

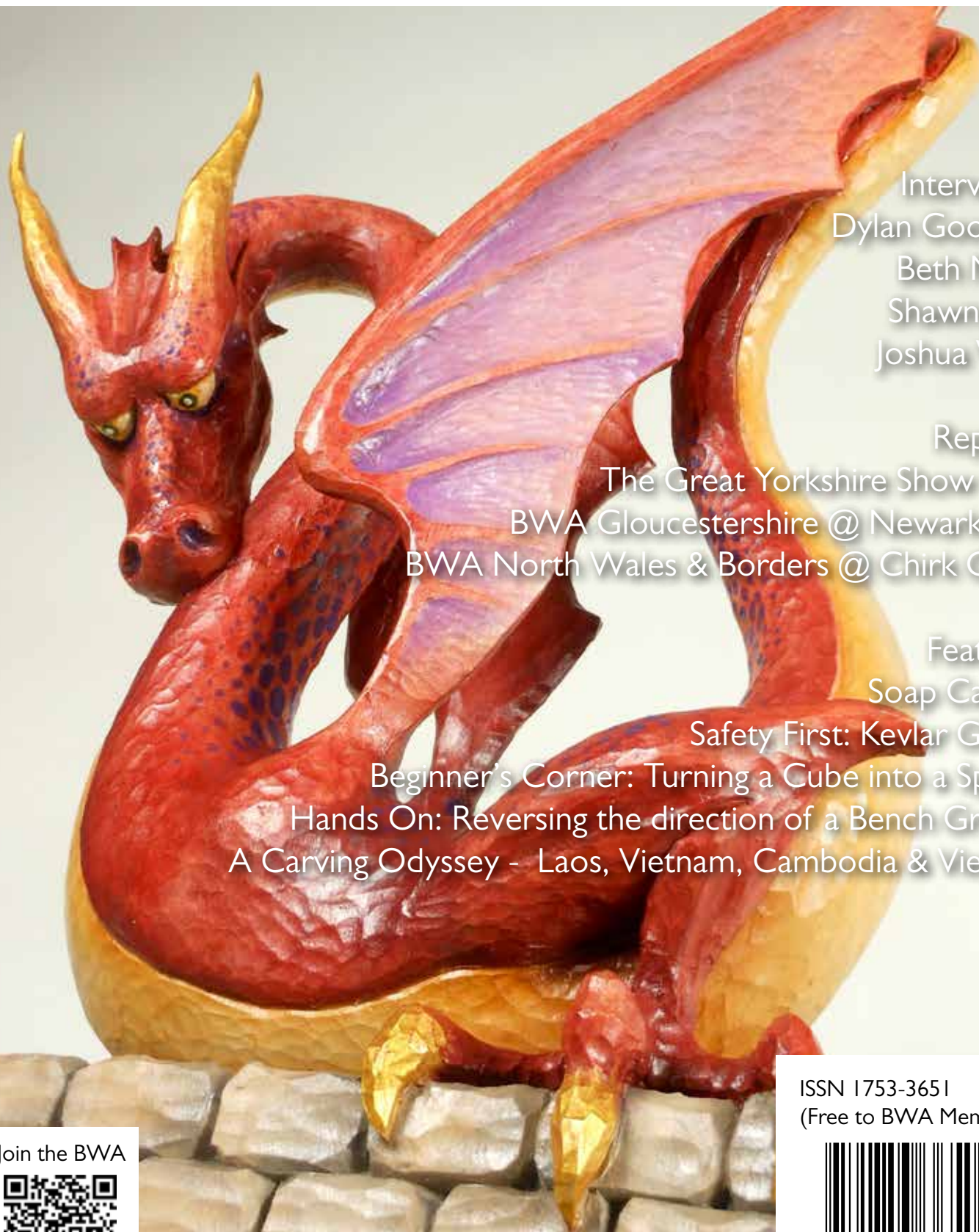
THE WOODCARVERS *Gazette*



Published by the British Woodcarvers Association

Volume 3 - Issue 10

Autumn 2015



Interviews:
Dylan Goodson
Beth Moon
Shawn Cipa
Joshua Vogel

Reports:
The Great Yorkshire Show 2015
BWA Gloucestershire @ Newark Park
BWA North Wales & Borders @ Chirk Castle

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A Carving Odyssey - Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia & Vietnam

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NOTICES

BWA Membership Renewal

Just a reminder to anyone reading this issue of the Gazette that hasn't renewed their membership, renewal can be paid by:

Standing Order:

For those of you who 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. I still have a few Standing Orders that are paid at other odd times during the year.

If you wish to start a new Standing Order Payment please pay by Cheque this year and then contact me for an updated Standing Order Mandate to commence on 1st June 2016 at the new annual rate of £25.

Postal Renewal:

Send a Cheque for £20 direct to the Membership Secretary. Renewal Forms can be downloaded from the Website or send a note with your details. Put your membership Number on your Cheque please. Send to: John Tyberg, BWA Membership Secretary, 27 Fernwood Close, St. Ives, Ringwood, Hants, BH24 2NQ.

Through your regional Leader:

Many Regional Leaders are willing to collect Renewal Payments. Check with them, if indeed they have not contacted you already.



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Autumn 2015 issue of The Woodcarvers Gazette. I have had trouble fitting everything into this issue that people have submitted to me again. If I haven't included your article, please don't be offended, I will make sure it's in the next issue.

Again I hope there will be something in this issue for everyone but as always, please send me your suggestions and comments; All submissions of content are welcome, particularly photos and write-ups on the events and exhibitions that your local clubs attend.

I would like to put a call out to members that may be able to write a how-to article. Articles of relief carving and projects for beginners would be particularly useful.

In this issue you will find several interviews again, one with the talented Shawn Cipa, wonderful tree photographer Beth Moon, rustic woodworker Joshua Vogel and Dylan Goodson who took home several blue ribbons at this year's International Woodcarving Congress in the US. Will Barsley has written the last article in his series on woodcarving in the East.

Talking of the International Woodcarvers Congress; I haven't had room to put any of the photographs of

winning entries in this issue, save for the photograph on the left which took first place in one of the bird categories and won a judge's choice award.

The AGM minutes included in the last issue, ought really to have included the financial statement for the association. In Lieu of that, please email the treasurer if you would like a copy.

I have revised the deadline for the carvings to be completed for the competition to carve something out of a Birch 'egg'. Please see page 22 for details.

I haven't had time or space to write any more on the BWA Spoon Project but please take a look at page 26 for information on the project. I hope that you will all consider entering items for the Spoon Project.

Happy carving until the Winter issue!



Jason Townsend

Gazette Copy Deadline and Contact Details

To submit content to the next issue of The Woodcarvers Gazette, you can email the editor using editor@britishwoodcarversassociation.co.uk or send items in the post to **Jason Townsend, 66 Wisbech Road, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8EF.**

Deadline for the Winter Gazette is **15th November**

OUT & ABOUT

Brockholes Nature Reserve (owned by the Wildlife Trust and just south of Preston right by the M6), have just opened up two adjoining areas complete with carvings: One lot are from Wind in the Willows and the others from the Gruffalo. Lots of fun to go and explore them.

The Editor has also been out-and-about and found some chainsaw carvings in parks at Wisbech, Cambridgeshire and Kings Lynn, Norfolk:

'Chainsaw carvings seem to be increasingly popular in public spaces and it's nice to see, the only down side is that local authorities don't maintain them by re-applying finishes so the carvings very quickly rot away especially if they are close to the ground (like trains carved from tree trunks).'



Carvings from a park in Kings Lynn



Some of the 'Gruffalo' carvings



Carvings from a park in Wisbech



Some of the 'Wind-in-the-Willows' carvings

By Sarah Lawrenson

REVIEW

Kirschen Micro Chisels

The Kirschen range of micro chisels come in two handle styles; a long thin hexagonal Hornbeam handle or a palm handle made from Pear.

The hexagonal handles allow you to use the tools like traditional chisels/gouges or like a pencil. The Pear handles are designed to be used with the palm on the handle and the other hand controlling the blade. A nice touch with the Pear handles is that they are flat on one side to stop them rolling all around your bench.

The tools are extremely well constructed and finished. They can be purchased

individually or in sets. The Hornbeam handles are about 100mm long which make the tools significantly longer than other micro tools.

I think that these micro tools from Kirschen are very useful although I prefer the Hornbeam handled tools overall.

By The Editor



To purchase see: www.axminster.co.uk





BWA WWI REMEMBRANCE PROJECT

The WWI Remembrance Project is still touring the country. If anyone has an event where you would like to exhibit the project, please get in touch with the editor.

