

A Club in South East London
for people interested
in wood carving

Visitors are very welcome

Website:
www.woodentopswoodcarvers.co.uk

f Woodentops Wood Carvers
#Carverofwood

WOODENTOPS Newsletter

November 2017

We meet at:

St Johns United Reform Church Hall
Lynwood Grove Orpington BR6 0BG

We meet on:

The first Saturday of each month
with additional 'carve-only' meetings
on many other months.

Full details of our meetings and
much more on our website.

Picture of the Month



The leaves bordering the **Shot of the Month** are a reminder of, and hopefully inspiration for, our Leaf Carving Competition – if you haven't started yours are wondering what leaf to carve. Tempus fugit, as they say...

Saved by Paulina Ternoski at
https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/659425570411029122/?utm_campaign=rdpins&e_t=6b219b4b73e444eea262bc1e4edaad2&utm_content=659425570411029122&utm_source=31&utm_term=11&utm_medium=2004. Believed to be by Fred Cogelow

International World Skills Competition 2017 in Abu Dhabi

Never heard of it? Not had I till a tiny feature on BBC Breakfast on 20 October. This International Competition celebrates just the sort of skills that UK industry says it is crying out for (from plumbing to milling), and yet there has so far been barely a mention of it in the British press. This year, for the first time, it took place in the Middle East.

In practice, the UK was very well represented, with apprentices from Toyota, Airbus and Topshop among 32 of the country's elite learners selected to represent the UK.

Those chosen for Team UK – and those who weren't – went through a two-year qualification battle with the best this country has to offer in each discipline, giving up most of their weekends and evenings to hone their skills. They've excelled at regional heats, a national final, the European finals, and last month jumped the final hurdle, facing the most testing international standards at a team selection showdown in Manchester.

And what do you know – we've won prizes! Including Gold and Silver, for trades including **stone masonry** and **cabinet making** – two sets of skills very closely linked to wood carving.

After a lot of searching on the net I found who these brave winners were, but nothing about their winning pieces, and no congratulations in the national press (at the time of writing, anyway).

No wonder our national skills base is deteriorating when recognition of the need for skills is so poor. But from me, **congratulations, Archie and Angus!**

Architectural Stonemasonry

Archie
Stoke-Faiers,
22

Training provider: Weymouth College
Employer: Self-employed
Experts: Kevin Calpin

More at
<https://feweek.co.uk/2017/04/28/team-uk-selected-for-worldskills-2017-in-abu-dhabi/>



Cabinet Making

Angus Bruce-
Gardner,
22

Training provider: Waters and Acland
Employer: Silverlining
Expert: Christian Nottley



Griffin

This impressive griffin is by one **Nebojsa Jovanovic** and is featured at <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=956014977825629&set=a.109292415831227.17332.100002514087260&type=3&theater>. Not, of course, as good as the offerings from our own member Mary who delights in carving mythical creatures (the inset picture shows her at work on one of these) but a good stab nevertheless! The top shot shows the work in progress and gives clues to the achievement of the marvellous end result.

