

THE WOODCARVERS *Gazette*



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Summer 2014

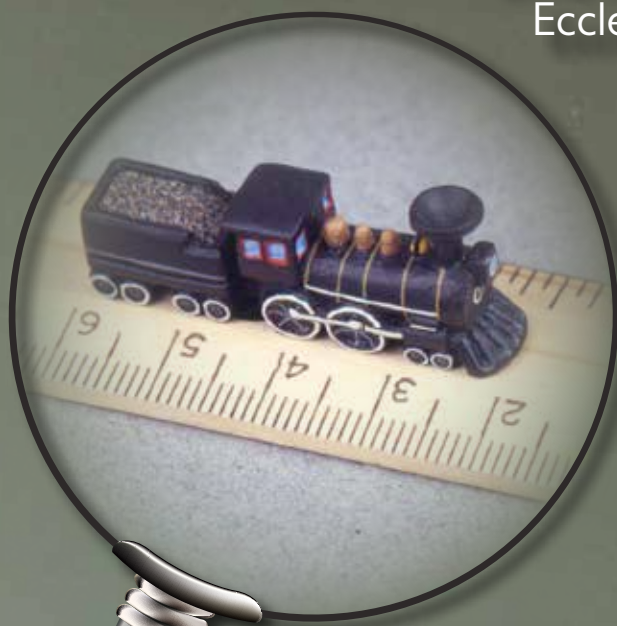


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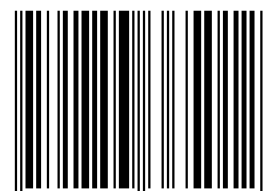


Choo Choo by Steve Tomashek

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NOTICES

New Membership Secretary

Dear Carvers,

I am John Tybjerg and would like to introduce myself as your new Membership Secretary. As I was the sole remaining volunteer Lyn McCracken, who had held the fort since November, and I met up in mid March and she passed me a couple of CDs and some boxes of paperwork. We decided that it would be good to take over soonest so that I could get myself organised in time for the June renewal. I have been carving for 18 years and for the last 5 have been the Regional Leader of the Hampshire Region. Professionally I spent 20 years as a Royal Navy Officer in the Fleet Air Arm followed by a similar period flying on a contract to provide training services to the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.



By now all the Regional Leaders will hopefully have received an updated Membership Application and Membership Renewal Form. The new forms are also available on the Website. Click the 'Join Us' Button on the Home page and you will be given the option of downloading an Initial Application Form or a Membership Renewal Form. As a Regional leader I am very aware that not all of our Members use the Website or Email and it is important to me that all the required facilities to access renewal forms and pay by posting me a Cheque are still available through the Gazette. One final point, my surname has a 'j' in the middle which I don't pronounce.

John Tybjerg

New Publicity Officer

Those of you who attended the A.G.M. will know that Paula Noble, our Publicity Officer, was wanting to stand down due to the time implications of her new job. At the end of the meeting, Dave Shires, who many of you will know as the ex Regional Leader of the Durham Region, kindly offered to take over the role. Dave has duly been co-opted onto the National Council, with our thanks and best wishes. Any publicity issues should now be referred to him.

We would like to give many thanks to Paula for the sterling work she has done whilst on the Council and wish her every success in her new job.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Summer 2014 issue of The Woodcarvers Gazette. I hope that you enjoy the issue and that there is something of interest to everyone.

gazette; the more the merrier.

The Autumn issue of The Woodcarvers Gazette should be published at the beginning of September.

As always, do let me have your feedback on anything that I have written or anything included within these pages. Your comments are always welcome and highly valued.

I'd like to make an open invitation to all members to submit any articles that you'd like to write for the



Jason Townsend

BWA Membership Renewal

Yes it is that time of the year again when £20 is due on 1st of June to renew your BWA Membership. Only renewals received by Monday 30th June will qualify for Capitation Payment (to your region), so please don't leave it too late. Renewal can be paid by:

Standing Order:

For those of you that already pay by Standing Order thank you very much, but please check that your Standing Order is set up to pay the BWA by the middle of June.

Note: The future of Standing Orders is under discussion so no new Mandates are being accepted at the moment. Hopefully we will have this sorted by next year.

Postal Renewal:

Please use the form included as an insert with this issue of the Gazette, or download and print a form from the website.

Through your Regional Leader:

Your Regional Leader may be willing to collect Renewal Payments. Check with them.

OUT & ABOUT



Green Man (in the middle), which had been carved with a chainsaw and had a suprising amount of depth compared with many green men.

By Sarah Lawrenson



I spotted the glorious door frame (above right), in the middle of London is Queen Anne's Gate, SW1. Quite an adornment to the exterior!

Below left is a huge snail which was beautifully carved and one of three around the grounds at Sizergh Castle in Kendal.

Jason spotted the Owl (top left) at Weird & Wonderful Wood, along with the



OBITUARIES

Harry Tams from Alsager, Cheshire, born on the 2nd July 1943, died peacefully surrounded by his loved ones on the 18th April 2014 at age 70 years. Harry was the dearly loved husband of Maighread Tams and the loving father of Tracy, Steven, Debbie and Nick and the treasured grandfather of Colette, Rebecca, Adam, Alex, Jess, Imogen, Ilaria and Mila.

Harry was always a handy man who took up wood carving when he retired from work at age 65. Harry's greatest achievement within woodcarving was a large pair of clasped hands which he carved for a special needs school in Duckingfield based on the schools emblem.

An article covering this achievement was published in the last issue of The Woodcarvers Gazette. Harry was thrilled when he found out that the article was to be published and acknowledged it



'Helping Hands'

as one of his proudest moments. Harry will always be fondly remembered and sadly missed by all family and friends.

By Rebecca Ward-Thomas

The Cala Lily

This is my recently finished carving of a hand holding a cala lily. The technique I used was to photograph my own arm and hand from a variety of positions, then printed them off to a reasonable size and used them not only as templates but also as a guide while I carved. As yet I haven't come across a useful book on the subject so I went it alone. The carving is 350mm high with the lily which was carved separately.

By Jim MacMorran



Missing Member!

Having trawled through Records old and new I still cannot trace one person who is sending us Money. Can anybody help me with details of the following person?

* J Thompson * Has been paying £15 by Standing Order every January since 2007 and possibly earlier. I cannot correct the payment or send him Gazettes etc. as I have no address or telephone number. Note this is not John Thompson Member No. 2494 from Essex.

Please contact me, John Tybjerg on 01425 470906 or membership@britishwoodcarversassociation.co.uk with any information

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An Interview with Steve Tomashek

Steve is the author of the book ***Tiny whittling***, available from all good book shops and online. An American, he now resides in Germany where he carves miniatures and paints them in a bright and perhaps psychedelic way that makes them stand out from the work of other carvers.

What is your favourite wood to carve?

It depends on the scale and amount of detail I wish to achieve whether I will use a softer or harder wood. For simple, quick carvings I've found nothing better than Basswood from my home state of Minnesota. For tiny detailed carvings I like to use Greek Boxwood or Pear. I purchased a lifetime supply of the Boxwood from a Greek woodcarver and so have no need to look for other woods. I've received gifts of wood and ivory that I sometimes experiment with. I also like pear, and since I am now living in a region of Brandenburg that is thick with pear trees, I will probably be using more of this wood in the future. Earlier this year I tested a new carving material invented in Germany, made from potato starch; its potential has yet to be fully explored. Fast carving and strong, it binds with water, making it a great material for beginners and just plain fun for skilled carvers.

Did it take you long to develop your style, or have you always carved with a particular style?

