

THE WOODCARVERS *Gazette*



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Winter 2015

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Peter Leadbeater
Andrew Brassington

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NOTICES

Missing Members

I have two Members who have paid their Membership Fees by Standing Order but I do not have any up to date contact details for them. Can anybody help me?

The first is Mr Malcolm Jones of Abersychan, Gwent. Malcolm paid by SO in July but Gazettes are returned from the only address I have for him and his Telephone No. is not recognised. Malcolm has been a Member since 1997.

The second is a 'Ms Williams' who has paid by SO in October for at least the last 4 years. Payment was allocated against a membership number but when this member also paid by Cheque I was able to rule them out.

If anybody has any updates or thoughts on these people could they please contact The Membership Secretary. Details are on the back of the Gazette.

By John Tybjerg

2016 Events

Hi to all, can you please send me details of any events for next year so these can be added to the events page on the BWA website. This is both to keep other members informed and members of the public who visit the website. My contact details are on the back of the Gazette.

By Graeme Murray

National Council Vacancies

We are still looking for a replacement for Lynn Kimm as National Secretary. If you or your partner are looking to enhance your CV or would like to try your hand at volunteering then this could be for you. For details about the role, please contact Lynn Kimm or Mark Davis using the contact details on the back page.

By Mark Davis

Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year!

Dear Carvers,

May this Christmas end the present year on a cheerful note and make way for a fresh and bright new year with plenty of enjoyable woodcarving.

Here's wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you all for taking part in and supporting the British Woodcarvers Association in 2015



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the last issue of The Woodcarvers Gazette for 2015. This is a bumper 40-page issue and is packed full of high-quality features,

If anyone would like to review a book, please contact me and I will try to send you one (depending on how many people reply).

It has taken me a while to put this issue together and I have left out a number of features that I did want to finish in time for this issue but they will now go in the Spring 2016 issue. The Spring 2016 issue will hopefully be published at the beginning of February.

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. If you don't see an item that you have submitted to me in the current issue, it means that I have run out of time or space to fit it in. I do not discard any items though, I merely roll them over to the next issue.

The BWA Spoon Project is slow to take off but I hope that you will all consider entering items for the Spoon Project. I have decided that it is more sensible to return your spoons to you after the project, that way hopefully more members will be encouraged to submit a spoon. I will get more details to you in the Spring 2016 issue.

Happy carving for 2016!



Jason Townsend

Birch Egg Competition/Project

The competition and project to carve something from a Birch egg has been very successful. In fact it has been more popular than I expected and due to this, I have run out of time to include the results and photographs in this issue. We had 69 carvings sent in! I am going to see if I can organise some further prizes between now and the Spring issue. I will feed the results and news through to you via your regional leaders ASAP. It has also been suggested that a booklet be produced to showcase the carvings: I will work on this. Thank you so much to everyone for taking part!

By 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 Spring Gazette is **15th January**

BWA Durham & North Yorkshire (Coniscliffe) Helping Heroes at Phoenix House, Catterick

A number of members of the club volunteer to help veterans learn to wood

carve at the woodwork workshop at Phoenix House, Catterick for Help The



Heroes. The club has been helping for about 18 months now. Michael painter has now designed a course for the veterans and is working with the club volunteers as well as the veterans to give instruction.

Members of the club now attend Michael's Warwickshire workshop every few months to receive training. They then pass this on to the veterans. The club would like to thank Michael for his involvement and sharing his expert knowledge.

By Mick McCabe

Chippendale International School of Furniture Student of the Year 2015

The Chippendale International School of Furniture, near Edinburgh, has been teaching furniture design, restoration and making for 30 years. Each year it attracts students from around the world for intensive 30-week courses. This year's intake included students from Canada, the USA, Norway, Italy and the UK.

The Chippendale School has built an international reputation in a niche area of further education, nurturing craftsmanship and raising the profile of furniture design and making as a career option. The leading European arts commentator Professor Richard Demarco, a former European Citizen of the Year, has described the School as an

'inspirational and wonderful institution of international importance.'

Each year the School takes students of all ages from all over the world for its immersive 30-week courses. Some come straight from school, while others are looking for new creative careers – or to learn a new skill in retirement. The school also runs one week 'taster' courses through the year.

Andrew Brassington (20) was awarded Student of the Year by the Chippendale International School of Furniture for 2015. Andrew's course work included a monumental door made from locally-sourced Scottish timber - inspired by

a silver birch sapling that he saw growing through the ruins of a collapsing barn in southern Ontario. The birch sapling had grown into an empty door frame that was propped against a pile of stones to leave the tree highlighted against the sunset.

In reconstructing that powerful image of nature's resilience, Andrew used quarter sawn oak for the

doorframe, with solid sycamore pegs in each corner to add strength and a design flourish to the mortise and tenon construction. Two mirror-image sycamore trees sandwich 12mm laminated glass, its colour and transparency carefully chosen to show hidden details in a certain light – including three falling maple leaves that are suspended between the glass sheets to highlight Andrew's Canadian roots.

The golden sycamores were selected to provide a beautiful contrast with the oak frame and tinted glass, and hand carved to add further character. To finish the 2030x950mm piece, two silver birch branches support the display frame. These were left in their natural state to bring the tree back to its design inspiration - the single silver birch sapling growing through rubble and concrete.

His other main piece are two swans in lime with walnut beaks, finished with jesso and white gold highlights and resting on an ash base. The bulrushes that the tempered glass rests upon are steam bent ash with turned lbowya rushes. Anselm Fraser, the School's principal, said that 'Andrew has demonstrated incredible talent, with all the pieces he made through the year. The School is all about unlocking imagination and giving our students the skills and confidence to turn creativity into things of beauty, and Andrew has done just that.'



Andrew Brassington with his door and frame



For information on courses at the school, please visit www.chippendaleschool.com

By Charlie Laidlaw

An Interview with Andrew Brassington

Andrew Brassington is a young Canadian who is now embarking on a career of a bespoke furniture maker.

How old are you now?

I turned 20 shortly before graduating the course.

Have you always had a passion for working in wood?

I have not always had a passion for wood no, I was on the fast track to an undetermined university in southern Ontario, to pursue a career in either civil engineering or mechanical engineering. However due to a scheduling error in my last year of high school, I was placed in a woodworking course, due to the policy at the school I was attending I had to wait 3 weeks prior to switching into the French course I had intended to be in. Well 3 weeks rolled by and I had enjoyed my time in the workshop so much that I had decided that I would much rather a career of working with my hands, than the stress-filled environment that is university. So I gave up the potential American football, and scholastic scholarships, to pursue woodworking in Scotland. Thanks to my British heritage getting here was a breeze.

Do you see yourself doing much woodcarving in the future?

Absolutely I do, upon my return to Canada I am looking forward to trying my hand at chain saw carving. I have my eye on a couple nice stumps of Canadian maple that should yield some spectacular results.

How has your experience of the Chippendale School been?

It has been a very well rounded course, but you can specialize in any subject you want. I did mostly carving as it as something I had never done before and it was something I wanted to try my hand at. The course is one where you get out what you put in, I was in the school about 65 hours a week for the better part of the 30 week course doing various projects and bench skills.



Tables by Andrew

What are you working on at the moment?

I just finished a coffee table, made of solid oak with hand turned legs.

What have been your major influences so far?

I like to bring nature back in to my designs, I really like the log cabin kind style of furniture: A more rustic feel yet very practical. So I suppose my biggest influences would be nature and practicality.

What is your favourite wood?

There is a time and place for everything



Andrew's recently finished Oak coffee table

but I really enjoy working with Walnut, but my favourite is the combination of Sycamore and Walnut. However, nothing beats making a carving out of Lime.

What aspects of woodwork or woodcarving do you look forward to tackling in the future?

I am really excited to do really high-end pieces of cabinetry, preferable ones that incorporate carvings in the design. It would keep things interesting by doing several things throughout the piece.

You can see what Andrew is up to now and in the future by looking at his website: **www.secondnaturefurniture.com**



Andrew's carved Swan base for his glass-topped table



ed.

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.

Here are a couple of photos showing carvings by Stuart Lamb a new member; The oak leaf relief is his first carving and the Tudor rose the second, both are carved in lime and of very good quality, Stuart is a natural.



Oak Leaf by Stuart Lamb



Tudor Rose by Stuart Lamb

Here we have a couple of carvings by a new member who is 17 years old, Corey Wilson. Corey is very keen and has done some really good first carvings the two here is his Gorilla in Lime and a pair of Cockerels.

Corey said the help and encouragement at Concliffe club has helped him achieve these carvings. He is impressing his fellow members with the amount his carvings progress from one week to the next, he really does seem to get stuck in!



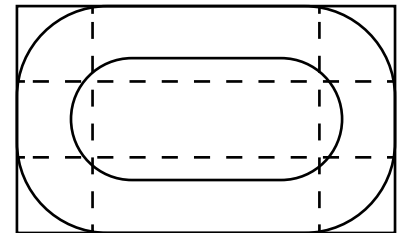
Gorilla by Corey Wilson



Cockerels by Corey Wilson

The first step is to convert your square cross section into a cross-shaped cross section. To do this remove a 10mm x 10mm strip from each corner, along the length of the wood. For longer chains the use of a Bench Top Saw or Router is very handy but this length should be manageable with a good Tenon Saw.

We now need to make a Template to draw around to mark out the links. Cut a piece of card the same size as a link, in this case 50mm x 30mm x 7mm, and draw the link on it.



