

www.thewoodentops.co.uk

WOODENTOPS

August 2016

We meet at:

St John's United Reformed Church Hall
Lynwood Grove Orpington BR6 0BG

Newsletter

We meet on:

The first Saturday of each month

9am-1pm. New members welcome

The Woodentops is the SE London and W Kent Branch of the BWA



Facebook: Woodentops Woodcarvers

Twitter: #carverofwood



And some months,
mid-month meetings
too! –see last page

Nairi Safaryan: *"The first time I used the saw, I cut off the wood supports under our dinner table," he said. My parents just shrugged and said 'He's learning'."* (From <http://woodworkessence.com/page/9?c=d%3Bo%3Da>)



Nairi Safaryan has been carving since he was a child. His parents wanted to encourage his talent and gave him his first saw at age 4.

Safaryan was born in 1958 in Shushi, which is located in the Karabagh region of Armenia. In 1987 Nairi Safaryan became a member of the Art Fund which gave him a chance to show his works. In 1991 Nairi decided to show his work at Vernisage (outdoor art fair in the central region of Yerevan) where his "Vine Leaves and Fruits" jewel box was purchased by congressman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.

In 1996, after being demonstrated in two shows at Yerevan's Folk Art Museum, Nairi was named a Folk Master.

In 2002 he met an American visiting Armenia who liked his work and started selling his carvings in the United States.

Also in 2002, the owners of a gallery in Las Vegas invited Safaryan to live in their home while he taught his style of carving at a nearby training centre. They also brought him to galleries in California and encouraged him to submit his wood carvings in the annual show sponsored by Smoky Hollow Carvers in La Crescenta Park where he won the Best of Show and the People's Choice Award in 2002.



Pictures from <http://www.woodsymphony.com/portfolio-nairi-safaryan.html>.
Text from <http://woodworkessence.com/page/9?c=d%3Bo%3Da>

Make Your Own Wood Stain – in Seven Different Ways!

This item is adapted from a piece in: <http://www.apieceofrainbow.com/make-wood-stain/>

Making your own stains does sound a bit like spilling coffee on a table. But there is much more to it than that, with some great benefits.

Made from all natural household materials, these quick and easy wood stains are **super effective and long lasting**. They are less harsh for our planet as well – no solvents and no VOCs (volatile organic compounds). And perhaps best of all, **they cost far less than shop-bought equivalents cost** (about 10% of commercial stains).

Recipes 1-4 – Different types of vinegar and metal

The science : the iron dissolves in the vinegar (acetic acid) and forms a soluble substance (Ferric acetate). When this solution is applied to wood, the ferric acetate reacts with the natural tannins in the wood, producing various shades of brown, grey and black.

Recipe 1 – 1 ½ cup of white vinegar and one steel wool pad

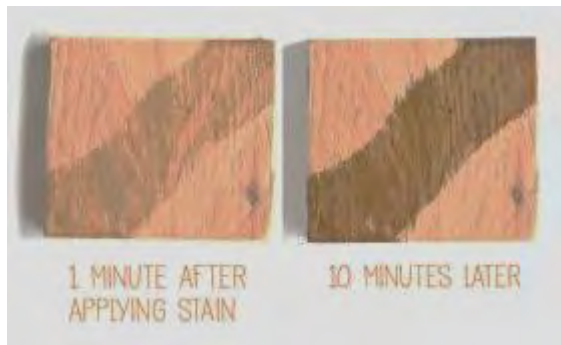
Recipe 2 - 1½ cup of balsamic vinegar and one steel wool pad

Recipe 3 - 1½ cup of apple cider vinegar and one steel wool pad

Recipe 4 - 1½ cup of white vinegar and rusty nails

To make the stains, put a pad of super fine steel wool (or rusty nails as in the 4th recipe) in a jar and pour in enough vinegar to cover it, loosely screwing the lid on the jar. If the pad is not totally submerged, rust will quickly form on the portion exposed to air which is ok. After about twenty-four hours pour the solution into another jar, or take the pads out of the jars to stop the reaction.

Now watch the magic. Brush some of the wood stain onto a piece of wood, and at first it looks like nothing is happening. But a few minutes later, it will look very different (see pictures).



Recipe 5 - Coffee or tea with the basic stains

Brew some tea or coffee at 3-4 times the strength, let it cool and apply this mixture to raw wood surfaces. This adds tannins to the wood which will make the stains much darker. Apply stains from recipes 1-4 after the wood dries from the tea/coffee first coat.

