the sanding

The stem

With the bowl's concave surface complete, I take the opportunity to carve the stem which will unite the handle and the bowl. This allows me to define the bowl a bit by raising it from the stem, it also allows me to curve the stem a bit and add a more dynamic feel to the spoon.

Because the pattern I had glued to the blank which had guided my cutting has now been removed due to the doming of the framework, I take the time to re-draw and scribe the lines which define each individual flame tongue. I use a fine pencil to draw out and then gently cut the lines into a depth of approximately 2mm with a small, straight knife. When engraving these lines, be aware that the wood grains can grab the knife and pull it off course. This is especially possible when

tracing long, sweeping curves, so cut lightly and cautiously. I find two or three shallow passes a safer option than one deep one.

Flames

When cutting out the flames, begin at the tips of the tongues and aim to carve nice, flowing curves as much as possible. Be careful with grain direction changes as it is very easy to chip the tips off each tongue or to knock a large chunk off the sides of the flame bodies. The fairer your curves, the more dramatic the flames become, so you'll want to work hard to avoid bumpy, irregular curves which muddle the flow and make the design appear clumsy.

Exercise caution when cutting around the bottoms of the curves. Grain direction must be constantly considered to avoid

chip-outs, which are difficult to clean up. Use a good, sharp knife tip to do all cross-grain cutting. Settling for a blade which isn't good and sharp is a recipe for problems that will come back to haunt you.

If you are finding that you have tear-outs or any kind of problems with roughness or unfair curving that your knife can't seem to deal with, opt for needle files before you reach for sandpaper. Small, round files will help you shape the curves without wasting abrasive paper and leaving potential scratch marks across the grain. They are fast, efficient, inexpensive and, best of all, very easy to use.

With the framework roughed out, you can get a good idea if your curves are fair enough and if they flow into one another without awkward transitions. Re-carve any areas that

seem a bit rough or don't look like they are transitioning properly. You are after clear definition of each flame tongue and good roundness at the base of each flame pair.

Refinement

To really smooth the bottoms of the curves, I will often make use of little strips of 150 grade cloth-backed emery paper. I exercise extreme caution to avoid cross-grain scratching and will often use paper that has been dulled a bit so that I know it is not too aggressive. I make use of files and various abrasive papers to give the whole piece a thorough sanding right up to 320 grit. Make sure that all the curves are smooth, that any bumps and dips are faired out and that there are no scratches left anywhere.



Refine the handle and spoon bowl meeting point



Use a knife to clearly define each flame section



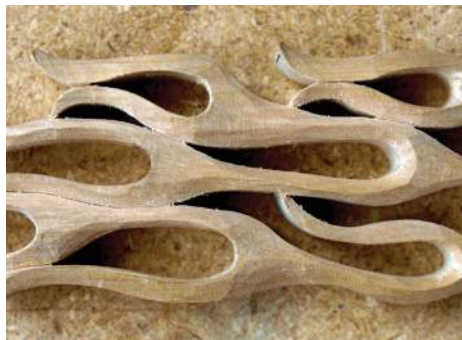
Shape each flame in the style you opt for



Try to avoid juddering cuts on curved areas



Refine the curved areas with a rasp or abrasive



The flames ready for sanding



Carefully sand the flames using minimal pressure

Surface treatment, back and finish

There are many surface treatments you can go for with these flames. I opted for a simple, highly-sanded rounded surface. You can leave the surface off-the-knife, but I find the look a bit rustic and it loses the silky, glossy feel of the sanded version. A third method is to leave a concave hollow face to each tongue. There is a dynamism about that type of finish, but again, it loses that classic hot rod flame feel.

With the front completed, I cut the excess material away from the back of the handle and bowl creating a nice concave curve to match the domed front. If you are brave, you can carve the flames to match the front face. If you are worried about cracking the delicate piece, simply round over the edges and call it a day.

Spend as much time fairing up the back of the bowl as you have on the front face. Get a good curve and sand it well. If the work gets tedious, just imagine that you are working on one of those beautiful hot rods and going for the same voluptuous, elegant, smooth finish.

Finishing

With all the carving and sanding completed, it's time for the fun bit. A few coats of oil, coupled with light 1000 grit sandings between each coat, followed by a buffing with a good beeswax polish will give you that luxurious, touchable finish you'd expect when you run your hand across the fender of that '57 Chevy. ▮



The final handle shape aimed for as on a previous spoon created



Final sanding



Applying a finish

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



FOR CRAFT
ENTHUSIASTS



THE BEST-LOVED
WOODTURNING MAGAZINE



INSPIRATION FOR
FURNITURE MAKERS

Save 30% on a woodworking subscription this Christmas

Use order code A5421. Offer expires 31/01/2019

Visit gmcsubscriptions.com or call +44 (0)1273 488 005

Quality Tools and Machinery for Woodworking



Duplicate faster and more accurate

wivamac

www.wivamac.com

Find your local retailer: www.wivamac.com/dealers

Birds of paradise

Mike Wood provides a guide for carving a trio of Wilson's birds of paradise

Wilson's bird of paradise (*Cicinnurus respublica* synonym *Diphyllodes respublica*) lives in Indonesia and sadly is on the IUCN Red List as near threatened and the population is decreasing. Both male and female grow to a size of between 140mm and 160mm and the male is heavier than the female by a few grams or so.

Interestingly, the blue crown area on the top of the head of these birds is not feathered – it is skin. The mature male of the species is the most highly coloured, exhibiting a vast array of hues depending on how viewed in the light. It is worth doing your research to truly get a better insight into their beauty and learn a bit more about them before trying to make them, but do use the patterns and images supplied here to give you a helping hand.

Carving the birds

The body for both male and female is effectively the same, it is just the colouring that is different. Whether you carve by hand or by power is up to you. Once the main body form is shaped, use a pyrography unit to burn in the feather details then coat with white gesso before applying the paint.

The feet can be bought online or you can make your own. The most difficult part of making these is when trying to create the extended tail feathers, the rectrices, on the male. Do not create these in wood as they will break. Instead, take some ram's horn, shape it lengthwise then heat/steam bend it to create the curly section. Of course, take precautions and wear protective equipment when working with heat or steam.

Colouring the birds

For the male: The blue on the head is cobalt. Naphthol crimson light is used to create the red on the back and secondaries and all edgings. The yellow on the nape is cadmium yellow light. All black areas are true black. The breast is painted black and dry edged with iridescent green. The carpal (wrist) is raw sienna edged with raw sienna and white. The central tail sickles are painted pale violet with a small amount of iridescent violet added. The feet are cobalt blue with a small amount of ultramarine blue added to darken it. The fine lines on top of head are black feathers on the bare skin.

