

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



Facebook: Woodentops Woodcarvers

Twitter: #carverofwood



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

The End of Woodcarving Teaching at Bromley Borough Adult Education

It is a sad month for adult learning here in Bromley. The Council, in its wisdom, has decided to close the Widmore Adult Education Centre. For many, many years, both here and elsewhere in the Borough, woodcarving and a wide range of other crafts have been taught, for the enjoyment, development and, dare I say it, inner peace of many a local resident. Woodcarving classes finished at the end of May. RIP.

By its own admission the Council is saving only about £150,000 by closing the Centre (the figure is in the Council's consultation document). For comparison, it is of note that in 2011 the Daily Mail reported that Bromley Council's Chief Executive, Doug Patterson, refused to take a pay cut - then his pay was £185,000. (<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1350970/Council-chief-earns-David-Cameron-refuses-pay-cut-despite-budget-cuts.html>).

So the closure of a Centre which has brought pleasure to thousands is seemingly saving less than the salary of one Council employee. And it's not as if the classes are not in demand – the Centre has always been over-subscribed.

For woodcarving in particular, this is worrying, as many Woodentop members got their first taste of carving at these Local Authority classes. This includes, Tom, Cathy and myself. And I suspect the same can be said across the country. Take away the classes, and you reduce the seed corn of potential new Club and BWA members.

Quite possibly – and as has been pointed out to them - in due course the Council will be caught short by a rise in its social care costs, because for so many Centre attendees, this was their main, in some cases only, social and creative outlet.

If you live in Bromley and object to these cuts, find out the name of your local Councillor from the Council website and write to her or him. If you live in another local authority area, watch out for similar cuts in your area. This is surely a vital part of local authority provision, and when it's gone, it is likely to be gone forever. Let's make some noise. The phrase **Knowing the Cost of Everything, and the Value of Nothing** certainly comes to mind.

For now, here are some of the excellent exhibits at the final exhibition of class members' work at the Widmore Centre.



From left: Pierced work – Khatije Sacranie
Hawk –Khatije Sacranie
Penguin –Phil Dommett
Ipswich Town Logo -
Derek Woodcraft



Miscellany



It's always worth keeping an eye out for a good carving. This relief is on a door inside a Costa café in the Strand, London.

The usual 'same old' shop front conceals a building converted from another use, and thankfully the old features have been retained.

SEND ME YOUR PICTURES OF CARVINGS



WOODCARVING COURSES AT THE HALL OF BRIGHT CARVINGS

THAMES-SIDE STUDIOS, HARRINGTON WAY, SE18 5NR

Roly Ross, who until May ran the adult Education Evening Classes in Bromley, is setting up some courses of his own in Woolwich. These are the details,. Contact Roly if you would like to attend.



TUTOR. ROLI ROSS

WWW.ROLIOMETRIES.COM

EMAIL.

roliometries@gmail.com

COURSES START IN SEPTEMBER ON WEDNESDAY'S, THURSDAY'S AND SATURDAY'S.



Spotted by the Sussex Coast, this simple but effective adaptation of a log does its job well.

In my view, there's nothing like a practical carving.

This talented artist is to be seen regularly in Bromley High Street. He always carves in wet sand, and always a dog. Brings a new meaning to Sandy Labrador..



Tools

What a strange-looking tool, you may think.

It's a Froe – generally used to cleave trunks to form wooden roof tiles, or shingles, as shown on the left and as demonstrated at the Ecobuild Show in London's Excel Centre this Spring.

But perhaps surprisingly there is a wide range of froes. To quote from the website Woodsmith: (<http://woodsmithexperience.co.uk/shop/product/ray-iles-micro-froe/>):

Despite being an uncomplicated tool, they come in a range of weights and sizes as it's unlikely that one froe will be universally suitable for all tasks.

We fit froes into 3 general categories:

Robust - Use this type of froe when splitting larger tougher woods such as oak or sweet chestnut. Typically, shingle makers and riven fencing makers will use a robust froe. Oak swill basket maker Owen Jones MBE has used Muller froes for more than 20 years to bust down oak butts into smaller riven sections so it can be boiled ready for finer riving into weavers.

General Duty - Froes for everyday green woodworking tasks such as busting apart short sections of timber and longer sections of small diameter stuff.

Lightweight - useful for cleaving rods such as hazel and making Also a fairly new froe from UK tool maker Ashley Iles.....the Micro Froe, a smaller finer version of the Iles Small Froe, suitable for splitting small wooden pegs and smaller diameter hazel. It sells for £37.