The template with 10mm dotted lines for reference. This template is to scale

Using the Template that you have just made mark out the Chain on your cross-shaped piece of wood.

PROJECT 3

Most Carvers think about carving a chain at some time or another, then some do and some don't. The most heard question at Displays and Shows is how do you do that. Hopefully this short article will provide enough information, and some motivation, for a few new carvers to have a go. Once you have had one go and made all the usual mistakes quickly pick up your second piece of wood and have another go!

We will make a three link chain with nice big links about 50mm long, 30mm wide and 7 mm thick. Start with a piece of Lime 110mm long and 30mm x 30mm square cross-section.



The piece of wood cut into a cross-shape. The four off-cuts (110x10x10mm) shown beside it



The most important point here is to leave a piece of waste wood between the individual Links. This is cut away to separate the Links. Do not draw the Links tight up against each other. If you look at all the Pictures before you mark out the Chain this should become clear. On this example try to leave about 8mm between the Links.



Now we have to remove the wood we do not want – and create three basic Links. A lot of the wood can be removed from the

By Mick McCabe

outside using a small saw, a Coping saw is ideal but careful use of the Tenon Saw will suffice. Wood inside the Links can be reduced by drilling it out. See the pictures below for what you are aiming to achieve.



The next move is to separate the Links. We do this by removing the small piece of wood that still joins the Links.



This is done by carefully paring it away from all four sides. I used a 3mm No. 11 Gouge. See the picture below, taken from my Chain Demonstrator.



This will produce a short Chain of three chunky Links. See picture below.



These Links are now carefully rounded off, sanded down and polished. See Pictures

below (the first showing the links being rounded off and the second showing them sanded and finished) And that is it!



You will not need any large tools. I used nothing greater than 10 mm wide and although I must admit to not keeping an accurate list as I went along my likely tools were my Pfeil 1/5, 1S5, 2/8, 3/5, 7/6, 9/5 and 11/3. The work is easily held in a Carpenters Vice or Carvers Chops but be careful when cutting or drilling right through and put a piece of scrap wood under the work.

Your next challenge is something like my Padlock and Chain in Picture 13, and yes the Key does open the Padlock.



By John Tybjerg

BWA Cleveland

Cleveland Region have had a successful first year. The club is regularly attended by at least 15 members on a weekly basis.

We had our first event in July when we attended the EID festival at Ropner Park in Stockton on Tees. On the day we had lots of interest from visitors with several enquiries about joining the club. We have been asked by the organizers if we could demonstrate again in September.

Guisbrough Forest Festival was attended by ourselves and Coniscliffe Carving Club, our nearest neighbour. The two clubs exhibited and demonstrated and once again visitors showed a great deal of interest.

The photographs shown are of some of our members at a recent club meeting, taken by Peter Downham.



The club has now moved back to its original venue: St. Cuthbert's Church Hall, Billingham, TS23 2DF. We hold our meetings every Thursday 1.00 pm - 4.00 pm. All visitors are welcome.

By Vince O'Donnell





The European Woodworking Show, organised by Classic Hand Tools, took place on the 12th and 13th September at Cressing Temple Barns in Essex. Amongst all of the other attractions was a woodcarving competition and exhibition. The woodcarving competition which is open to ALL BWA members is hosted by the Essex Region of the BWA, it was well advertised in advance by our editor Jason Townsend in this very readable Gazette.

Over the last few decades I have travelled the length and breadth of this country to many woodworking shows and I cannot think of another show that attracts such a diversity of woodcrafts. But what really makes it special for me is the location, the historic CRESSING TEMPLE BARNs are the perfect venue for crafts involving wood. Built by the Knights Templar in the 13th century entirely of wood we are really able to appreciate how much our much loved carving material 'WOOD' was, and is, so vital to life throughout the ages. To be part of our woodcarving competition in the wonderful 'Granary Barn' is something very special and adds a frisson of historic atmosphere to the whole event.

This article is written from my personal point of view as the person who has the responsibility for receiving and recording entries for the competition. But the added bonus for me is that I also have the privilege to count the votes and at the end of the two days be the 'Only person' to hold the complete record of the number of votes placed for each carving. I am then able to announce the first three for Mike Hancock of our sponsors Classic Hand Tools to present the trophy and very generous prizes. The winners this year from a very impressive group of entries were:



The Granary Baarn was at standing room only for much of the weekend but you can see some of teh activity here during a less busy moment

In First Place Michelle Bolton with her frighteningly realistic 'IMPALA EWE' winning the splendid trophy that features Cressing Temple Barns plus £500 of vouchers to spend with Classic Hand Tools.

In Second Place was Gerry Guiver with his 'MUSIC TO MY EARS' piece in the style of Grinling Gibbons, winning £300 of vouchers.

In Third Place was Peter Benson with his carving 'SEARCHING FOR WISDOM', a very clever idea and well presented, winning £200 of vouchers.

We all thank Mike Hancock for his generous donation to BWA Essex which enables us to attract so much interest in our competition and congratulated him on organising a very enjoyable woodworking show yet again.

This year, we surpassed previous years in terms of quality of carvings overall and the number of votes that were cast very enthusiastically by the public. We received 27 very good entries, counted over 1600 votes and I estimate that over 2000 members of the public visited our barn.

From my position, sitting at the end of the barn, halfway round the display of entries as voters visit the tables containing the carvings, I got a very good view of the reactions of the public when they decided which carvings they liked best. I got a great deal of questions to answer including 'Where are the prices?', 'What tree does Jelutong come from?' and 'How long did it take to carve that?'

However! The comments made by large numbers of the public in praise of the carvings and the looks of amazement on their faces as they gazed in admiration really made me realise our carvers



Here the Wheat Barn looks liek a Cathedral in wood. The surroundings make for a fantastci show

have a very special skill, a skill of course that we can pass on to anyone who is keen and dedicated enough to 'Give it a Go'. Many went a lot further than just casting their vote for the carving of their choice by adding a complimentary comment on their voting slip. I would like to let you have a few example comments which would give the carvers involved a very good reason (if a reason was needed) to continue to enter more shows in future, they are as follows:

'Amazing, Simple but awesome'
'Very intricate and pleasing to the eye'
'Took my breath away and stopped me in my tracks'
'It is very lifelike and striking'
'Brilliant use of that wood'

All of the BWA Essex members who attended and helped to make the competition as enjoyable as possible for the visiting public will have been very proud and will be putting their names forward to attend in 2017.

By Brian Pitcher

Imapala Ewe By Michelle Bolton



Music to My Ears

By Gerry Guiver



Searching for Wisdom

By Peter Benson



Laurel & Hardy

By Dave Lodge



Book

By Derek Drain



Lacey

By Maureen Hockley



A host of Golden Daffodils

By John Richards



Easter Island Man

By Michelle Bolton



Padlock & Chain

By Peter Roberts



Drayman

By Derek Drain



I only want My Ball

By Derek Drain



Not Another Tea Party

By John Urbanowski



War & Peace

By John Urbanowski



Juggling Jester

By Gerry Guiver



Based on a design by Ian Norbury

Barn Owl

By Steve Smart



Octopus

By John Hollerbach



Jaguar

By Gordon Pringle



Cat

By David Bourne



A Lifetime of Prayer

By Sheila Humphrey



Humpty Dumpty

By Gordon Pringle



Lighthouse

By David Bourne



Frogs

By David Bourne



Ladle

By Jason Townsend



Owl

By David Bourne



Cow Puncher

By Derek Drain



Tropical Marine Fish

By Michelle Bolton



Spanish Bull

By Anthony Smith



REVIEW

For stockists please see: www.trend-uk.com

Trend AirShield Pro

The AirShield Pro from Trend is a powered full-face respirator that can run off of its own internal battery or can be run from the mains. I have previously used disposable dust masks to protect myself when sanding or sawing. I found them to do a reasonable job but had trouble fitting the mask around my nose. I decided to upgrade to a half-face dust

mask with disposable filters and for that I chose the Trend AirAce. I found this to be superior to the disposable masks but the rubber seal still let gaps around the top of my nose which is quite narrow. I looked around for a full-face dust mask and liked the idea of the Trend AirShield Pro. This mask has two disposable filters and has a cuff that extends below the chin to form a good seal. It is also an active filter, using a motor to drive air through the filters, over the face and out of the bottom of the mask.

Overall, I like the Airshield Pro – It covers my whole face and offers very good protection from dust. Forcing the air down over the face also means that the visor doesn't steam up which is a

great idea – it also keeps you cool when working. There are a few things that could be improved in my opinion though. The method of tightening the mask around the head needs improving: it could be more comfortable and tends to come loose quite often. In a future version, I would like to see the NiMH battery swapped for a Lithium battery to improve run-time and longevity. I found the noise from the motor to be uncomfortable for long periods of time. It would be nice to see a future version with the motor and filters in a separate pack to reduce the weight of the mask: It can be quite uncomfortable to look down when wearing the mask. Saying all that though, it is an excellent product and offers superior protection to anything else that I have used.



ed.

BWA AGM 2016 - 7th May @ Hatfield House, Herts

The Hertfordshire Region members cordially invite you to the BWA AGM to be held at the 'Riding School' (conference centre) of the 7th Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury's family home, Hatfield House. Superb examples of Jacobean craftsmanship can be seen throughout Hatfield House, such as the Grand Staircase with its fine carving. Quite apart from being able to visit the many historic mementos in the house, there are also the West and East gardens and the Old Palace to visit. If you are looking for a different retail experience that offers you unique products in a unique location, then go on the web to find out more information.