For the female: Cobalt blue is used for the head. The female's back, wings and tail are dark brown. The secondaries are edged with burnt sienna, the lores and bill are black. All of the underside is pale buff and the barred areas are done with raw umber. ■

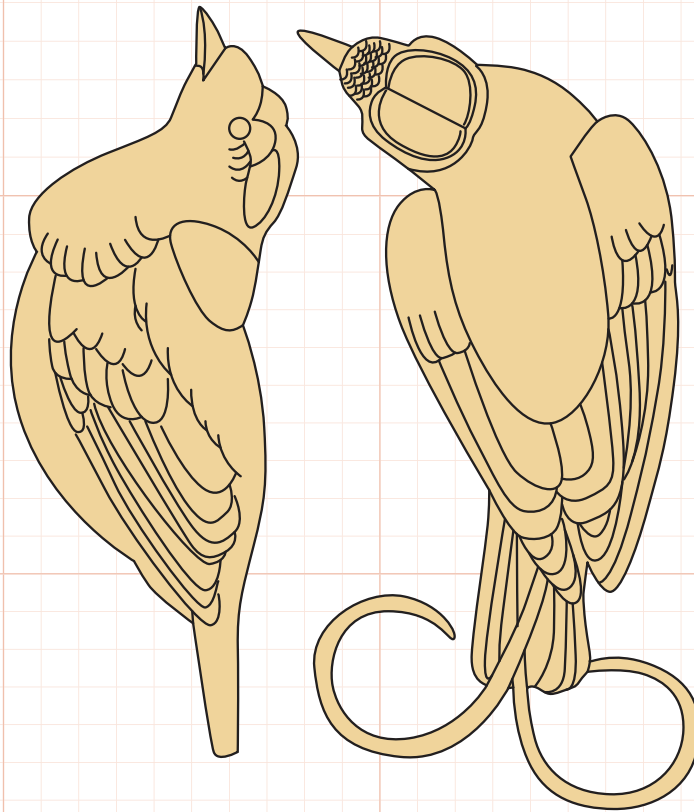


Things you will need**Tools:**

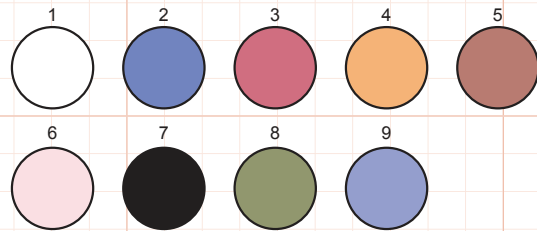
- Personal and respiratory protective equipment
- Bandsaw, coping saw or fretsaw
- Carving knife
- Rotary power carving unit
- Coarse taper burr
- Medium flame or taper burr
- Bull-nosed burr
- Round-nosed burr
- Sanding drum
- Pyrography unit with scalpel nib

Materials:

- Jelutong (*Dyera costulata*)
- Ram's horn for the curly tail feathers
- Eyes
- Feet
- Paintbrushes
- Airbrush
- Spray template
- Gesso
- Acrylic colours as per the colour palette right
- Acrylic colours for the wood leaves and any other decoration you add
- Plastic wood
- Abrasives 120-240 grit



- 1 - White Gesso
- 2 - Cabalt Blue
- 3 - Naphthol Crimson Light
- 4 - Cadmium Yellow Med
- 5 - Raw Sienna
- 6 - Raw Sienna and White Mix
- 7 - Black
- 8 - Iridescent Green
- 9 - Pale Violet

**Different views of the birds for reference when applying colour**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE WOOD



Going further into letter carving

Murray Taylor explores the spacing of letters, the different methods of carving them and some project ideas

In the previous article I mentioned that all the books I read on letter carving paid great attention to the spacing of the letters and that my feeling was I would worry about spacing when I could carve the letters. Well, I hope you have practised the carving of the Roman alphabet sufficiently to take you to the point where you feel it necessary to look at spacing.

Looking at spacing

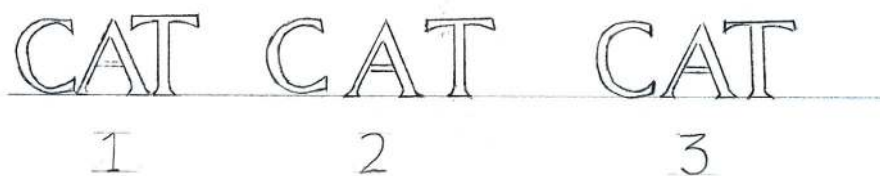
The spacing between letters has no rules. It is determined by what is pleasing to the eye, aesthetic appeal and a general impression of balance and structure. In setting out a piece of work we have to consider the space between the letters, or the inter-space,

and the space within the letters, or the counter-space. We also have to consider the shape of each individual letter.

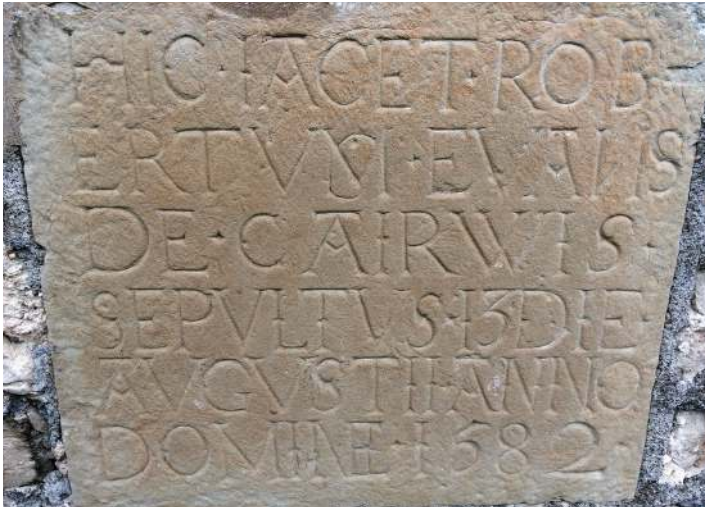
There are no hard and fast rules on spacing, it's just a matter of trial and error to get what looks right for the font being used, is legible and also what is appropriate for the context of what is being done for what purpose. If you keep your eyes open and your camera handy

you will see many examples of good layout.

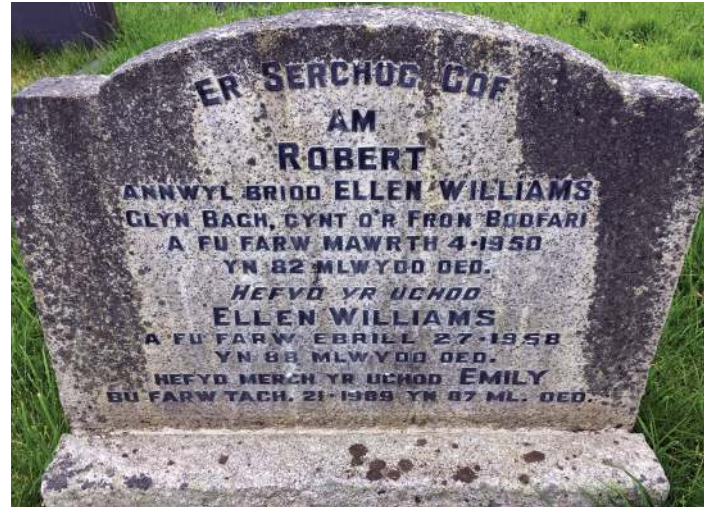
I do not usually give specific instructions for projects but rather open-ended ideas, principles and guidelines. In this article in which I am looking at the layout of letters I have prepared two examples of the same words: 'The fruit of the vine'. This could, of course, refer to the grape or the delightful drink made from it.



1. This is obviously too compact. 2. The letters are too far apart. 3. This looks about right



A stone plaque dated 1582. Note the delicate spacing and the interesting use of the diamond shape between each word



A relief carved stone exhibiting excellent spacing



A relief carving in stone. Note the layout and use of stops between the words



A relief carving in stone. Note the layout and use of stops between the words

Project ideas

The idea of an inscribed platter or box could be the basis of an idea for a project. Instead of a turned plate you could use a flat board. The box is of simple form, just four cross halving joints. A little imagination could turn these ideas into many different projects.

