

www.thewoodentops.co.uk

WOODENTOPS Newsletter

September 2016

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

Carving for Royalty

He apparently created a rush on a clothing range with a single photograph. This led to the phenomenon being known as 'The Prince George Effect'. On his third birthday, a present from his Grandad, Prince Charles, was a wooden, oak-plank swing. On it are carved the names of George's parents.

According to the Daily Telegraph (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/07/22/duke-and-duchess-of-cambridge-prince-george-and-princess-charlot/>) the swing was made by The Oak and Rope Company, based near Canterbury. Also according to the Telegraph, this company immediately saw an increase in sales after the seat was known to have been provided to Prince George.

The Telegraph additionally reported that Prince Charles is a regular customer of the company, and is a particular fan of its garden swings, hewn from oak sourced from Duchy of Cornwall's forests.

Such is his fondness for the hand-carved objects that Charles is apparently understood to have purchased two additional swings for the couple, on the birth of each of their children, engraved with the name of each child.

Eagle-eyed readers of this Newsletter will note that the Oak and Rope Company's wares were shown in an edition a couple of years ago when they exhibited at the Hampton Court Flower Show (oh, were ahead of the game here!).



Picture below from the Oak and Rope Company website:
<http://theoakandropecompany.co.uk/shop/product/73/medium-swing>



Picture Credit (pictures above): MATT PORTEOUS/Daily Telegraph

Carve Your Own Stool (If You Have a Chainsaw)

This item adapted from **Getting All Lumberjacky**, by the Rooster and the Hen:<http://www.theroosterandthehen.com/getting-all-lumberjacky/>

I go to load up the boot of my car one fine afternoon, and inside I find this log laying awkwardly to one side. It's only as I'm asking what in the world a piece of a tree is doing there that I have an inspiration for a new bathroom stool.

Just holding that chainsaw helped the inner lumberjack come to life, and before you knew it I was dicing and splicing at all sorts of angles. I started off by trimming off the ends to make it as flat as possible and making it the correct height.

We rough-sketched where we'd be making the cuts into the wood. We wanted to make sure the cuts were somewhat evenly spaced and that the legs of the stool would support it properly. I cut vertically down the stool – making sure to leave about 3-4" at the bottom of my cut as this would be the seat of the stool later on.

Then I cut the other direction, making a "+" to remove the space between the legs. Obviously I don't have the skills with a chainsaw to make a bear or totem pole here, but you can see the stool begin to take shape – I was mildly shocked myself. The nice thing about this project is that it's supposed to look rustic, so while some may like the tailored look, I was completely ok with some flaws in the cutting. I did, however, use a sawzall and sander with 60 grit sandpaper to take off the rough edges and clean it up a bit.

Once sanded down, we applied the stain. The new stool is perfect for us. It goes along with the bathroom's woody feel, and is the perfect height for the kids. And as an added bonus, because it's a mite heavier than the old one, it won't be dragged all around the house and bathroom.

Surprisingly though, it's not as heavy as you'd think and it doesn't take much for an adult to slide it to one side or another, especially with felt pads placed on the legs.

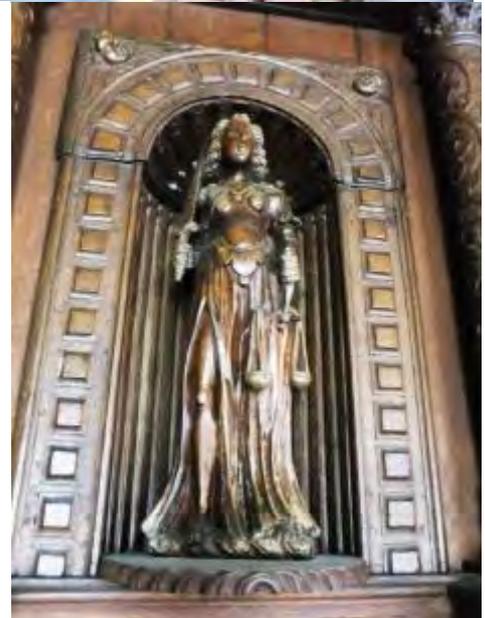


More Shots from Members



Last month featured some shots of carvings taken by **Paul and Jane**. Here are a few more of theirs, taken at a National Trust property called the Vyne (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-vyne>).