In addition, there will be a vibrant showcase of Living Crafts featuring a huge range of both contemporary and heritage crafting skills, including



workshops, specialist masterclasses and demonstrations. Refer to The Woodcarvers Gazette Summer 2015 edition, page 10, for a report of the BWA participation in the 2015 event.

Details of the programme for the AGM, plus a booking form and available accommodation details for the event will be included in the Spring 2016 edition of

The Woodcarvers Gazette. We do hope you will join us.

Living Crafts will be running from Thursday 5th May through until Sunday 8th May. In addition, there are many other local attractions nearby. Further details will be listed in the programme.

By Mark Davis



An Interview with Ben Law

Ben Law is the author of a number of excellent books including his latest 'Woodland Craft'. He is an advocate of the working wood and has been featured in several television programmes including 'A Cook on the Wild Side' and 'Grand Designs' for Channel 4. I believe his Roundwood Timber-framed House was voted the nation's favourite Grand Design.

How did wood and trees first become part of your life?

I got involved with working with trees and wood from an environmental perspective. Having visited the Amazon and seen rainforest destruction first hand at the end of the 1980s, I concluded that good forest management and producing locally sustainably managed timber was the best way to reduce pressure on our need for tropical hardwoods. This on my return to West Sussex led me to becoming a woodsman - that was 25 years ago.



Chestnut and hazel bowback stick chair

What is your favourite wood to work?

It has to be sweet chestnut - not because it's a great carving wood! but it's what I mainly have in the wood and it is what I know and understand. It's fast coppice re-growth ensures a constant supply of material, it's tiny amount of sap wood makes it ideal for Roundwood Timber Framing, it's high level of tannins ensures it's excellent durability, its ability to cleave so well makes it excellent for many of the

woodland Crafts from which I earn my living like pales, post and rail, shakes and laths.

Do you have a favourite (individual) tree and what does it mean to you?

There is an Oak standard below my house that stands high in the coppice. It is more like a parkland tree than a forest tree as it has a well-developed crown. It is a young/middle aged oak (about 360 years) and full of vitality. It is particularly beautiful in the winter when it's branching patterns resemble a brain overlooking the woodland. It is a tree that I am drawn too through good and bad times in my life, and my children have grown up with it as a place we tell stories - it is an important part of our lives.



Chestnut Deck, ballustrade, chair and roof made by Ben for Prince Harry's 'Sentebale' charity garden at Chelsea Flower Show 2015. The Garden won the people's choice award.

Are we seeing a resurgence in the management of our woodlands?

Yes and no! There is a growth in activity in the woods and most of it is good but the demand for firewood is encouraging some exploitation of woodlands where short term gain is put before the long term management of the woodland. The growth of interest in continuous



Ben peeling Chestnut poles



Ben's Grand Design, 13 years after construction

cover forestry will hopefully begin to see a move away from the plantation/clearfell model which has been so dominant over the past 100 years and the revival in coppice management and associated crafts will bring more people into contact with woodlands and its associated management will be beneficial for increasing bio-diversity.



Reciprocal roof

What's the best thing about working with wood?

For me it is the whole process. It is managing the woodland, felling the tree, working the timber and creating the finished craft product. The joy of holding



Trough made from Norway maple

the finished product having gone through that process is far greater than purchasing timber whose history I do not know and then making a product from it.

Do you do a lot of woodcarving?

No, not what would generally be described as wood carving but through my Roundwood Timber Framing work, I create joints like the 'butterpat' joint that involve a lot of carving. These joints are scribed using a scribing tool and carved out using framing chisels and gouges as they are curved in shape. In some ways my house is a bit like a building scale wood carving!



Bespoke chestnut and oak gate

Do you have a favourite carved wooden object in your home?

I do, it is carved by the wind, the sun and the sea. It is a small piece of drift wood made from an oak branch that I collected off my favourite beach 35 years ago. I spend time on the beach every year and when I am at home it reminds me of that special place - nature is a great wood carver!

Are tree diseases having an increasing impact on you as a woodsman?

Without a doubt, tree diseases are a growing concern for every woodsman. I believe we have been very foolish as an island in our lack of bio-security. When

I visited Australia, I could take no fruit or plant material into the country, I was sprayed down on arrival as I left the plane and my boots were cleaned - this was 30 years ago! We could at least begin similar measures now to help stop further diseases arriving on imported plants or under the bark of imported timber logs. Meanwhile our best defence as a woodsman is diversity. I am already diversifying the chestnut coppice stands I have as I believe our woodlands best chance for survival is diversity of species. Education of the public is important, how many of you clean your boots after a walk through one woodland before walking through another? This is not a criticism, I never thought about it myself in the past but now we need to adopt it as normal behaviour.



Sculptured 'butterpat' joint

As someone who works very closely with trees and the wood they produce, do you think the government does enough to support home-grown timber?

No, the government could do a lot

more. The 'Grown in Britain' campaign has been positive but I would like to see the government adopting bio-security measures like Australia's and to bring in a tax on timber miles. In other words timber is measured from source to destination and a tax per mile (or km) is placed on it. We would soon think twice about buying tropical hardwoods over timber from our local woodlands if an environmental tax on distance travelled was introduced.



The Government's Grown in Britain campaign to help push home-grown timber and timber products

Are young people getting more or less interesting in working with wood?

This one is hard to gauge - in a digital age where most young people are experiencing making something from wood on an animated game rather than touching the raw material we should be concerned! However, there are positive signs - I am getting an increasing number of applications for apprenticeships and many are searching for a more practical/real involvement with life and then there is "Spoonfest". If someone had said to me 10 years ago that there would be a festival where young people would turn up and camp for a few days and make spoons and it is sold out; I would never have believed it! 'Spoonfest' offers for many young people their first contact with wood - that magical moment when they first create a useable object with their hands. If spoonfest sells out, then let's have 'bowlfest', 'basketfest', 'carvingfest' (over to you to organise this one) and many more. Let's introduce young people to the delights of working with wood through fun gatherings where they learn and enjoy themselves - then when they get older, the seed will have been sown and they will have a project in their workshop like you and me!

For more information on Ben or to sign up for one of his courses, please visit www.ben-law.co.uk

ed.



2015



Michelle Bolton accepting the Westonbirt Trophy from Andrew Smith

Westonbirt Arboretum, once again, hosted TREEFEST over the August Bank Holiday Weekend. The BWA were represented by Gloucestershire, Essex, South Wales and Hertfordshire Regions, who each provided demonstrations, exhibits and much interaction with the public.

Treefest is a great day out for all the family with craft stalls; children's activities; hawk flying displays; the Black Mountain Axe Men and excellent 'alternative' catering (Portuguese Custard Tarts anyone?). Although the weather

was not at its best, everyone enjoyed themselves.

Carvings entered for the Westonbirt Trophy Competition were of a very high standard and attracted many compliments with over 1200 members of the public voting for their favourite carving. Over the weekend the BWA had about 2,000 people visit our marquees. The completion results are laid out below and photographs of the entries are also shown here (except for Nos. 11 and 14 which were withdrawn as they were sold). The Westonbirt

Trophy was kindly presented by Andrew Smith, Director of Westonbirt Arboretum.

1st Place:

Michelle Bolton with 'Impala Ewe'

2nd Place:

John Urbanowski with 'Oh No! Not another Tea Party'

3rd Place:

Stewart Clapham with 'Kingfisher Plaque'

By Lynn Kimm

Gothic Panel

By Ian Lloyd-Oswell



Crane Plaque

By Ian Lloyd-Oswell



Kingfisher Plaque

By Stewart Clapham



Bramble Plaque

By Stan Kimm



Impala Ewe

By Michelle Bolton



Kingfisher

By Jane Moss



Man with Rifle

By Steve Peers



Trees Mirror

By Derek Edwards



Not another Tea Party

By John Urbanowski



Art Deco Mirror

By Karen Peers



Tropical Marine Fish

By Michelle Bolton



Carousel Horse

By Ken Jones



Tinkerbell Clock

By Terry Peterson



Grinling Gibbons Clock

By Tony Bush



Love Spoon

By Bryan Harris



Cricket

By Dave Johnson



Fairy House

By Ron Jones





Questions & Answers

A CARVING ODYSSEY

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

Will Barsley answers a few questions about his travels across Asia looking at woodcarving traditions.

Which country that you visited has the most interesting carving styles?

That's a tricky one to answer as all of them had their own unique styles and history, but the one that stood out the most to me was Bali. I spent a long time getting to know quite a few carvers there and their style and technique was incredible. Besides the skill of carving on the floor holding the piece with their feet, hammering chisels just centimetres from their toes, their style of carving was particularly striking. Much of their figurative work is elongated, which creates a beautiful fluidity and elegance. Balinese carvers tend to let the wood inspire their work, adapting and incorporating knots and twists in the design. I really hope to go back again sometime in the future.

Did you take a toolkit on your travels and if so what did it consist of?

I did, over the five months my cycling panniers slowly got heavier and heavier with all the chisels and various pieces of carving I was collecting along the way. I think two or three times I sent big parcels back to the UK with my carvings in, it was a huge relief to find them waiting for me when I returned home. In Canada I picked up a very small multi chisel set from Lee Valley, this was perfect for travelling, small, lightweight and pretty good quality steel.

What are the most unusual woodcarving tools that you came across in your travels?