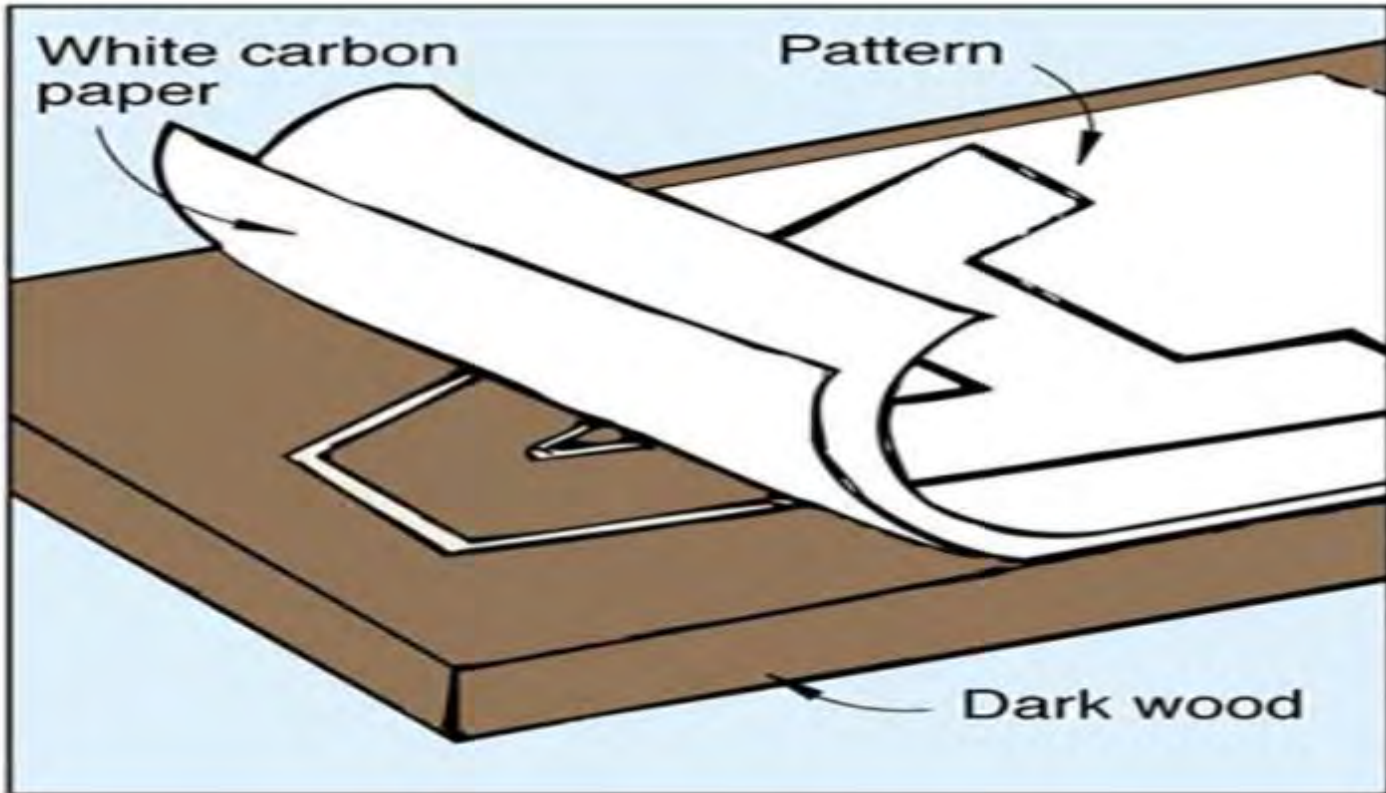


A Tip Right Out of the Sewing Basket

Carbon paper is very useful to transfer your carving sketch onto your wood, before carving.

But it becomes hard to use when transferring paper patterns to dark woods such as walnut. The dark lines can be barely visible, and don't erase easily.

White carbon paper, found in many arts and crafts shops, is ideal for transferring patterns to dark wood or hardboard. And, you can remove the pattern lines with a pencil eraser. This tip is from one Cobert LeMunyan, Troutman, N.C. found at <http://www.woodmagazine.com/woodworking-how-to/shop-tips/a-tip-right-out-of-the-sewing-basket>



Woodworking in History



MSN News - the front screen that may come up when you open your browser (or it does on mine, anyway (<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/photos?ocid=spartandhp>) currently has a feature on forgotten trades and skills. One such slide is about bodging. MSN says (from <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/photos/industries-lost-to-time-from-the-art-of-trug-making-and-chair-bodging-to-coal-mining-and-chimney-sweeping-these-old-photographs-reveal-just-how-much-times-have-moved-on/ss-AAtdZO7?ocid=spartandhp#image=13>):