The style of my work has evolved over time but emerged after a few years of committed practice. I carved as a kid which gave me the confidence later that I could carve. Beginning in college, on my way to earning a teaching degree and as part of my interest in World

History, I started carving and researching carving traditions, focusing on animal sculpture, then animistic art in general. For several years I religiously doodled, daily spending an hour or two drawing cartoonish animal forms and absorbing material from the day's observations or studies. From this practice, I turned to wood and eventually refined my distinct style of work.

Your painting is very interesting, were you a painter before a carver?

The only art class I took in college was called "Self-Instruction in Art" and I went for its fifteen lessons in fifteen weeks to give me a schedule to test my discipline for producing art on a regular basis. I did a few small paintings containing cartoonish figures at this time and later I committed myself to carving. I quickly realized that carving would allow me to practice both sculpture and painting at the same time and since I was most interested in miniatures, I could save money on material, tools and space. I was interested in learning and liked the idea that I might combine the two art forms in a new way.

Why do you choose to carve miniatures?

I have always been interested in models



Capuchin

and miniatures but at first it was merely the economy of it that was important. I did not have the money to invest in tools, material or space to store it all: with miniatures everything fit in a cigar box. As a student of pedagogy, I soon realized that the quick studies I could produce were helping me learn skills fast. Later, what Levi-Strauss called the "intrinsic aesthetic quality" of the miniature came into more focus for me and has continued to fuel my interest in this scale.



Blue Mice



Kiwi and Kiwi



Dragon and Match

Did you learn carving from anyone in particular?

My dad carved some decoys when I was a kid and I often made smaller versions from what he'd cut out for me. When I came to carving in college a co-worker encouraged me with information and material but most of what I know is by self-taught observation. I never took a course from a master. I learned by trial and error.

Do you remember the first thing that you carved or whittled?

As a kid I carved a lot of ducks and songbirds. I scratch built several WW2 airplanes as well but I don't know what I carved first. Much of my early work was destroyed when my family house burned to the ground while I was attending college. I sold some of my carvings as a kid at outdoor art festivals in Minnesota and gave some to my grandma for birthdays and Christmas. The earliest carvings I still have are of a Canada goose

and a tiny tree full of birds from when I was 16 years old. I had given them to my grandma and got them back when she passed away.



Gumdrops

How do you choose a subject for a carving?

I get a lot of commission work and on a regular basis I make simple inch long birds in small batches. When I have time to make something on speculation I like to use a process: Doodling exercises, automatic drawing and taking walks usually produce a wealth of ideas. The



Bird Beads



Emperor Penguins

hard part is deciding which one to pursue.

Do you have a favourite carving knife?

I like the knives of David Lyons in the US. I usually use a Murphy bladed (straight blade 1-1/2 inch) knife and a detail (3/4 inch) knife. I have an accumulation of other carving tools I've purchased used or gotten as gifts including a prized, motley collection of gouges, knives and handmade doodads from the wife of a deceased hobby carver from the former DDR.

Where do you do most of your carving?

I carve outside when it's warm. Since moving into a new place I've used the kitchen table and I have a workbench set up in the bedroom for painting until we can build an art studio in the back yard. In the past I've carved in coffee shops and parks, basements and closets and living rooms. I do a lot of carving at art festivals: if it's a slow day, I still get some work done and people like to see how things are made.



Busy Beaver

If you had one piece of advice for a budding carver, what would it be?

Learn how to sharpen your knife and keep it sharp.

To find out more about Steve and his work, please take a look at his website www.ministeve.com

By The Editor

Photographs by Glenn Gordon and Steve Tomashek



BWA WWI REMEMBRANCE PROJECT

It has been suggested that after exhibiting the carvings, we could auction them off for the Help for Heroes charity or perhaps the Royal British Legion.

Any comments or suggestions are welcome, just send an email the editor.

The WWI Remembrance Project is going well, with several carvings contributed so far. A selection is shown on the right. I am really pleased that members have been happy to contribute to this project. I would like to make a plea to all other members out there to have a go at submitting a carving if you haven't already. It doesn't have to be a complex carving or a perfect carving, all are welcome.

The plan at the moment is to try and exhibit the carvings at Imperial War Museums and other similar venues later in the year, with the possibility of members of the public voting for their favourite carving.

I would love to get a couple of hundred carvings for the project to make it a significant national work.

Here is a reminder of the details:

- Use any kind of wood
- The carving blank must measure 100mm x 100mm x 10mm, this is so that it is inexpensive to post to me to put the project together.
- Once completed, post your carving, to me 'Jason Townsend, 66 Wisbech Rd, March, Cambs, PE15 8EF'
- Submit as many as you like

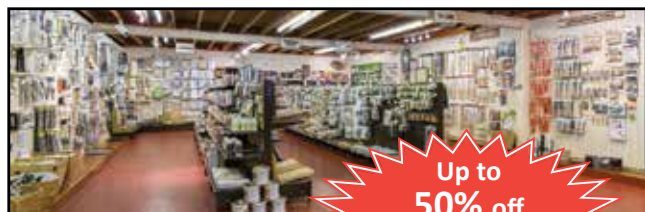
The deadline for carvings to be submitted is 20th August 2014.



By The Editor



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The South East WOODWORKING & POWER TOOL Show



Kent County Showground, Maidstone
7th & 8th March 2014

This is the third year that we have been asked to represent the BWA at this event, and we had a very busy and I hope productive time.

We had seven members carving on each of the two days. Made up of members from both the Hamlet Wood Maidstone and Kent Wormshill Regions. With a good display of our work on show.

Perhaps I should explain that we are based just a few miles apart, but we meet on 30 Thursdays a year, while Kent meet on the 3rd Sunday of most months. Some BWA members attend both.

I am not sure just how much carving got done, as we seemed to spend a lot of time talking to the visitors. But that was the whole idea of being there!

We had a lot of interest in the BWA and gave out a lot of membership forms and back numbers of The Gazette.



Everyone hard at work



Time for lunch

It was a long and tiring two days, but great fun and well worth the effort. We are already making plans for next year.



Carvings on display



A momentary break in activity

One or two members of the public wanted to buy some of the carvings, but we explained that they were not for sale, and that we are really only hobby carvers not professionals, and that some of the pieces had taken many months to complete.

Lots when asked, "what do you do in wood" replied that they did wood turning, and could not possibly carve, as they did not think that they could possibly do anything like that !! We suggested that they should have a go, try carving something simple out of a bar of soap, and then go on to wood from there.

A lot of people were interested in joining the BWA and our groups. One lady, was so keen that she has joined the BWA and turned up at Hamlet Wood this week !!! We gave out an open invitation to any interested potential members to visit one of our meetings and have a Coffee or Tea with us, just to get a taster. A number of visitors from Orpington and Essex Regions looked us out, and exchanged lots of ideas.

One couple had come over from Belgium especially for the show, they carved at home and were very interested. We also met a number of carvers from Sussex who took away BWA forms and could well start up their own Region.



Carvings on display

By Mick Mills

Living Crafts

Art, Design & Innovation



Stan with visitors

Living Crafts is 40 years old!

Within the grand grounds of Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, this fabulous show of arts and crafts from all around the country was as impressive as ever. To celebrate their 40th Anniversary, special guest Monty Don came to visit too and each stall was given a commemorative mug. I would've been about 8 years old when my father lifted me up above the crowds to watch Ralph Hentall whittling love spoons here and 40 years on, here I was again with the BWA Herts region teach right next door to Ralph's stall. Where does the time go!



What a carving talent - and only 3 years old!

Blustery outside! Warm and welcoming inside as we shared our end of the marquee with our friends from BWA Essex – always a treat to catch up with them. We supported each other in answering the flood of questions from visitors of all ages about techniques used and we heard lots of admiring comments on the workmanship of carvings. We enjoyed reunions from our regulars who come to see us every year to view new

additions to our collections.

We took some commissions and hopefully our new friends Nina and Beverley will join the BWA Luton group after being thrilled to learn they live around the corner from their meeting place.