Three different types spring to mind. The most unusual and ingenious carving chisels I saw were made out of bicycle spokes. The Malaysian carver Nik

Rashiddin Nik Hussien used to find them perfect for carving intricate Keris heads (a traditional dagger believed to have mystical powers).

Balinese tools were pretty unusual (see photo), I saw similar types of chisels all around Asia. They were simple strips of metal without any handle, slightly longer than our chisels in the UK. They took some getting used to and definitely toughen up the hands!



Balinese chisels

Finally the chisels I saw in India used for intricate block wood carving in Jaipur, were incredible and perfectly suited to the job (See photo). They were about a third the size of our standard chisels in the UK and similar to Bali in that they had no wooden handles.



Block wood printing chisels of Jaipur, India

Do the woodcarvers that you met manage to make a good living?

It depends how you define a 'good' living I suppose. Compared to woodcarvers in the 'west' then no, in general they receive very little for their time and skill.



Author and carver Will Barsley

There was definitely a difference between successful independent artists I met and those carving in big workshops that employ 10-20 woodcarvers. Very roughly an average wage for a skilled woodcarver in Vietnam was around £90-150 a month. It is seen as much more of a 'trade', like carpentry or plumbing is seen here.

I recommend a fantastic book, which focuses exactly on this question of livelihoods, it's called 'Carving out a future: forests, livelihoods and the international woodcarving trade'.



A balinese mermaid I carved out of Hibiscus wood



A Lao woodcarver from the indigenous group the Ta Oy's

Can you list and describe some of the species of wood that were being used in your travels?

In Malaysia I came across quite a lot of Chengal Wood, a heavy tropical hardwood, highly prized and reserved for only the finest and most important carvings, it's beautiful to carve and has a wonderful golden colour. In Bali they use a lot of Crocodile or satin wood which is a white wood and relatively hard to carve. Hibiscus wood is also used quite a

lot, I carved a Balinese mermaid using a piece of this with a master carver called Ida Wayana Mudana (see photo).

Where were the majority of the carvings that you saw being carved, destined for (overseas, local shops, commissions, etc.)?

Good question, it was quite varied actually. In Laos and Vietnam many of the carvings were commissioned for locals or destined for nearby countries.



Block wood printing in Jaipur

Predominately though most of the carvings were for the tourist industry in some shape or form, whether it be directly for sale on the street, used to decorate hotels and restaurants or shipped abroad. In many places however, I met woodcarvers working on beautiful pieces destined for local temples, such as Buddha's statues and decorative work.

By Will Barsley



The elephant carving workshop of Ban Jang Nak, Thailand



An Interview with Kristin Levier

We meet innovative American furniture maker, woodcarver and woodturner Kristin Levier.

How did you get involved with woodcarving?

10 years ago I moved to a small town in Idaho and within a month met a very talented woodturner and carver, Jim Christiansen. He welcomed me into his shop and we have been working together for 10 years now. When I first went to his shop I had planned to return to woodturning and furnituremaking, but seeing Jim make amazing carved sculptural work led me down an entirely different path. I took to micromotor carving very quickly. The freedom involved in making sculpture is vast and I really love to do this kind of work.

What is your favourite carving to date?

The first spoon I ever made, Spring Spoon, and Ominousa burl bowl. I think that Ominousa is an acquired taste, but as a former microbiologist I find beauty in strange waggily, tentacle-y creatures. As I have spent time with Ominousa, she seems to have developed quite a personality: stalwart and calm, but with a deep reserve of fierceness ready to be tapped if necessary. It's not just me! My photographer told me that he started talking with her by the time he was done with her photo shoot.

What are the main influences on your work?

Nature. Plants, microbes, sea creatures, horns, shells, insects, seeds, rocks, ice...

What is your favourite tool in your workshop?

My micromotor carvers. My new favorite is a portable battery powered micromotor pocket drill by Mystisa. I got it for working when I am outdoors off the grid, but the handpiece is so small and light that I find myself using it almost every day in the shop in its plugged-in mode.

Do you prefer woodcarving or woodturning, or are the two integral in your work?

They are definitely both integral to the work I am doing now and I really like doing both, but I think I look most forward to a carving day. Carving is like drawing in 3-dimensions, and I have

always loved to draw. I find it very meditative.

A lot of your work is mixed-media, is wood your favourite material?

Yes. I really respond to a lot of glass, metal, ceramic and fiber work, but I am in love with wood grain. A piece of straight grain hardwood is so beautiful and has such warmth. I spend a lot of time matching my design to a piece of wood to get the proper grain pattern. I don't love sawdust, but I can't imagine ever leaving wood totally behind.

Do you have a favourite wood?

I am a minimalist and prefer straight grain, closed-grain wood, particularly Cherry and Maple. I did find a piece of 8/4 straight grain Zebrawood this year that I am in awe of. It is just gorgeous.

Can you explain how you use compressed wood?

Compressed hardwood is regular hardwood that has undergone a thermo-mechanical, chemical-free industrial process that allows it to be bent at room temperature. The cell walls are literally accordion-folded, allowing the wood to be bent along its long axis in any direction like a hospital straw. Despite this, compressed wood can be worked like regular wood in almost all ways. Besides the fact that I don't have to worry about working with hot wood coming out of a steamer, compressed hardwood has some advantages over steam bent wood that makes it perfect for the work I do. I can bend most of the components of my pieces by hand with no clamping, which gives me a lot of control over the bends I make.

I usually pre-saw, lathe-turn and/or carve a piece of compressed wood close to the final shape I desire, then



soak the piece in water overnight. I then hand bend the piece to the shape I want. I sometimes use jigs that I make out of rigid foam and immobilize the wood with clamps or hardware or ties for more complicated bends. I then use a hair dryer to dry the wood for a few minutes, which sets it into shape. (Although I can resoak and reshape a piece that didn't bend as I wanted. Compressed



'Sprig' necklace



'Horn VI'

wood remains bendable until a moisture-impermeable finish is applied to it.)

Compressed hardwood is amazing. It allows me to make things that I don't know if I could otherwise make. I highly recommend it for adding curved elements.

What projects are you working on at the moment?

I was away from my shop traveling for a few months, and now I am tackling a drawer full of partially made spoon sculptures to ease back into work. I am always inspired to work on spoons, which are powerful symbols to me: of



'Walker'

family, sustenance, nourishment. I have a much more ambitious project developing in my head that I am working up to.

Are there any other woodcarvers whose work you admire?

Bruno Walpoth, Ron Layport, Jacques Vesery, Dixie Biggs, Alain Mailland, and Janel Jacobsen, to name a few.

Do you sketch out your projects before carving them or make maquettes in clay?

I sketch everything – I have a big file of sketches waiting for a rainy day -- but I have also started to make very rough maquettes, often with clay and pipe cleaners. A 2-D sketch does not suffice for my more complicated sculptures and I end up making design mistakes that I later regret unless I make a 3-D model of some sort.

For more information about Kristin or to see some more of her work, please visit her website: www.kristinlevier.com



'Ominousa burl bowl'

ed.

BWA Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire

The Ox & Bucks Branch have just concluded their Annual Exhibition and Les Owen's Competition in The Community Shop, Abingdon. Over five days, Monday to Friday, several hundred local residents visited.

Members of the Ox & Bucks Woodcarvers submit carvings that have not been entered previously in the competition and the Winner holds the Les Owen Cup for the next year. With many excellent carvings to choose from, the public cast their votes for which they liked best, marking First, Second, Third. Every entry received votes. The winners were:



'Cap in Hand' by Linda Dales

1st: Linda Dales with 'Cap in Hand' - a wonderful, imaginative carving of Cap in Hand, complete with a cheese sandwich, dead mouse, buttons, sweet and I.O.U. A quite excellent example of originality and very unique.



'Funghi & Friends' by William Stevens



Close-up of 'Funghi & Friends'



2nd: William Stevens with 'Funghi & Friends' - again a real one-off, as the large mushroom and surrounding undergrowth, are joined by nature's friends, bugs, flies, butterflies and field mouse: Some carved from cocktail sticks, grass and rose thorns. A magnificent concept, painstakingly carved



'Red Squirrel' by Richard Soulsby

3rd: Richard Soulsby with 'Red Squirrel' - complete with a nut in its paws. Very detailed, excellent finish and a well-deserved third place.



'Out of the darkness' by Jeff Wheeler

4th: Jeff Wheeler with 'Out of the darkness' - an original idea of a silhouette of the cat coming out of the dark.



'Tudor Rose' by Angie Stevens

5th: Angie Stevens with 'Tudor Rose' - Angie's first carving in deep relief, well done!



Also displayed were many other carvings produced by our Members, some of the carvings are over 40 years old and the carver is still carving. The photographs clearly show the range of carvings; faces, animals, sculptures, scenes, buildings, all demonstrating to the public the versatility of our members. Such an event cannot be staged without the full support of ALL of the Members - it was totally a team effort. It has become a social event.



As a direct result of the Exhibition, we have attracted another two definite members and many others have shown an interest in joining us. Linda, Richard Angela and William are fairly recent members, clearly demonstrating that The Ox & Bucks Woodcarvers is in a healthy state.

By Brian Eastoe



BWA North East London & West Essex

During the August Bank Holiday weekend, the NELWE Region of the BWA attended the Havering Show with the Essex Region of the BWA. The event was a great success. On display were Pub Signs carved by our members. The challenge to carve a Pub sign was set last November, with the sign to be carved from a block of Lime wood 7"x 8"x 2".