All of the carvings in the project are displayed here on this page (with the exception of an additional carving by Ken Veal). It is difficult to appreciate them fully because I have photographed them in a way that makes them look rather flat. Thank you to all those who made a carving for this project

By The Editor



REVIEW

Veritas 3 Piece Miniature Chisel Set

This set of tiny chisels from Veritas is very cute, being one third scale. Made from PM-VII steel with stainless steel ferrules and Bubinga handles. They are really tiny at about 80mm long. Ideal for finishing up a carefully made joint, they are also nice for cleaning up a small carved surface. The handles are very short compared to other micro tools so look like they should be a one-handed tool but holding the handle with the fingers of one hand and the

blade with the fingers of the other seems to be the most useful arrangement. These are not for everybody but do fill a niche where you might otherwise have to use a tool with a cranked handle. Very well manufactured like the other Veritas tools.

For stockists see: www.brimarc.com



By The Editor

You don't need a degree to know that sharp blades can be dangerous and that your hands are the most likely area of injury when woodcarving. Gloves should be an essential component of every woodcarver's toolbox. Gloves can provide protection and extra grip (for both your tools and your work piece). It should be noted that not any old glove will do: We are talking specifically about gloves that have high abrasion and puncture resistance and the most common type of these gloves are made from Kevlar.

BWA member David Fewell contacted me after he recently had an accident when carving. He wanted me to print his story as a warning to fellow carvers of what can happen if you do not wear gloves. Here is David's story:

My name is David Fewell, a member in the Notts/Derby region and I carve with the Bolsover carvers. Recently when carving, I slipped using a small gouge: It went into the side of my thumb. My wife took me to Accident & Emergency and they then sent me to the Northern General Hospital in Sheffield where they told me I had cut a nerve and the guider to my thumb. After 2 hours in surgery, they reattached them! I then had a cast which I had to wear for 6 weeks: So no carving, no driving and lots of frustration.

David's story is only one of many horror stories that I have heard and doubtless you have heard many stories too. The moral of the story: Wear Kevlar Gloves when woodcarving: If not on both hands; then at least on your left hand (if you are right-handed).

I would like to share my story with you all as well. I too have had an accident when carving and it was also my thumb (left thumb) that suffered. The difference between my story and David's is that I was wearing Kevlar gloves. Here's my story:

I was using a small palm gouge on a hard piece of Utile wood. I was wearing a yellow Kevlar glove on my left hand. I recognised that wearing a glove was the correct thing to do but this did not prevent the accident. The gouge slipped on the wood and penetrated the base of my thumb, creating a cut about 8-10mm long. I was a bit worried about it but it was evening and

decided that I would keep my hand closed and pop up to the doctor's surgery in the morning to see the nurse. Overnight the cut had sealed up and seemed okay. The nurse wanted to check that I had not damaged a tendon so she and a doctor re-opened the cut (which was about 10 times more painful than the original accident). They concluded that there was no damage to a tendon and I was sent home again.

About a week later, I was picking up a bag with my left hand and heard a huge CRACK like breaking bone. I had a strong pain in my palm and could not fully extend my thumb. The accident had obviously partially severed a tendon and it had just now severed completely. I spoke to the doctor and they made arrangements for me to go to the trauma unit at the nearby Broomfield Hospital. I went there the next day, waited there for eight hours but they could not fit me in. The next day I went along again and by about 10am it was my turn for surgery. The surgery went well and they reattached my tendon. My left arm was put in a cast (see the photo) and I went home after the anaesthetic had worn off.

A tendon takes about twice as long as bone to heal. It was only after three months and lots of physiotherapy that my hand was getting back to normal. My left thumb will never be quite as good as it once was and I have a big Z-shaped scar from the surgery. This is not an experience that I would recommend and one that I would advise everyone to avoid if at all possible.

The yellow Kevlar glove I was wearing was quite cheap (maybe £3 a pair at the time). Apart from not having many fibres in the glove, its construction was poor; in particular the seams. The gouge I was using didn't cut the glove but by chance found a small hole in the seam between the palm and thumb of the glove. I cannot stress enough how poor these cheap Kevlar gloves are and how important it is to have a well-made sturdy Kevlar glove. After my accident I purchased a significantly more expensive and better constructed pair of gloves.

I settled on Polyco as my band of choice in Kevlar gloves. There are many brands of Kevlar gloves and I imagine that there are many gloves of comparable quality but I can only recommend gloves that I have direct experience with. When purchasing a pair of gloves don't skip

on the price and look for the following features:

- High resistance to abrasion (cutting)
- High resistance to puncture (stabbing)
- Quality construction and weaving
- Good level of grip (you don't want to increase the chance of slippage)

The two different gloves featured here are the Polyco Dryflex Plus N and the Polyco Dryflex Ultra. Both gloves offer slightly different features but both are excellent for woodcarving. The Dryflex Plus N has good all-round grip and has extra reinforcement between thumb and palm. Of the two gloves, the Dryflex Plus N offers the best durability and is a slightly heavier-weight glove. The Dryflex Ultra offers slightly better grip and allows the hand to move much easier: 'Designed to be close fitting, it is anatomically shaped and allows for great freedom of movement with minimal hand fatigue'.



Polyco Dryflex Plus N



Polyco Dryflex Ultra

I have no hesitation in recommending both gloves but it is down to personal preference as to which glove suits you and your carving style best. Just make sure you don't buy cheap inferior gloves because the decision could come back to haunt you.



The Editor with his plaster cast

By The Editor

BEGINNER'S CORNER

In this section, we are aiming to showcase the work of novice wood carvers and to provide advice and projects to help the beginner. Your early carvings are very useful to you as a means to see where you have made mistakes in design and execution. Indeed, learning-by-doing is invaluable in the art of woodcarving.

PROJECT #2

This project is a little exercise to help you practice using a knife and to help you practice using just your eyes and hands to produce a symmetrical carving. The project is to take a cube of wood and turn it into a sphere of wood. A piece of wood two inches by two inches by two inches (50x50x50mm) is a useful size. In the photograph accompanying this text, I have used a two-inch piece of Ayous wood (also known as Samba or Obeche) because that is what I had to hand. Lime wood is ideal but you can try a harder wood like Black Walnut if you want more of a challenge.



Figure 1

For this project you need a sharp woodcarving knife. I used a knife with a blade about 35mm long. If you do not use a sharp knife, this project will be difficult and potentially dangerous because you need to hold the piece of wood in one hand and the knife in the other: A blunt blade will require more pressure and increase the chance of an accident. A blunt blade is also more likely to crush the wood which will produce an unpleasant finish.

The method for carving the cube into a sphere is entirely up to you but I find that a good method is to carve opposite sides and compare them regularly and then work around the piece and repeat.

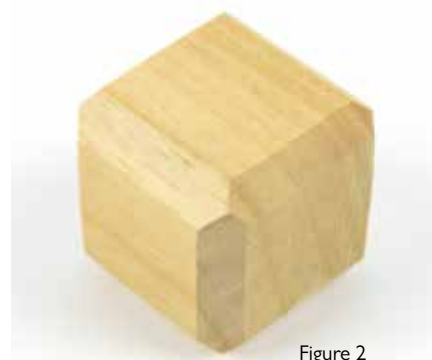


Figure 2

I would not try to carve each side fully but rather carve the piece in stages; taking off a layer at a time almost as if it were an onion. Figure 1 shows the cube of wood and Figure 2 shows the cube with waste wood removed on all sides, making a symmetrical shape. In figure 3 I have started to round off the sides of the cube. Once this has been done, I turn the piece around and repeat. I then turn the piece around once again round the last set of angular edges. Finally it is necessary to round the eight 'corners' of the piece. I then look at the piece, taking off small slivers of wood until I think that the piece is spherical.



Figure 3

Now that you have your sphere, you can test how spherical it is by rolling it along the table (or floor). The more spherical it is, the further it will go.



Figure 4

When carving your sphere, there are two things that you want to try and avoid. The first is that you do not want to end up with a rounded-cube; try to get the piece as spherical as possible. The other thing that you want to avoid is ending up with a tiny sphere, having kept removing more and more wood in an attempt to get it spherical: Your finished sphere should have a two-inch diameter if the original cube measured two inches.



Self Portrait by John Scott

Here are a couple of early carvings by members. John Scott attempted this in-the-round self-portrait as one of his first carvings and Mick McCabe carved a Yorkshire Rose as one of his early projects.

If you are a beginner and would like to see your work featured here or if you are an experienced carver but would like to see your early works here, please send photographs and descriptions to the editor. Email is preferred but you can post photographs by Royal Mail.



