

# West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



October 2009

Newsletter Issue 180

David James - Stickmaker.

www.wrwoodcarvers.com



For the October meeting we were very fortunate to have speaker David James with his encyclopaedia knowledge of the history, design and the intricacies relating to the construction of the many varieties of walking, shooting sticks and shepherds crooks.

David was the second stick maker we have had to the Club in the last few years, Dominic Suddaby in November 2007 being the other, and again I'm sure that members enjoyed a fascinating couple of hours on this specialist subject.

David spoke eloquently about the fun and rewarding experience of creating the stick from the raw branch and controlling how it develops throughout the entire process. He showed how in the end one created a very versatile utilitarian instrument that can be used in just about every daily endeavour from casual walking to a tool for use by farmers and hikers. It can be a creation that may be admired for both its beauty as well as its many uses.

David is the editor of the Stickmaker Magazine and we are indebted to George Crawshaw for introducing him to the Club.

David's sticks were extremely well made and the envy of many carvers who follow this particular craft but the one that quite a number of members present gazed at with admiration was by one of our own newer members **Malcolm Cooper**. The pictures below will show you the intricate twirls of the shaft and handle but don't do justice to the remarkable finish and the small carved ladybirds that were strategically placed as the heads of steel strengthening pins into the length of the shaft (if that's what you call the bit below the handle).



Norman Shaw



Peter Slavin



Adrian Lindley

Please bring loads of carvings to the November meeting, including Armouries carvings.

With this Newsletter you should have a new contact sheet of all 76 members and a map to the Fleece pub.

Not often mentioned, but not forgotten and very much appreciated, are the ladies in the kitchen who will be extremely hard worked at our full day meeting in November.

Regretfully we still have a number of members not very well. Jane is suffering from a nasty sore to her leg and problems relating to her diabetic condition- but gets little sympathy from me after her very rude comments at the Shepley meeting regarding my self inflicted stabbing in Malcolm's class. I understand that Mick Wilson and his wife made a social visit to Mike Hadfield's class and it was reported that he was very much on the mend. I also believe that Frank Bromhead and Eric Schofield are not in the best of health. On behalf of all members we wish them all a speedy recovery and return.

**November 28th 2009:** Michael Painter will make a return visit, mainly at the request of quite a number of the newer Club members who have never had the pleasure of watching him teach and work. This will be an extended event with the usual 10:00am start to about 3:00pm with a pea and pie lunch. Will the people who kindly agreed to bring a sweet course along please remember to do so or we shall all be fighting for the left over pies to fill us up. If anybody is a vegetarian, or doesn't like, for some reason, pea and pies, - there are a few strange individuals around - then please ring Jane on 01484-541278 and she will cook you a three course vegetarian meal. An entrance charge of £5 will be collected on the door to help cover the cost of the lunch and Michael's expenses. (Somebody passed a comment when the entrance fee was agreed at £5 "Where can I go for £5 and get three cups of coffee a pea and pies lunch followed by a sweet and five hours good instructive entertainment" - obviously he had taken his holiday in the European Euro zone this year! Not sure what Michael is going to do yet - I have to see him at the Yorkshire Woodworking Show to arrange something.

**December 12th 2009:** Alan Scott from BBC radio. Golden memories of the variety theatre. This is of course our Christmas Luncheon at the Meltham Golf Club. Price £16 per person. We usually hold a special raffle, organised by Wendy Hodgson, with proceeds going to Kirkwood Hospice. Would anybody with anything for raffle prizes - like the one you won last year and hated - please let Wendy have them either on the day or preferably before. Jane would like more jokes sending to her. She has only had 6 sent so far and 2 of these are so dirty they can't be read out in mixed company. If more don't get sent we are in danger of having to listen to Jane's own jokes and if they are anything like her usual ones it could ruin everybody's Christmas.

**January 9th 2010:** Free and Easy with up-date on the Royal Armouries Museum Panels. Possibly, if time allows, a talk by a club member.

**February 13th 2010:** Dr Jonathon Riley and Steve Burt from the Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds. (To be confirmed).

### Royal Armouries Museum Panels up-date.

Having sat at home watching the very moving ceremony of Remembrance at the Cenotaph in London it made me aware of how very honoured we are to be playing a small, but extremely demanding, part in the commemoration of the service personnel and civilians who gave their lives in both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> World Wars. The project we are embarked on will be a lasting celebration of the talent within our Club and a marvellous memorial to the fallen.