Members of the public were asked to judge their favourite at the show. The winner was 'The Hare and Hound' by Gill Brett. Second Place was 'The Dragon' by Gillian Shepherd, Third Place was 'The Swan' by Julia Macaulay and Fourth Place was 'The Green Man' by Sheila Humphreys.

The NELWE Region welcomes all visitors when we meet on the 2nd Saturday of every month at Nelmes Church Hall, Hornchurch, Essex. Our carving challenge for 2016 will be to carve a hat out of a piece of Cherry wood.



'The Swan' by Julia Macaulay



'The Prince of Wales' by Dave Colvin



'The Hare & The Hounds' by Gill Brett



'The Nags Head' by Roy Ellis



'The Green Man' by Sheila Humphreys



'The Queens Head' by Anthony Smith



'The Dragon' by Gillian Shepherd



'Closed' by Graeme Cockburn



'Brass Monkey' by John Urbanowski



'The 19th Hole' by Bob Grey

By Martin Howells

BWA Durham & North Yorkshire (Coniscliffe)

It's been a busy year for the BWA Durham and North Yorkshire region. The club has attended seven events with the club stand having both a large display of member's carvings, as well as members demonstrating live woodcarving to the public and answering any questions visitors may have.



Colin Laycock carving at the Darlington Event

The object of our public events is to promote woodcarving, our own club and the BWA. We hand out leaflets giving general information that also has links to the BWA and our own club's websites. People really do seem to come up and speak more while the actual carving is being done. We have gained new members directly this year from both the events and the club website.



Members with our Northshields stand

As for the shows, we kicked off the year in July at North Shields Heritage Skills day, where we had a lovely pitch overlooking the river Tyne and brilliant weather. We were even visited by a pirate. At the beginning of August we experienced a totally different setting indoors at a national Railway Museum Model Mania weekend in Shildon, which attracted lots of interested visitors. One family were even over here from Germany. The lady was an art teacher who had tried stone and woodcarving.



At the Stokesley Event

From here we headed to Slaley Country Show way up in Northumberland. Again we met many visitors and all children showing an interest in our work were rewarded by Dave Winders with one of his cute carved wizards.

At the end of August we were in the show tent at the increasingly popular Durham Flower Show where Michael and Adam, two of our junior members, showed off their skills. They attracted many visitors, especially families who watched as the lads carved. Early September we headed south to Guisborough, where we exhibited alongside the Cleveland club at the forest festival, set in the woodland itself alongside many other woodcrafts. Again south of the region we attended the Stokesley country Show, a very busy show, where our display again attracted much interest. Late September we were at the Darlington Railway Museum 'Head of Steam' event: This was the railways 190th anniversary. Here we had an excellent spot at the entrance to the museum, in a large corner tent that gave us plenty of room to demonstrate.

I think all members attending the exhibitions had a great time and met many interesting people. We also shared many a laugh together. The club would like to thank all members who have helped with the events and loaned carvings for the displays over the summer. Special thanks must also go to Brenda Simpson who as our Events secretary has done a first class job of arranging all the shows.

Various members of the club have had some success at competitions during the summer. Some of the competitions were held at the shows the club was attending with the display/demonstration stand.



Entries at the Slaley Show

Slaley Show, Northumberland - 8th August Maurice Walker one of the clubs oldest members had a very successful day at Slaley Show in Northumberland.



Helen Smith's 'Feather'

Maurice came first and second in both the relief and the in the round classes of the competition, also receiving the Hexhamshire Hardwoods trophy cup for the best carving in the show. Relief Class 1st Prize was 'Watermill scene' (also best carving in show) and 2nd was 'Pheasant fire screen'. In-The-Round class 1st Prize was 'Bear & Cub' and 2nd was 'Vixen and Cubs'. Ronnie Allen from the club also came third with his horse carving for the In-The-Round class. Helen Smith was also awarded a commended ticket for her 'feather' carving in the novice section.



Cherie Kemp's 'Cottage by the Stream'

The Great Yorkshire show - 12th July
Mick McCabe came 3rd with his pointer dog carving. *Stokesley Agricultural Show - 19th Sept* Cherie Kemp came first with her relief carving 'Cottage by the stream'.



Corey Wilson getting some tips from Mike Painter

One of the clubs new members Corey Wilson who is 17 years old recently met Michael Painter at the G.S Timber open day event in Cumbria. Corey is very keen to learn and was delighted to get some tips from Michael and also this good photo too. As you can see in beginners corner Corey has been putting these tips to good use. More photos of competitions and the carvings can be seen on the website:

www.coniscliffecarvingclub.org

By Mick McCabe

Glyn Mould

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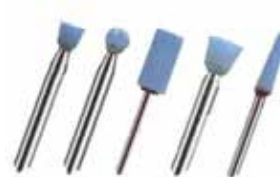
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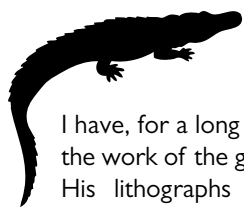


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CROCODILE METAMORPHOSIS

I have, for a long time, been fascinated by the work of the graphic artist M C Escher. His lithographs and woodcuts feature impossible constructions and images based on tessellating shapes and figures. His lithograph "Reptiles" (1943), in particular, lends itself to being reproduced in three dimensions as a wood carving.

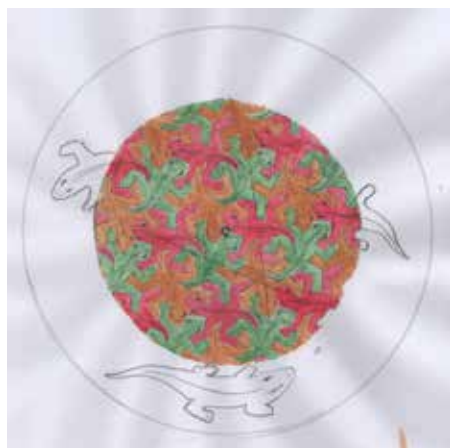


M. C. Escher's Reptiles

It features a drawing of his desk top with a book opened at a page of tessellating lizards from which a creature emerges. It then metamorphoses into a crocodile which climbs over the objects on the desk before disappearing back into the picture. I resolved to use the idea as the basis of a carving of a crocodile which emerges from a bowl of tessellating lizards.

Lacking the skills and equipment to turn a bowl of any size, let alone one with a diameter of 42cm, I approached local wood turner, Jack Foreman, who agreed to help. This still left me with the problem of the lizards.

The idea was to make a circular jigsaw of lizards in three woods (walnut, cherry and sycamore) which could then be let into the bowl. Sizing was important as the lizards needed to radiate from the centre and eventually reach the edge in such a way that two of them could emerge onto



My working template

the rim of the bowl in the right position. Images of the lizards were cut and pasted and endlessly photocopied, enlarged and reduced until a working template was established.

All that was needed now was to reproduce it in wood!

This needed to be 3cm. thick so that the dish of the bowl could eventually be turned. The image of the lizard, once printed out, could be glued to the wood and cut out.



Individual lizard template

Easier said than done! My scroll saw was not up to the job but eventually I found that I could make a reasonable job of it with the narrow bladed band saw.

Now the problems started! I could just about make two lizards fit together but there was no way that the third was even close. The problem was that the slightest error in one was magnified many times in the adjacent one and if continued would be compounded so much that by the time I got to the edge, it would become unrecognisable as a lizard. The problem was eventually resolved by extensive use of the photocopier. Each time a lizard was added I photocopied the resulting block.



Ready for the bandsaw



This image was then superimposed onto the much copied working template and the next lizard adjusted so that it would fit the template. Eventually I finished the core of the bowl. The lizards were by no means identical but at least they were lizards even if some of them had very fat thighs!



Fitting the lizards together

So it was back to Jack who turned the bowl in elm and let in the block of thirty or so lizards that made up the centre of the bowl. All that remained to finish the bowl itself was to outline the lizards and add detail using a pyrograph. Any imperfections in the joins could be filled with coloured wax once the bowl was finished and oiled.



The large maquette

The next things to consider were the three crocodiles that were to go on the rim. It is important to really understand your subject and I always use a maquette but



Using filler for another maquette

this time, rather than make one I bought a plastic model from a toy shop.

A little "plastic" surgery allowed it to fit the rim and I was ready to begin carving. The basic outline of the main figure was cut out of a piece of walnut on the band saw and glued to a block of pine for clamping. A piece of thin card between the surfaces when gluing enabled the finished piece to be easily removed from the clamping block without damage.

The two intermediate figures posed more of a problem. The underside of the wood had to be made to fit the bowl. After making a rough fit, chalk was applied to the surface of the bowl and the piece of walnut offered up to it. High spots were thus identified and removed and eventually, after much repetition, a snug fit was obtained. I was able to use my photocopied images to accurately mark out the shapes which were then cut out on the band saw. To mount the pieces



onto a clamping block I first glued a thin sheet of card to the underside of the walnut and then fixed it to the block with car body filler. This took up the shape of the walnut and enabled me to carve without damaging the chisel.

Carving the intermediate figures was relatively easy as they did not require a lot of detail a part from the head of the

emerging crocodile. The main figure was more of a challenge but the accurate maquette was a great help with the various

scale patterns. The open jaws were left to last and I was quite pleased with the finished result. It has to be said, though, that I would never have completed it without the continued help and support of my tutor, Mike Painter.