‘CHAIR BODGERS

Bodging was a traditional wood-turning craft used to make chair legs and other cylindrical parts of chairs. This picture from 1945 shows men working in West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Since the late 1950s bodging was relegated to history. ‘

I suspect their commentary is a bit superficial – while bodging to make a commercial living on a broad scale is clearly obsolete, there has been a huge increase in the interest in country crafts, and bodging is one of these. There is a myriad of courses available, if you would like to try it, notably through the Association of Polelathe Turners and Greenwood Workers, at <https://www.bodgers.org.uk/index.php/courses>



**Association of
Polelathe Turners
& Greenwood Workers**

But the MSN pictures about lost occupations is worth a look (see web link above) as it covers trades such as trug making and millstone manufacture.

Computer-Generated Assistance

The issues and problems of carving the eye have been mentioned in these columns before.

But these shots show the eye at a level of detail that I've not seen in the past. I rather think it is all done with 3D computer-generated imagery.

But however it's done, its useful.

This eye has been produced by Mathieu Aerni (see mataerni.com) who writes at <https://www.artstation.com/artwork/girl-with-the-dragon-tattoo-intro>:

GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATOO intro

I have modelled, sculpted and textured the eye for the main title for David Fincher's The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo,

The value of such images is that they provide a study to assist the accuracy of your carvings because of the extraordinary level of detail.

And below is a similar image, also computer generated, from

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/305822630929756010/>.

Again, it shows a level of detail that can be very helpful when defining proportions for your carving of a human face. There is much more of this material on the net. Browse the world wide web for such images when researching your next project. It may save you a lot of time, but you are certain to have an interesting journey either way!



Jerome's Project



As part of our series on Members' labours, here are some shots of Jerome hard at work on his swan, which looks as though it will turn out extremely well.



A Woodentops Friend on Facebook

Aljohn Naves is a friend of Woodentops on Facebook. He lives in the Philippines and so far as I can see he makes a living from carving furniture, particularly headboards. And he's a talented guy. One of his posts states:

"YOUR IMAGINATION IS THE LIMIT" Just give us the design that you wanted, and lets make it happen.



Aljohn M. Naves added 2 new photos.

22 September at 13:02



Like Comment Share



Another of his posts says, in his native language:

Sa mga gusto pong magpagawa ng furniture lalo na po yung may gusto ng customized yung design pm nyo lang po ALJOHN'S Wood Carving Creation pwede din mag pagawa ng mga picture frame or vanity mirror design mo ang masusunod pwede din palagyan ng name magandang pang regalo pm lang mga bess wag na mahiya... :) :

Translated, this is:

To those who want to have the furniture make especially, the one who wants to have a customized one of your design just pm me, but you can also take pictures of the picture frames or vanity mirror design you can be able to be masusunod Just pm me bess don't be shy... :)

Perhaps not a perfect translation, but you get the point!

To Aljohn and al those many other carvers around the world trying to make a living by carving wood, and it's not an easy living by anyone's standards anywhere in the world, we salute you!



Budapest Carvings

On a recent visit to Budapest, there was the usual search was on for wood carvings, but this time few were found. Perhaps we just went to the wrong places!

Either way a great trip and much to recommend it. Below are carved wood features from the fine Parliament building (completed 1896). The incised mouldings (second shot down on the right) were something a little different and featured widely. There was much of this repetitive work around doors and panels, all very finely executed.

Also below are some of imaginative and very well produced cityscape stone carvings, something that it seems to me we lack in the UK, where stone carvings is generally commemorative and tends not to show much imagination (The **Women Of World War Two** statue recently commissioned in Whitehall, is one exception).



Old Trees Were Different (It's Official)

As reported in <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/offbeat/scientists-baffled-over-prehistoric-tree-mystery/ar-AAAtXo9J?li=AAmIR2Z&ocid=spartandhp>:

Trees that grew more than 300 million years ago had a far more complex structure than their counterparts today, research has shown. The earliest trees had an astonishingly intricate anatomy for reasons scientists do not understand.