Michelle with Orlov - trimming claws!

Dave, as generous as ever, allowed novices to chip away at his fairy scene for them to get a feel for what is involved with our hobby. Martin made us laugh with his whimsical carved feet. Michelle brought Orlov the meerkat along to do some work on his claws. He's got such a personality and has become a much loved member of her family, with Lily, Michelle's gorgeous granddaughter being his best fan. John was inspired by the Chinese brush painting lady who used her watery paints to add colour to his wooden caricatures to great effect. The grain could be clearly seen through the colour bringing them to life even more. John was working in Yew, carving a chimpanzee head from a greeting card design. The challenge will be to get the

facial expression right as John will be carving with an exclamation from the chimp of "Not another tea party!" in mind.



Jeanne with her bear

Hugh was carving a lady. Jeanne gave me advice on how to repair the nose of my maiden. Dave showed me his lady being carved in a padawk, an intense fiery orange-red colour. The Herts region was inundated with children wanting to try soap carving. We experimented on them too! Imperial Leather soap carved beautifully, but a little costly. Pears soap had an alluring clear window look about it, but proved too sticky to work with.



Bert's 'Mr and Mrs'!



Stan's gift from Ralph Hental

Cheap, cheerful and pliable, we gave a thumbs-up to Shield soap which could be shaved easily and safely with clay modelling tools. It was clear which little ones would go on to be great carvers one day – the best listener being a three-year-old! Many people were so impressed with the idea of soap carving that they vowed to take it back to their own community groups to try.



Mick, inspired by a sculpture in another medium

I was so pleased to finally catch up with Colin Bell from BWA Herts – Luton Group. Since he retired and for over 12 years, Colin has been making the most amazing range of walking sticks in stunning wood, using his skill in carving to design the wide variety of handles. Using deciduous trees and shrubs which season successfully, Colin favours fruit trees, ash, hazel, holly, and buddleia with blackthorn being used for an ultimate stick! Colin usually leaves the bark on, but holly sheds bark when it seasons because it shrinks so much. Woods imported for handles include zebrano,

padawak, rapula lacewood and myrtle burr. Look out for Colin at Woodworks in Marston Moretaine, Luton Hoo – Apple and Pumpkin Fair, Ashridge and Mentmore. Colin's claim to fame was selling three sticks to the Duke of Bedford who quoted: "A gentleman can never have too many nice sticks!" Why not commission one uniquely made just for you?



Colin Bell with his walking sticks

Gift giving was very much a theme this year too with Lynn giving her soap-carved elephant to her friend Eve, John giving away his carved Father Christmas decorations to young children who were thrilled to bits to be able to keep them. Ralph Hentall gave Stan a spoon he carved from the discarded wharf timbers near to an excavated Roman site, made from the design of a traditional Saxon spoon.



Dave sharing tips

As you can see from the photos a great time was had by all and we can't wait to get together again next year.

By Paula Noble



An Interview with Randall Rosenthal

Randall is a painter/sculptor/carver whose life-like creations are exhibited across New York. He is a master artist and his works are a real labour of love.



When did you start carving?

I started painting as a child and continued through college, BFA Carnegie-Mellon University, and into my early forties. In the mid nineteen eighties I started working as an architectural designer and model maker for the architect Norman

Jaffe. Eventually Mr. Jaffe asked me to carve two twenty-foot long friezes on the wall of a house in Southampton. This commission led to a decade of large architectural carvings. One project was for an Ambo (lectern) for a church in Seattle, Washington. An open book was carved as the bible rest. I was so intrigued by this object that I began carving open books. Then I started painting the pages.

Was woodworking in your family or is it something that you got into on your own?

I started as a carpenter and no one else in my family carved. My father owned a jewelry company.



Wonder Woman

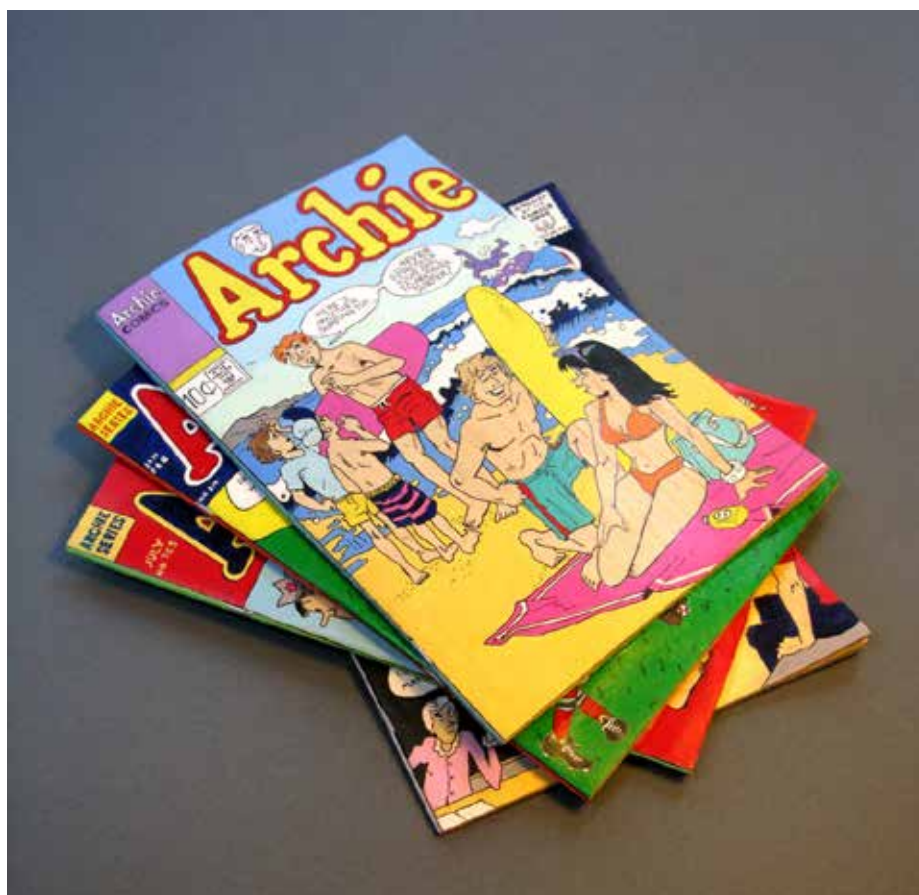
Do you consider yourself primarily a woodcarver or sculptor or something else?

I consider myself a sculptor.

You seem to have a passion for carving imitations of everyday objects, how did that come about?

In 2004 I was offered a show at Guild Hall Museum in East Hampton, New York. Working toward the show I switched from mahogany, which I had used for my architectural sculpture, to pine. The pine was transformational as the new work was no longer obvious sculptures of books carved from wood but objects that jumped from seeming reality to sculpture depending on the viewer's distance from them. The paint and ink sat on the pine much as it would on paper. Eventually the scope of the work expanded from books to any paper object, such as charts, cards and even money.

What is the carving that you are most proud of and why?



Archie



Duke Snyder



Canada Hush Money

I like the large box of money carvings as they are the most challenging.

What is your favourite wood to work?

I work mostly with Vermont white pine because i like the way paint sits on it. i'm doing a large box out of bass wood at the moment however.

Would you like to see more carvers take up painting their carvings?

As to painting carving....i was a painter first so its no accident i found a way to combine the two.

Do you have any anecdotes about any of your carvings?

Watching people when they realize what they are looking at is wood can be pretty amusing.



Cuban Cigar Box

If you could only do one, would you carve or paint?

What i do is ALL about being able to carve AND paint. i really enjoy the fact that they are opposite disciplines. With the carving its totally reductive. with the painting i can add paint 'till i'm happy.