Lessons learned? Always resource more wood than you think you require. Some of the colour matches are not good since I had to buy replacement wood halfway through the project. Choose something simpler next time!

By John Francklow



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An Interview with Will Barsley

Author of the Carving Countries articles and City & Guilds student Will Barsley, takes a moment to answer a few questions.

How did you get into woodcarving? Does woodwork run in the family?

Growing up in the Kent countryside I was fortunate to be surrounded by some beautiful woodlands, which together with my father's love of carpentry had a great impact on me. Experimenting with his old lathe was what first sparked my own interest in woodwork. The family heritage actually lies in tailoring, with my great grandfather having opened a family department store, Barsley's, back in 1891, which is still in the family and thriving to this day. Woodcarving for me began as a simple way to make cheap yet heartfelt presents for friends and family, but in my early 20's grew into a real passion and pursuit. My desire to master the art of woodcarving inspired my recent journey across Asia (Carving Countries), which opened my eyes to the breadth and variety of woodcarving around the world.



My current carving, newel caps for an 18th century house in Kent, this one with an Irish theme

Where do you want to be in 10 years time?

That's a good question, to be honest I hope I will still be at my workbench completely absorbed in woodcarving and pushing myself to produce the highest quality work that I can. A big dream of mine is to continue the Carving Countries journey of exploring woodcarving around the world. There are so many incredible countries still to visit that have such a strong and unique woodcarving history. At the moment, Japan is high on my list of places to visit.

Do you have a favourite wood to use?

Recently, I've really been enjoying using chestnut as an alternative to oak.

Although it doesn't have the same beautiful medullary rays that oak does, I find it much easier to carve and it can look nearly identical.

What sort of carving do you prefer to do?

Well I'm currently undertaking a three-year diploma in Ornamental Woodcarving and Gilding at the City and Guilds of London Art School. Recently, we've been carving a lot of acanthus leaves and traditional beading such as egg and dart, which I'm really enjoying.



My carving in Malaysia, replicating an old pulpit ceiling panel that highlights the famous Langkasuka motif and the lotus leaf outline

I am also working on a number of private commissions; one of which is a set of staircase newel caps for an 18th century house in Kent. The owner has Irish and Slovakian links, and so it's been great fun designing and carving those pieces.

Are there any common themes or subjects in your carvings?

To be honest not really at this stage. The next year or two for me are all about embracing new and unique projects that come up, and learning as much about woodcarving as possible. Coming from Kent I am fascinated by Hops and Oast houses, so I've no doubt these will make a strong appearance in my future work.

Do you consider yourself influenced by any particular artists or woodcarvers?

Yes I think so. The woodcarvers I met across Asia had a big impact on my work and continue to provide me with great material for reflection and analysis. A Malaysian woodcarver by the name of Nik Rashiddin Nik Hussien had a lasting effect on me, besides his incredible carving ability it was a lifelong pursuit of discovering the history of traditional Malaysian woodcarving that stood out. On my current course, almost all of



our tutors are practicing woodcarvers and provide constant inspiration, woodcarvers such as Dick Onians, Peter Thuring and Robert Randall.

What is your favourite carving to date?

I guess if I had to choose one I would say it was a Welsh love spoon I made a few years ago for a Welsh friend that was marrying a girl from Canada. I used the Welsh dragon for the top and shaped the Canadian Maple leaf into the spoon, connecting the two with a spiral symbolizing their unity. I try to always invest all my energy into each and every carving I do, but there is always that certain extra special element when carving for a close friend.



Welsh Love Spoon

Do you have any favourite tools?

Definitely! I'm fortunate to have a wonderful collection of my grandfather's old carving chisels that date back to around the 1920s, which includes some really unique shapes. Besides this, I've just invested in my first ball vice, which I'm absolutely loving, it's made an incredible difference being able to pivot and spin my carvings so easily.

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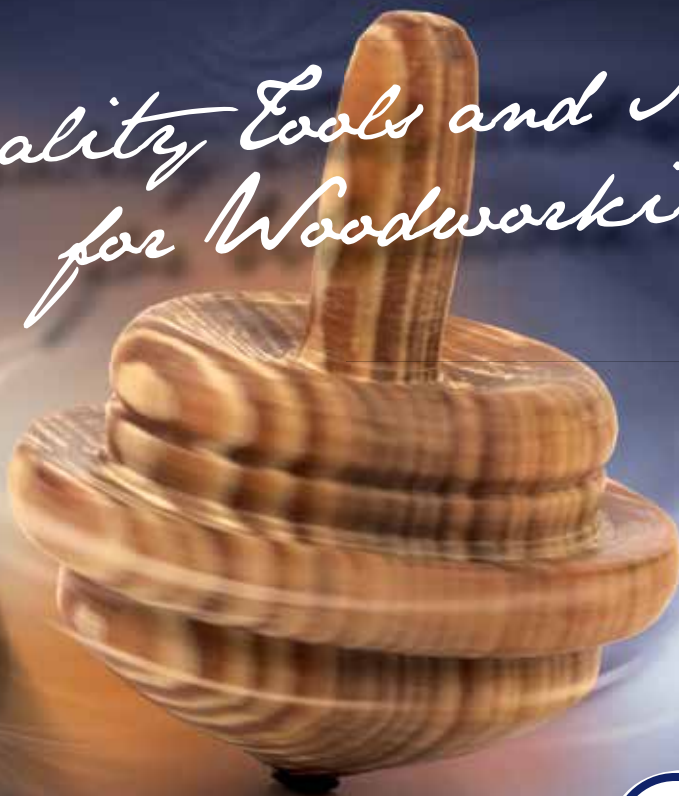
Membership of the BWA is open to people from outside of Britain as well as those in Britain itself.

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Here is a selection of photographs showing some of the entries from this year's International Woodcarving Congress in the USA. This was the 49th annual congress. The photographs were all taken by Marc Featherly.



Flight Without Wings

By Don Bent



Remnants of My Old Home Place

By Kenneth Alvey



Green Man

By Carole Jean Boyd



Territorial Dispute

By Sandy Czajka



Hobbit

By Donald Mertz

On The Prowl

By Kay Gabriel



Basket of Wild Flowers

By Charlotte Phillips



Flying High out of Water

By James Thalacker



Play Time

By Lila Gilmer



Thor

By Bridges Dillehay



Harvest Bounty

By Charlie Arnold



Drowzy Days

By Jerry Niles



Sage

By Donald Mertz



Bowl-in-Cage

By Kenneth Bedel



For more information on the International Woodcarving Congress, Affiliated Woodcarvers or to enter the 2016 competition please see the website: www.awcltd.org

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An Interview with Peter Leadbeater

Peter Leadbeater is a furniture designer/ maker turned sculptor. After studying for a degree in Furniture Design and Craftsmanship, Peter has had a successful career creating enormous wooden sculptures and free-standing pieces of furniture.

Does working with wood or craftwork run in the family at all?

I am the first for some generations who has made their living from the craftwork. My parents were in management and teaching, although my mum did have a spell when she made stuffed toys with a friend, which they sold at a local market. I think I still have one of her 'Wombles' somewhere. Interestingly, some of my ancestors did work with white metals making safes, etc. I guess this is where the name Leadbeater must have come from.



Ashford sculpture

What is your favourite wood to work with?

Favourite wood? Almost an impossible question to answer there are so many interesting woods and all have a very different beauty and impact on a piece. I guess it is fair to say as most of my work is for outdoors that my timber of choice is Oak. It is soft to carve when green, is available in large chunks and is very durable.

What is your favourite hand tool and why?

The majority of my work is done with chainsaws, angle grinders, power files and power sanders and rarely do I pick up a hand tool. However I do have a set of palm chisels and they are just perfect for those times I need to add that bit of detail or texture that can only be created by hand carving. They are light weight, easy to control and easy to maintain.

What carvings are you working on at the moment?

I am currently finishing off a three metre tall sculpture made from cedar. It is for Beacon Hill Country Park, near Loughborough, where I am based. The sculpture depicts a giant head peeking through some flowers and is to be set into the wild flower meadow. My next few jobs are for private clients and are an organic form bench, a 3-4 metre tall abstract and then 3 Alice in Wonderland figures all to stand around 4 foot tall and are made from oak. They will have some painted details to bring out certain fun features.

Where do you do most of your carving?

I tend to carve all over the place as a lot of my work is on site in client's gardens, schools, or country parks. However when I can work from my base I am very lucky. I have been artist in residence at Beacon Hill for just over 3 and a half years and I have been allowed, in the middle of a woodland, a small fenced off area with a Hut and a wood burning



Celtic & Fox Abstract



stove. It is beautiful there all year round.

Who has been the biggest influence on your carving?

Another tricky question. I guess I have two main influences one is a Chap called John Houlston who taught me a great deal about form and the balance of form. I worked with him whilst I studied Furniture making at Bucks College in High Wycombe. The other is the ever



'Thoughts of My Lover'

increasing skilled collection of Chainsaw carvers out there. The skills and ambition they show with not only the scale but the detail/form of the work, just keeps me pushing to try harder and harder to keep making the best work.

What do you find to be the most difficult thing about woodcarving?

I think that every carving project has it



Beacon Hill Toad

challenges and problems which need working out. This can both be a pleasure, when things come together, and a pain when they don't. Sometimes the hardest job is just working out how to move some of the sculptures, as on the scale I work they can weigh over a ton. The job I dislike the most is the sanding off of the chainsaw marks as although it is a very important step it is also the most tedious. The thing I find most tricky to resolve in terms of composition is how to detail the background, the bit in between the important carved features. Every day is a learning process.