You will notice that, although the words are the same, the spacing is different. In the carving on the box the perpendicular lines are all parallel, however on the plate they are not, and this makes for quite

a different effect. There is obviously more space between the 'T' and the 'H' than there is between the 'H' and the 'E'. There are no exact rules, just study as many examples of carved lettering as you can. There are many books on calligraphy which should create a fund of ideas for future study on spacing. At the end of the day if it is pleasing to the eye and it looks right, it probably is right.



The plate drawn out but not carved



The completed plate



The carving on the box front



Resting your work on a cushion

CARVER'S TIP: If you are carving something like the plate with an uneven base you should rest your work on a cushion to keep it steady.

Getting smaller

One of the problems I most frequently encounter with students usually comes at the end of a project, maybe a lovespoon for example. The spoon is small and then they want to put an inscription or dedication on their treasured piece. To solve this problem, I have come up with a simple solution which works for letters from 10mm down to about 5mm.

You simply draw parallel lines either straight or on a curve and draw in the letters free-hand. You do not need to draw the letters as double lines, you simply carve either side of the drawn letters with a fine

chip carving knife or a small craft knife.

You will see from the photographs that carvers with limited experience can get quite good results using this method. If you have trouble with the letters with curves you could make them more square in nature or, as you progress, you could use small gouges to define the curves. Remember that if you are putting a small message on an object it is the sentiment that counts – the recipient will not be looking at your letter-carving ability. I suggest that you keep some tools specially for the purpose of small letter carving and remember, practice makes perfect.



Examples of single line letters in 10, 8 and 6mm



A pair of interlocking spoons drawn out but not yet carved



The interlocking spoons carved by a student from one of my original jewellery designs



The interlocking spoons separated



Two styles of scalpel handle with different shaped blades

CARVER'S TIP: A well-known brand of replaceable blade scalpels are ideal for small lettering. Blades of various shapes are available but be careful when changing blades as they have a tendency to snap. I use a pair of small pliers when changing a blade.



A spoon made by one of my students, Andi Parry. This was only her second piece of work

Getting bigger

It is widely believed that carving larger letters is not possible with a knife and I was quite happy to accept this until I met a carver in the United States. He was in a workshop in a marina making a boat sign on a piece of sapele. The letters were about 4in (100cm) high and, to my surprise, he was using a tool with which I was not familiar. It is called a mill knife and has a strong handle and a strong blade with a cutting edge of about 35°.

Being intrigued by his adept use of the mill knife, I bought one and was eager to try it at home. I found it very difficult to use at first because it is held with two hands and drawn towards you, however, with practice, it produces wonderful results and I am

surprised that they have never caught on in the UK – they are the norm in the US.

Instead of cutting down to the root of the letter with a chisel or gouge the centre of the letter is removed as a V-cut on the heavier sections and then you work out to the edges of the letter.



Mill knife and blade



Mill knife with some homemade and adapted tools



The lettering on the sign was made with a mill knife. The wood is a piece of oak from an old bed headboard, and the mallet and gouge are applied. The sign is 500 x 180mm



The first V-cuts on the longer sections



Carving the letter 'O' with the mill knife



Putting the finishing touches with the mill knife

Some easier starter projects



A monogrammed coaster



A spelling tile





An alphabet block



Line drawn lettering on the top of a love spoon by one of my students, this was his first attempt at lettering. (Cymru am byth - Wales forever)



The exploded view of the box

Although it is not easy to find mill knives in the UK they are available from the US and Canada. As you can see in the photograph of my mill knife the adapted versions are not difficult to copy. The use of knives for letter carving does not detract from the traditional use of chisels and gouges, it is just another string to the wood carvers bow.

If you wish to read more about the use of the mill knife I highly recommend 'Carving Signs' by Greg Krockta and Roger Schroeder, which is published by Fox Chapel Publishing.

Besides the obvious use of lettering for notice boards and signs etc. I was scratching my head for small project ideas (no splinter

jokes please) and I came up with a few projects that are a little easier than the plate or the box.

You could try things like the monogrammed coaster, just play around with the initials to form a balanced monogram and you have a very acceptable gift.

The spelling tiles are approximately 50 x 50mm. and a set of 26 does not take long to carve.

TOP TIP: Carve the letters on a board and cut the tiles afterwards. It makes life much easier.

The Alphabet blocks are a little more difficult to do; I used a 50 x 50mm section of lime in 300mm lengths. I marked them off at 50mm divisions, carved the letters and parted the blocks afterwards.

As always these are just suggestions, once you get going I am sure you will come up with lots of new ideas.

If you want to try a variation on the box it is just four cross halving joints as shown in the photograph.

The use of simple line drawn lettering can be used to enhance any piece of work, it is quick and easy to master and can open up many possibilities in your future projects. ▶

Chip. Relief. Flat-Plane. Whittling...

Whatever your discipline, get the right tools for
the job and elevate your work to be
a cut above the rest.

From power carving to hand gouges, or simply
for that next blank piece of timber,
we've got you covered.

The ToolPost

www.toolpost.co.uk • 01235 511101

Unit 7 Hawksworth, Southmead Industrial Park,
Didcot, Oxon. OX11 7HR



RECORD POWER

O'DONNELL



TORMEK



PROXXON



NEW! High performance sanding discs



High Performance Wood Carving

Carving, Cutting and Planing Attachments for Grinders



- Removes wood fast and easily
- Will carve the hardest of timber
- Handles reclaimed timber with dirt and debris
- Powerful and controllable
- For all types of soft and hard timbers
- Long lasting replaceable carbide cutting blades



- Free worldwide shipping
- 10% discount code **P231P** (valid until 31/12/2018)



For more information please visit www.dbxcutter.com

The diary of a student woodcarver: **THE DEGREE SHOW**

In this final article of the Diary of a Student Woodcarver series, William Barsley takes you on a tour of the 2018 City & Guilds of London Art School Degree Show

PHOTOGRAPH BY PRATIK DESAI



William's
ornamental
wreath of hops

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM BARSLEY UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

I'm officially no longer a student. What a strange feeling. I know I've only scratched the surface (excuse the pun) of all there is to learn about woodcarving, but it has been a truly invaluable three years and it has been a delight to share my journey with you in this magazine.

The degree show is essentially the grand finale of the three-year course and includes the graduation ceremony, a private view, and open studios for the public. It is an eventful week where students from Fine Art, Conservation and Historic Carving courses display their final works.

Miraculously, the show came together just in the nick of time,

after carvings were frantically finished, studios given a fresh lick of paint, and the work hung on the walls. It was my first experience of exhibiting work, and it was fascinating to think about the best ways to light the room and position the carvings. Having spent months working on some of the pieces, and in the case of my class mates Xabier and Wilfe even a whole year, getting the lighting and composition right is crucial.

In the past few articles I have been updating you on my classmates' final-year projects to give you a taste of the variety of work going on. You can now see their incredible finished works, along with the work of some of the stone carvers.





Edgar Ward's Romanesque relief



George Edwards' 'wineskin bearer' bust



Thomas Clark-Collins' Lincoln Cathedral Boss



Borys's picture frame for a Van Dyck painting



Xabier's Coat of Arms for the Fishmongers Guild

Gilded frame

The beautifully carved and gilded frame you can see was carved by Borys Burrough, and will house an original Van Dyck painting (the portrait of Olivia Boteler Porter – C.1630s) bound for the Bowes museum in county Durham. Carved in the auricular style, Borys had to design an appropriate frame for the painting, as the original had been lost many years ago. Borys intends to continue working as a carver in London and will spend the summer at the antique picture frame restorer he previously worked for prior to the course.

