

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

Visitors are very welcome

# WOODENTOPS

## Newsletter

November 2021

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.

Website:

[www.woodentopswoodcarvers.co.uk](http://www.woodentopswoodcarvers.co.uk)

 Woodentops Wood Carvers

 #Carverofwood

## September/October Reports

### September

Comments from Ann...

David was delighted to have won the 'Movement' competition when announced at the September meeting. He received a bottle of Cava and some lime wood to carve. We decided on the next competition theme which is 'Abstract', leaving it wide open to interpretation!

Although the kitchen is now open for use we decided that for future meetings we would now prefer to bring our own refreshments to future meetings at least pro tem. (So don't forget your thermos flask next time.)

We discussed how to attract more members and there were a few suggestions. This included mentioning the Club on 'Next Door' and having stickers made for our car windows with brief details including that we are Orpington Woodcarvers so everyone knows where we are, and linking to the website.

The September meeting was really enjoyable despite all having to shout over David's enthusiastic mallet wielding as yet another lovely carving of his appeared. Hence me giving him lime wood as it is softer!!

Members are reminded that it is their personal responsibility to wipe down their own tables, tools and equipment in the hall and that for the time being there won't be any additional 'no frills' meetings in the weeks between our normal, First-Saturday-of-the-Month meetings,

### October

At the October meeting we discussed the name of our group, and whether it would be more appropriate to call it the Orpington Woodcarvers' Club (or similar). There was a general feeling that this would be entirely appropriate, to better identify the group with the local area and so that the name better reflects what we do. There was also recognition that there is now some work to do to change the name properly (such as the logo, the website address, bank account details, and so on... ) We also need to revisit our statement of aims, or purpose if you like, so that when newcomers visit the website people can see quickly and easily what we are about.

We also discussed in more detail the **Christmas Party Meal** being held on the evening of **Saturday 4 December** in the usual hall, which is now booked for the occasion. Members are urged to come to this very enjoyable event, with is free to members, but who are asked if they can to bring a dish to share. Please contact Ann (details below) to confirm your attendance, and with your dish suggestion (so we can help ensure we have a good mix of starters, main courses and puddings). There will probably also be a quiz, music – and who knows, even dancing perhaps!

***Do come to our next meeting – Saturday 6 November.***

Leader:	Ann High	01689 859617	fellowcarver@gmail.com
Treasurer	Andrew Cheesman	07843 274363	andrew.cheesman@hotmail.co.uk
Secretary/ Newsletter	Clive Nash	0208 4648902	clivewoodentops@outlook.com
Committee Member	Tom Young	01689 851500	thomas.young67@ntlworld.com

# From Members, 1

finally found the square root!



Thanks to Sue Medley for sending the above through

*Amazing carved door. Cornhill, near the Bank of England.*

*Regards  
Tim*



## From Members, 2

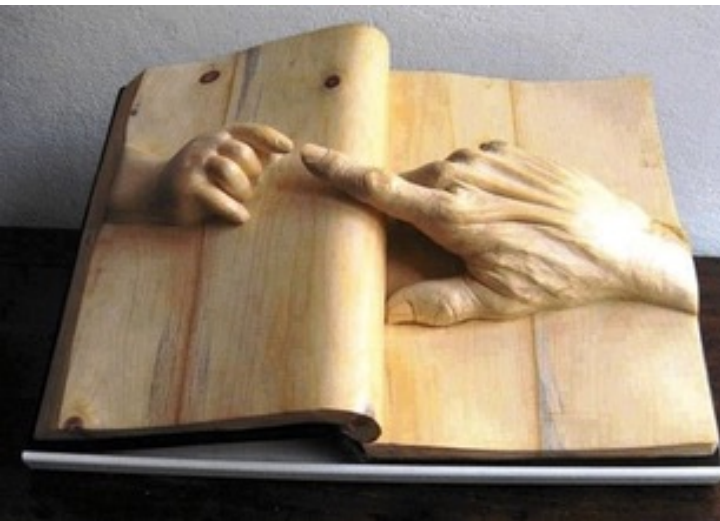


Infirmity precludes George from carving now, but he kindly sent through these examples of his work.

Thanks, George, for your friendship and best wishes for the future from the Club.



# Nino Orlandi



Thanks to **Derek** for forwarding these inspirational carvings by Nino Orlandi,

See more at [Carved Wooden Sculptures By Nino Orlandi \(awesomebyte.com\)](http://Carved Wooden Sculptures By Nino Orlandi (awesomebyte.com)) from which come these words:

*One look at Nino's works and its magical effect will immediately have you under its spell. What's even more surprising is this gifted wood carver is completely self-taught. His series on wooden books, titled as 'The Book of Life', 'The Book of Dreams' and 'The Magic Mountain', is most appealing. The finely crafted hands and other details in these books are a testimony to both his carving skills and his fantastic imagination*

# Traditional Carpentry/Carving Skills

Here are two extracts from the magazine **Professional Builder** (September 2021 edition). Of interest might be the shot of the carpenter trimming a log into square section using an axe. Modern techniques of course would involve the use of a circular saw in a factory. Though it looks laborious, I would not mind betting that this worker is actually doing the job quite fast, with the added satisfaction of a traditional craft being preserved, - and with no need for hearing protection! Good to see that ancient timbers are being preserved (see text) and traditional skills being taught.

## SPECIAL REPORT

### TRADITIONAL BUILDING SKILLS

# FELLOW TRAVELLER



Throughout the summer of 2021 four builders have been visiting a host of projects and conservation specialists across the country as part of the William Morris Craft Fellowship. Professional Builder Lee Jones talks to the group about their experiences.

Organised by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, this unique educational opportunity allows the Fellows to undertake a six-month, nationwide tour. On it they will gain hands-on experience of building conservation and repair across a diverse range of disciplines and locations, with the opportunity to subsequently focus on a particular trade. Last year, Covid-19 restrictions forced the cancellation of the annual SPAB initiative for the first time since the Second World War. As a result,

this chosen few have been waiting patiently for a full year to embark upon the life of an itinerant craftsman that the training programme demands.

Professional Builder caught up with the group at the annual SPAB summer working party, which has again brought the organisation's Scholars - as well as volunteers - together at two sites: the SPAB's Old House Project at St Andrews former chapel and Boxley Abbey, both near Maidstone in Kent, where the repair of the site's 15th century St Andrew's Chapel is putting the charity's principles

concrete render.

It's that belief that the fabric of old buildings should be saved where possible that attracted the Essex-based craftsman to the Fellowship and the SPAB philosophy. "I've always tried to save as much of any old timber frame as possible, rather than replace whole sections, because you are saving a piece of history."

Whilst taking time out from his successful business is a huge commitment, Toby has found the SPAB programme hugely rewarding. His many Fellowship highlights have included thatching, a visit to a slate quarry, and an introduction to brickwork conservation

Palace, whilst he will also be undertaking a three-month millwrighting course at the end of the SPAB Programme.

Carpenter, Oli Beatson is already well versed in using time honoured techniques to ply his trade and was demonstrating his rope access skills in the roof repairs of Boxley Abbey's imposing medieval barn. The joiner works for Historic Environment Scotland, and also has the added pressure of being away from his family, and two-year-old son, during the Fellowship, but it is a sacrifice well worth making. Like Toby, he believes as much of the original timbers as possible should be preserved and it is an approach which



## And finally..

There seems no shortage of chainsaw-carved pieces around and about the locality. Who carves them is a mystery, as there are never any attributions. This very proficiently carved owl was spotted in Westerham, at the foot of the churchyard. If YOU see anything of interest in the carving domain, photo it on your phone and send it to me (details page 1).