Recipe 6 - Dilute the basic stains with water

Dilute stains from Recipes 1 to 4 with water. This produces a lighter colour, much like naturally aged wood.

Rough Guide to colours produced (It is essential to use trial and error on scrap wood before applying to your prize carving).

- Stains 1 – 4 applied on walnut wood: This type of wood has high concentrations of tannins, so all the stains come out quite dark. No need for tea or coffee.
- White vinegar and steel wool stain on pine: a rich brown colour
- Balsamic vinegar and steel wool stain on pine: a warm grey with a gold tone
- White vinegar and rusty nails stain on pine: a brown colour lighter than the one with steel wool, i think it's because steel wool dissolves faster, so the iron is more concentrated
- Apple cider vinegar and steel wool stain on pine: also a warm grey similar to the balsamic vinegar, more silvery grey
- Coffee and the vinegar metal stains: all the different vinegar and metal solutions produced a dark, almost black colour because of the coffee
- 50% white vinegar and steel wool stain with 50% water: The rich brown stain became a grey colour stain after being diluted with equal amount of water.

All the above stains provide shades of browns and greys. The following recipe provides other colours.

Recipe 7 – Diluted acrylic paints (or any water based ink or paint)

Dilute acrylic paint with lots of water, and wash the wood. It will take on the paint colour, but still has the wood grain showing through. Different brands of paints will have different light-fastness. For exterior use, choose those that can withstand sun light.

Pros and Cons of Homemade Wood Stains:

Pros: Made from all natural household materials, these quick and easy wood stains are super effective, long lasting, and low cost (like 10% of those in the shops). And they are less harsh on our planet as well – no solvents and no VOCs (volatile organic compounds – harmful to the environment).

Cons : Variations on different wood species, and matching colours when making new batches. So planning and testing is really important.

Tips:

Use scrap pieces to do tests before you tackle a big project.

- The longer the metal stays in the vinegar, the darker the stain colours become. Remove the metal before using the stain so the colour is consistent in the batch.
- Many woodworkers keep their stain solutions for several weeks in room temperature. Use it up within 1-2 months because the colour is most intense when freshly made.
- You can apply finishing wax or oil to the wood after staining.
- The stains can be sanded off just like commercial stains.
- There is a little bit of fine powdery rust-like residue that should be wiped off after the wood dries.
- NB – Worried that these stains aren't permanent? **YOU** try getting a rust stain out of fabric or a carpet!

Paul's Pics



Members **Paul and Jane Mannering** have kindly sent me some shots of some stunning carvings they have seen on their travels. Thanks Paul. **How about YOU doing the same?** I look forward to it

From Paul:

Hi Clive

Attached are some carving images from our visits to National Trust properties.

These are by Grinling Gibbons and are at Sudbury Hall.

Details of Sudbury Hall are at:

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sudbury-hall-and-the-national-trust-museum-of-childhood>



More from Paul and Jane's gallery next month

Stolen Carving and 'Are You a Dedicated Carver?'

Interesting what a crisis of conscience can produce! The Flame is a really nice carving, simulating a blaze very effectively. Fire is very hard to represent in a carving, as anyone who has tried will know. The carving is almost certainly a finial for the top of a staircase post.

The report is from the Daily Telegraph, 29 May 2015 and the pictures from the Hereford Times, the first showing Head teacher of Herford Cathedral school, Paul Smith, with the piece.

School prankster returns stolen carving after 60 years

● A historic wooden carving taken in a "dare" by a schoolboy 60 years ago has been returned to its rightful home.

The sculpture disappeared from one of Britain's oldest schools in 1955 and teachers put it down to a prank.

But the carving has now been sent back to the Cathedral School in Hereford with an anonymous note, believed to be from the prankster, who would now be in his 70s.

It read: "Dear Sir or Madam, I return this to Hereford Cathedral School. It was taken as a 'dare' about 55 to 60 years ago when

the darer was a pupil. It has been carefully looked after.

"It has come to light recently as the result of a house move. The darer apologises and hopes it can be reinstated."

None of the current staff can remember the dark wooden sculpture but school records indicate it was a staircase decoration and nicknamed "The Flame" by staff.

Paul Smith, the headmaster said: "I imagine the anonymous sender had a crisis of conscience when he found it during a house move and did the decent thing by returning it."