Coat of arms

Xabier Mendizabal's final year project was to carve the heraldic crest of the outgoing Prime Warden for the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers. This carving has been an annual project at the Art School since the 1970s. Xabier was initially given the heraldic crest, in this case for Nigel Banks, and then had to

design the arms to include classic dolphins for the Fishmongers Guild. As you can see, Xabier has created a masterpiece. The main crest is carved out of two sections of lime wood, with a painted and gilded finish. Xabier previously studied conservation in Spain, and learned carving in London to complement his training. He has now returned home to Onati, in the Basque country, to conserve a statue of Saint Bartolome from the 16th century. His carving skills will prove very useful, as the hands and the base of the wooden statue need to be recarved.



Wilfe's dolphin coffee table

Dolphin coffee table

Wilfe Gorlin carved an ambitious classical dolphin coffee table for a client who is a member of the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers.

As you can see in the photos, it was a technical challenge not only to joint the timber for the dolphins, but also to get the glass level and ensure the dolphins supported its weight. The outcome is stunning, with Wilfe finishing the carving with a heavily distressed silver leaf effect. After the course, Wilfe will spend the summer at Lincoln College Chapel in Oxford, working to gild metres and metres of traditional egg and dart moulding. Alongside this he has a studio in London where he will continue to carve.

Stone carvings

The degree show is a great celebration of the whole art school, with Fine Art, Conservation, Historic Stone, and Woodcarving students all displaying their works. I've not space to include every student's work, but I wanted to touch upon some of the stone carving.

The gigantic griffin you see was carved by Fyfe Sands, and weighs in at an incredible 700kg-plus. This was a real showstopper and, sitting high on a wooden frame, the griffin loomed over its viewers with great effect. In the next-door room was a beautiful bust of 'the wineskin bearer', who is said to be a companion of Ulysses from the blinding of Polyphemus, and was carved by George Edwards. Other works by the stone carvers include: a Romanesque panel, designed and carved by Edgar Ward; a copy of a huge boss from Lincoln cathedral by Thomas Clark-Collins; an ornate capital by George Griffiths; and a shallow relief panel by Richard Barnes.

What next for me?

Since finishing the course, I've been fortunate in finding work carving in Westminster Hall at the Houses of Parliament, helping to conserve the stunning 14th-century hammer beam roof. If you've not heard of it or seen an image, I strongly recommend having a look. It is a masterpiece of 14th-century carpentry, and has 26 beautiful angels carved on to the hammer beams, each with a different face. It is a great challenge, but very rewarding, and looks set to be an exciting time ahead. Alongside this, I continue to work on private commissions, and look forward to pursuing my interest in carving ornamental hops. In September, I will travel to Venice to be a 'young ambassador' for an exciting and unprecedented exhibition organised by the Michelangelo Foundation to showcase 'the finest in European craftsmanship'.

I've often noted during this series that there is really no single path to take in carving or a 'best' way to learn, as it really is a personal journey. For me, as someone who learns best in a structured environment and wanted to turn carving into a full-time career, the past three years at the City & Guilds of London Art School have been truly life changing. ▶



Fyfe Sands' gigantic griffin



William's heraldic crest for Roald Dahl's grandson

Our contributors



Andrew Thomas has been a professional sculptor since 1993 and delivers weekly private woodcarving lessons for both beginners and intermediate students.
www.3dsculptor.com
art@3dsculptor.co.uk



Dave Western is a professional lovespoon carver and the author of two books on the subject. He carves to commission and also teaches carving classes. His books, *The Fine Art of Carving Lovespoons* and *History of Lovespoons*, are both available through GMC Publications.
davidwesternlovespoons.com



Dick Onians has been a professional sculptor since 1968. He is a Fellow of the Royal British Sculptors Society and an award-winning teacher of carving. He is also the author of two books about carving as well as many articles.
dick.onians@talk21.com



Mark Ivan Fortune followed a traditional apprenticeship in stone carving to become a master of his craft with more than 20 years' experience. Since 2008 he has turned his attention primarily to woodcarving. He teaches from his home workshop at Raheenwood in East Clare.
markivanfortune@icloud.com



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



Steve Bisco has been carving for 30 years, specialising in decorative carving in period styles, first in wood and recently in stone. His book, *Stone Carving for the Home & Garden*, is available from GMC Publications.
steve@thebiscos.com



William Barsley has just completed a Diploma in Ornamental Woodcarving & Gilding at the City & Guilds of London Art School.
www.williambarsley.com
willbarsley@googlemail.com

Editor Mark Baker
E: markb@thegmcgroup.com
Editorial Assistant Karen Scott
E: karensc@thegmcgroup.com
Designer Oliver Prentice
Illustrator Mark Carr
Chief Photographer Anthony Bailey
Advertising Sales Executive Russell Higgins
E: russellh@thegmcgroup.com
Production Controller Amanda Hoag
E: repro@thegmcgroup.com
Publisher Jonathan Grogan
Production Manager Jim Bulley
Subscriptions:
pubs@thegmcgroup.com
T: 01273 402810

Marketing Anne Guillot
Printer Precision Colour Printing
Distribution Seymour Distribution Ltd
T: 020 7429 4000
Woodcarving
(ISSN 0965-9463) is published bi-monthly by Guild of Master Craftsman Publications Ltd.
Furniture & Cabinetmaking magazine (ISSN 1365-4292) is published every four weeks by Guild of Master Craftsman Publications Ltd
Subscribe from £25.50 (including free P&P)
Save 10% with 6 issues
Save 15% with 12 issues
Save 20% with 24 issues
Plus UK subscribers can save an extra 10% by choosing Direct Debit

Cheques made payable to GMC Publications Ltd
Current subscribers will automatically receive a renewal notice (excludes direct debit subscribers).
Post your order to:
The Subscription Department,
GMC Publications Ltd, 166 High Street,
Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XU
Tel +44 (0)1273 488 005, Fax +44 (0)1273 402 866
Email: pubs@thegmcgroup.com
Website: www.thegmcgroup.com
Cheques made payable to GMC Publications Ltd.
Current subscribers will automatically receive a renewal notice (excludes direct debit subscribers).

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

Woodcarving magazine will consider articles for publication, which should be sent to the Editor together with a stamped self-addressed return envelope. GMC Publications cannot accept liability for the loss or damage of unsolicited material. Views and comments expressed by individuals in the magazine do not necessarily represent those of the publishers and no legal responsibility can be accepted for the results of the use by readers of information or advice of whatever kind given in this publication, either in editorial or advertisements. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission of the Guild of Master Craftsman Publications Ltd.

WOOD SUBSCRIBE TO CARVING

Subscriptions start
from just £11.48

PHOTOGRAPH BY VEY HENI CHULOVSKAYA/HUTTERSTOCK

Free early delivery
direct to your door

+44 (0) 1273 488005

www.thegmcgroup.com/offer/carving

From the community

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

Tilman Riemenschneider meets Veit Stoss in Poole

Mark,

The design of the left-hand side of my carving was based on the flowing robe of Mary Magdalene in Tilman Riemenschneider's Münnerstadt Altarpiece. The right-hand side of my carving was based on the Virgin Mary's robe in a carving by Veit Stoss of about the same period of the 16th century.

Both the component shapes were selected by me for their visual appeal and the way they combined in a pleasing manner, and not for any religious reason.

My post-retirement woodcarving hobby can probably be traced back to carvings seen in successive schools – one of St Christopher carrying an infant Jesus, the other a naked female torso, no longer on display.