Yorkshire Rose by Mick McCabe



BWA North Wales & Borders @ Chirk Castle

Medieval times

I have been coming here for the past six or seven years with the North Wales and Borders branch of the BWA, and it is still difficult not to be impressed by the huge double gates that dominate ones approach to Chirk Castle. The view beyond looks inviting, and even as I drive through the beautiful parkland, making my way towards the building that will be ours for the next couple of weeks, I look forward to the days that I will spend there. The building itself is rather gloomy due to its original purpose as a squash court, and therefore without windows. But our illuminated displays and the very presence of our cheerful group soon brightens up the proceedings.

However, Alun and Howard, the two who do so well with the children on the soap carving didn't look very happy on the first day; they were left at the mercy of the weather which was rather chilly with a stiff breeze blowing and without the gazebo in which they usually work. By lunchtime, there was a big improvement and they soon got

underway in the open air with full sunshine to bask in. It's always a pleasure to see the looks on the children's faces as they carry away their masterpiece safe within a plastic bag. Fortunately, the gazebo was installed on the second day. Even with only a half day, they managed to use up forty bars of soap. Last year's total is said to be four hundred bars over the whole two weeks.

The display inside looks very good, especially with the added attraction of the display of carvings donated by members of the many clubs countrywide towards the BWA WWI Remembrance Project. Many of these I found to be quite moving. Also to coincide with a medieval event taking place in the castle at the same time, we have added our own twopennyworth with a selection of relief carvings, each with a medieval theme.

One of the photographs shows a rocking horse. This was done by Bryn Jones, a club member that up until now I was aware of more for his collection of old jokes than his carving ability. Well that has now changed because the rocking horse is his, and what's more, it's his twenty-sixth, including one that had to be sent over to America at considerable expense. Bryn has said that this is his last one.

I am always impressed by the generosity of the public's response to our charity appeal. We have a collection plate that never stays empty for long. This year the proceeds will go to the Macmillan nurses.

The photographs were taken by Alex Garfield.



By Ron Cannell

SOAP CARVING

Soap, soap, glorious soap!!

Soap carving – such a simple concept, especially once the visitors to our soap carving corner realised that our soap carving skills were none too impressive either!

'I can't do that', 'I'm not creative', 'Let the children do it' – we heard it all! But with gentle persuasion, the offer of a chair to sit down on, and friendly banter, our table became so popular that the BWA Herts Region almost ran out of soap at both the Kimpton Village Fete on Saturday 4th May and the Living Crafts Show at Hatfield House on Sunday 10th May.

Some anecdotes to share with you:

"You've saved me! My son's homework is 'sculpture' this weekend. He can show and tell his soap carving. Please can I have some information about your organisation to stick in his homework book too?"

"I'm a scientist from Rothamsted Experimental Park. I'm going to carve DNA into my soap!"

"It's a beef burger of course!"

"I'm carving a squashed fish"

"Don't let my mum see this. It's a present for her. Quick, hide it in my pocket!"

"Our family lives in a tiny flat with no play space for our children. We will buy soap for them to play with. Great idea! We can't afford a TV. We should do more crafts together as a family." (A family from Germany and Japan)

"I run a scout group – this is such an easy idea. It'll fire their imaginations. Thank you for the idea!"

"I've carved this skull for you to keep, Paula". (Bless!)

"I didn't think I could do this, but it's so absorbing and I've finished it". (An elderly lady who carved a heart. She was beaming with pride at her unexpected achievement and thrilled to be allowed to take it home to treasure)

"There was a great deal of interest shown by

the visitors but the undoubted star attraction was Paula's soap carving corner. I was lucky enough to stand in for her over lunch and invite visitors to come and have a go. Most did, although some were a bit shy at first! We had all ages, and I was fascinated to see all the different approaches, some being artistic, some creative, and some destructive, but everyone was satisfied and everyone wanted to take their masterpiece home with them. They kept me busy supplying raw material, asking advice (not that I am best placed for that!) and showing me their results. I must admit that I thoroughly enjoyed joining in with them, whatever direction their work took, but then I am probably just a big kid myself!" (Derek Titchner – BWA Herts Region, Luton Group)



Improvement opportunity? Oh yes!! I will remember to collect the right spare bags of 'bags' to give out to visitors to take soap carvings home in next time.

My apologies to Lynn and Gill who wondered why they were searching through my household rubbish waste bags instead. I was mortified!!!

It was a privilege to share our marquee with BWA Essex again. Thank you to Michele Bolton for encouraging visitors to join our regional group. We do make great friends being part of the British Woodcarvers Association.

By Paula Noble



Tips for a Soap Carving Workshop

Here are some tips for running soap carving workshops at your own events. They are lessons from the soap carving undertaken at the Shropshire Woodcarvers exhibition at Ironbridge Museum during the last week of July (our first time):

1. Choose soap that is not too thick so that it does not defeat the younger carvers.
2. Note that chairs designed for small children are a long way down... and even further to get up from after a couple of hours.
3. Don't give children too much choice... An octopus is not easy to carve.
4. Make sure you look your best, you could be in a lot of photos or videos and on facebook before you know it.
5. Let the children tell you what it is before you say what a nice snail dog/cat/mouse it is.... only to be told it is portrait of the child's mother.
6. Make sure you have your drawing and design head on.... How else can you carve a gecko?
7. Ensure you know what a Minion looks like!
8. Don't let parents spoil a piece by being over-confident... Tears and tantrums can result; and the child can get upset as well!
9. Be prepared for some very involved and enthusiastic future potential carvers.
10. Be prepared to find and remove soap from places it shouldn't even be able to get in.

A final thought: If children want to carve things they are interested in, and it seemed usually to be something tactile and therefore in the round, should we in clubs bear that in mind when we start and try to retain beginners of all ages using wood?

By Dave Taplin

An Interview with Beth Moon

Beth Moon is an American photographer who has fallen in love with ancient trees. It all started when she was living in London: 'There were so many impressive ancient ones right there and I started to visit different ones all around the city. I just wanted to chronicle their existence'. From there she has travelled the world visiting the great titans of Africa, Asia, America and Europe. Beth carefully researches potential subjects using botanical references, history books, newspapers and tree registers. Each subject is chosen for their immense size, vast age and notable history.