For more information on Randall and to see more of his work, please visit his website www.randallrosenthal.com or visit this gallery www.bernarduccimeisel.com/artist/index.php?aid=64

By The Editor



Observer

WEIRD & WONDERFUL WOOD

@ Haughley Park
17th & 18th May

This year's Weird and Wonderful Wood at Haughley Park in Suffolk was blessed with even better weather than last year. I managed to visit the event on the Sunday and it seemed incredibly popular with a queue to get in stretching nearly a mile up the road.

There were many many stalls as usual, selling all many of wooden products. There were many woodcarvers and wood sculptors showing their wares.

I don't think that any of them were members of the BWA except for Gerald Adams who had a small podium where he was demonstrating. It was good to catch up with him and reflect on the event.



The crowds start to gather

There were plenty of Bodgers and Willow workers on site, both demonstrating their crafts and selling some interesting items. There was plenty of exotic-looking furniture for sale although I couldn't afford any, which is a shame. The variety of items on offer shows a real sense of creativity in the field and shows what a wealth of talent there is out there.

The atmosphere was very friendly and family orientated.

There was plenty to entertain the crowds, ranging from the small music stage to some green men, to some jugglers and the like. There were plenty of activities that children could get involved in and they looked like they were all having a whale of a time. There was even the opportunity for them to make their own walking stick/staff.

Haughley Park offers such beautiful surroundings for the event, with wonderful open parkland where sheep graze and wonderful gardens around the house and event. I particularly like the Holly hedging which is as tall in places as I have ever seen Holly grow.

Sadly, there seemed to be fewer veteran



Gerald at his podium

trees in the landscape than last year due to the storms we had during the winter. It might just be my imagination of course but I'm sure I noticed more big trees last year.



One of many expertly carved Green Men





Some of the fantastic sculptures around the event



There were lots of carvers showing their creations



The setting for the festival couldn't be better



The Bodging apparatus



A chainsaw-carved Dragon's Head



This guy must way a ton!

I had a great time at this event and I recommend going next year to anyone who likes woodcraft and a fun day out. The site is located in one of my favourite areas of countryside, that being South Suffolk. It is easily accessible by road or you can get a taxi to site from Stowmarket

train station. I did the later myself and decided to walk back into Stowmarket as it was such lovely weather.

By The Editor

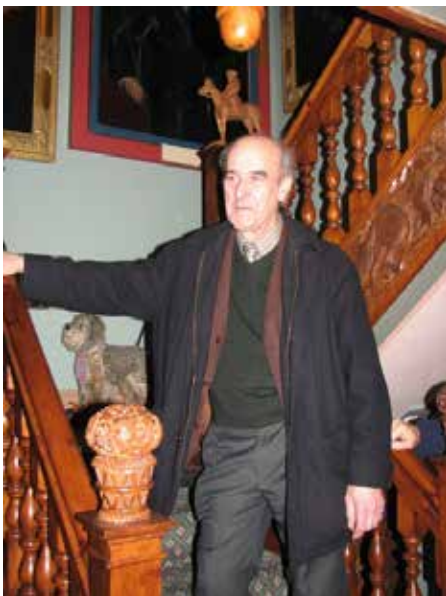


Clive's House Extraordinaire

The article in the last issue of The Woodcarvers Gazette titled Out & About set me thinking. I am lucky enough to know a fellow woodcarver who has over the years completed something that I believe a number of us would love to do. His name is Clive and he lives on his own in Northamptonshire; he is a sign writer by profession, a local councillor and has a keen interest in his local history. He is a long serving woodcarver with the Rockingham Forest Carvers. With his ok, let me take you inside his house to give you a brief insight into what he has been up to.



Clive our sign writer, councillor and historian producing yet more carvings for his absolutely extraordinary house shown below



The Staircase



Great grandfather (Boer War)



Shields, hand painted

The only current down side is that Clive has recently sold this house, with most of the carvings insitu, and moved elsewhere to a smaller property. But has he stopped, no, he is currently setting too and is busy carving his innovative ideas for the new house. How many of you out there would like to follow his example? No doubt several but if my situation is anything to go by your 'management' may have other ideas!

By Mick Stidever



Antique Tools

The recent article in Wood Carving Magazine about Paula Noble and her carving, featured a couple of her treasured tools. She received the following message from Larry Agan in the US, who has some similar tools:



Paula's tools

I saw Paula's write-up in Wood Carving Magazine. Very good and interesting. I think that stories like yours keeps an interest on what we do. Another thing that drew my attention was the antique tool that you use with the letter k on the handle and you said that the brand name was Herring Brothers. This could be interesting, I'm in the Colorado wood carvers club and i bought a set from one of our members who had fifty-two of these antique tools with the brand name on; some that said herring brothers, some that said C. Maiers co., some that said b. J. Addis and some of Buck Bros. Most of them are still in good shape; some of the Handles are round and some hexagon style and have not been cleaned up which is the way the old tools should be. There is too much history on them to take that away.

Here is what got my attention: they have the letter k on the handles just like the picture of yours in the magazine! The story I got from the man I got them from was that he bought them from a sculptor who has now passed away, who in turn got them from a man from England and they belonged to his father. Could the tool that you have belong to the same woodcarver as the tools that i have? The letter k is the same style - such a small world nowadays! Don't ask me why i bought them but I could not stand to see them split up. They also have two homemade cloth tool rolls that go with them, which a lady said be washed and i said no that would ruin them. I paid four hundred dollars for them and i would sell them for the same amount plus postage if you know of anyone who would be

interested in them. The way i think is that they should go back to England where they came from. I wish I knew more of the history about them but that is all I got but that letter k on your tool really got my attention.

If you fancy purchasing the tools of have some information on the 'k' who owned the tools, please get in touch with Paula.

It all makes me think what a good idea it would be to try and put together an online database of carver's marks where people can add information to marks they recognise.

By The Editor

BWA Essex

Our themed carving for 2013 was a roaring success. The picture shows various fruits carved by members, residing in the huge bowl carved by Dave Colvin.



Beryl Wallace has recently transferred from the Rockingahm Forest region and shows off her ornathological expertise with this carving in Lime.



Below is a recently completed relief by Charlie Godber in Lime



This is an interesting creation from Ted Jeffrey; according to my count there are at least 29 different woods used. I believe it is called a cross of crosslets. It all swivels and comes apart (no glue), as long as you know which bit to remove first.



By Ken Veal



An Interview with Terry Widner

How did you get into carving?

I believe it was just sort of a natural progression. Somewhere in my early twenties I started making a couple of items from wood. I remember making a small box with a 'secret' drawer from 'hobby lumber'. I had seen some small pieces carved or whittled and thought I would like to give it a try.

Do you remember the first thing that you carved or whittled?

I had to look through my old photos to narrow this one down. The oldest carving I could find was actually a duck decoy (teal). It was maybe two-thirds actual size and was created from a glued up block of approximately 12,000 burnt matchsticks. My foster dad had a nice decoy collection and I wanted to make the duck to add to his collection. After gluing up the matchsticks and carving the shape, I used some round, black onyx cabochons for the eyes.

Do you prefer to work green wood or seasoned wood?