Some 60 years later, attendance at a course given by the Oxford University Department of Continuing Education (open to all) on Northern Renaissance Sculpture gave me an insight into the stylistic creation of these works. A one-day lecture put on by the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford) on the restoration of a Grinling Gibbons picture frame helped me to understand the original production methods.

Inspiration is everywhere.

Tony Wilson



Practical advice

Hi Mark.

Further to Peter Benson's article, as usual he gives sensible, practical advice and discussion in his article about the art /craft of carving rather than just how to do something. What I would add is that many people miss out on the use of indelible ink pens and markers. They don't drip, don't need preparation, don't seep, come in a variety of colours, and can be used very accurately. Thus, to whiten the claws and beak of the attached griffin took only a few moments. Even larger areas can be coloured. Again, the more coats the less the grain will be apparent, but as always try it on a spare piece of wood first.

Cheers, Dave Taplin



Rose

Hi Mark,

I just today was able to purchase issue 163 of *Woodcarving*. I read your editorial with great interest and completely agree with your comments about mistakes and learning as well as the benefits of a carving club. The club here in Indianapolis, Circle City Carvers, is a treasure of experience, expertise, and cheerful company.

Also, since you asked in the editorial, I thought you would like to see my recently completed rose from an article in *Woodcarving* by Steve Bisco, which now resides in my daughter's home.

Best regards, Richard Root

Inspiration

Hi Mark,
I just wanted to share my latest carving with you that is a gift for my sister.

The inspiration to create my carving came as a result of reading Ian Edwards' original project featured in a 2007 issue of *Woodcarving* magazine. I was so happy with the outcome.

The base is from an old jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*) staircase. The driftwood piece I found on our local beach while doing my morning swim. The swallow is from rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*), which is my sister's favourite wood from New Zealand, where she lived for many years. The swallow also represents the swallows that yearly visited her old house in suburbia as she now lives on a rural property.

I just wanted you to see how keeping my old copies of the mag have now resulted in a new project that I have thoroughly enjoyed creating.

Many thanks for your time.

Regards, Julie Park



Unsung heroes

Hello Mark,
I thought you might like this 300mm-diameter plaque which I carved from a piece of oak washed up on the beach at Widemouth Bay in Cornwall, for my son-in-law who was in Bomb Disposal in the Royal Navy.

He and his former shipmates were constantly working to keep our Island safe, and as such were unsung heroes. He has since retired from the RN, but is now clearing ordnance in the North Sea.

Sincerely yours, Ron Richardson

FROM THE FORUM

Here we share with you pieces that readers have posted on our *Woodcarving* forum. 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.

https://www.woodworkersinstitute.com/forum/lobsters-lair_topic21945.html

After Christmas I decided to try to carve something in its natural surroundings rather than just an object/animal on its own or on a plinth etc. It turned out to be one of my largest and most difficult carvings to date.

This carving of a lobster, about to devour one of its favourite prey species – a sea star – required a huge amount of undercutting in some areas that were difficult to reach. I was trying to achieve the correct amount of light and shadow.

Certain subjects, such as crustaceans and shells, seem to work very well as carvings. The natural beauty of wood with its changing figure and grain direction helps to give the subtle tonal changes which contribute to the life-like appearance of these fascinating creatures.

The carving has been made from a single piece of English cherry



(apart from the antenna, which were carved separately and then attached).
It measures H10 x W22 x L35cm.

Kind regards, David

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

wood carving tools and wood chisels specialist

Ashley Iles - Henry Taylor - Robert Sorby

All items in stock, ready for dispatch..
*unless marked otherwise all prices inclusive of VAT



Henry Taylor 6-Piece Starters Carving Tool Set



for only

£92.00

HUGE SELECTION OF HENRY TAYLOR CARVING TOOLS

Japanese Saw Rasp

for only

£15.95

Ashley Iles York Carving Set

for only

£139.00

Kevlar Gloves (pair)

for only

£5.00

straight gouge adze

£59.00

£75.00

Multi-Profile Japanese Sharpening Stones

280g: **£15.00**
1000g: **£5.00**
3000g: **£15.60**

Henry Taylor Supersharp Carving Tool Set

for only
£49.50

Natural Leather Chisel Rolls

10 pockets: **£18.50**
12 pockets: **£21.50**

Order online today at

www.toolnut.co.uk

Wood Sculpture Tools



tool sharpening



New
DEEP
Gouge Adze

for only

£79.95

Huge range of Ashley Iles Carving Tools available

Order online today at www.toolnut.co.uk much, much, much more on the website

Next issue...

On sale 27 December

Step-by-step guide to
carving a bee-eater



Make your own
versatile carving vice

Guide to carving
a Gothic misericord

The ins and outs
of carving a
Christening spoon

Carve a cheeky
climbing mouse

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE WOOD

Christmas roundup

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



Robin Wood carving axe

A razor-sharp axe that will do anything from felling small trees to splitting firewood; where it really excels is as a carving axe.

The weight of the head is 550g and the total weight around 720g, the handle length is 31cm. This is a good mid-weight carving axe that most people will use easily without getting tired, yet still heavy enough to remove wood quickly.

Price: £39 or with sheath £49

Contact: Robin Wood

Web: wood-tools.co.uk



Gransfor large carving axe

This new axe pattern, based on old Swedish carving techniques, is developed by Wille Sundqvist, master craftsman and author of *Swedish Carving Techniques* in cooperation with craftsman adviser Onni Linnanheimo. The handle is 'rugged' to give a good grip.

A chop axe for hewing bowls and other wooden objects, artistic wood carving and architectural work. Available with left, right or double grind.

Price: £136.00

Contact: Classic Handtools

Web: www.classichandtools.com



Robin Wood spoon knife right hand compound curve

Robin's spoon knives are available as a compound curve or open curve and left or right handed. They come razor sharp and ready to use. The handles are beech and around 7½in long, allowing for a great range of grips to be used efficiently.

This compound curve spoon knife design is designed for versatility. The gradually tightening curve towards the end of the spoon knife blade allows you to carve most size spoons with ease, from small caddy spoons and eating spoons to larger ladles and kuksas.

Price: £39 or with sheath £49

Contact: Robin Wood

Web: <https://wood-tools.co.uk>



Golra chip carving set of three tools in toolroll

The Toolpost are offering a set of three chip carving knives. This set include two sizes of straight-edge chip carving cutting knives for making heavy and more refined cuts and there is also a skewed-edge knife. These are housed in a soft and supple toolroll with five pockets.

Price: £30.59

Contact: The Toolpost

Web: www.toolpost.co.uk



Wayne Barton chip carving knives

Made to Wayne's specific design to fit in the hand comfortably and control they are 'perfectly ground to an angle that enables carvers to make the precise and crisp cuts that chip carving demands'.

Price: \$39.95 each

Contact: Wayne Barton

Web: chipcarving.com



Mora Knives

Mora offer a range of carving knives with both straight and curved/hooked blade designs. The blades are made from laminate steel and each knife features an oiled birch wood handle. Blade lengths range from 49mm to 82mm.

Price from about: £17.86

Contact: Tomaco

Web: www.tomaco.co.uk



Flexcut Beginner Palm and Knife Set

This Flexcut four-piece set comprises a general shaping knife, a detail knife, a V-gouge and a shallow gouge, all of which are honed ready for use and provide a good mix of tools to start carving.

Price: £84.92

Contact: Brimarc Tools & Machinery

Web: www.brimarc.com



Narex bent gouges

Narex offer a wide variety of carving knives and gouges to suit all styles and sizes of carving including curved gouges. Narex professional carving tools are handmade, polished and sharpened and ready for use.