The carver of this magnificent fireplace is, sadly, unknown. More from Paul and Jane's gallery next month.



Wood Hardness

How do you measure the hardness of wood?

Well, according to <https://tinytimbers.com/janka.htm>, the **Janka Scale** rates the relative hardness of wood. The higher the number the harder the wood. These ratings were determined using the Janka Hardness Test which measures the side hardness measure of the force required to embed a 0.444 inch steel ball to half its diameter into the wood. This is apparently one of the best measures of the ability of wood species to withstand denting and wear. It is also a good indicator of how hard a species is to saw or nail.

Red Oak, which has a Janka rating of 1290, is apparently the industry benchmark for comparing the relative hardness of different wood species.

The trouble is, much of this work appears to be done for the benefit of wood floor providers. Of course, it is very helpful when buying flooring to know that your surface will withstand the pressure of high-heeled shoes and hob-nailed boots, but for carvers, something a little simpler is surely called for.

I for one would like to see a simple table setting out the hardness of common English carving woods (and other woods available in the UK). Such a list would be immensely useful to carvers, experienced and novice, but try as I might I cannot find one. Sure, available tables of wood hardness are useful (see the one below) but they generally include a range of exotic woods with precious little reference to English species. And such tables (reference the one below) do not seem faultless. For example, Teak is listed twice with different harnesses.

Does anyone know where a simple table of carving wood hardness might be found? If you do, please let me know. Meanwhile, I've highlighted some of the wood hardnesses that you might find helpful in the table below.

This should only be used as a general guide when comparing various species – the source guide notes that results may vary depending on where the wood is harvested.

Wood Hardness Table

From <http://heritagewoodfloors.co.uk/technical/wood-hardness>

Patagonian Rosewood / Brazilian Tiger Mahogany	3840	Rosewood	1780	Cocobolo	1136
Brazilian Olivewood	3700	African Padauk	1725	Brazilian Eucalyptus / Rose Gum	1125
Brazilian Ebony	3692	Blackwood	1720	Makore	1100
Ebony	3220	Merbau	1712	Siberian Larch	1100
Brazilian Redwood / Paraju / Massaranduba	3190	Kempas	1710	Peruvian Walnut	1080
Yvyraro	3040	Black Locust	1700	Boreal	1023
Stranded/woven bamboo	3000	Highland Beech	1686	Black Walnut / North American Walnut	1010
Bloodwood	2900	Wenge, Red Pine	1630	Teak	1000
Red Mahogany, Turpentine	2697	Tualang	1624	Cherry	995
"Southern Chestnut"	2670	Zebrawood	1575	Black Cherry, Imbuia	950
Spotted Gum	2473	True Pine, Timborana	1570	Red Maple	950
Brazilian Cherry / Jatoba	2350	Peroba	1557	Boire	940
Mesquite	2345	Sapele / Sapelli, Kupa'y	1510	Paper Birch	910
"Golden Teak"	2330	Curupixa	1490	Eastern Red Cedar	900
Santos Mahogany, Bocote, Cabreuva, Honduran Rosewood	2200	Sweet Birch	1470	Southern Yellow Pine (Longleaf)	870
Pradoo	2170	Hard Maple / Sugar Maple	1450	Lacewood, Leopardwood	840
Brazilian Koa	2160	Caribbean Walnut	1390	African Mahogany	830
Sucupira sometimes "Brazilian Chestnut" or "Tiete Chestnut"	2140	Coffee Bean	1390	Honduran Mahogany	800
Brushbox	2135	Natural Bamboo (represents one species)	1380	Parana	780
Karri	2030	Australian Cypress	1375	Sycamore	770
Sydney Blue Gum	2023	White Oak	1360	Shedua	710
Bubinga	1980	Tasmanian Oak	1350	Silver Maple	700
Cameron	1940	Ribbon Gum	1349	Southern Yellow Pine (Loblolly and Shortleaf)	690
Tallowood	1933	Ash (White)	1320	Douglas Fir	660
Merbau	1925	American Beech	1300	Western Juniper	626
Amendoim	1912	Red Oak (Northern)	1290	Alder (Red)	590
Jarra	1910	Caribbean Heart Pine	1280	Larch	590
Purpleheart	1860	Yellow Birch, Iroko	1260	Chestnut	540
Goncalo Alves / Tigerwood	1850	Movingui	1230	Hemlock	500
Hickory / Pecan, Satinwood	1820	Heart Pine	1225	Western White Pine	420
Afzelia / Doussie / Australian Wormy Chestnut	1810	"Brazilian Mesquite" / Carapa	1220	Basswood	410
Bangkirai	1798	Guianensis	1220	Eastern White Pine	380
		Larch	1200	Balsa	100
		Carbonized Bamboo (represents one species)	1180	Cuipo	22
		Teak	1155		

