

We meet at:

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

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



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In the News

Its official! Sculpture is now more popular and valuable!

The Evening Standard cutting below of 4 November shows how sculpture is, thank goodness, finally getting prices reflecting its true worth. So remember this when you next sell the prized carving that you sweated and slaved over for months, or when you are whittling something for the godchild or grandchild. That sale or treasured heirloom could have a value well beyond its sentimental value. Long may the trend continue!

Sotheby's carves out record £264m

Sculpture no longer the poor relation of painting as bidders make history

Louise Jury
Chief Arts Correspondent

THEY have been selling art for 270 years and have never enjoyed a more lucrative auction.

In a record-breaking night in New York, Sotheby's notched up £263.9 million in sales. There were bidders from 40 countries.

Chariot by Albert Giacometti – a painted bronze woman atop a platform on two wheels from 1950 regarded as so special it was kept behind a rope when shown in London pre-sale – went for \$108 million (£63.1 million). Only one other sculpture has ever been sold for

Going, gone: auctioneer Henry Wyndham takes bids. Centre, Giacometti's Chariot, and far right, Modigliani's Tête



more – Giacometti's Walking Man I, which sold for \$104 million four years ago. The work is one of only two casts in private hands and has been in a private collection for more than 40 years.

Pierce bidding also saw Amedeo Modigliani's Tête (Head) make \$70.7 million (£44.2 million). The work has never been seen at auction before. Simon Shaw, co-head of Sotheby's worldwide Impressionist and modern art department, said the total was the



highest for any auction in company history.

"Tonight's historic results bookend an exceptional year for Impressionist and modern art at Sotheby's

– our fourth consecutive year as leaders in this market," he said.

The New York sale comes after London enjoyed its best-ever auction in February with £215.8 million of sales.

And it saw sculpture – not so long ago a poor relation to canvas – command prices on a par with the best paintings.

Other top works included a Vincent van Gogh self-portrait, Vase with Daisies and Poppies – one of the few paintings the artist sold in his lifetime – which went to a private collector in the growing Asian market for £38.6 million.

Three works by Claude Monet sold for a total of £38.7 million. A fifth of lots on offer remained unsold but all the major works were snapped up.



Stuck for a Christmas present idea?

These are available from ebay.



How Do I Get an Idea for a Carving? Part 2

I get precious little feedback so I'm never sure if anyone actually reads this magazine, but assuming someone does, you may remember that last month I mentioned that I've several friends who've said they would really *love* to take up carving but wouldn't have a clue *what* to carve. So they don't even start. Last month I gave a few ideas for inspiration, such as going to sculpture exhibitions. Here are a few more.



This interesting sculpture popped up by Liverpool street station and is now there for good. Makes you think. Why triangular heads? Why no arms?

I was not sure if 'Please Do Not Climb' was a safety notice or the title of the piece!



← This full size wooden bear was on the pavement to the left just before the entrance to the Northern approach to the Blackwall Tunnel, by a wood yard. Clearly an inspired carver is working there. (Sorry about the poor quality of the shot – snapped though the car window while the traffic was queueing)



← Finally, this magnificent wood carved stag's head is on permanent display at **Great Comp Gardens, Kent.**

So the message is clear – keep your eyes open to get inspiration.

As David Hockney said: 'If you want to be a good artist, just look around you - but actually **look!**'

Barry RIP

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the death of one of our members, Barry Freeman (known to his family as Bill). The following is from his daughter, Alexis Bodycomb:

Dad became ill at the end of September with his COPD and was admitted to hospital 4 weeks ago and I'm sad to say his health went downhill rapidly.

The only solace we take at this time is that he had a fantastic life filled with more fabulous experiences than I think most people could fit into two lifetimes. Until he became ill he was still busy in the shed carving and enjoying his carpentry - I am so pleased that he has made a couple of beautiful pieces of furniture for our new house and of course I have my spitfire which is displayed with much pride in my hallway. Last year he made my husband and I a model yacht based on the 'true love' from the film high society for a wedding present - all of his work are pieces that I truly love. We came to see him at the garden centre last year and I know how much he loved being involved with your woodcarving group.

We will all miss Dad terribly - he really was a genuinely lovely man who was interested in others and interesting to others.

I am sorry to impart this news via email but I thought that speedier than a letter which may not get posted for some weeks with the amount of things to be done here.

Dad's funeral is to be held at the Eltham Crematorium at 11.45 on Friday 5 December and then after we will be going to the Falconwood Club, 1 Falconwood Avenue Welling, Kent, DA 16 2SH and all are welcome to join us.

Barry was a talented carver and below are some of his works. A true individual, he specialised in aeroplanes and similar items that are outside the comfort zone of most carvers. He will be sadly missed.