Prices from: £12.95

Contact: Tomaco

Web: www.tomaco.co.uk



Stubai micro carving six-piece set

This set of six micro carving tools is designed for those wanting to carve fine detail and small items.

This set comprises a No.1, 3mm, a No.2, 7mm skew edge, a No.5, 5mm, a No.11, 3mm, a No.28, 5mm and a No.41, 3mm.

Price: about £104

Contact: Stubai

Web: www.stubai.com



Chris Pye Short Fishtail Gouge Set

This beautifully forged set of short fishtail gouges are made by Auriou to Chris' Pye's specifications.

The set comprises a No.3, 6 & 14mm, No.5, 5 & 14mm, No.7, 6 & 14mm and No.9, 6mm. Each features octagonal ash handles and is sharpened ready for use.

Price: £255

Contact: Classic Handtools

Web: www.classichandtools.com



Pfeil lino and block cutter set

For those interested in lino or block cutting, Pfeil have created four different sets to help you. Each feature palm-type handles made from pear and the blades are precisely ground and polished and are the same high quality as the standard-sized carving tools.

Price £98 per set of six

For stockist details contact: Pfeil

Web: www.pfeiltools.com



Henry Taylor beginner's relief carving set

Henry Taylor Tools have created a five-piece beginner set of tools which includes a 12-page leaflet written by Jeremy Williams with full usage instructions and a pattern for you to use. Each tool is sharpened ready for use.

Price £76.80

Contact: Henry Taylor Tools

Web: www.henrytaylortools.co.uk



Nic Westermann 50mm swan neck gouge

This hand-forged bowl carving gouge has a 50mm diameter sweep. Excellent for smaller bowls, kuksa and creating a scalloped finish. It is supplied with a forged, tapered ferrule for you to make your own handle.

Price: £66.00

Contact: Nic Westermann

Web: nicwestermann.co.uk

Proxxon battery-powered drill/grinder

Featuring variable speed control with speed range of 7000–23000 rpm, this battery-operated unit is designed for drilling, milling, polishing, planing, cutting and engraving. The unit is supplied with a 34-piece bit set, six collets, lithium-ion battery (10.8 V) and fast charger, all held in a polypropylene case.

Price: £186.52

Contact: Brimarc Tools & Machinery

Web: www.brimarc.com



Arbortech Turboplane

The Arbortech turbo plane is a shaping and planing blade designed for use in a suitable 100 or 115mm angle grinder. It comprises three tungsten carbide cutters, which can be re-sharpened using a diamond file, is 100mm in diameter and has a 22mm hole in the middle. It is capable of making heavy-duty shaping cuts as well as very delicate refining cuts.

Price: £125.50

Contact: Brimarc Tools & Machinery

Web: www.brimarc.com



Kutzall burrs and discs

Kutzall produce a range of rotary carving burrs in seven different profiles with two different shaft sizes, 1/8in and 1/4in, to fit various rotary carving units, available in three different coatings. Extreme (black) which feature aligned tungsten carbide teeth which is very coarse, grit (red) which features a coating of carbide grit equivalent to 23grit which creates a coarse cut, and original which comes in coarse (silver) and fine (gold) grades which comprises an almost crystalline-looking carbide coating.

In addition to rotary carving burrs, Kutzall also produce shaping discs and dished wheels for use on 115mm angle grinders.

Price start from: \$11.00

Contact: Kutzall

Web: www.kutzall.com



Saburrtooth burrs and discs

Saburrtooth produce discs and carving burrs in eight different profiles with four different shaft sizes, 3/32in, 1/8in and 1/4in and 3 and 6mm. They also produce sanding sleeves comprising a mandrel onto which a hollow sleeve is fitted, buzzouts and carving wheels of various profiles for use on 50 and 100mm angle grinder units. Each grit grade is colour coded: orange is extra coarse, green is coarse grit, red is medium grit and yellow is fine grit.

Price start from: \$11.00

Contact: Saburrtooth

Web: www.saburr-tooth.com

Wecheer flexi-shaft carving kit

This flexi-shaft reciprocating carving unit is capable of carving speeds of 0 to 20,000rpm, controlled by a foot pedal. The 1-metre long flexi shaft has a toughened inner sheath to minimise wear and handpieces are secured by a ball bearing locking catch to the end of the shaft. The reciprocating handpiece has a contoured, non-slip grip and comes supplied with five blades.

The kit includes wall hanger, motor, foot pedal, flexi-shaft, reciprocating carver handpiece and five blades.

Price: £199.95

Contact: Rutlands

Web: www.rutlands.co.uk



King Arthur's Guinevere Total Sanding

This complete sanding system includes a Guinevere sanding double-ended motor, a flexible shaft with chuck and a Total sanding kit comprising five inflatable sanders with sanding sleeves for each in 80, 150 and 320 grits, a hand pump and cleaning stick. It also includes an introductory DVD and instructional booklet, *The Velvety Wood Surface*.

Price: \$467.99

Contact: King Arthur's Tools

Web: www.katools.com



For UK enquiries it is sold under the Kirjes brand name.

Contact: Classic Hand Tools

Web: www.classichandtools.com



Hi-Torque 45K Micro drill

This power-carving unit from Woodart Products incorporates a feedback system that increases torque when extra power is needed. The handpiece speed is variable up to 45,000 RPM and features a quick release $\frac{1}{2}$ in collet chuck. A $\frac{3}{32}$ in reduction sleeve is available as an optional extra. It is supplied with two carbide piercing cutters

Price: £290

Contact: Woodart Products

Web: www.woodart-products.co.uk

Robert Sorby ProEdge

The Robert Sorby ProEdge enables repeatable sharpening every time and delivers astounding 'factory finish' results without fail. Perhaps the most simple to use sharpener on the market, this system replicates the industry standard of achieving a flat grind using the preferred method of belts over traditional grinding wheels. It sharpens bench, framing, carving and turning chisels, drill bits, plane irons, knives and garden tools.

Price: from £288–£340

Contact: Robert Sorby

Web: www.robert-sorby.co.uk



Trend Diamond bench stone

This double-sided diamond bench stone is 200mm x 75mm in size. The bench stone features 300 grit on one side which has clearance channels for a faster cleaner cut and has 1000 grit on the other side for a finer cut. It comes complete with a pouch, cleaning block and non-slip mat.

Price: £105

Contact: Trend Routing Technology

Web: www.trend-uk.com



Diamond sharpening wheel

The new Tormek Diamond Wheels come in three different grades; coarse (360 grit), fine (600 grit) and extra fine (1200 grit). The wheels offer the ability to sharpen on the side as well as the periphery. Side sharpening suits small carving tools such as carving gouges and V-tools, plus plane irons, wood chisels and knives. The result is a bevel edge with a completely flat surface, instead of a hollow grind. The wheel can also be used to sharpen steel, ceramic and carbide. A 150ml bottle of anti corrosion concentrate is included.

Price: £201.64–£216.65

Contact: Brimarc Tools & Machinery

Web: www.brimarc.com



Record Bandsaw

The BS300E is suited for a medium sized workshop where a range of duties will be required. Cast iron table with a solid fence, a one-handed table tilt on a smooth rack and pinion, cast iron bandwheels a solid blade tension indicator is fitted to the rear of the machine to allow for easy setup. It has 190mm max depth of cut, 305mm throat depth, two speeds: 820 & 380M/minute. An option extra wheel kit is available.