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

The majority of my tools have disposable sanding belts / discs so these are easy to renew. My chainsaws (of which I have 5) I sharpen by hand with a round file I find this both a great way to keep the saw cutting well but also a good opportunity to reflect on where the next few cuts



Broxtowe Tree Beard

should be. I might sharpen the saw 3-4 times a day.

ed.

REVIEW



Polyco Dyflex Ultra & Dyflex Plus N

The Polyco Dyflex Plus N and the Polyco Dyflex Ultra are both very good gloves. Both gloves offer slightly different features but both are excellent for woodcarving. The Dyflex Plus N has good all-round grip and has extra reinforcement between thumb and palm. Of the two gloves, the Dyflex Plus N offers the best durability and is a slightly heavier-weight glove. The Dyflex 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'. Both gloves are sold in pairs and are readily available from a whole host of online retailers. The Dyflex Ultra is especially good because of its lightweight construction and the fact that it comes in sizes as small as size 6 (particularly useful for those with smaller hands). I have no hesitation in recommending both gloves

For distributors see: www.polyco.co.uk



Polyco Dyflex Plus N

but it is down to personal preference as to which glove suits you and your carving style best.

ed.

BOOK REVIEW



Carving and Painting Christmas Ornaments

By Betty Padden

ISBN: 978-1-56523-843

This is a lovely book full of small projects that would suit both beginners and those with more carving experience. The finished carvings look rather rustic and I would prefer a smoother finish but this is a matter of personal taste. Each beautifully photographed project is accompanied by very clear visual and written instructions and includes patterns for each item as well as suggested amounts of Basswood. Tool sizes and types are suggested and a list is given at the front of the book. I don't think a beginner would have all these tools in their collection and as I am not one for sticking to these suggestions would in truth use whichever tool I think would work best. The projects are all quite small but the patterns could be enlarged or reduced if desired. Tips and techniques for painting the finished pieces really held my interest as I have no experience of painting my carvings. I particularly like the 'Bless This House' ornament and though the book is a Christmas themed book I think this particular project could be adapted to make a lovely house warming gift. I would definitely recommend this.

By Cherie Kemp

MEMBERS GALLERY

Snowman

By Janet Robinson



The snowman is Janet's own design, the tree is from Mike Shipley's book *The Country Bear*

Kingfisher

By Chris Martinali



Holy scene

By Jerry Hughes



Carved from Olive

Galleon in relief

By Jim Morgan



Venice in relief

By Liz Spiers



Carved from Lime

Owl

By Mary Lynch



Wren

By Mary Lynch



Trevor Mills

By Trevor Mills



Carved from Holly on a base of Oak and then painted

Sailing Ship

By Jenny Wesley



Carved from Elm on a base of Concalo. My inspiration for the carving came from an ornament I saw on my travels

Honeycomb

By John Hollerbach



Holy Family

By Geoff Wells



Love Spoon

By Eric Rees



Maori Spiral

By Brian Harris



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

Kissing Couple

By Brenda Simpson



Green Turtle

By Trevor Mills



Carved from Cherry on a Mopani root base

Love Spoon

By Bob Thompson



Birth Plaque

By Anne Corbitt



Christmas Tree

By Lynn Orr



Christmas Tree

By Stewart Clapham



Labyrinth II

By Roger Pearce



Mushroom House

By Helen Smith



Stylised Cheetah

By Maurice Harper



Stag Horn Xmas Decoration

By Richard Peppard



Nativity Set

By Joe Miller



Nativity Scene

By Tony Bush



Neptune

By Alan Robinson



Neptune is based on a netsuke in a book from the British Museum

Hands On...

VICTORIA PLUMS - A WEEKEND PROJECT

I used aspects of a few photographs of Victoria plums (figure 1.) to design a small relief that should not present too many problems, the idea being not to leave too many small spaces.



Figure 1.

PROCEDURE

I drew out a design for the Plums which had enough detail to look right but not so much that it would take too long to carve (see figure 2.).

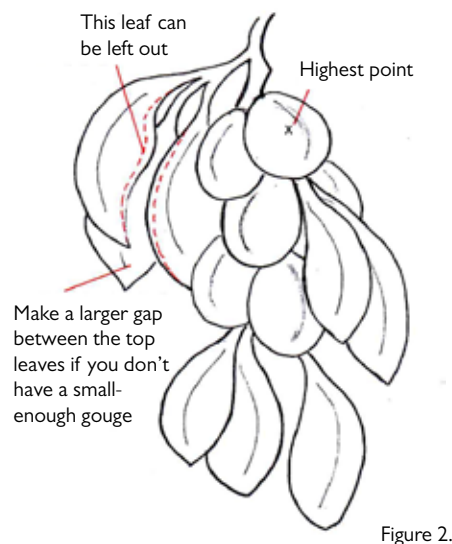


Figure 2.

This is a fairly low relief and it will be helpful to make a plasticine maquette to get the levels right. My maquette is the same size as the carving and only took about an hour to make, time I considered well spent. (see figure 3.)

I used a piece of Lime wood 20cm x 12cm (8" x 5") x 2.5cm (1") thick and finished the back before I started to carve. This saves trying to hold it face down to sand the back at the end.



Figure 3.

Transfer the drawing onto the timber (figure 4.) and mark a line round the edge to give the thickness of the relief.



Figure 4.

Without some kind of guide it is almost inevitable that you will carve upwards from the edge. One method to help avoid this is to drill small holes round the edge of the design making sure they are all the same depth and just a little

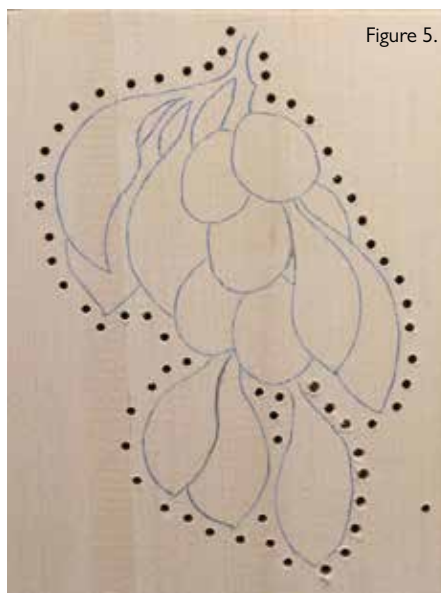


Figure 5.

less deep than the edge line (figure 5.). Another way is to make a simple depth gauge that can be used while there is still a flat surface in the centre.

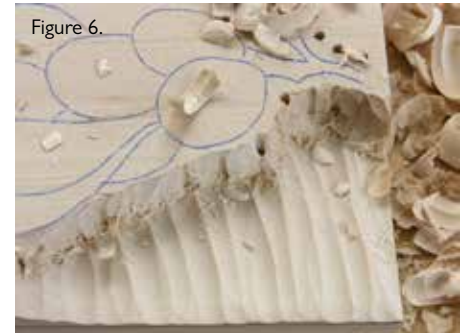


Figure 6.

Start on the background by cutting across the grain with a no.8/13mm up to the line of holes. (figure 6.). When the last sign of the hole disappears you are level with the outside line.



Figure 7.

Cut straight down round the drawing with a no.2 or 3 gouge that best fits the curves and use a no.2/16mm to smooth the background right up to the leaves (figure 7.).

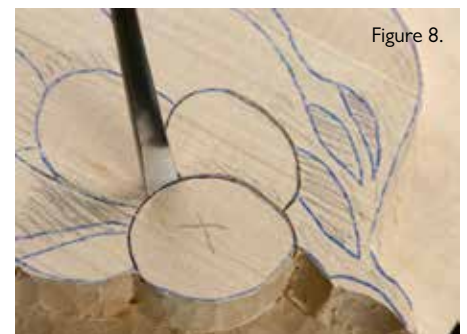


Figure 8.

Stab cut round the plums and mark the places where plums and leaves are lowest (figure 8.).

I used a no.2/12mm and a no.3/12mm

for most of the rest of the carving. Reduce the depth of the left hand leaves and round down to the background (figure 9.). Then cut between the leaves. (figures 10. & 11.)



Figure 9.



Figure 10.



Figure 11.

Round the top plum as everything comes from under this. The plums are best rounded turning your gouge over and using the inside edge (figure 12.).



Figure 12.

Work your way down the carving to the bottom leaves. (figures 13. & 14.)



Figure 13.



Figure 14.

Leaves of the plum tree are fairly flat so I just used a V-tool to indicate veins and

put a little shape on the plums with a no.11/5mm (figure 15.).



Figure 15.

Texturing the background will make the relief stand out more and I chose a no.9/5mm for the job (figure 16.).



Figure 16.

I suggest trying this texturing with different gouges on a spare piece of Lime until you are happy with the effect.



Figure 17.

A carving this size only needs a small hole in the back for hanging and I finished with two coats of Danish Oil (figure 17.).

For different effect the plums can be sanded (figure 18.) and even lightly stained (figure 19.).



Figure 18.



Figure 19.