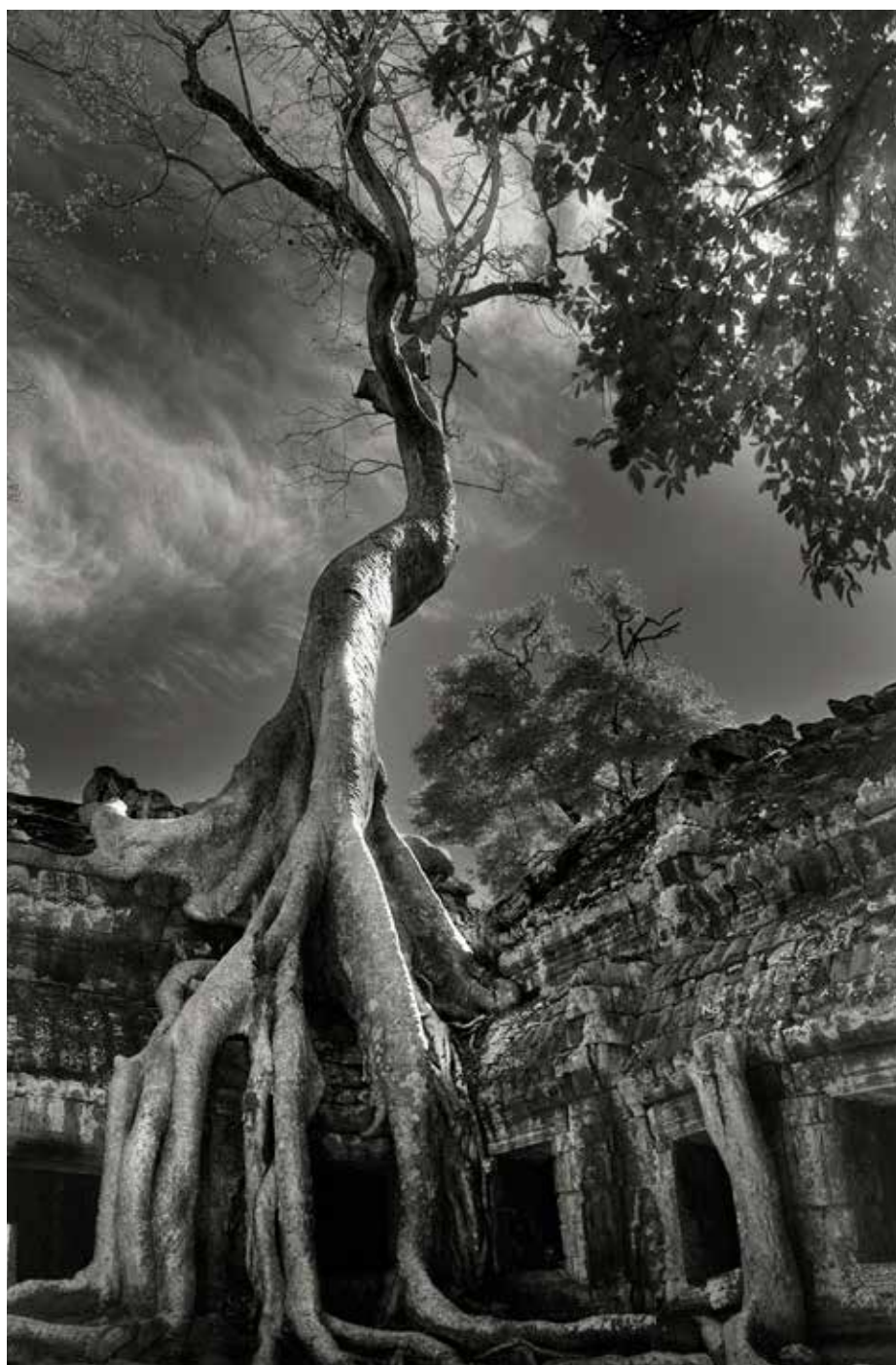
Beth uses a monochrome technique

that brings great dynamic range to the trees that she photographs. She prefers black and white, citing that there is a lot of distraction with colour. Her vintage technique uses palladium and platinum printing. The metals bind with the paper, producing art with longevity comparable to the subjects in her work. To anyone that has tried photographing trees; they will know how difficult it can be. This makes Beth's photographs all the more incredible.

Beth cares greatly about these ancient trees and our relationship with them: 'Standing as the Earth's largest and oldest living monuments, I believe these



symbolic trees will take on a greater significance, especially at a time when our focus is directed at finding better ways to live with the environment, celebrating the wonders of nature that have survived throughout the centuries'.



Rilke's Bayon



Chapman's Baobab

Beth doesn't have a favourite tree, 'I love them all!' she says and I'm inclined to agree with her. I asked her if she had done any woodcarving before and although she says she hasn't, she did say that she helped her daughter with a carving: 'When my daughter was very young, I helped her to carve a knife out of a lovely piece of wood that she treasures to this day'.

For more information on Beth or to see a bit more of her work, please visit her website **www.bethmoon.com**

By The Editor



REVIEW

For stockists please see: www.saburrtooth.com

Saburr-tooth Coarse 90mm Carving Wheel



The Saburr-tooth carving wheels are designed for rapid removal of wood. They have Tungsten-Carbide teeth and are well made with the teeth far enough apart such that these wheels are unlikely to clog and require any in-depth cleaning. This is a review of the green (coarse) 90mm wheel with holes. I don't own a specialised angle grinder so tested it in what I had to hand.



I was very impressed with this product. The wheel was easy to control and the removal of stock wood was very quick indeed. This wheel can be used to shape wood very rapidly indeed. The holes in this wheel (6 x 0.5") allow the sawdust to escape the work area very well. Fitting the tool to the angle grinder was extremely easy and if I had several of these discs in different sizes and grades, I think it would be very quick to change between them.



SABURRTOOTH
SUPERIOR POWER CARVING TOOLS

I can easily recommend these carving wheels for applications where you want to shape large pieces of wood swiftly. The Saburr-tooth range is well worth looking into if you are going to be power carving with an angle grinder.

By The Editor

REVIEW

Arbortech TurboShaft

For stockists please see: www.brimarc.com



The Arbortech TURBOShaft is a new tool on the market, aiming to fill the gap between Arbortech's larger rotary carving tools and small rotary tools or hand tools: 'It is not designed for rapid removal of wood like the larger tools, but is finely tuned for control as the last powered carving tool before reverting to chisels'.

The TURBOShaft measures 20mm in diameter and is 70mm long. The two cutters are very small and mounted right at the end of the shaft to provide a planing (rather than drilling) action. The Tungsten-Carbide cutters are also replaceable. This tool will fit any 100mm or 115mm angle grinder and includes an M10-to-M14 brass adapter should you need it. It also comes with a nice adjustable depth gauge.



When I first unpacked the TURBOShaft, I wasn't sure how effective it would be considering how small the Tungsten-Carbide cutters (or 'teeth') are. The tool was very easy to fit to the angle grinder (it just screws on, allowing rapid changing between tools). I was pleasantly surprised by the effectiveness of the tool. The amount of wood that can be planed away



using this tool is significant and much more than I expected. I found the tool a little difficult to control but with further use I think it would be easy to master. The Arbortech website has some excellent photos and videos of the tool in action; my photos don't really do it justice. As stated above, you cannot drill into the wood with this tool – instead it is intended to be moved across this wood.

The TURBOShaft can be thought of as a kind of 'freehand router', allowing you to incise lettering and hollow out areas amongst other things. I thought this tool to be a useful addition to the toolbox of a power carver and can see it being of great value to those working on large projects.

By The Editor

Hands On...

Reversing the direction of a Bench Grinder for Sharpening Carving Tools

Typically, bench grinders have the part of the sharpening wheel that is available for use (i.e. the part not guarded) flying downwards. This is so that sparks fly bench-wards and the tool being ground is held safely against a metal stock or guide.

However, many 'carving tool sharpening solutions' that employ electric grinders require the direction of the grinding wheel to be reversed. This enables better control of the face being sharpened.

Typical is the The Ashley Iles carving tool sharpening system. See: (www.ashleyiles.co.uk/tool_sharpening.html).

Buying a bench grinder that is purpose-made to run in reverse can be very expensive, but it is quite simple to change the direction of a cheaper, conventional grinder WITHOUT playing around with the electrics. This article shows you how.

PROCEDURE

Firstly, disconnect the machine from the power supply.

1. Figure 1 shows a typical 'out of the box' bench grinder.

2. Turn the grinder over and remove the cover of the base (Figure 2).

3. Remove the screws holding the base to the motor and gently loosen the base unit (Figure 3), *leaving all electrical leads in place and undisturbed* (Figure 4).

4. Carefully turn the base unit through 180 degrees and re-fix it to the motor with the screws (Figure 5).

5. Re-fix the base cover.

6. Put the bench grinder the right way up and you now have a very odd sight – with the on-off switches at the front, the wheels now turn upwards as you require, but you can't see them because the wheel guards are in the way and the grinding faces are at the back! (Figure 6).

7. You therefore now need to reverse the wheel guards. First remove the outer guards using a ring or box spanner (Figure

7) making sure you carefully retain the holding bolts and remembering the order of nuts and locking washers (Figure 8). It is important they go back in the right sequence so the guards are properly locked, given that the vibration in a grinder can work loose bolts that aren't locked.

8. Then remove the grinding wheels with a ring spanner, remembering that one side is a left-handed screw and the other right-handed. This is purposeful design to help ensure that neither wheel nut unscrews gradually because of the motion of the grinder in action (Figure 9).

9. You can get at the guard housings. First remove these, on both shafts of the grinder (Figure 10) and then reattach them the other way round so that their throats (the open part of the guards) are now on the same side as the on-off switches to the grinder.

You can now replace the grinding wheels, and then the outer parts of the wheels guards. (I also took this opportunity to change a very coarse grinding wheel supplied with the machine with a much finer one.).

10. You now have a machine with the wheels turning upwards (Figure 11)! It just remains to attach the spark guards and - very importantly – warning signs so that others who might use your machine are aware that that, on this grinder, the wheels move in a different direction to conventional grinders (Figure 12, 13).

Happy sharpening!

By Clive Nash

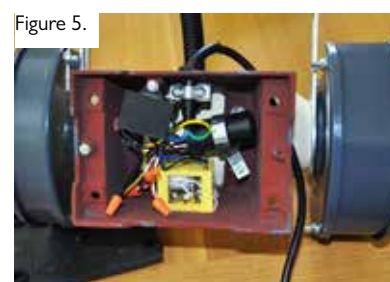
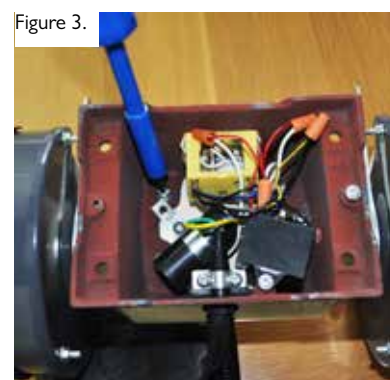


Figure 8.



Figure 1.

Figure 9.



Figure 10.



Figure 11.



Figure 12.



Figure 13.



BWA Rockingham Forest 'Twigs' When Harry met Sally

The Rockingham Twigs meet in the club house of a model engineering club. Some years ago, they requested a 'Train Spotter' to stand on the station platform, to join the multiple gnomes and teddies who reside there.

