



NEWSLETTER

No.125

SEPTEMBER 2024

www.watersidewoodcarvers.co.uk

COMMITTEE CHIPPINGS

Since we moved our workshops to Noadswood School, we have been allowed to hold them during holiday periods and, at the request of members, successfully did so this year. Every other Thursday in 2025 is available to us for workshops. So, rather than charge per term and then ask for cash payments for extra workshops in the holidays, the committee have decided to include the holiday workshops in the usual fees but to run them as **4 quarterly payments**, starting 1st January 2025. **Workshop fees in future will therefore cover 3 months each rather than a school term.** The overall cost will remain the same. For the period Jan to March inclusive, there will be 6 workshops, starting 9 Jan, so a fee of £12. Separately, the annual club membership fee of £10 remains the same and is also payable on 1st Jan.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to Mark and Paul for attending a First Aid at Work course so that, along with Gosia, we now have 3 qualified first aiders. Also, Noadswood School have provided us with a map of the grounds showing where the toilets, defibrillators and fire assembly points are. Andy keeps a laminated copy in his folder for your reference.

It is not strictly speaking a club event but Noadswood School are having a Craft Fayre that will be Christmas themed for Saturday 30 November. I just thought I would let you know in case any members make wood items (or any other) that they would like to go along and sell. This is a fundraiser for the school for their International pot. This is to help students who have been selected to represent themselves, the school and their club in their sporting activities abroad. They currently have 3 students in school who are doing just this and will be going to Azerbaijan, Zanzibar and Bulgaria to compete in Euro championships. A table costs £20.

SUMMER PICNIC

As the clothing in our photos show, the kick-start summer was still trying to get going as we met at Kaili's garden in Beaulieu for the annual summer picnic on the 13th July but even so there were around eighteen hardy souls who turned up for a bite to eat and some silly games. Actually it wasn't too bad when the sun came out and we could always shelter in the 9x3 marquee that we had erected in the morning.

We started off playing "Molkky" which is the wood-throwing game that we have played before where the object is to knock down the numbered pegs with the first to 50 being the winner. This time it was Mike who hadn't played it before which I guess goes to show how much skill is involved.

After that came "Corn Hole", a game involving the throwing of bean bags into a hole in a wooden board which we'd previously played indoors at the trophy night and was just as much fun on grass. Terry came out on top with this one.

By this time appetites had been truly worked up and so it was back to the marquee for the lovely spread that had been laid out for us. As you can see in the photo, the dip arrangement was a work of art in itself which it seemed a shame to disturb, but we did anyway along with rest of it and very enjoyable it was too so thanks to the ladies who organised and prepared it.

It had been intended to go on until seven but around six o'clock the heavens opened and so we huddled under the marquee packing everything up and then dashed to the cars and off home. Several people went back the next day to dismantle the marquee. Many thanks go to Kaili for letting us use her delightful garden.



HORTICULTURAL SHOW (1)

The first show was the Dibden Purlieu one on the 29th July where they have a woodcarving section. Our own Allan Mechen is the judge but as you can see, he didn't have an awful lot to do with only two entries, one from your Chairwoman and one from your editor. Di was the champion with her chameleon and received not only a certificate but a silver cup as well for coming first in the Handicrafts section. I came second (not last!) with my nuthatch.

Let's see if we can put on a better show next year and make the trip a little more worthwhile for Allan.



HORTICULTURAL SHOW (2)

The following week on the 3rd August was Exbury Fete and Flower Show. This is an event which we have not done before, chiefly because it usually clashes with Hythe of Activity which this year is somewhat later. It was also a free event to us since we do not sell.

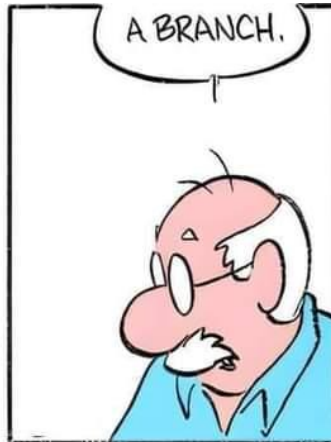
The weather was fine on the day and there were plenty of bodies to help put up the large marquee on the edge of the enormous field next to the car park and in the shade of some trees and inside it we had a single large table upon which were laid out a dozen or so carvings for the visitor's delight. The show consisted of an arena in the middle of the field where there were things like dancing and a dog show surrounded by stalls selling all manner of items and beyond that a bouncy castle and various fun rides for the children. Inside the club house was the lounge bar and next to that the function room which housed the flower and vegetable show. There was also much food and drink on sale.

As you can see in the photos, we soon got down to some carving and some serious chatting both amongst ourselves and with the many people who came along to see what we are about. I think we all enjoyed ourselves and maybe generated enough interest among the visitors to give a little boost our membership. I know the organisers were pleased with our display.

Also a thank-you must go to Mark for fixing the broken marquee poles and to Mary for mending the side walls.

Oh, and did I mention that your editor got first prize for the heaviest tomato?!

Cont.



ANNUAL EXHIBITION

After all those years at Lymington, St. Andrew's in Dibden Purlieu has now definitely become our regular venue and we turned up again on the 17th August to set up our yearly exhibition for the benefit of the people of the Waterside. We continued with the rule of only six carvings on display per member which made for a much better display than simply a sea of carvings which can be overwhelming for the viewer. Members were also encouraged to put a maximum of two pieces on the voting table which were judged by the visitors in a ballot and that resulted in a win for Maggie Port with her "Bunny".