It somewhat depends on the wood. I am primarily a power carver and sometimes the green wood just clogs up the burs every few seconds, making the work slow and frustrating. Other green wood seems to work just fine, creating very little load on the burs. Working green wood that does not load can be quite rewarding. There is a certain 'life' or vibrancy that comes with the green wood... and the dust seems to be less fine. Seasoned wood seems to offer a clearer picture of how the finished piece will look in colour

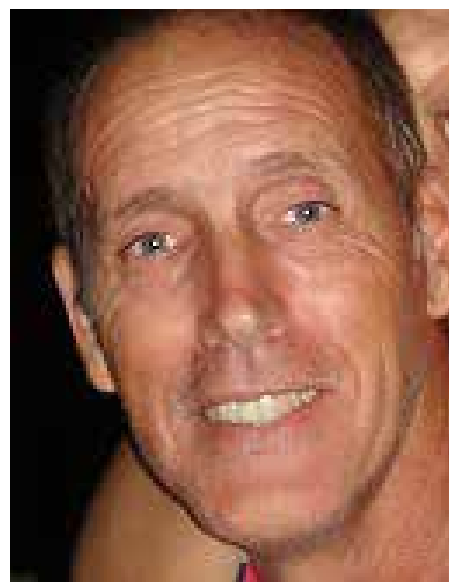
and in grain. Of course, sometimes the wood can be quite hard and a bit slow to carve, but mostly the process is a bit more predictable. For the more sculptural pieces there is less concern with wood movement (checking).

The most difficult for me to carve are the woods that are seasoned but are still sappy. I have a piece of 'strike pine' sitting unfinished on the bench because it is so dang hard (gives off sparks during the carving process) and is full of gummy sap that requires work to remove it from the teeth of the bur every minute or two. I'm optimistically hoping that I will have that piece completed sometime before I croak.

What is your favourite wood to work?

Lilac, I think. It is a finely grained wood that is a pleasure to work. Carving is reasonably easy and all you have to do is merely threaten it with a piece of sandpaper and it takes on a finish smoother than a baby's bottom. It seems to be hard to come by though... but I always keep an eye out for it. A couple of other woods that are favourites and don't get too much recognition are Serviceberry wood and Surinam cherry.

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), also known as Shadbowl, is a dream of a wood. Works a lot like cherry but somehow a bit more agreeable. The wood can range from a pinkish white to a very mellow, warm brown colour and there are darker 'flecks' all through the wood. Working



Decoy carved from burnt matchsticks

this wood leaves nothing to complain about (other than availability).

The Surinam cherry (*Eugenia uniflora*), also known as Florida cherry is really not a cherry at all. The small fruit are actually shaped like little red pumpkins hanging on the large shrub / small tree. Who would think that this common (around here) plant would have such a fine grained wood inside. It is a fairly hard wood to carve and the sanding process is a little more labour intensive, but the wood emerges with a hard and silky smooth finish.... and the grain is tight and provides great visual interest.

What do you think the enduring fascination of carving the spoon is?

Wow! That is a good question. For me, I



Ladder Ladle



Ribbonoir



Fowl Play

think it is several things. I see the spoon as a small canvas which can be carved and adorned in countless variations. Since it is small, each piece can be completed in a reasonably short time... so, there is no way for boredom to creep in.

The wood itself influences each spoon because of the wood grain, colour, texture, etc. You can carve 10 spoons from one branch (or board) and you will end up with 10 totally unique pieces. I sometimes try to impose a design upon the wood, but the wood always has a dominating effect on the finished spoon.

During the carving process the wood constantly reveals choices to be made that affect the final design. A small knot appears and it can be given prominence or it might be cut away... but in either case that 'dialogue' with the wood is really what is shaping the work. And that is the aspect of spoon carving that is just totally captivating to me. That 'not knowing' where the piece is going..... until it gets there!

Where do you do most of your carving?

A few years back (and in a moment of apparent weakness), I somehow allowed my wife to convince me that it was a good idea to buy a condo instead of a house. So now I drive 20 minutes to a rental bay situated along a busy and noisy road in an industrial area. My neighbours are cabinet makers, granite fabricators and locksmiths. The noise took a bit of getting used to but I have mostly adjusted. I say 'mostly' because when the

lunch truck makes his round, the driver faithfully blares his horn just as he passes by my bay. I do my carving just inside the open door (for daylight) and there have been times when making a delicate cut with the razor knife turns into me saying things I really should not.

Where do you draw your inspiration?

It was the spoon work of Norm Sartorius that initially inspired me to focus on spoons. Inspiration for my spoon and other work comes from all quarters. I suspect nature is the most dominant source... and I mean that in a couple of ways. First, just spending time in the forest (for rest) or a garden just simply inspires me in life.

My spoon work is directly inspired by pods, dried leaves, limb scars, critters, etc. Also, the wood itself is very inspiring.... I call it "wood appreciation". When I am not sure how to start carving



Tyto the Owl Girl

on a piece of wood, I take a pencil and draw lines around the most interesting grain patterns. Connecting the 'circled' areas yields a spoon design that I otherwise would not have conceived. Wood with small burl patterns work really well with this approach.

Another endless source for inspiration comes from words and phrases... especially 'visual puns'. The wooden spoon just seems a perfect way to express humour.

Do you enjoy carving items other than spoons?

Yes, I do take occasional departures from my spoon work, and usually have a carving or two going on in the background.

Recently I completed a 5 foot-carving of a nude female. I had this 5' long 4" x 4" post of Cumala sitting around and had plans to cut it up for coffee table legs. Cumala looks a lot like mahogany to me and so one day I decided to set about



Balancing Act

carving this tip-toeing girl with her hands on her hips. Cumala might look like mahogany but it carves nothing like it

It was not until I got the figure mostly complete that I remembered I don't know how to carve a girl's face. Every attempt thus far had ended up looking a lot like Geronimo. I had been looking at owls on the internet and so I decided to make her an 'owl girl' instead. That was a sort of 'Pee Wee Herman' moment... "I meant to do that".

Has your fondness for trees influenced your appreciation of wood?

Oh yeah, absolutely. I grew up in an orphanage that was also a working farm. The fields were surrounded by patches of woods and this is where I spent a lot of my time. There was this one maple tree growing along a fence row and the closely spaced branches whorled all the way around and up to the top. I could see the whole farm with a 15 second sprint.

When I went off to college I wanted to study Forestry, but at the time that program was overfilled. I ended up majoring in Ornamental Horticulture



Charlie Brown

instead and worked as a landscape designer for about 20 years. During that time I became fond of... and promoted trees that were lesser known in my area. Trees like the Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*), Fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*), Black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*).

What is your favourite carving to date?

I think my favourite spoon carving might be the 'Ladder Ladle'... mostly because it just sort of 'fell out of the wood', meaning that the whole process went smoothly. I remember being excited by the figure in the bowl... and even the borer holes in the bark seemed right for this spoon. Well, that it sold the first day might also have had an endearing effect.



Tendril

For more information on Terry and to see more of his work, please visit his website www.spoontaneous.com

By The Editor

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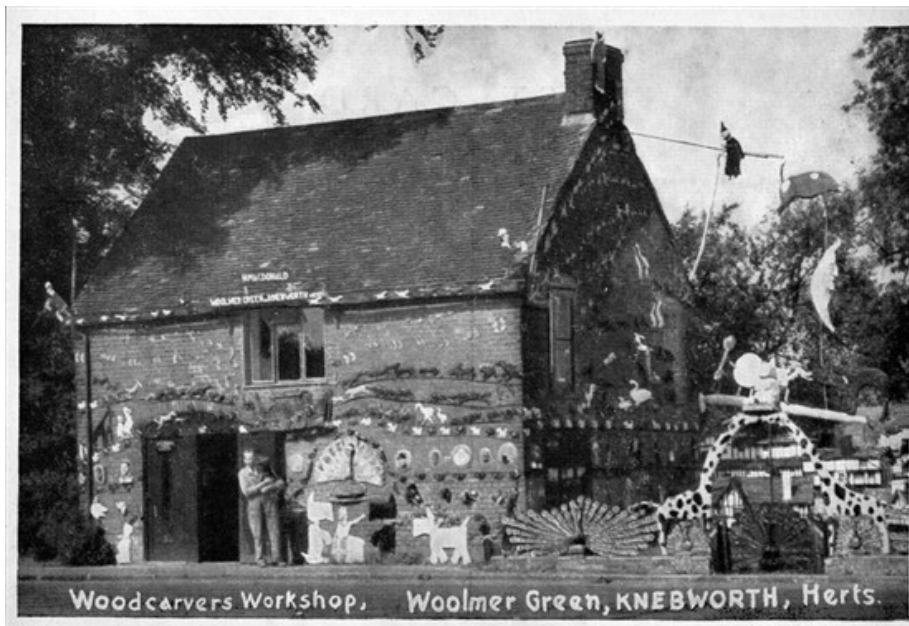
Our Berkshire and Mid Thames group took part in an art exhibition over the May bank holiday weekend in Twyford, Berks, as part of the Henley Arts Trail.