Recently members noticed that Harry was looking rather sad, and they requested that he should have a 'girlfriend'. Geoff Stimson said he was up for the challenge, and after many weeks of designing, carving, redesigning, adjusting and painting, Sally appeared. The race was on to get Sally finished in time for the first public running days at Easter.

The week before Easter, Sally was taken to the track to meet Harry. Judging by the photos, they will make a go of it. We are sure that the members and the public will get a great deal of enjoyment seeing them together.

Well done Geoff!

By Barbara Beard



Carving & Cycling in Japan

Thinking of Will Barsley's articles on the Far East, Dave Taplin has also done his own bit of cycling in Japan. I guess that bicycles are one of the few modes of transport that us woodcarvers can afford!

Recently my wife and I visited Japan. We decided to do a 2 hour escorted bike ride around the rural area (mainly because it was flat) around the village of Hida Furukawa. On our way round we passed by a gentleman in his front driveway carving away. I immediately stopped of course. Despite the language differences, with the help of the guide, we briefly discussed his work and the similarity of subjects ie birds. In typical Japanese style he insisted on getting out all his work to show us and on giving us a gift. This was a small carved bird made out of the local Ichii wood, of which many Japanese carvings are made. Just goes to show you don't have to travel as far as Will or for as many months to meet fellow carvers, and it is a truly international hobby.



By Dave Taplin

An Interview with Joshua Vogel

What was your route into woodcarving?

I was exposed to carving from an early age. On the porch, in the field, besides a stream. Wooden chains, captive balls, stick whistles, lures and decoy ducks. Carving was my introduction to wood working in general. I think that a pocket knife is one of the earliest gifts that I can remember receiving and it was given, in my family, as a sign of great responsibility and maturation. But for as much as I loved carving growing up, it was only offered and encouraged as diversion. It was not until much later that I understood that it was possible really to challenge myself in this way, and much later still that I saw a way to make it into an occupation.

What is your favourite wood to work with?

There are many different woods that can meet many different needs and considerations. I think that it depends on the project as to which I would call my favourite. For small carvings I enjoy using Holly. Box wood is also quite nice. Linden, which we call Bass is great for larger work but I have also had success with Tulip or Poplar. Recently, I have been doing some great work with a wood called Catalpa which has really interested me of late. It is incredibly stable (even green), very pleasurable to carve, and has an intensely spicy smell. It was not an obvious choice for carving wood but has turned out to be one of my favourites. I try to be open to using material that may be different from what I

am used to or that I have not used before.

Do you use seasoned wood as well as green wood?

Yes, not necessarily together in the same project at the same time, but some of my work is definitely more easily accomplished wet or green. Some of the work, in fact, needs to be green to begin with and then is reworked, final-shaped and finished, after it has been seasoned. I find it very illuminating to reflect that the natural state of living wood is to be saturated with water.

Why do you think spoon carving is so popular?

I was not aware that it was! Perhaps there is a difference in perception about craft work in the UK versus the States. I love the idea that there are people out there who are taking the time to make them. Here, I feel like we could stand it if it was even more popular because I don't feel like spoon carving is so widely acknowledged and certainly not very widely practiced. I have been doing it as a way to be productive, as a method of resistance and an exercise in the fight against planned obsolescence. I have been investigating the idea in my own work that there are some things in our

world that are in fact better when made by hand. I think that wooden spoons are just one of those things. If it is indeed popular, it must have something to do with the spoon's iconic nature, unique sculptural qualities, that they are universally understood to be useful by shape alone - and of course, that they are fun to make, and even better when gifted or shared.

What sorts of tools do you use and which are your favourite?

I am not a 'purist', I don't really have a set method for all the different types of work that I do. In that respect, I would say that I am still learning about tools,





their limitations and what they are capable of, and that my approach is, if anything, practical. I have investigated using pneumatic chisels, chainsaws, grinders, planes, adzes, rasps, gouges and knives to carve (to name a few). When I think about spoon carving however, I immediately think about hooked or crooked knives, now that is a beautiful tool! What an elegant shape, how exact and particular - I find concaves are very satisfying to carve in wood.

What's the best thing about carving for you?

It is the creative process itself that keeps me interested and vital. Carving satisfies this in a very accessible, personal and meditative way. It is a way to be productive in a destructive sort of sense while also challenging me to see and experience things more completely. What lies inside? And how do I get there? I find grappling with these kind of questions and problems fun.

What do you use for sharpening your tools and keeping them sharp?

I use diamond lap stones for heavy shaping, then water stones for honing

and polishing. The gouges usually go to the rouge wheel, and everything gets stropped with leather in the end.



Where do you do the majority of your woodworking?

Most of the work that I do these days happens in our workshop. We have a small studio that is located in an old factory building in a town that is close by to where we live. My workbench is

set up right by a window with plenty of natural light with which to see, which is more and more important the older that I get. When I can however, I love to work outside.

Where do you get your wood from?

We live in the forest. Timber is everywhere. There are a few good local saw mills, and arborists that we use, but just as much of the material that I use comes from our own property or that of our neighbours.



Do you carve on your turned items at all?

Sure. I am not one for 'decoration' for decoration's sake, but if there is a purpose behind the work, an edge pattern or chip carving that serves a grip, for instance, then so much the better. I like to use some kind of internal logic or geometry to help me describe the limits or appropriateness of a pattern and then I try to focus on technique. I do love the idea that carving can serve as a sort of signature, style or brand itself; that gestural marks can be read as more than just random cuts. I think that these moments can impart very human and familiar quality to otherwise sterile work.

For more information on Johua and his work, please see his website **www.joshua-vogel.com**

By The Editor





A CARVING ODYSSEY

A journey across Asia to explore and document the art of woodcarving

In the third part of this series we will look at a small selection of the carvers I met across Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and India. All have fascinating carving traditions, techniques and styles, which I hope to show you a taster of in this article. To see more images and stories about the journey please visit: www.carvingcountries.com

LAOS

After the excitement of meeting such exceptional carvers in Thailand, I was unsure what to expect of my next destination, Laos. Out of all the countries I was to visit it was the least known to me. I had heard rumours of an indigenous group of woodcarvers in the south of the country, but first had to make my way through the mountains of the north.

It was whilst searching for carvers in the north that I discovered a social enterprise called Backstreet Academy (www.backstreetacademy.com). Their aim is to link up small-scale artisans with people looking to learn traditional crafts (often tourists). In the last few years, the

project has thrived across Asia and now includes a huge variety of crafts from woodcarving, pottery, painting, drawing and traditional dance, to name but a few.

Through Backstreet Academy, I spent a wonderful day carving with Mr Lon, an exceptional woodcarver in northern Laos who specializes in carving elephants and Buddhas. He uses a variety of woods such as Teak, Mahogany, Sandalwood and Siamese Rose wood.

On his bench was a wide selection of chisels, some with no handles, others very similar to those we find in the UK. With his guidance I carved a small elephant out of a beautiful piece of Mahogany. You can't quite see the hammer in the photo below but, despite being hardwood, it was indented on either end from the constant use it received.

Further south in Laos, I discovered the indigenous group the Ta Oy, who often create a blackened effect on many of their carvings by burning them in the fire, sometimes for hours at a time. They



At a Backstreet Academy course, carving an elephant in Lao's. The table was definitely a bit low for me!



Another Backstreet Academy course, carving a Buddha's head in Vietnam

work mainly with green wood and send a lot of their work north to the capital Vientiane.

VIETNAM

After three weeks in Laos I cut through into Vietnam, a country home to some incredible woodcarving and with a rich history in the craft. Nowadays, there exist handicraft villages throughout the country, which are recognised by the government. At least 300 of these villages carry out traditional heritage handicrafts such as carving, bronze casting, embroidery, pottery and weaving.

In Hue city, once the capital of Vietnam, I found a small handicraft village 40km north of the city and off the beaten track. It was a woodcarving village with a huge variety of independent workshops, which often employed up to 15-20 carvers. Much of the work is done in groups of 3-4 people. Apprentices train for up to three years, transitioning from paying for their own food to begin with, to being paid a small salary in the third year.

Much of the carving I witnessed in Vietnam was done by the carver holding



A huge panel carving inspired by the ancient stone carvings of Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

the wood with his feet, a method I saw a lot in Bali. The quality of Vietnamese finishing particularly stood out.

CAMBODIA

After Vietnam I moved through into Cambodia, a country steeped in history from the days of the ancient Khmer empire.



Stone carvings on Angkor Wat

I was eager to see the stone carvings of the famous temples around Angkor Wat and how this has influenced the

woodcarving industry around the area.