[Adapted from <http://woodworkessence.com/page/9?c=d%3Bo%3Da>

You know you're a dedicated carver when:

1. You watch old films just to check out the woodworking and furniture.
2. You look forward to your spouse's family reunion, as you know it's on the family farm where you can go wood hunting while everyone else eats and carries on.
3. You can't cut and burn firewood any more without feeling guilty and there are no logs in your firewood pile, just pails of offcuts no more than 3" long.
5. You go out to buy a small piece of wood to finish a project and come back with enough wood to start another (plus a few new tools).
6. You try to convince your spouse that the van-load of wood you just bought was a good buy since it was on sale.
7. You're driving to the Borough Tip to dispose of household rubbish, spend your time walking slowly round looking for any cast-offs or off-cuts you can use for carving, and return with more stuff than you took.



Tool Storage – on a Grand Scale!

Many of us have more tools than we really need. I have a theory that most wood carvers are kleptomaniacs, and snap up anything that looks vaguely tool-like just in case it fulfils that vital role for the new project. Well here's a guy who seems to have solved the issue of storage. From <http://www.hometalk.com/137368/i-finally-got-tired-of-having-all-my-tools-scattered-all-over-my-garage-and-decided>

I Finally Got Tired of Having My Tools Scattered All Over My Garage

From Richard H, Wylie, Texas

I finally got tired of having all my tools scattered all over my garage and decided to build 4 cabinets to hold it all (well, almost all). They are on casters so I can roll them around when needed, but you must roll them out to open them up.



Below: cabinets open. Hard to tell on these photos but cabinet opens to reveal 3 storage areas. Each outside door is pegboard on top and shelves at the bottom. Centre unit is walled up half way with places to hang on each side and above centre divider is shelving.



Above: close-up of one side and the centre unit. all three are hinged with piano hinge on back and caster on the base for moving around.

Right: This is a close-up of rabbeted edge. Notice how the plywood side sets inside the slot cut from the 3/4" plywood. Both side and plywood edges are flush. If you choose not to do this the plywood side will attach over edges of plywood

Letter to the Editor

Hi Clive,

How are you? Came across this chap ([NAIRI SAFARYAN](#)) after looking at the link in the newsletter for Celia Dickson, which has some very nice, original carvings. [See Front Page Feature

The 'Wine Glasses' this guy has carved and some of his other stuff are jaw dropping and thought maybe other members might like it too??

I am forever stunned at the ingenuity, originality and skill people have - wonderful!!

Will pop in tomorrow for a visit!!

Regards

Ciro (previous and hopefully future Club member)

Response from Jason Townsend, Editor of the BWA's Woodcarving Gazette:

Hi guys,

I'll try and interview this craver for the gazette - looks amazing!

Best regards,

Jason Townsend

Club Stuff

Cakes

August:

Derek



Carve Me

The BWA is running both a Spoon Carving competition (as last year) and an Egg Carving competition in 2016-17. Clive has the blank eggs if anyone wants one. Go on, have a go! The blanks will be for you to take home at our August meeting. If you want to carve a spoon, you provide the blanks yourself, I'm afraid.

2016 <u>Main</u> Meetings (Carving, coffee & cake, an opportunity to bring guests and potential new members, occasional guest speakers) All 9am to 1pm, Saturdays	2016 <u>Additional</u> Meetings (No frills, just carving) All 9am to 1pm, Saturdays
6 August	20 August
3 September	17 September
1 October	15 October
6 November	[No extra November meeting]
3 December	[No extra December meeting]

Ripley Garden Party- Demonstrating Carving on 27 August

The Club is a member of **Bromley Arts Council** which was formed in 1965 to maintain, improve and develop the arts in Bromley. It owns and manages **Ripley Arts Centre in Sundridge Avenue, Bromley**, where the Arts Council is based.

Set in a magnificent period property this venue is deep in history with an enviable record for hosting a variety of concerts and exhibitions.

At the rear of Ripley's beautiful lawns rests our Sensory Garden; created with Millennium Lottery funding this garden is for the benefit of all our visitors, particularly those with disabilities.



We are demonstrating Woodcarving in this delightful setting at Ripley's Annual Garden Party on Saturday 27 August. Want to join us? Please come along and help or carve. It's a fun afternoon: there will be lots of other demonstrations, plus cream teas, stall of all sorts, music and shows.

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