A variety of our work was on display and some sales and interest in our group resulted.

By Roger Edwards



Harry Macdonald & The Woodcarver's Workshop



Harry Macdonald was brought up in Harewood near Leeds. After his father's death in 1937 he moved down to Hertfordshire and set up his woodcarving business in a barn at the junction of New Road and the Great North Road in Woolmer Green. Initially he produced rustic garden furniture but business was rather sporadic.

To attract new business Harry carved the giant figure of a policeman who stood holding up a hand to the passing traffic, encouraging passers by to stop and look at his business. This initial carving led to many more and several commissions including one from the Hertfordshire

Society in the form of a carved trophy for the best-kept village sign. The side of Harry's cottage was eventually covered with his carvings and became a local landmark. The garden too was full of Harry's carvings and home to one of the first model villages in the country.

The woodcarver's cottage became so well known that it attracted the attention of several press agents and was the subject of newspaper and periodical articles and a number of short films. By the end of his life the woodcarver's cottage was internationally famous. As a result during the Second World War a number of American and Australian



servicemen visited his cottage and said they recognized it from films and magazines they had seen. Follow the links below to see some of the surviving footage from British Pathe news reels.

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/wood-carver-1>

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/wood-carver>

By Paula Noble

AGM 2014

This year's AGM was held in sunny Shropshire, at the local school in the village of Pontesbury. The event was a huge success with over 60 members attending from 14 different regions. The event was very well planned, organised and run in delightful surroundings.

The classes proved popular and so did the evening walk through the hills along the Stiperstones ridge, which 12 members joined. The competition to carve a chess piece that would fit on a standard chess board was successful and the winning piece is shown on the right.

Janet and I attended the BWA AGM hosted this year by the Shropshire Region at Mary Webb School, Pontesbury, near Shrewsbury. It was a lovely sunny day, so there were no complaints about having to go outside between buildings for the various events.

The day commenced with the arrivals, coffee, time to chat and meet a few new carving enthusiasts, and a chance to admire a good selection of carvings presented by

various members. There was a vote for the favourite piece, and a competition for a chess piece, some of which were non-traditional and included an Elvis for a king and a meerkat with a coronet as a castle!

We then had a talk by Murray McBride about carving antlers, which turned out to be carvings on antler material. Different types of antler and their suitability for carving was explained. This was extremely interesting, as completely different techniques are employed to wood carving. Antler material can be polished, and is very suitable for jewelry as was shown by the many beautiful pieces displayed.

We then had a lovely buffet lunch and prepared ourselves for the AGM itself, which was ably chaired by Mark Davis and completed within the allotted hour. Some 60 plus members representing most areas of the country were in attendance.

The day continued with three workshops, spoon carving, lettering and chip carving, all of which were well attended and hopefully gave participants a spur to try



Winner of the Chess piece competition: Bishop based on the Lewis island collection - carved by Steve Worral of Shropshire

something new - it certainly has with Janet and me.

After the AGM some 30 of us drove to the Stiperstones Inn, where a number went for a walk whilst the rest of us propped up the bar.

We then all dined and, of course, continued to talk about everything under



Speaker Murray McBride talks about antler carving



The welcoming committee



David Brown advising Heather and Jan on chip carving a clock face



Carvings on display

the sun. We left a good number still at the pub (at least two were lodging there for the night), and went back to our hotel after an exhausting, but very pleasant day.

Thank you to the Shropshire region for hosting and organising the event.

By Alan Robinson



Murray Taylor's Letter carving with knives workshop



Murray Taylor's lettering with a knife class



Winner of 'the piece that people would want to take home' was 'otter and fish' by Michael Lane from Leicestershire, carved from 4000 year old bog pine



Murray McBride



Some of the troops who took to the Stiperstones ridge

On a lighter note David Shires and his colleague from Durham, Vince, brought with them a huge replica of a gorilla, named Coco, and planted it right in front of the Chairmans chair at the two meetings! It was a hoot!! During the AGM I put my spoon hat on Coco's head and said jokingly at the item of election of officers that Coco was up for the chairman's job next year!



By Mark Davis



Ecclesiastical carvings in Germany

If you have a map of Germany look for Wurzburg about the middle, this was badly damaged during WWII. The cathedral has been rebuilt, well worth a visit! Go south to Augsburg, then in between is the Romantische Strasse. There are many lovely interesting towns, some with fortifications, Dinkelsbühl, Nordlingen, Donauwörth, which leads on to Füssen and Oberammergau, every ten years the locals put on a passion play.

But Wood Carvers should stop at Creglingen which is 7 kilometres north of Rothenburg. The stories told of a wafer (RC bread) being found while ploughing, with oxen and wooden ploughs. The church was built on the site and a carving by Tilman Reimenscheider of Mary in Ascension, a beautiful carving, a small pair of bins will help, sit in the pew and study this amazing piece of work. Either side are two good reliefs in colour. There are choirs from all over Europe who make the pilgrimage to sing there. I have poster on my door of Herrgottskirche.

Just down the road is Rothenburg ob der Tauber which is a walled town with much of it still intact, which is good and interesting. St. Jakobs church is rather non-descript from the outside, do please ask it really is worth a visit. The altar of the Holy Blood was a place of pilgrimage in medieval times from all over Europe, which made it very wealthy, there

was a phial of Christ's blood on the altar.

There is a large carved and painted Triptych where the altar is, some stone medieval sculptures and some good carved reliefs. Just up the stairs, the opposite end, the altar of the Holy Blood is something to behold. Some forty or more feet high with fretwork and angels and other carvings, but the centre piece is the 'last supper' in lime, with all the apostles and Jesus, but what caused a furore at the time was Judas with his bag of money, centre stage. The hands, faces, hair create another great display piece by a 15th cent. carver namely Tilman Reimenscheider.



All over Europe wood and stone sculpture can be seen and enjoyed and of course the nearer to home and wonder at the skill of these artisans, no electricity, just the skill with the chisels and the BWA doing its part to promote this age old craft

By Ken Willoughby

Lime Reliefs of St. Andrews, Halstead

In St. Andrews church in Halstead are some very nice Lime relief carvings adorning the pillars and the altar. I'm more used to seeing simple carvings and screen of Oak in English churches, so these were an interesting surprise. The group

of thirteen carvings 'The stations of the cross', were carved by Jonathan Fernhead, of Essex in 2001.

By The Editor



Simple Carving

Letter Openers from Kindling

Winter may not be upon us and the days are long but here is a project for those shorter winter nights. With fuel prices continuing to rise, more of us are returning to wood-burning fires and stoves. I can think of worse ways to spend my time than sitting around a warm fireplace of a winter's evening, whittling something useful.



Carving in front of the fire

Letters and cards sent through the postal service are something that we all have to deal with. A useful item for opening these packages is a trusty letter opener, particularly if you get lots of mail. Letter openers make great heirloom items or Christmas gifts and don't take that long to make.

Carving found wood and reclaimed or waste wood is a great way of creating something new and purposeful from what would otherwise be discarded. An example of wood that is either waste or reclaimed is that of your average bag of kindling. The small pieces of wood that are used for kindling are ideal for carving.