After the last Sub-Group meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> October it became quite obvious that the presentation date for the hand over is more likely to be towards the end of 2010 than the middle of the year. We have 95 individual carvings to complete by 51 carvers plus the actual construction of the two Panels, which in total is a mammoth, but a worthwhile and exciting, undertaking.

Although nothing has been decided yet, and will be put to the total club membership for approval, it was thought that an ideal time for the eventual hand over could be the 11<sup>th</sup> November to coincide with Remembrance Day and the many activities arranged at this time of year at the Royal Armouries. This would give us the extra time we are likely to need and make the handover ceremony more meaningful.

Progress is going to plan with all carvers now being in possession of timber and the necessary drawings and as I write at least five people, to my knowledge, have completed their first carving and are now preparing to start a second. The Utile timber for the frame has been purchased and collected by Derek Adams and Bryan Hodgson and is being stored by Derek until required. Our budget price was £325 and the actual cost finished up at £253.

Graham Lockwood, who is extremely accomplished in photography and taught computer-aided design, has kindly taken on the task of photographing both the finished and work in progress carvings. He has also offered his expertise with the technicalities of the overall booklet design. Frank, who usually takes on the responsibility of club photographs, is fully in agreement with Graham undertaking this task and will assist him where necessary.

After Christmas we shall start in earnest gathering together information for the booklet and putting together ideas for the overall design and content of the booklet. If anybody has any additional information regarding the particular subject they are carving please forward to Anne or myself. I have been in touch with the Armouries who are actively seeking information on the type and availability of dispensing machines. The machine will eventually determine the size of the booklet and will be located in near proximity to the Panels.

A meeting has been arranged with Celia Kilner for the 9<sup>th</sup> December to discuss the content, design and costing of the glass information plate. Meeting with Celia will be Mike Hadfield, Bryan Hodgson, Dennis Farmer and myself.

It has been suggested that after the classes at Brooksbank and All Saints finish in late March 2010, that classes could be extended at either one or both venues to assist with tuition throughout the summer for the carvers still working on the Panels. I'm not sure when Des Lindley's class finishes or if it goes on throughout the summer months.

The January 9th 2010 monthly Shepley meeting has been designated as a "Free and Easy" with the emphasis on updating all members on the Royal Armouries Panels' progress.

Dr Riley and Steve Burt, Directors of the Royal Armouries Museum, have been contacted with a suggestion that they accept an invitation to our February 13<sup>th</sup> 2010 Shepley monthly meeting. The reason for the invitation would be two fold. It will give Dr Riley, Steve Burt and others the opportunity to meet the wider membership of our Club and view the carvings that are finished and in progress. Secondly the suggestion would be that they give a short talk on their plans for the two Panels and the history, functions and extended venues connected with the Royal Armouries.

Evening social/progress meetings at The Fleece, Elland: The first meeting has been arranged for Thursday the **26<sup>th</sup> November 2009** commencing at **7:00pm** (to ensure all carvings can be viewed and photographed in the time available). Constructive advice, if required, will be available. Our negotiations with Lindley Liberal Club for a room unfortunately didn't come to a positive conclusion but the landlady and her staff at the Fleece are very welcoming. Please note this is as much a social evening as a progress evening and wives, partners etc are very welcome. Because of members' Christmas commitments we shall not hold a further meeting until January. (I will try and put a direction map to the Fleece Inn in the latest Newsletter pack).

Will all members please ensure they keep a record of how many hours they employ in carving time. This is important for the booklet and publicity as we all know the first question anybody asks is "how long did it take".

Reg Platt has asked me to pass on the information that the gentleman who runs The Old 7th Batt HQ, DW Regiment West Riding TA. Bullecourt Museum, The old Drill Hall, Scar Lane, Rufford Road, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield is very interested in our project and very helpful with military information. Open times are 2:00pm to 4:00pm Saturday and Sunday.

I had cause to contact the Publications and Information Supervisor at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission regarding some information I needed to assist with the carving I am trying to do of a stonemason carving a gravestone. Having explained why I wanted the information we had a long conversation which resulted in a request that we keep the Commonwealth Graves Commission informed of our progress. She has also asked, when available, for photographs and a copy of the booklet for their records.

**Raffle:** Sales £60.00. Prizes £20.00.  
Tickets -£4.00. Profit £36.00.

**Management meeting:** January 14th 2010. Round Hill pub 7:30pm.  
**Armouries Sub-committee meeting:** December 10th 2010 Round Hill pub 7:30pm.