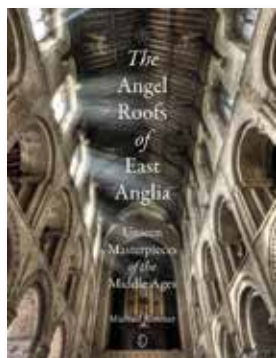
I chose to carve plums because I have the trees in my garden and the way they grow does not leave too many fiddly little gaps, but why not try a similar relief carving of different fruits from your own garden. Should you like to contact Maureen, she can be reached by email on: **hockley.ml@gmail.com**

Tools used:

No.11/5mm gouge
No.9/5mm gouge
No.8/13mm gouge
No.3/12mm gouge
No.2/16mm gouge
No.2/12mm gouge
V-tool

By Maureen Hockley

BOOK REVIEWS



The Angel Roofs of East Anglia

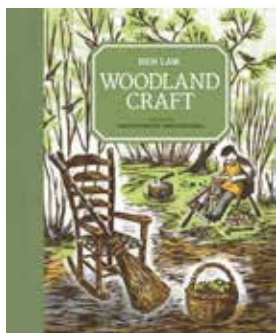
ISBN: 978-0-7188-9369-9

By Michael Rimmer

This is a must-have book for anyone interested in ecclesiastical woodcarving. Michael Rimmer has written a definitive work on the 'Angel Roofs'. An Angel roof is a wooden church roof (a masterpiece in Oak), that makes use usually of Hammer-Beam construction and features carved wooden angels. Angel Roofs are peculiarly restricted to East Anglia on the whole, with some exceptions and the earliest Angel Roof is purportedly Westminster Hall (now part of the Houses of Parliament).

I have had the pleasure of observing quite a few of these Angel Roofs first-hand, being from East Anglia myself and currently living very close to one of the finest examples at St. Wendreda, March. The book features some excellent photographs of the Angel Roofs, both close-up views of the angels and wider views of the whole roofs. Having tried to take such photographs, I am in a position to appreciate how well Michael has done with this book and his photography therein. This book would suit those who have an interest in church carvings, those who have an interest in late-medieval woodwork or those who would like to find and explore some of these churches first-hand. Michael has included great maps and gazetteer for Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.

ed.



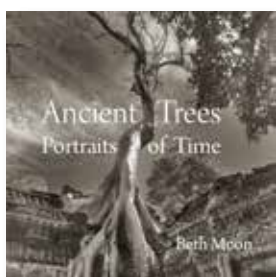
Woodland Craft

ISBN: 978-1-86108-936-6

By Ben Law

I have several of Ben's books and they are all written and illustrated very well. Ben's new book 'Woodland Craft', is no exception. Many crafts are featured in the book, including carving spoons and troughs. Ben has teamed up with other master craftsmen to produce a book that covers everything from the making of fencing to tools to bar stools. If you own your own piece of woodland or take part in any sort of woodland management, then this is an ideal book for you. It covers pretty much everything that you need and want from a book on working with wood in the wood. The book has been divided up into crafts for the farm & garden, crafts for building, and domestic crafts. Ben also describes the common tree species that you will come across, the woodland as a resource and wood as a fuel. The book is well-illustrated with drawings and photographs. I think there is a definite resurgence in woodland craft and green woodworking. Of these crafts, Ben Law is definitely one of the masters and his writings make the reader feel that these crafts still very much have a place in our 21st century lives.

ed.



Ancient Trees

ISBN: 978-0-7892-1195-8

By Beth Moon

Beth Moon's Ancient Trees project has produced a wonderful coffee-table book. I love photography and art books must admit that I am often drawn to looking at the pictures first in most books. This book is a visual feast that reminds one very clearly of how short our time is and how pronounced is the longevity of trees and wood. Beth uses a technique for developing her photos that makes the trees glow and jump up at you from the page. I hope that in my lifetime, I am able to visit some of the great Yews and Oaks in the UK that are featured here in this and other books. Each photograph in the book depicts a scene that is both daunting (because of the huge hulking ancient tree) and exciting (such that you feel that you want to explore every detail of it). If you love trees and enjoy excellent photographs of trees, this is a book for you.

ed.



The Man Who Made Things Out of Trees

ISBN: 978-1-846-14842-2

By Robert Penn

This very readable book is about the journey that Rob Penn has been on with one of his Ash trees. After felling an Ash tree in excess of 100 years old, Rob took it to be sawn and slowly distributed planks and pieces to master craftsmen around the country. Slowly, finished products trickled back into his home made from his Ash tree. Rob accompanies some of the wood on its journey through the hands of the craftsmen, watching bowls being turned on a pole-lathe and watching fine arrows being made in the traditional way. Through the book, Rob tells us about the Ash tree (both the species and his own specimen) and reflects wisely on craftsmanship and wistfully about the woods. If you have seen his BBC television show Tales from the Wild Wood, you will have a fair idea of what to expect from this book. For those who have not seen it, this is a book that celebrates traditional craftsmanship, our relationship with the woodland and the Ash tree.

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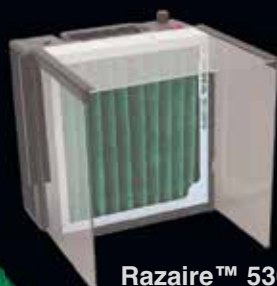
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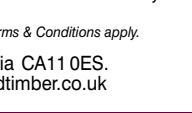
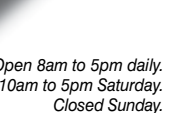
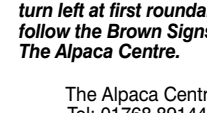
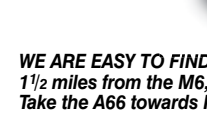


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REVIEW

For stockists please see: www.saburrtooth.com

Saburrtooth 1/8" Shank Burrs

Saburrtooth offer a wide range of rotary TCT burrs in several sizes. They come with shanks of either 1/8" (3.2mm), 1/4" (6.35mm) or 3/32" (2.3mm). The tools that I have been testing have a 1/8" shank. The burrs include Ball-nose, cylinder, flame, Rotosaw (discoid),



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Sphere, Taper and some others. They are available in two versions: Coarse (green coating) and Fine (yellow coating).

Firstly, I should point out that these burrs are rather aggressive. They chomp through wood very readily. I personally found that the coarse burrs (green) were a little too coarse for my purposes. I found that using the fine burrs (yellow), I could then go on to 100-grit sandpaper to start finishing the area. With the coarse burrs, I couldn't go straight onto sandpaper because the marks from the burrs were too deep.

I like the wide range of shapes that Saburrtooth offer and the fact that they offer them in two different grades. For power carving on the small scale, this type



of TCT burr is the first tool that I would use. Afterwards, you could move onto detailing with diamond or other carbide tools that have an even finer grade. I think that the burrs from Saburrtooth have a greater longevity than similar TCT burrs that I have used from Proxxon: They seem to keep their sharpness for longer.

You can get hold of Saburrtooth's 1/8" burrs individually or in packs I believe and they are reasonably priced between £6 and £15 depending on which burr you want. Overall, I think they are good value for money and a very useful addition to your power-carving toolbox.

ed.

OBITUARIES

Derek Dodd

I have sadly to report the death of my dear husband Derek Dodd (member 3061). He was passionate about his carving and belonged to the Essex branch of the BWA meeting in Westcliffe, Essex.

By Mary Dodd

Barrie Robins

Really sad to report the loss of another of our members over in Lancashire. Sadly Barrie Robins lost a very brave fight with cancer in September, and we as a group

will miss him very much. Barrie was our resident photographer, and such a cheerful, helpful lovely man who was very talented with all things wood related, he relished new challenges, for example after having a chainsaw carver do a demo, he went home and had a go himself. And after Peter Berry came and showed us how to do hands with a pointing first finger, Barrie gleefully went home and made a plaque with a whole display of various hand signals, which was his warm humour showing through as usual. Always keen to help the newer carvers, and always interested in how everyone was doing, he always played down his own condition. Green woodworker, stick maker, carver by hand and powertool, pole-lather; he was instrumental in setting up U3A locally to him, where his skills will

be sorely missed. It was a pleasure to have both him and his lovely wife, Marianne at our meetings.

By Sarah Lawrenson



Barrie Robbins

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07	Surrey, Gatwick	Brian Monk	01342 843 421	surrey@britishwoodcarversassociation.co.uk
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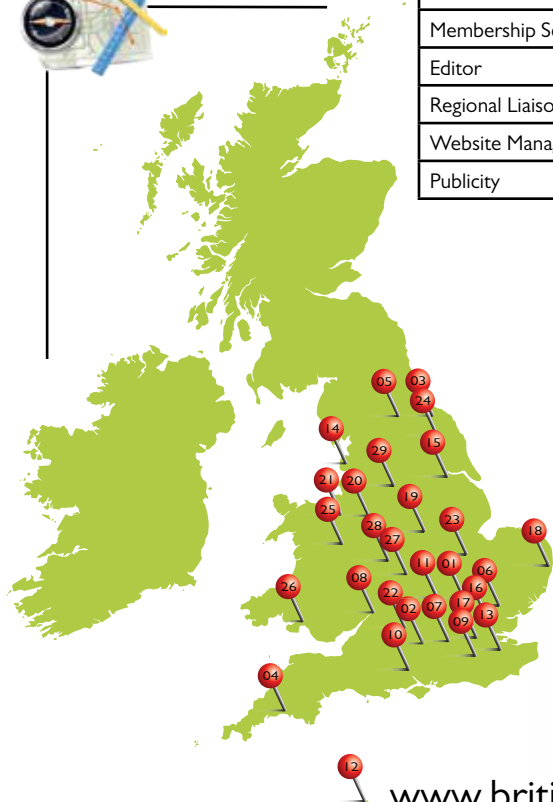


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