I have started by purchasing an average bag of kindling that looked as though it had some interesting pieces of wood in it. I paid £4.99 for my bag of kindling from our local garage. In my opinion this was a bit steep and you ought to be able to get a better deal if you look around. Though you don't have to use kindling of course; you can make use of any waste or reclaimed wood.

Opening my bag of kindling, I found some fifty or so pieces. The majority was scrappy bits of softwood but I was



The bag of kindling

able to find several pieces of hardwood (some Walnut, Beech and Oak, along with a few pieces of tropical hardwood). I have used the pieces of hardwood rather than the softwood. I have chosen to do this because the hardwood is more interesting to me and will make items that will last longer. Indeed, the kind of softwood found in the average bag of kindling will take only a fingernail to mark it.



Clockwise from top-left: Beech, Walnut, Oak and then other hardwoods that were difficult to identify

Using seasoned hardwood for a letter opener means that it is significantly harder than green hardwood or seasoned softwood (in general).

I am therefore going to need sharp knives and I recommend wearing a Kevlar glove at least on the hand in which you hold the wood if you are inexperienced. I also recommend using a knife that has a blade length of no more than a 2". I have chosen to use two knives for this tutorial; a Flexcut KNI3 and Flexcut KNI4.



Some Flexcut knives

The first step in carving our letter opener is to mark out a suitable piece of wood with a design. I drew some simple designs, copied them onto cardboard and used the cardboard templates to draw around.



The Beech blank all marked out

I have chosen a piece of Beech out of the bag of kindling for my letter opener. I have drawn a design onto the wood and shaded the waste wood that I need to get rid of. I will be using three cuts with my knife; the Stop cut, the Thumb-push and the Paring cut. The cut that I will be making most use of is the Thumb-push, which allows for great control and safety. If you are right-handed, you will hold the knife in your right hand and push the knife away from you over the wood with your left thumb.

Once I have my design drawn out on the wood, I will remove the waste wood from around my template.



The waste wood removed

To make it useful as a letter opener though, I will need to reduce the 'blade' of my opener in its thickness.



Reducing the thickness

Once I have done this I can begin giving the 'blade' some edges. I will draw a

line along the length of the 'blade' in the centre of each side.



Creating the edges

I will then shape the wood towards the lines (to make a diamond shape if you looked at the 'blade' end on).



Shaping the handle and smoothing out the rough triangular sections

Next I can shape the handle by cutting a triangular section off of each edge. Going back to the 'blade', I need to shape it so that it comes to a point at the end (so it can be inserted into the corner of a letter).

Once this roughing out has been done, I can further shape the 'blade' by smoothing it into an attractive 'blade' by making the surfaces smooth and flat. I will shape the handle a bit more by removing further triangular sections until the handle has been rounded.

The Letter Opener is now finished. For mine, I like to smooth them down with sand paper. I use a grit of 100, followed by grits of 240, 400 and 1000 to create a silky smooth finish. Although not essential, I then seal the wood with Danish oil and give it a little polish with Creamed Beeswax (both items you ought to find in your local hardware shop).



The finished letter opener: Sanded, Oiled and Waxed

Although working the hardwood is more difficult, hopefully you can see that the results are worth it and much better than just chucking it on the fire.



The Stop Cut



The Thumb Push Cut



The Paring Cut



The finished letter opener in use



Some marked out pieces of kindling (above) and the same kindling carved into letter openers (right)



MEMBERS GALLERY

Dragon

By Rosemary Pennington



A Dragon or possibly Griffon, carved from Lime

Kiss

By Meriel Brown



Carved from Walnt

Mermaid

By Dave Taplin



Carved from Lime with a bleached base

Owl

By Jerry Hughes



Carved from Yew

Baroque style niche

By Martin Cameron



Martin Cameron designed and carved this Baroque style niche with fruit basket, in lime

If you would like to submit one of your recently completed carvings to the gallery for the next issue, email

editor@britishwoodcarversassociation.co.uk

or use the form on the website

www.thewoodcarversgazette.co.uk

ERRATA

In Volume 3 Issue 4 of The Woodcarvers Gazette, sl ommited to include a most excellent carving in the Members Gallery. The carving is by Martin Cameron and is a Baroque style niche with fruit basket, in lime. My alogies to Martin for not including this. Please have a look at the carving in this issue's gallery.



THE GROWTH OF TREES

How the growth of a tree can affect its wood

The way that a tree has grown during its lifetime can have a significant effect on the properties of the wood that is harvested from it. This is particularly true of hardwood trees which are generally slow growing. Like many others, I am a big fan of character in wood and it is how some of this character comes about, that I'd like to discuss here.

Growth Habits

Trees tend to have one of two growth patterns in their natural state; either excurrent where a conical shape is formed or decurrent (deliquescent), where a round shape is produced.

Trees like the Oak or Lime will naturally have quite a round shape if left to their own devices in an open setting. Many coniferous trees exhibit the excurrent habit, which occurs through apical dominance.

Apical dominance is where control is exerted by the terminal bud over the lateral buds. The shoot apex (terminal bud) inhibits the growth of the lateral buds so that the tree may grow vertically. The idea of this is to out-compete surrounding plants by reaching more light. The plant achieves all of this through hormones. When this natural growth habit is interrupted by the removal of the shoot apex (either deliberately or accidentally), the growing habit of the tree is significantly affected.



A Weeping Larch

The maximum size of a coniferous tree can significantly be restricted by cutting off the top of the tree. Unusual growth can be encouraged by removing the



A finely manicured Yew hedge

apex, like the weeping Larch in the photo. It can be very useful for ornamental growth though. A classic example is Yew hedging, where repeated pruning allows the lateral buds opportunity to grow (due to the reduced amount of growth inhibiting hormone produced by the shoot apex).

Wind

Wind can be a significant factor in how a tree grows. A tree growing in a location that is subject to high winds may develop off-centre growth in its bole, to increase support to one side of the tree. Sudden high winds may well blow a tree down but if it doesn't blow down it may well develop wind shakes. This is where radial shakes (cracks) develop where the wood is literally pulled apart as the tree strains against the wind.

Bogs

If a tree falls in a marshy environment, it may quickly be engulfed in peat which can build up relatively quickly. Once submerged, the wood of the tree is in an anaerobic environment. This absence of oxygen greatly reduces the effect of decomposition on the wood. When the tree is exposed again through farming or drainage, it is well preserved. It must be cut and processed quickly though because the sudden exposure to the air will make the wood deteriorate.

Bog wood is highly prized by many woodworkers and Bog Oak particularly so. Bog Oak (or Fenland Blackwood) is famously black in colour. Some Bog Oak can be brown or grey but the colour change is all down to the tannic acid leeching out of the bark and staining the wood. The tannic acid also acts as a



A Bog Oak being exhumed at Needham Market

preservative in the wood, which assists in prolonging the life of the wood in the bog.

Commonly the main woods that are recovered from bogs in England (mainly in the Fens) and from Ireland are Oak, Yew and Pine. However, there are other bog woods from around the world including Kauri from New Zealand, which claims to being the oldest workable wood in the world.

Wood as a crop

Wood is the world's oldest renewable construction material and fuel source. Much of the wood that we harvest (particularly in modern times), is harvested by felling trees. Two classic ways of producing wood without felling trees, are pollarding and coppicing. These two methods have been around for centuries but are used much less on a commercial scale than they once were (in the UK at least).

Coppicing is a technique where the growth of a tree is cut back to the ground, creating what's known as a stool. The tree puts out new shoots which produce a large crop of long straight growth after a few years. Harvesting the poles and cutting them back to the ground, produces an ever larger stool and can extend the life of a tree by centuries. Coppicing is still going on (mainly by volunteers), in many managed woods around the country, like in Bradfield Wood as featured in Volume 3 Issue 3 of The Woodcarvers Gazette.