Price: BS300E Bandsaw £499.99

BS300A Wheel kit £69.99

Contact: Record Power

Web: www.recordpower.co.uk



Sjoberg bench

Constructed in European beech the top is 85mm thick with a 110mm apron, ready treated with a premium quality enriching finishing oil. The vices provide clamping power across their 600mm width. A double row of 25mm round dogs work from both vices and across the full worktop area of 1,805 x 600mm. Overall bench dimensions are 1945 x 740mm. Supplied with top, trestle and four unbreakable round steel bench dogs which can also be used in the trestle legs. Please note: Available as bench only or complete with storage module SMO4. The picture shows the bench with storage unit.

Price: £1899.50

Contact: Brimarc Tools & Machinery

Web: www.brimarc.com

Air filters filter

Charnwood have introduced a new Micro Clean range of air filters designed to remove airborne dust particles from the air in the workshop.

MC200, one of the range of four units, has an airflow rate of 200 cubic metres per hour. Therefore it is suitable for a small workshop with a volume of up to 20 cubic metres. For example: Floor area 3m x 3m x height 2.2m. Designed to sit on a shelf or bench. Locate either: close to the centre of the room to create the best airflow, or locate closer to the source of the dust to filter it out of the air as quick as possible. Supplied with 1m power cable and plug.

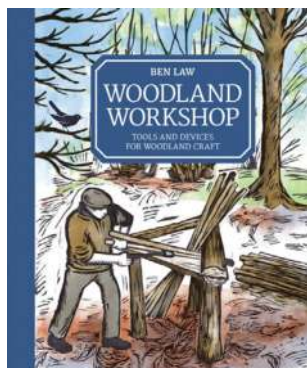


Price £209

Contact: Charnwood woodworking Machinery

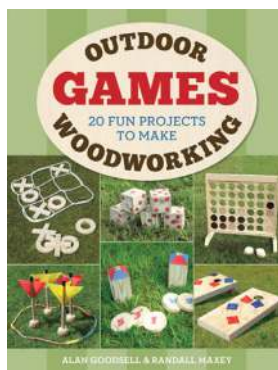
Web: www.chnwood.net

BOOK OFFERS



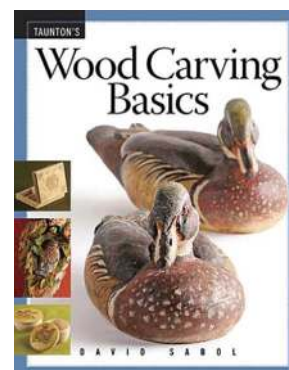
Woodland Workshop

ISBN 9781784943431 RRP £25.00, offer price **£17.50** plus p&p. To order please call 01273 488005 or go to www.thegmcgroup.com and **quote code: R5398**. Closing date: 28th February 2019. Please note: p&p is £2.95 for the first item and £1.95 for each additional item.



Outdoor Woodworking Games

ISBN 9781784943745 RRP £14.99, offer price **£10.49** plus p&p. To order please call 01273 488005 or go to www.thegmcgroup.com and **quote code: R5401**. Closing date: 31st January 2019. Please note: p&p is £2.95 for the first item and £1.95 for each additional item.



Wood Carving Basics

ISBN 9781561588886 RRP £17.99, offer price **£12.60** plus p&p. To order please call 01273 488005 or go to www.thegmcgroup.com and **quote code: R5402**. Closing date: 31st January 2019. Please note: p&p is £2.95 for the first item and £1.95 for each additional item.

Advertisers Index

Alec Tiranti	43
Calvo Studio	12
City & Guilds of London Art School	9
Classic Hand Tools	37
Craft Courses	43
Creative Welsh Woodturning	IFC
DBXcutter.com	62
Flexcut Tool Company	20
G & S Specialist Timber	27
Henry Taylor Tools	4
International Boatbuilding Training College	IBC
John C. Campbell Folk School	12
Pfeil	12
Razertip Industries	BC
Saburrtooth	43
Sjöbergs - Brimarc	9
The North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show	4
The Toolpost	61
Toolbank	2
Toolnut	70
Tormek - Brimarc	26, 27
Wivamac	53



SPECIALISED SHARPENING SOLUTIONS

By *Nic Westermann*

PLUS OTHER CARVING RELATED EPHEMERA

HEWNANDHONE.CO.UK

WOODCARVING TUITION IN DEVON

SPECIALIST TUITION IN ALL ASPECTS OF CARVING BY EXPERIENCED QUALIFIED TEACHER. WELL EQUIPPED STUDIO. MAXIMUM 5 STUDENTS, WITH BEGINNERS/RETIRED STUDENTS ESPECIALLY WELCOME. COMFORTABLE ACCOMMODATION NEARBY.

**SAE: Zoë Gertner,
Puddleduck Farm, South Wonford, Thornbury,
Nr Holsworthy, Devon EX22 7DR
Tel: 01409-261648
www.zoegertner.co.uk**

Murray Taylor

is now offering courses in North Wales specialising in Chip Carving, Small Letter Carving and Love Spoon making, with special attention to knife sharpening.

Tuition is arranged to suit your requirements for 1 - 5 people over 1 or 2 days.

Tools and materials can be supplied, local B & B can be arranged.

Contact Murray Taylor on: **07802524448**
or murraytaylor@hotmail.co.uk

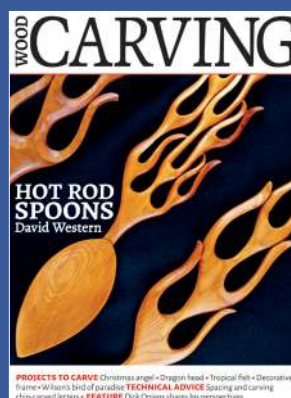
www.aboutlovespoons.com

MICHAEL PAINTER - MASTER CARVER over 35 years experience WOODCARVING CLASSES/COURSES

Daytime/1 day/2 day
in fully equipped carvers studio
beginners to advanced carvers all welcome
study courses for the following disciplines:-
RELIEF, CLASSIC CARVING & FIGURE CARVING
ALSO AVAILABLE FOR
DEMONSTRATIONS AND LECTURES



For further information contact Mike on 01827 830133
Well Cottage 14 Main Road, Austrey,
Nr Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 3EH
www.mikepainter.co.uk Email: info@mikepainter.co.uk



JOIN US ON FACEBOOK

Like our page
for regular
updates!



WoodworkersInstitute

ALL OLD WOODCARVING TOOLS WANTED

Also wanted - all woodworking hand tools and anvils.

Very best prices paid for Norris planes.

Please contact Tony Murland

Telephone: **01394 421323**

Email: **tony@antiquetools.co.uk**

LINCOLNSHIRE WOODCRAFT SUPPLIES

Specialist in high quality carving blocks inc.
Cherry, Lime, Mahogany, Sycamore and
Walnut etc from 1" - 6" in thickness.
Send 6 1st class stamps for catalogue.

Send for details

The Old Sawmill, Burghley Park, London Road,
Stamford, Lincs. PE9 3JS

Open 9am to 4.30pm - Monday to Friday

9am to 4pm - Saturday.