Angkor Wat is the largest religious structure in the world, covering over 401 acres. Many of the temples remain beautifully preserved, others have undergone extensive restoration work and some remain ruins reclaimed by nature.

Much of the woodcarving done today in Cambodia is targeted towards the tourist industry and is strongly influenced by the carvings found on the ancient temples.

20km south of Angkor Wat I discovered a small workshop with a group of young carvers who were producing huge replica panels, showing scenes of their ancestors heading off to war through thick jungle on top of huge elephants. The panels were extremely heavy and took at least two if not three people to lift.



Block wood carvers in Jaipur, notice the small chisels and the fact they are carving into the end grain.

INDIA

The final stop on my carving journey was India, where I would spend six weeks meeting carvers across the country. Even with six weeks I was only able to scratch the surface of carving in India, reflecting the size of the country and the huge diversity of carving styles.

A particular highlight was meeting the block wood carvers of Jaipur, who create intricate patterns for traditional fabric printing.

The carvers use small chisels with no handles that are about a third of the size of chisels we commonly use in the UK. They carve their designs into the end grain of hard wood with incredible precision and confidence.

Eager to see the whole process of block wood printing, I visited a nearby printing house. I was told the prints use a minimum of two blocks in their patterns and a maximum of seven.

Travelling further north into the foothills of the Himalaya's, I spent two weeks learning to carve at a Tibetan arts institute called Norbulingka (www.norbulingka.com). Funded by the institute, Tibetan's can undertake a three year apprenticeship to learn the traditional methods of woodcarving (amongst other crafts). It was a fitting end to what was an incredible journey.

Email: carvingcountries@gmail.com
 Website: www.carvingcountries.com
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/carvingcountries

By Will Barsley

An Interview with Shawn Cipa

Shawn is the author of several books on carving including *Carving Gargoyles, Grotesques and other Creatures of Myth*. Here gives us a few of his thoughts on carving here:

What was your route into woodcarving?

I come from an artistic family, so since I was a child I was always involved in some type of visual creative process. I prolifically drew, painted and sculpted with clay into adulthood. I was also starting to sculpt with natural and found materials, such as driftwood and minerals. It was the summer of 1993 when I saw a woman carving wood spirit walking sticks at a local craft festival. I thought "Hmmm, I bet I could do that." I received my first set of carving tools that same Christmas, and never looked back. Now, the only time I draw is to work

on carving designs, and the only time I paint is to finish a carving.

Do you have a favourite kind of wood and why is this your favourite kind of wood to work with?

I have several favourites; it really depends on the subject matter at hand. I carve a great deal of Basswood (Linden) when it comes to figure work or something I intend on painting. I use American hardwoods such as Maple, Cherry and Black Walnut when I am carving walking sticks and canes. The very first wood I ever carved was Sassafras, because it grew like weeds



around my area, and I didn't know any better. Turns out it is a wonderful wood to carve, and is very fragrant as well - a pleasure to work with, and holds a special place in my heart.

What kinds of tools do you use; do you use any homemade tools?

Although I have many different brands, my favourite for proper mallet and chisel work are Pfeil Swiss-made gouges. I use many different knives as well, but my favourites are OCC blades. I usually buy the blades and create my own handles. I have made countless knives over the years from old penknife blades, hacksaw blades, and antique straight razors.

What is your favourite subject for carvings?





it. It is carved from basswood with butternut wings, and is finished with a whitewash stain. I mounted it on an old fencepost finial with beaten copper stars as an added element.

Do you have any good tips for working in-the-round?

When designing a piece, be sure to cover all angles, front, back, left and right, before starting. There are always many unforeseen things to deal with when roughing out, and without a solid approach

I have carved countless walking sticks and canes, Santa figures and wood spirits. My favourite subject matters are fantasy and whimsical folk art.

What has been your favourite carving to date?

That is a difficult question. Although not my most technically challenging piece by far, I completed a folk art angel this past year that turned out exactly how I wanted it to, which doesn't happen most times, as most carving folks will tell you. Because of that, I am very pleased with



beforehand, one can waste a lot of time (and wood). Although I prefer hand work as opposed to using power, I often use an Arbortech to rough out from the beginning band-sawn block; this way, I can concentrate more on the overall shape of the piece without getting hung up on banging out big chunks of waste wood, fighting stubborn grain and dealing with fatigue. Once I get the form where I like, I switch over to hand tools for the refined shaping and detail work. Always, always provide for sufficient clamping / vicing; it is safe, keeps you from getting distracted, and helps the creative process. I have spent considerable time and money either buying or creating my own clamping systems.

Do you paint all of your carvings or do you leave any with a natural-style finish?

I do paint a great deal, especially the folk art stuff, and have managed to create my own colour style, somewhat, or so my fans tell me :) Having said that, I also enjoy natural finishing - it depends on the species of wood being carved. It is a great sin to paint over nicely figured wood. I often like to "antique" natural finishes by first sealing and then applying a dark stain. The stain is immediately wiped off, which leaves nice patternation. I do this with many of my walking sticks and canes.

Is carving your life or do you



pursue any other activities?

Carving is pretty much my life, but I am also a musician of 30 years. I love the outdoors and enjoy harvesting much of my own wood stock.

Can you describe your average working day?

Well, I am not yet retired, so I do hold a day job. Once I get home and take care of the typical household and family stuff, I often work into the night to complete commission work. It sometimes can become quite stressful especially during the holidays, which are my busiest times. I look forward to retirement (hopefully early), so I can spend most of my time creating. I'm afraid I have more ideas in my head and on paper than I ever will be able to complete in my lifetime.

For more information on Shawn, his books and his work, please visit his website: www.shawncarvings.com

By The Editor



BWA Gloucestershire Seminar Weekend

Our second Seminar was a great success and many thanks are due to Dave Johnson not only for the success on the two days of the Seminar, but also its concept and prior organisation. Sending out a questionnaire to club members to ascertain what subjects should be included, limiting numbers to six/eight participants, and having the workshop cover two days instead of one subject per day ensured that our members had the subjects they wanted, and were able to achieve a finished object at the end of the session. Having the facility for the whole weekend enabled us to have a talk in the evening open to non - workshop participants and a social evening.



The three workshops comprised Design, Stick making and Lettering. Terry Moss one of the old guard of the BWA, and who was the designer of the current BWA logo, took the Design module. He is a retired Lecturer in Graphics and design with Bristol City College but continues as a self employed technical illustrator and wood sculptor of some repute. The aim of the course was to introduce students to the processes and skills required to develop an idea into a working intention. The students selected a subject, revised their drawing skills and made scale maquettes using plastelene. We now look forward to seeing them transformed into woodcarvings.



The Stick making was taken by Ken Whitehouse who describes himself as a true amateur having been creating sticks for a number of years as part of his involvement as a deerstalker. With the aim of learning the skills and techniques involved in the carving and fabrication of fancy and cane sticks, sticks were selected and the students shown how to straighten them and attach the handles. Ken had brought with him a supply of horn and time was spent carving and polishing pieces so that most students completed a couple of sticks during the weekend.



The third group enjoyed letter carving with our own Dave Johnson a founding member of the BWA, with over thirty years experience much of it as a professional carver. The group hoped to develop the skills required to execute incised lettering, both text and calligraphy in various fonts. They learned to carve their names using an incised form and carved their initials as a monogram using raised lettering.

For the evening talk we had Geoff Dixon an NC exhibitions officer and editor speak on casting figures from your own carvings. This was very interesting and led to considerable thought for those that were interested in trying to make money from their carvings. Sausages and chips and a drink from the bar ended a very busy and enjoyable day. We look forward to repeating the idea in two years time.

By Tony Bush

BWA Gloucestershire @ Newark Park



At the end of the Cotswold escarpment, just above Wotton-under-Edge, there is a property called Newark Park. It was built as a hunting lodge in about 1550, eventually the estate was given to the National Trust in 1917 by Catherine Power-Clutterbuck in memory of her son James who was killed in WWI while serving with the Royal Flying Corps. The Trust let the house to a succession of tenants but it was run down and the garden ran to seed.



Newark Park flourishes today thanks to an American – Robert Parsons. He first came to Britain during the Second World War, stationed here with U.S Army 65th Fighter wing. He fell in love with the architecture and ancient buildings here. After the war he settled in London, becoming a wealthy antique dealer and property restorer. He wanted to restore an old country house and took on the tenancy of Newark. He did the much-needed repairs and also performed miracles in the overgrown garden until he died in 2000.



BWA Yorkshire (Wooldale Carvers)



The house has a gallery room on the second floor and we have seen many different exhibitions there but noticed no woodcarvings or sculptures. Three years ago Maurice and I became National Trust Volunteer gardeners at Newark Park and had the opportunity to talk to the Manageress about the Gloucestershire Woodcarvers. She was interested and offered us the Gallery for an exhibition for 4 weeks in June.