The touch table was another feature that proved popular but we still found that certain people still touched those on general display despite the signs (some things never change). The sales table this year was devoted to the work of one carver: Don Andrew who some of you will remember. Don who passed away about four or five years ago was a very talented carver who specialised in birds but carved many other subjects as well. Earlier this year we were contacted by his daughter who asked us if we wanted those carvings of his that were left over after family members had chosen what they wanted and to do with them as we pleased. We said we certainly would and so we set them out on the sales table with very reasonable prices on them. Many of our members quickly made purchases before the general public had a chance and by the end of the day we had sold all but two of them making over £300 towards club funds.

Another regular feature was the raffle to win a carving. This year the carving was of a robin and young kindly carved and donated by Maggie Port. This brought in a sizeable amount of money and was eventually won by our own Yvonne. Maggie also contributed to the show by doing her pyrography demonstration which always attracts a good deal of attention from the visitors.

One big highlight of the day was the arrival in the hall of Pippa Smith who, due to illness, had not been along to our meetings for quite some time. It was great to see her looking so well and hopefully we will see much more of her in the coming months.



Andy explains the finer points



Maggie demonstrating her pyrography

ROGER ELLIOTT

It was with great sadness that we recently learned of the death of Roger Elliott on the 27th August. Roger joined the Waterside Guild of Woodcarvers as we were then known, many years ago and right from the start was always very enthusiastic and hard working in support of the club. He was also a very skilled woodcarver utilising his boat-building and carpentry skills to produce beautiful and often very original pieces of carving to entertain both us and the visiting public.

He served on the committee for a number of years and despite saying that he was not a natural born public speaker, when the need arose for a new chairman in 2009 he stepped up to the plate and served up until late 2020. During that time he instituted many changes and ideas which kept the club running so well. For many years he arranged the supply of lime for the Woodblock Challenge and always organised the Lymington Exhibition with great precision. He made the Thursday night sessions the main feature of the club so that we concentrated on actual carving and were not just a social club that did occasional carving and all this with his great sense of humour and sense of the ridiculous.

He came to us all the way from Sholing in Southampton often with his wife Ann who was also a great help in running the club. Sadly Ann suffered illness several years ago and it was while Roger was at home looking after her that he had a fall leading to partial paralysis a couple of years ago. It's a bit of a cliché to say "sadly missed" but in Roger's case it really is true.

The funeral will be at 10.00 am on Tuesday 8th October at Wessex Vale crematorium, Hedge End.



GROUP OUTING

On Sat 14 Sept a dozen members drove over to the Weald and Downland Museum near Chichester to see an exhibition entitled “Made by Hand – Heritage Crafts and Skills”. Over 25 organisations had stands demonstrating a huge range of skills: making clogs, corn dollies, chain mail, pins, chairs, nets, hurdles (fence type, not athletics!), kilts, baskets, teddy bears, stained glass, spinning, weaving and dyeing, brewing (Tudor-style), blacksmithing, baking, stone carving, specialised brick shaping, woodblock printing and wood carving. It took all day to get round everything and was truly inspiring, especially the stag beetle below.



A carved stag beetle alongside a real one

NEWSPAPER CUTTING

IT WAS A RIGHT CARVE-UP

DECIDING to take a crash course in carving meat and poultry for Christmas, a junior chef at a Richmond public house booked one at an adult education centre and arrived for the first lesson—only to find it was a wood-carving class.

SEPTEMBER SOCIAL

We call it a social evening but this time it was back to school for the dozen or so members who went along to St. Andrews on the 20th of the month.

Long-time member Allan Mechen had kindly volunteered to do his soap-carving tutorial which is designed to help the woodcarving beginner to learn the basics of carving the human face using a bar of soap and wooden tools rather than a piece of actual wood. This of course has the advantage of being very quick and easy but still demonstrates the cuts required to form that most difficult of subjects that we all possess right at the front of our heads.

He started by getting us to form an approximate right angle on the soap with the tip of the nose being at the apex of the right angle which amazes many people who believe the face to be much flatter than it actually is. He then showed us the surprisingly small number of cuts needed to form the basic shape, all the while going round the table to check that we were on the right track.

After a few lost noses and much laughter we all had a reasonable approximation of the human fizzog which we could use as a carving model or combine with a flannel for use in the bath.

Once again, thanks to Allan for keeping us all informed and entertained.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS – notes for your diary

OCTOBER

Thursday 10th.....Club night – Noadswood School

Thursday 24th.....Club night – Noadswood School

NOVEMBER

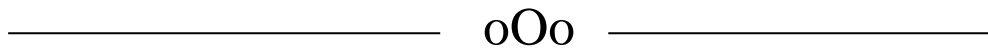
Thursday 7th.....Club night – Noadswood School

Thursday 21st.....Club night – Noadswood School

DECEMBER

Thursday 5th.....Club night – Noadswood School

Saturday 7th.....Social Afternoon. St. Andrews Hall
Don't forget, this is when you hand in your
Disney-inspired woodbock challenge entry.



“All the months are crude experiments, out of which the perfect September is made.”

Virginia Woolf