Letters

In the last edition I published an article on **do-it-yourself wood staining**. Well-known wood carver and friend of the Club Peter Benson has replied:



Hi Clive

Thanks for the newsletter – some very interesting content. With reference to the bit on the use of vinegar and wire wool, there is one minor disadvantage of using this method of colouring – your piece smells like a fish and chip shop!

There is one good alternative, that works just as well, and that is to use Coca Cola instead of vinegar. As this contains a quantity of phosphoric acid that will dissolve most metals (and much else besides) you will end up with ferric phosphate which has the same effect on the wood. You can still get colours from light grey to almost pitch black with applications of an old damp teabag. It is also a bit more user friendly than vinegar as the solution isn't quite as nasty if kept for a while. You can also get ferric sulphate tablets from the chemist which can be dissolved in water and used the same way but with less dramatic effect.

One small word of warning if colouring this way. Don't use near wood that has been bleached as it will react with the bleach and turn the wood pink at the edges in contact. I speak from experience!!!!
Hope this is of interest and that all is well with you all.

Kind regards

Peter & Em

From Rob Walmisley

Hello Clive,

Thanks for all the emails, - very interested in the attachment on the letter sent from Ciro Coleman - ie: Wood Art Masterpieces by Nairi Safaryan. I would like to buy one or two of his artefacts in the US but he seems to be very difficult to contact, - does he not sell to overseas customers and how do I get in touch with this guy ?

Best Regards,

Rob.

Hi Rob

I know little more than you – I found his works through his website. However I have found he has a Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/NairiSafaryan.art>

Perhaps you could Messenger him through Facebook to ask about purchase. Also try these websites:

<http://www.artslant.com/global/artists/show/209654-nairi-safaryan>

<http://blog.woodcraft.com/2010/07/nairi-safaryan-interview/>

http://www.zapmeta.co.uk/ws?de=c&q=buy%20wood%20carvings&asid=zm_uk_ba_5_cg1_09

Couldn't find anything from him on sale on ebay!

Regards

Clive

Thanks a lot Clive, - I'll give them a try,

Best Regards,

Rob.



Cartoon
from
http://www.the-cartoonist.com/knots/KNOTS_MB_wood_carving_rev.jpg

CARVE OUT YOUR NICHE

And finally....

Q. What's the best way to carve wood?

A. Whittle by Whittle



You might find this attractive. From the web at <http://www.funfun.in/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/wood-carving-amazing-art.jpg>



Club Stuff

Cakes

September: Terry
 October: David
 November: Jane



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 from our meeting. If you want to carve a spoon, you provide the blanks yourself, I'm afraid.

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<p>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</p>	<p>2016 <u>Additional</u> Meetings (No frills, just carving) All 9am to 1pm, Saturdays</p>
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>



And finally...

The Mayor of Bromley talking to Ann and Cathy at our carving demonstration at Ripley Garden Party on 27 August, and showing great interest in our work.

More pictures in the next edition.