The BWA WWI commemorative plaques were exhibited as well as our group's display board made up of 6" squares depicting scenes of Gloucestershire Life. All of our members were encouraged to show their carvings or sculptures, even our beginners. It was a very successful show with many complimentary comments and interest in the BWA; some of the carvings were sold. We have been informed that in excess of four thousand people visited Newark during this time and we thank the NT staff and volunteers for their help and co-operation.



By Jean Harper



Left to right: Brian Davies, Fred Chapman, John Niland, Michael Weston and Bob Russum.

On 6th June 2015 we attended the Spring Fair organised by the committee of Wooldale Community Centre, which is our meeting place. We had a super display of carvings, both relief and in the round, which generated a good response from visitors. Several people took away information about us which hopefully will bear fruit later.



On Sunday 28th June 2015 The National Coal Mine Museum for England, near Wakefield, held their annual Gala Day. We were in attendance all day with 5

of our members giving demonstrations throughout the day. Again we had a super display of finished work from our members. Hopefully there will be photos attached to this letter. I have to be honest and say I am very adept at doing it wrong!!

Several people have contacted me, following information from the BWA website and have been given info and advice, hopefully they will join us.

Our group meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month with a good attendance in excess of 20 each month. I like the fact that there is as much "caling" (Yorkshire-speak for talking) as carving which makes the day very sociable. I hope to expand our activities to include talks, demonstrators and trips.

By Bill Piggott



MEMBER COMPETITION

The competition and project to carve something from a Birch Egg is well under way now and hopefully all those that have requested an egg have received one.

There has been a fantastic response and I have issued about 142 eggs!

Remember you can carve anything you like out of the egg and the piece of wood needn't remain egg-shaped. You could carve an animal, a fruit, a hatching egg, or anything that your imagination can come up with.

When you have carved your egg, please pass it to your regional leader and then I will arrange for them to be sent to me for photographing.

Once I have all of the entries, I shall name a winner of the editor's prize and then hopefully, we can organise an Easter egg

hunt next year at a stately home (perhaps a National Trust or English Heritage property). The aim would be for visitors to pay to enter the hunt and the winner is whoever can write down the locations of as many of the carvings as possible (which have been secreted around the house) in the shortest time possible.

Due to it taking longer than I expected to issue the eggs, **there is a revised deadline of November 13th** to get your carving finished and handed to your regional leader.

Many thanks to Colin at Woodworks for providing the eggs.

The main prize is a special edition of forged knives from Flexcut in a presentation case. I hope to organise some additional prizes as well.



For stockists please see: www.brimarc.com

REVIEW

Dura-GRIT 6-piece woodcarving set (3.2mm shank)

This 6-piece power-carving set from Dura-GRIT, comprises five burrs of 9mm diameter and one of 12.7mm, all in 80-grit. There is a conical burr, aspirin burr, flat-head burr, rounded-end burr, ball-end burr and a hollow-tip burr. These burrs all have a very well made 3.2mm shank which should fit most rotary tools.

The burrs are designed to be long-lasting (as the name suggests) and are coated in tungsten-carbide grit with a comparable grit size of 80-grit sandpaper. As such they are quite a coarse tool but not coarse like the colourful 'spiky' burrs that you can buy. This is an advantage if you do not want to have to do too much sanding afterwards but does clog like a sandpaper.

When using the burrs, I found that they clogged up very quickly when I tried them

on a piece of Cocobolo. It didn't take long before the burrs became ineffective due to the build-up of resinous material. Dura-GRIT recommend cleaning them either by dipping the burrs in Acetone, using a wire brush, brushing against uncured rubber or put them under a propane/butane torch. I haven't cleaned mine yet but Dura-GRIT suggest that with regular cleaning, these burrs should last a very long time.

As this was a set of burrs, almost like a starter kit, I would have liked to see a stick of uncured rubber included in the package to make maintenance easier for the beginner. I plan to purchase a stick of rubber separately to clean these tools and other abrasives.

Overall, the range of shapes in the set and their sizes are a useful starter kit and their



construction is very good. The price is competitive and the burrs are of higher quality than many others on the market.

By The Editor

OBITUARIES

Victor Stark

It is with great sadness to report that our member Vic died after a severe stroke at

the end of March. Vic was a very popular attendee at the BWA Essex (Westcliff) meetings and he will be very much missed. There were only 14 members attending the day that the news came through but even so we collected £70 in donations in his memory. I understand from his wife Kay that the money will be donated to the

Essex Air Ambulance and that altogether over £900 have already been collected in his memory, which just proves how high he was held in his family and friends' esteem.

By Ted Jeffery

Glyn Mould

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An Interview with Dylan Goodson

Dylan is a young American woodcarver who carves in a variety of styles including relief and in-the-round.

How did you get into woodcarving?

I started wood carving when I was about 14, (fifteen years ago now), I always had a natural creative urge as a kid and enjoyed watching Roy Underhill's and Scott Phillips' woodworking shows on public television. One episode, Scott Phillips did a road trip to a woodcarving show, where they filmed a carver carving a face on the corner of a block of wood. After watching that, I had to go try it with my Ex-acto knives. It looked enough like a face that I was hooked, and I've been carving ever since.

What is your favourite woodcarving tool?

My desert island tool would definitely be a #5 gouge anywhere between the width of 8mm and 14mm. As my students learn, I do a lot with #5's. But I'm constantly switching between tools while I'm carving.

Do you have any tips for the beginner?

Learn how



Dylan's very first carving (2" tall)

to sharpen your tools. Nothing will make the carving process more enjoyable than having sharp tools. Also practice, if you don't practice then you'll never be very good at wood carving. The importance of studying your subject and gathering good reference material cannot be overstated.

What's the best thing about carving for you?

The creative process: Seeing an idea come to life, and then sharing the finished piece with people. Getting to teach carving and share what I've learned with other carvers. There's nothing like seeing the light bulb come on when a student learns a new carving technique, or the expression of wonder as people look at my carvings.

What woodcarving techniques do you prefer to use?

I prefer carving with mallet-size carving tools, even when I'm not using the mallet. I always prefer to have my piece of wood secured to a work bench or carving stand, as this is much safer and more energy efficient. I will do power carving whenever the project calls for it though.



'The American Farmhouse' (17" x 11" x 2")

I'll use whatever does the job the best, and the fastest, I'd use dynamite if I could figure out how, (stole that joke from another carver), but I like using the mallet tools most of all.

Do you consider yourself influenced by any particular artists?

Not really, although I definitely have a preference for classic art. The works of Michelangelo and Bernini I find to be quite inspiring.

What is your favourite wood to work?

Basswood, I tell people that it's a blank canvas since it can be carved, stained and painted pretty much anyway you want. I probably do at least 90% of my carvings out of basswood. However, it's not the best choice for power carving.

Do you have any advice for those



'The Magician' (24 inches tall)

wishing to produce carvings for sale?

This question is tough since it's the part of the business that I still struggle with. My suggestions are: Try to develop a pricing method that is easy for the customer to understand, and DO NOT under-sell yourself. By selling cheap you not only hurt your own pocketbook, but you also hurt the bottom line of every other carver that sells, since it causes people then to expect more for less.



'The Mabry Mill' (16" x 11" x 3")

What aspects of woodcarving would you like to explore in the future?

I'm currently experimenting with a little chainsaw carving. It's so different from the slow meticulous work that I normally do, that makes it a lot of fun and I really enjoy it. I'm also going to be trying my hand at some marble sculpting in the future, having already started my first piece.



'What it was, was football' (7.75" x 10.75" x 2")

For more information about Dylan and his work, have a look at his website www.oldoakenterprises.com

By The Editor



Pair of Poppies

BWA Rockingham Forest 'Twigs' Chair Leg Competition

A member of our group turned up with 8 round wooden chair legs, complete with screws and 'domes of silence'. The question was, "What can we do with these?" Someone suggested a competition and so the die was cast!

5 people took the challenge. There were no restrictions, no limits on what could be added or removed. No-one talked about what they were doing, so the final pieces were a real surprise.

But what about the prize? You can't have a competition if there is no prize. The person who brought the chair legs suggested £1000, but he seemed unwilling to provide the necessary! Eventually, the prize was left to the tutor, who kept it a secret until the judging. The winner was presented with a certificate for 2 free sessions at the class. Something everyone could enjoy.

Who would be the judge? We didn't want someone who was a high level carver as we knew that some people would use materials, which were not strictly within the usual range of wood carving. So the tutor's husband was coerced into taking this role. Although very supportive, he has never shaped anything but metal – making steam engines.