Scientists examined the exceptionally well preserved fossilised trunk of a 374 million-year-old cladoxylopsid tree from Xinjiang, north-west China. What they found surprised them.

All trees have straw-like woody strands called xylem that conduct water from the roots to the leaves. New layers of xylem in most trees produce the familiar growth rings in trunks and branches.

But the new fossil discovery showed that the earliest trees had their xylem confined to the outer 5cm of the trunk while the middle was completely hollow.

The strands were interconnected like a finely tuned network of water pipes. And rather than the tree laying down a growth ring under its bark each year, each xylem strand generated its own growth ring. In effect the xylem strands behaved like individual mini-trees.

As the strands expanded, connections between them split apart and the diameter of the tree trunk widened.

Dr Chris Berry, one of the scientists from the University of Cardiff, said: "There is no other tree that I know of in the history of the Earth that has ever done anything as complicated as this. The tree simultaneously ripped its skeleton apart and collapsed under its own weight while staying alive and growing upwards and outwards to become the dominant plant of its day.

"By studying these extremely rare fossils, we've gained an unprecedented insight into the anatomy of our earliest trees and the complex growth mechanisms that they employed.

"This raises a provoking question: why are the very oldest trees the most complicated?"

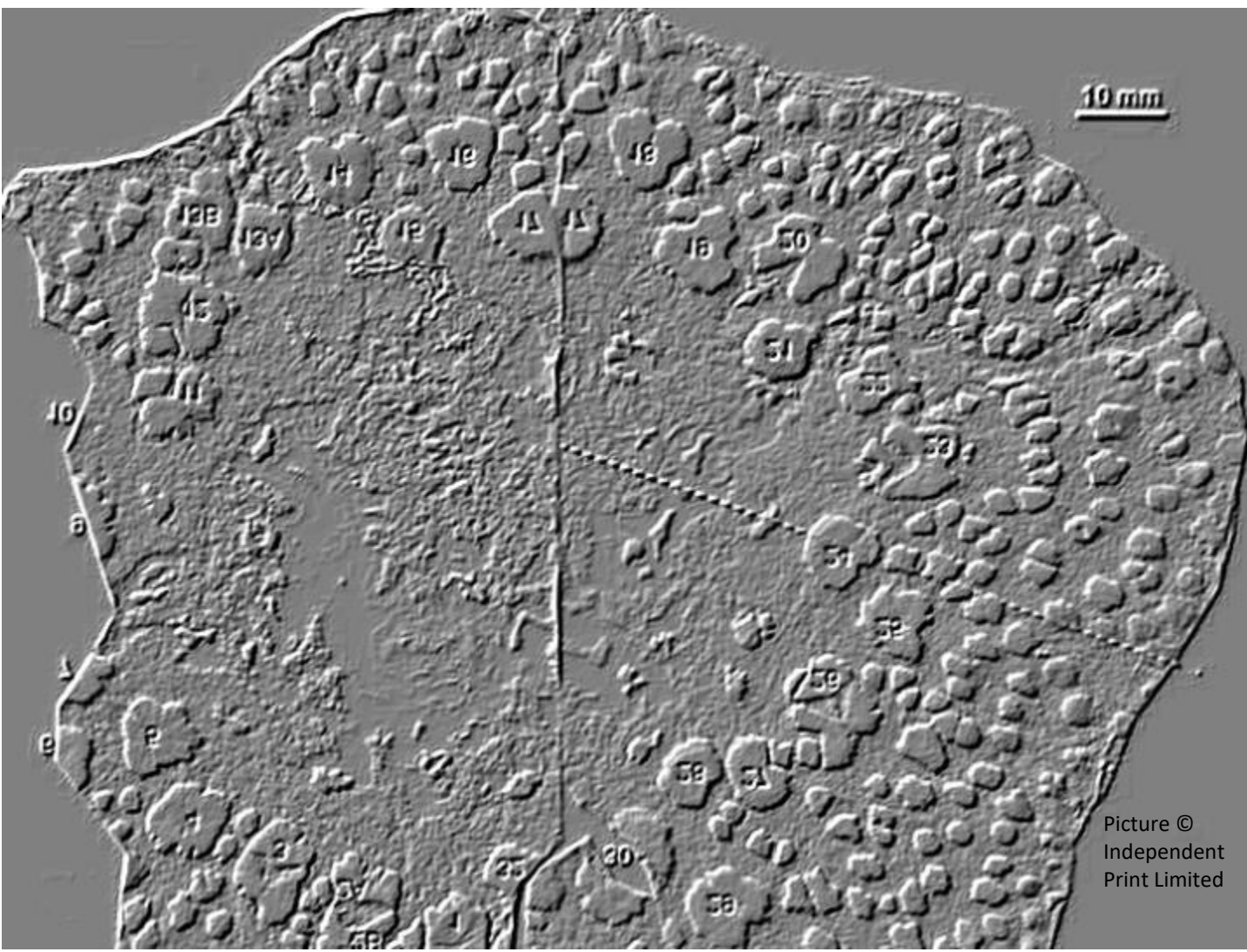
Dr Berry previously helped uncover a fossil forest in Gilboa, New York, where cladoxylopsids grew more than 385 million years ago.