Tel: 01780 757825

New website: www.lincolnshirewoodcraft.co.uk



W.L. West & Sons Ltd
Selham, Petworth, GU28 0PJ
T: 01798 861611 F: 01798 861633

- Hardwoods
- Wood finishes
- Australian Burrs
- Exotic Timbers
- Woodturning Blanks
- Woodworking Tools
- Fencing, Gate & Decking Products
- Bespoke Garden Furniture

Open: Mon-Fri 8-5

**Timber, Tools & Machinery
for D.I.Y • Carving
Woodturning • Furniture Projects**
shop@wlwest.co.uk

Off A272 Midhurst to Petworth road opp The Halfway Bridge Inn

www.wlwest.co.uk

TIMBERLINE

Suppliers of fine and rare timbers
Veneers and inlays
Tools and sundries
For the craftsman in wood

Unit 7, Munday Industrial Estate,
58-66 Morley Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1RP

Tel: 01732 355626 Fax: 01732 358214

email info@exotichardwoods.co.uk

www.exotichardwoods.co.uk

WOODCARVING MAGAZINE BINDERS

Keep your magazine collection in order with this stylish and durable binder

Holds two year's worth of issues

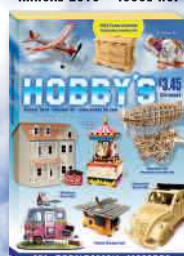
£8.99
(PLUS P+P)



Visit www.thegmcgroup.com
or call +44 (0) 1273 488005

HOBBY'S

ANNUAL 2019 - ISSUE NO. 49 - £3.45 P&P FREE



Our range includes Airfix, a full range of Crafts, Mould Making and Casting, a huge range of Tools, Boats and Ship models, Hobby books, Glues, Building Plans and a massive range of Model making supplies.

324 PAGES

Hobby's Knights Hill Square, London SE27 0HH.
Tel: 020 8761 4244 mail@hobby.uk.com
Visit: www.hobby.uk.com

THE MODELMAKER'S YEARBOOK

ISCA WOODCRAFTS

Suppliers of quality blanks, spindles and boards in native hardwoods and exotics. Also abrasives and finishes. We will cut to customers requirements. Visits to clubs welcome. Mail order available.

The Craft Units,
Tredegar House
Newport NP10 8TW
Mob: 07854 349045
www.iscawoodcrafts.co.uk
iscawoodcrafts@yahoo.co.uk

**For your passion
Woodcarving tools
made in Switzerland**

More than 600 high quality products
www.pfeiltools.com



pfeil

Advertising in the UK's only woodcarving magazine can ensure your message reaches your specific target audience throughout the year.

Contact Russell on

01273 402841 or russellh@thegmcgroup.com





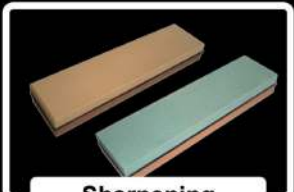
Ockenden Timber

SPECIALIST WOODTURNING & CARVING SUPPLIERS

Est. 1987



Ockenden Timber are leading retailers of specialist woodturning and carving supplies, offering an extensive range of products including tools, finishes, timber and machinery. Thousands of 1st grade timber blanks are in stock and available for delivery throughout the UK and Europe. All turning and carving blanks are produced to the highest standards and subject to individual quality checks.

			
Timber	Tools & Accessories	Machinery	Finishes
			
Sharpening	Adhesives	Safety Equipment	Abrasives

Visit our website for more information and to view our full range of products.

www.ockenden-timber.co.uk



MISSING A BACK ISSUE OF WOODCARVING?



Order back issues direct from us for only £5.25 in the UK
and £5.75 overseas (includes P+P).

CALL OUR SALES TEAM ON +44 (0) 1273 488005
OR VISIT WWW.THEGMCGROUP.COM/OFFER/WC-ISSUES

Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, India

This month we look at these ornate temple towers in Tamil Nadu



The Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple in Tamil Nadu, India is considered the most important of the 108 temples dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu. It is located on the island of Srirangam, which is bounded by the Cauvery and Kollidam rivers. Also known as Thirunaranga Tirupati, textual and architectural evidence dates the building of the original temple to the 1st century CE. It was then developed several times over the following centuries. The temple complex covers 156 acres and comprises seven enclosures, 50 shrines, 21 gopuras (towers) and 39 pavilions. The gopuras are a characteristic of Dravidian architecture, a

South Indian style of Hindu temple architecture. The gopuras at Sri Ranganathaswamy were built between the 12th and early 17th centuries, with the 13-tiered Rajagopuram tower added in 1987. The towers are decorated with ornate sculptures of Hindu gods and goddesses. Other remarkable carvings at the site include the 40 leaping animals in the Sesharayar Mandapam hall, depicting wild horses trampling on tigers. Also notable are the painted murals on the temple walls depicting morality tales involving Hindu deities. Sri Ranganathaswamy has been nominated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is currently on the tentative list.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SOMPOL SHUTTERSTOCK



Lettering & Decorative Woodcarving

A weekend course with
Gary Breeze



PHOTO: David Collins

Gift Vouchers
Available
Quote **WCM10**
to receive a
10% discount,
short courses

A practical approach to v-cutting lettering and decorative motifs into wood.
This course is led by award winning lettering sculptor Gary Breeze.

Gary Breeze is recognised as one of the leading craftspeople in his field. For over 25 years he has won numerous public commissions, from the lettering on the Princess of Wales' memorial to Richard III's tomb. Gary has a broad approach to design, tackling everything from coins for the Royal Mint to landscapes, and was awarded a second RHS Chelsea Flower Show Gold medal for his evocation of a medieval Broadland boatyard sponsored and built by students and staff of the IBTC in 2017.

www.ibtc.co.uk | courses@ibtc.co.uk | 01502 569663

Razertip® P80

...Powered to Fire Your Imagination...

Fine Pyrographic Tools & Portable Dust Collectors

**THE RESULT OF OVER 30 YEARS
OF EXPERIENCE AND LISTENING
TO CUSTOMER FEEDBACK**

- UNIVERSAL POWER SUPPLY WORKS
WORLDWIDE AND IS COMPLETELY
UNAFFECTED BY VOLTAGE FLUCTUATIONS.
- BETTER-THAN-EVER TIP HEAT RECOVERY
- COMPATIBLE WITH EXISTING RAZERTIP® PENS
AND ACCESSORIES
- CAN BE EASILY CONVERTED TO DOUBLE OR
TRIPLE UNIT WITH AVAILABLE EXPANSION
MODULES



razertip.com/P80.htm

NOW AVAILABLE



Razertip® Pyrographic Tools:

- Preferred by some of the world's best pyrographers
- World's finest, sharpest, most innovative burners
- Exceptional temperature control for delicate detail
- 10 Amp output for superb tip heat recovery
- Over 800 different tip profiles available
- Fixed-tip or interchangeable-tip pens and tips
- Unconditional warranties:
 - 3 year power supply
 - 1 year pen warranty includes fixed tips
 - 6 month warranty on re-tips
- World's only safety certified hot-wire burning tools
- Choose from regular or heavy-duty pens and cords
- Adapters and cords available to fit most other brands
- Systems starting at \$158.95 USD
- Dealers world-wide

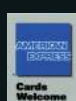
We've always re-tipped Razertip® pens.

We can also re-tip any other brand of hot-wire pen from \$8.00 postpaid (within North America).

Re-tips carry our exclusive 6 month unconditional warranty

- that's better than most new pen warranties! Call or email us for details.

"Wood Duck Decoy"
by Cam Merkle
Oil on Tupelo
Photo ©2016 Cam Merkle



Razertip Industries Inc.

- PO Box 910, 301- 9th Street North, Martensville, SK Canada S0K 2T0
- Phone 306-931-0889 • Toll-free order line 1-877-729-3787
- Email: info@razertip.com
- More information & free catalogue at razertip.com