An ancient Ash stool at Bradfield Wood

Pollarding is a similar technique to coppicing. In the case of pollarding though, the growth is not cut back as far as the ground. Pollarding therefore has the advantage of preventing livestock and wild animals from browsing the new growth. Many species including Oak used to be pollarded. In the case of Oak, I believe that the cycle of cutting the limbs of an Oak took place every 25 years. Indeed, just like coppicing, pollarding extends the life of a tree and many of the ancient oaks around today are still here because of pollarding. Sadly, a lot of people today are reluctant to pollard such attractive old veteran trees which would actually extend their life for future generations to enjoy.



An (overgrown) pollarded Oak in Epping Forest

There are other techniques used to harvest wood from trees. One interesting technique is the harvesting of cork. Cork isn't really wood but the bark of the Cork Oak tree. Every eight years or so in countries like Spain, people cut away the bark to make cork products. The bark has re-grown sufficiently after about eight years, to do it all over again.



Pollarded willow for firewood

Stress

Stress occurs in trees as much as people. In trees, it is mainly in the form of water scarcity. We're all used to a house-plant wilting without water or dropping its leaves but trees can show other signs. A stressed tree might drop leaves but (depending on the species), may also put out new shoots at the base or length of the bole. When stressed, a tree worries about being able to maintain the leaves in its crown, so it can put out these



An urban Lime tree that was pollarded during the winter. The short limbs become clump-like over repeated pollarding. Note the extensive new growth from the base and trunk of the tree.

additional shoots from the bole just in case the crown is lost, so that the tree can still survive. Pollarding a tree or topping a tree entirely can easily cause this stress.

Continually putting out these extra shoots can cause a burr (burl) on the tree. Pollarded trees often show massive amounts of burr around their bole. A burr builds up over time, composed of irregular grain caused by knots from dormant buds. Trees in urban areas often show a lot of burr but burrs occur in natural settings as well - weather and conditions are always changing and burrs are a result of a tree coping with them.



Spruce Burrs

Growth inhibition

The growth of trees is often inhibited for

deliberate reasons; dwarfing, resilience or disease resistance for example. It doesn't really yield timber that can be used but is quite common due to its use in fruit trees. Grafting is the method by which the tissues of two plants are combined so that they create a single vascular system. Usually one plant provides the root system (the stock plant) and one provides the stem system (the scion plant).

In fruit trees, a desirable cultivar is selected and grafted to the root system of a hardy stock tree. This allows the cutting of the cultivar to reach maturity and start fruiting much quicker by avoiding the 5-9 year juvenile development stage. This is particularly useful for apple production. The apple tree is known for its great genetic variety and using root stock allows cuttings to be taken from a desirable cultivar and fruiting clones produced quickly. It is an interesting thought that all Bramley apples for example, have been produced from clones of the original Bramley apple tree Southwell, Nottinghamshire.

Grafting occurs naturally in nature (known as inosculation) and you may have noticed it where trees grow very closely together or even where branches on the same tree cross each other and one seems to get 'absorbed' into the other. In my neighbour's garden for example, two maple trees have grafted together to form a single crown. It occurs in roots as well where they touch, but you're less likely to have seen this unless you are a mole.

Grafting is also done for ornamental reasons and for reasons where people are short on space. Ornamental grafting can be used to create 'living furniture' or unusually shaped trees. An interesting use for grafting is the creation of a 'family' apple tree, where multiple cultivars are grafted to a root stock to produce a single apple tree that bears several varieties of apples.

Grafting of non-woody plants can also be done, for disease resistance or hardiness. One of the most interesting uses of this is grafting the related species of potato and tomato together to produce a plant bearing potatoes below ground and tomatoes above.

Bonsai, is the classic example of growth restriction in trees. Just like coppicing and pollarding, bonsai can extend the life of a tree. A bonsai tree is forced to bear

leaves, flowers and fruit in miniature due to the restrictions on available nutrients. Whilst bonsai trees are beautiful to look at, they obviously are unable to provide any timber.

Growth can also be restricted in the wild by the availability of nutrients and location. A good example are the oak woodlands of Dartmoor (although they are very few and far between now). Due to the altitude and rocky ground, the oak trees are unable to reach their usual size and appear dwarfed despite their age. When growth is slow and restricted, the growth rings of the tree will be smaller and the wood may be harder. A good example of this is the Rock Maples from Northern America, where they grow slowly and produce a very hard timber.



Wistmans Wood, Dartmoor

By The Editor

Victory at last!

The Daily Mail recently reported on the completion of HMS Victory by Ian Brennan... In miniature of course.



Apparently he has 5000 hours of carving the ship complete with 200ft of rope,

104 cannons and 37 sails. He carved the whole thing out of a piece of 400-year old timber from the original HMS Victory. It has taken him 17 years to complete the 1:66 scale replica of Nelson's famous flagship.



The oak, taken from Victory's lower gun deck, was so hard that Mr Brennan said it felt like carving concrete, and the project took much longer to complete than he imagined.



An official sculptor for the Royal Household, he was given the piece of wood while working on the restoration of Victory. The beam provided enough raw material for Mr Brennan, 60, to create his 47-inch model. During its creation, he has worn out four sets of overalls and cut himself countless times.



The warship is depicted in full sail as she headed for the battle of Trafalgar and triumph over the French and Spanish fleets in 1805. It was to be last and greatest of Admiral Lord Nelson's successes. He was shot by a sniper during the fight and died below decks, surviving long enough to know that he had won.

Mr Brennan, from Warsash, near Southampton, has discovered one of his ancestors was killed on Victory during the battle. He said: 'Some years ago I

did some restoration work on Victory. I virtually lived on her for about a year.



'They always try to use original timbers when doing restoration work, but some are just not good enough. I was given a timber and had it for some time until I decided there was enough good wood to make a scale model of Victory. I couldn't work on it full-time and the wood was so hard it took me a lot longer than I thought it would. I have researched the ship and have made sure the sail configurations are correct and that the number of guns and rowing boats and rigging are accurate. I only had one chance at this – there will never be another piece of timber from Victory that I could use.'

Mr Brennan, who hopes to ultimately sell the replica only became a full-time sculptor at 34. Within five years he was working for the Royal Household.

It is estimated that it took some 6000 trees to build the original HMS Victory of the Nelson period.



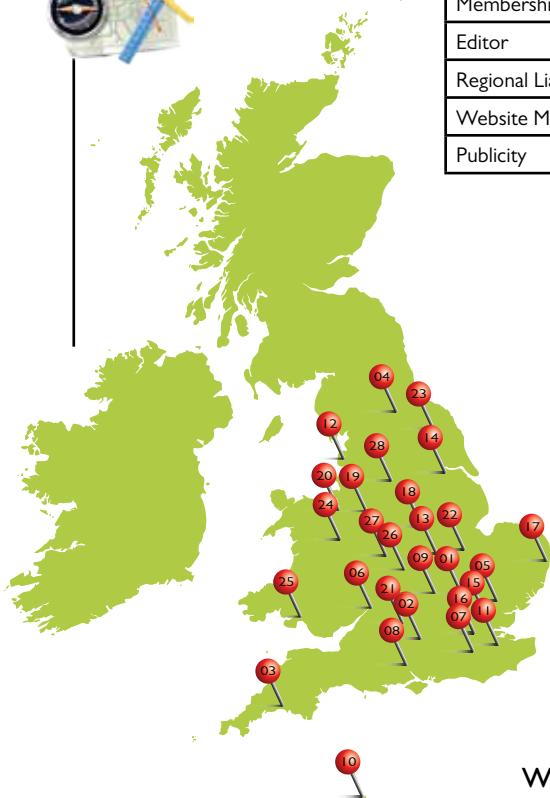
Nelson's HMS Victory

By Roland Laycock



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