But no earlier examples of the tree fossils compared with the latest one from China, he said.

"Previous examples of these trees have filled with sand when fossilised, offering only tantalising clues about their anatomy," said Dr Berry. "The fossilised trunk obtained from Xinjiang was huge and perfectly preserved in glassy silica as a result of volcanic sediments, allowing us to observe every single cell of the plant."

And what were they like to carve? We will never know.

The research is reported in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.



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Events



Sheet Copper Sculpture Workshop (November 2017)

A four day introduction to working with sheet copper as a sculpture material using the techniques of beating and brazing will be held from 27 to 30 November at the London Sculpture Workshop, Thames Side Studios, Unit Zero First Floor, Harrington Way, London SE18 5NR

The course, in this excellent metal working workshop at LSW will show you the possibilities of working sheet copper, a great material for making outdoor sculpture, water features and hanging mobiles.



Peter Benson Tutorials

Peter Benson (former Chair of the BWA and master carver) runs small tutorial groups at his home in Essex. There is a charge but is not expected to be high. If any members are interested in attending, let Ann or Clive know. We will need to establish the maximum number Peter can take. We would car-share to get there. (The picture is of Peter when he visited us a few years ago.)

Club Stuff

- Lots of members went to the Woodworking Show at Cressing Mills (Essex) in September and a good show it was. Rumour has it that this will be the last show there (not because of lack of interest – more to do with organisational issues) so watch this space for further information. Ann notes that Peter Benson (former Chair of the BWA and master carver) was there giving advice and demonstrations.
- Members were reminded to bring old sheets for under their work benches or tables when the 'mid-month 'No-Frills' meetings are held in the Link area of the church.
- Our Christmas Party will be held in the normal meeting place on the evening of our December meeting (2 December 2017) with members bringing a food contribution. Do tell Ann what dish you will be bringing (of size to cater for roughly 4-6)

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

Members are reminded that if they demonstrate at an event on their own, they MUST tell Leader Ann to help ensure they are fully covered by the provisions of the insurance arrangements in place.

Cakes for November meeting:

Jerome

The next 2017 Main Meeting
(Carving, coffee & cake, an opportunity to bring guests and potential new members) will be from
9am to 1pm,
Saturday 4
November 2017

There is an additional mid-month meeting in October.

The October 'no-frills' meeting will be held on
Saturday 11 November,
from 9am to 1pm
(in the 'Link' area)

All our meeting dates and other information are shown on our website www.woodentopswoodcarvers.co.uk