He was quick to decide. The entry that was nearest the original shape was the chosen winner – the Hallowe'en pumpkin. Despite the fact that we knew it was not the one which demonstrated the most skilled carving, we were all happy with the result, and now we need another idea for a competition. Any suggestions?



Hallowe'en



A 'Native' Head



A Mace



A Skier

By Barbara Beard

BWA Spoon project

At the AGM, the idea was formally put forward to have a new national BWA project in the form of carved spoons. The project is open to all members and I hope that most members will give it a go and submit a spoon.

There are three categories of spoon and you may submit up to three spoons. The categories are:

- Love Spoon (a spoon with symbols e.g. Welsh Love Spoons)
- Utensil Spoon (a spoon designed to be used)
- Art Spoon (any spoon that does not fit the other categories)

I plan to curate the project and produce a book showing the spoons of the project and saying a bit about each spoon and its creator. I hope that we will be able to publish this as a BWA book but if there is not enough interest I will make it an eBook.

You can let your imaginations run wild with this project. The only constraints are:

- It must have a 'bowl' and a 'handle'.
- You must nominate one of the three categories for your spoon(s).
- A spoon can be as large or as small as you like.
- You can use any wood(s) that you like
- You must provide some details about the spoon and yourself in writing with the spoon.

This is an opportunity for all professional and semi-professional members to have their contact details (email or web address) published along with a professional photograph of their carving(s). Ultimately I hope that we will be able to find a permanent home for the project somewhere in the country for the public to see. Before a permanent home is found it is hoped that a touring exhibition will be organised.

The aims of the project and book are:

- To showcase British woodcarving talent
- To showcase the talent that we have within the BWA
- To promote woodcarving and the BWA

The deadline for the project is TBA but please start submitting your carvings to me now using the address on Page 3

By The Editor



BWA Yorkshire (Wooldale Carvers) @ The Great Yorkshire Show

BWA Yorkshire were at The Great Yorkshire Show again this year. The BWA presence was very successful: The weather was fine and there were visitors from all over the world, as you can see from the photos.



Mick Weston, from the Wooldale Woodcarvers scored a well deserved double having been awarded 1st Prize for his carving of a rhino by Judge Norman Walsh, from Holmfirth and also winning the People's choice for his entry; winning the Bill Hodgson Memorial Cup (having got the most public votes). This is the second time Mick Weston has been awarded both trophies. The cup was presented by Bob Russum the Lead Demonstrator for our Branch.



Bob Russum presents the Bill Hodgson Cup to Mick



Mick Weston's winning piece

By Tony Wilson

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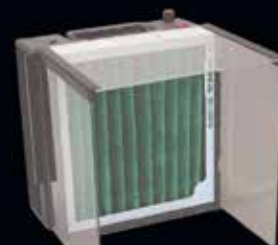
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"Forbidden Fruit"
Miniature Carolina Parakeets
by Cam Merkle
Oil on Holly and Brass
Photo ©2014 Cam Merkle

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MEMBERS GALLERY

Grinling Gibbons Garland

By Gerry Guiver



Carved in Lime and left natural

Ian Norbury Juggler

By Gerry Guiver



Carved in Lime and Walnut

Plaque for Royal Engineers 12 Group

By Mark Davis



Carved in Lime and Oak

Green Man 3

By Rich Pepperd



Love Spoon

By Bryan Harris



Dove

By Ian Lloyd-Oswell



Seagull

By Peter Walwin



Labyrinth I

By Roger Pearce



If you have a recently completed carving or a carving that your fellow members may not have seen and would like to submit it for the gallery in the next issue, please email: editor@britishwoodcarversassociation.co.uk or use the form on the website: www.thewoodcarversgazette.co.uk

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BOOK REVIEW

Carving Realistic Flowers (revised edition)

by Wanda Marsh

ISBN: 978-1-56523-818-3

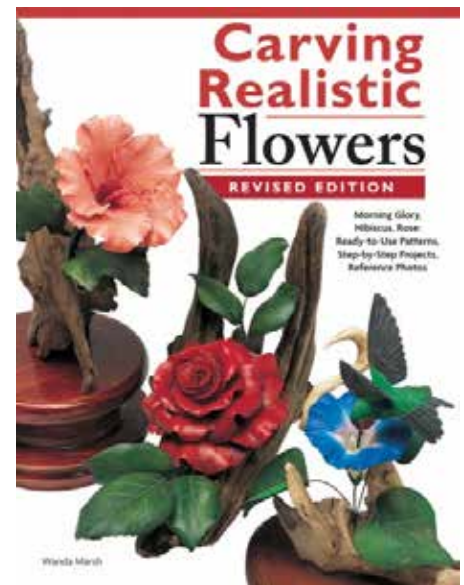
On first glance the book reminds me in size and design of the GMC Woodcarving Illustrated books, which used to showcase a few projects from the magazine. The front cover is nicely designed with close up colour photos of Wanda's carvings.

There are only 3 projects to try, however the book is written in a very practical and informative way, with real attention paid to all aspects of how she does the project from start to finish. The book starts with a good introduction to the subject being carved, with diagrams of how a flower is structured internally, tips on the best tools to use, types of wood and good sized colour photos of other flowers carved by Wanda that are not included as projects in the book but using her techniques described on the projects you could easily have a go at, if you have a little carving experience.

On to the projects there are pages of photos of the real flowers in various positions as reference to help you make the flowers look as realistic as possible, and even advice on the best time of year to find natural examples, although as this is an American book not quite

as useful info for the UK! Each flower project has a strong clear pattern, precise measurements for the wood, list of tools and materials and photos of the power tool sanders and burs which she uses. There are step by step clear colour photos, which clearly illustrate the markings she has suggested on the wood, and when hand carving show her hand behind the piece (bearing in mind these are life sized flowers so fairly small it is very useful to see what position they are in whilst being intricately carved!) A word of caution, she does say the Morning Glory-apparently a real American flower-is a beginners piece, and in none of the pictures do I see any protective gloves despite the small pieces being hand held at all times. That said there are no pictures with plasters on her hands either so perhaps her holding technique is safe!

There is a little too much power tool use for my liking, and I suspect that to replicate what she does by hand could be tricky given the burs she uses. Not sure you could get the thinness that gives the realistic look. The finished projects before painting are stunning, and to me would be fine left as they are. She then shows how to paint them realistically using acrylics, even detailing the colours and make of paint you will need, size of brushes etc. I



suppose this is all down to personal taste, but to me, the rose in particular doesn't look like wood any more when painted and when you look at the finished wood version loses a little with colouring, but again it is personal preference and if you wanted to complete the project to how Wanda finishes hers then she has been very generous in sharing her way of doing things.

Overall a very good book written enthusiastically by someone who clearly has great passion for the subject. Haven't really seen many books covering this subject before, so if carving flowers is something you fancy trying, this would certainly give you a head start.

By Sarah lawrenson

BOOK REVIEW

Carving Egg Animals

by Mary Finn

ISBN: 978-0764314155

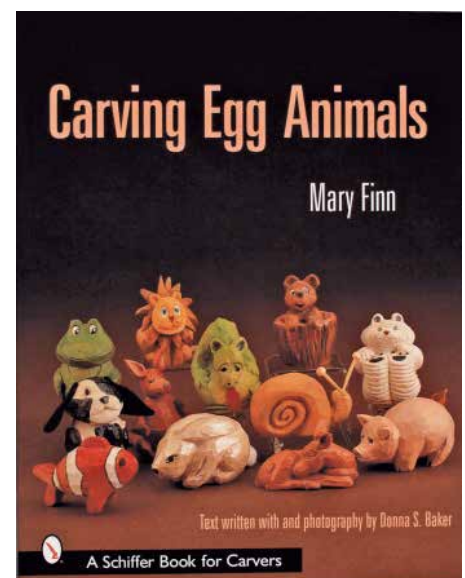
This is a nice book written and photographed by Donna S. Baker, featuring the carvings of Mary Finn. Being an American book, the carvings have been done using Basswood. All of the Basswood eggs featured are the type that have a flat bottom (rather than being fully elliptical).

There are four projects within this book: Rabbit, Bear, Pig and Dragon. The four projects all end up being fairly egg-shaped compared to some of the carvings featured on the cover of the book. I did quite like the Dragon project though – I

thought it was an imaginative use of the egg-shaped piece of wood.

The step-by-step projects are well-structured. They show clearly how to mark-up and layout the designs on the egg. The author has used a mixture of knives, palm-tools and micro tools to carve the projects. The Basswood makes the projects look very easy but on harder wood like Birch, the projects would be a little bit more challenging.

This book would definitely be of value to any members who are taking part in the Birch-egg carving competition. The author does glue on extra bits to some of her projects to take them beyond the



confines of the egg-shape but it is a good reference.

By The Editor

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