As a general rule froes are not cutting tools therefore the edge does not need to be kept sharp like most axes for example. However, the bevels need to easily and accurately enter end grain therefore need to be maintained wedge shaped. It's normally only after many years service that the edge needs to be looked at.

The micro-Froe

The pictures below are from the **Weald and Downland Museum**, near Chichester, Postcode PO18 0UE. A cornucopia of tools and implements, it's well worth a visit. **What do you think the curved plane is used for?** (Prize for first correct answer) To the Editor please (see back page).



The Bracket



Jetty Bracket - 1976.713b

Carved oak jetty bracket from The Old Punch House, Chichester.

Jettying occurs when the upper storey of a building projects over the lower; the bracket provides support for the upper storey, usually at the corners.

This also from the Weald and Downland Museum. A superb piece of carving, incorporating a Green Man and nice leaf work. Its age was not given in the Museum display, but it is well over a Century old.

This clay model is from somewhere on the internet – my apologies to the artist that I did not find her or his name.

To me it is a very creative piece.

It perhaps also demonstrates this Editor's frustration that so few Club members contribute to this Newsletter. For those with smart phones, it's now so easy to send me shots of carvings that YOU see as you pass through life - I'm sure you occasionally glance something shaped in wood that would be enjoyed by others so why not send a copy to me? If you can't or wont do words, just send me the pictures.



BWA

BBC
COUNTRYFILE
Blenheim Palace
4 - 7 Aug 2016 **LIVE**

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In association with
National Trust

In a major new and innovative live countryside event. between the 4 - 7 August, **Countryfile Live** will be hosted in the spectacular grounds of Oxfordshire's iconic World Heritage Site, Blenheim Palace, celebrating the very best of our countryside. This exciting new event will allow visitors to explore every aspect of the British countryside in one unmissable day out. The aim is to bring the award-winning elements of this very popular programme to a live audience in an educating and entertaining environment.

One of the Craft stalls will be hosted by the BWA.

The BWA tent/marquee will be exclusive to individual members or regions who would like to display and demonstrate the craft of carving. This is the first year of what is to become a regular event. **The Woodentops has an opportunity to participate.** What an chance to display our work.

The show is open to the public from 09:30 until 18:00 on Thursday the 4th August and the same times on Friday the 5th and Saturday the 6th. On Sunday the 7th the times are 09:30 until 17:00.

Setting up day is Wednesday the 3rd. Entry for exhibitors is free and Car Park passes will be available.

This is a marvellous opportunity to promote the BWA and the Regions as the show is expected to have 80 thousand visitors and between 6 to 8million viewers on TV. The show also enjoys the services of a dedicated marketing team. **Ann and Tom have more information.**



Club Stuff

Our AGM will take place midway through our 4 June meeting. It is hoped this will not take too long out of our carving time. Any nominations for posts should be sent to Ann or myself (Clive). Alternatively, nominations can be made on the day.

Agenda for Annual General Meeting of 'The Woodentops'; 4 June 2016

(The meeting will be held after the usual 11am gathering at which items of common interest are generally discussed. At this point, non-members can leave if they wish to do so.)

1. Chairman's Report
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Secretary/Newsletter Editor's Report
4. Election of Committee
5. Any Other Business

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
4 June	<i>[No extra June meeting]</i>
2 July	<i>16 July</i>
6 August	<i>20 August</i>
3 September	<i>17 September</i>
1 October	<i>15 October</i>
6 November	<i>[No extra November meeting]</i>
3 December	<i>[No extra December meeting]</i>

Leader:	<i>Ann High</i>	<i>01689 859617</i>	<i>highmorton@tiscali.co.uk</i>
Treasurer	<i>Cathy Thomas</i>	<i>01689 829646</i>	<i>Thomascathy@virginmedia.com</i>
Secretary and Newsletter	<i>Clive Nash</i>	<i>0208 4648902</i>	<i>clivewoodentops@outlook.com</i>
Beverages	<i>Mary Paddick</i>	<i>07929 051373</i>	<i>Marye.paddick@sky.com</i>
Committee	<i>Terry Vincent</i>	<i>01689 827680</i>	<i>terence.vincent@mypostoffice.co.uk</i>
Committee	<i>Tom Young</i>	<i>01689 851500</i>	<i>thomas.young67@ntlworld.com</i>