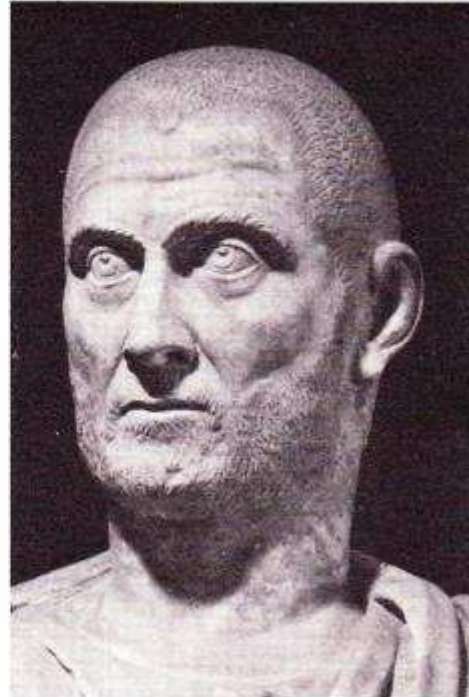
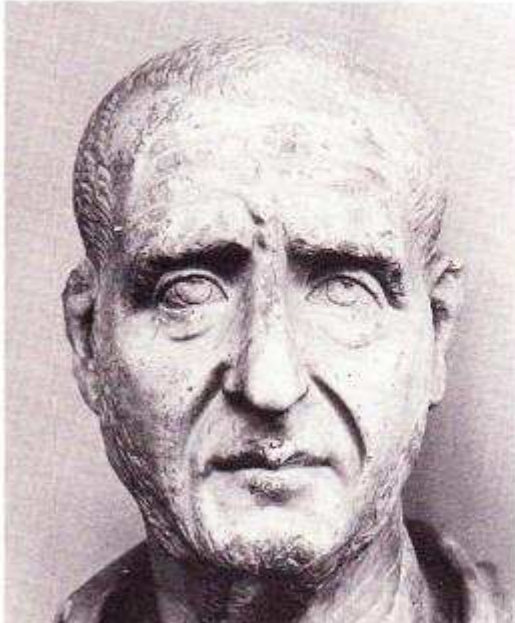
Expressionism

A recent carving published in 'Chip Chats' (the American Woodcarvers' magazine) was of a man's head, purportedly laughing. But the expression was poor- it was not clear whether he was indeed laughing, in immense pain, or trying to stifle anger. I won't republish it here, but it made me realise that while it's difficult enough to carve a realistic head, it's ten times harder to capture an expression. I'm not sure what the trick is, but perhaps we could learn from some old masters here. Below are Roman portrait statue heads. Don't they just capture the expression?

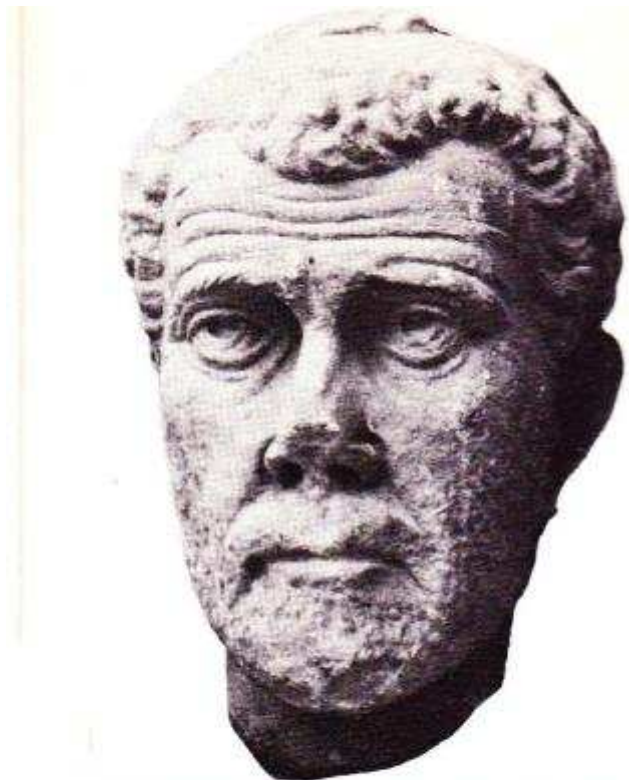
From the book: **The World of Late Antiquity** by Peter Brown

Mansell Collection (Allinaria)

53, 54 The emperor Decius and the philosopher Dogmatius: tense and realistic treatment of public men in the Roman manner.



49 The philosopher. 'The very pupils of his eyes were winged, he had a long grey beard; one could hardly endure the sharp movement of his eyes.' This description of the philosopher who most influenced Julian the Apostate fits this portrait head from Ephesus, fifth century.



55, 56 (right) Philosophers from Aquileia and Athens: grave, hieratic images of the 'spiritual man'.
Aquileia Archeological Museum

Members' (and other) Jottings

Hi Clive,

Just to let you know I won't be attending meetings for a while as I have to go back on to chemotherapy.

Please wish everyone a Happy Christmas from me and keep the Club News coming.

Will see you all in the New Year.

Eve Ralphs
09 November 2014

I'm sure
the Club
wishes Eve
all the best
for
recovery

Hi Clive

Michael Cox of the BWA Herts region - Luton group, has been in contact me with to ask if I can ask you if you would be free to support him in his 'woodcarving' area of the Kimpton May Festival Spring Bank Hol - 3 May 2015. Michael will be carving. He would also be delighted if someone is available to

- 1) demonstrate their carving skills alongside him
- 2) do soap carving with beginners. I have the tools and soap for this to lend to Michael, but might not be available on the day.

If you can help Michael out please could you contact him directly on 01438 832574

Many thanks!

Paula Noble
BWA

**Next
Meeting:
9am to
1pm,
Saturdays**

6 Dec

**Christmas
Party
Evening!!**

6 December

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