

West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



November / December 2009

Newsletter Issue 181

Michael Painter

www.wrwoodcarvers.com

Without doubt the decision to bring Michael back for a return visit to the Club, and especially at this crucial time in the Royal Armouries project, proved to be of enormous benefit and inspiration to all members undertaking relief carvings for the two Panels.

We are all indebted to the teachers, and more gifted members, within the Club for the assistance on a weekly basis which they freely give, but the opportunity to listen, watch and absorb the teachings of a professional carver of Michael's reputation and skill will prove invaluable.

To hold an audience of 52 enthralled for a solid four and a half hours (this excludes break times), with only two rest periods, is testament to both his engaging manner and skill plus the interest of the subject matter to his audience. The request that he concentrate his lecture on relief carving with particular reference to perspective, figures and faces in full, side and three quarter profile was well received.

Our thanks must go not only to Michael but also to all the members, in particular Arthur, who were willing to put forward their particular carvings for constructive comment and in two cases surgery. But at least now we have a baby on the 1st WW panel that won't grow into the facial image of its mother before she had a couple of very sharp and large chisels attack it.

One thing that Michael did comment on, on a number of occasions, was the enormity and complexity of the task we have collectively undertaken with the Royal Armouries project and his admiration for embarking on the project. He also, during the break, put into words a problem that is of concern and may eventually befall the project and that is complacency and the slowing down of the project that can set in as the months progress. Something we must ensure with careful management does not happen.

He has very kindly offered, in the New Year, to set aside a few hours of his valuable workshop time for a group of 8 to 10 carvers who are struggling and may be in need of his services. Obviously we cannot transport all 51 carvers to his workshop near Atherstone, Warwickshire so will have to carefully consider how we take up his kind offer. I think Arthur may have to be one of his first customers.



Our grateful thanks to David who did a splendid job on the projector.

DVD's will shortly be available of Michael's lecture. We thought we could produce them for £4.00 each but there is so much content that they are having to be recorded on two discs, so regrettably we shall have to charge £5.00 per set.

After recovering from the shock of seeing a fair percentage of his carving reduced to chips on the floor Arthur has very kindly given me permission to print the following photos of his carving - the man has no shame.



Original picture - a baby to be proud of.

Arthur's carving - poor little soul!

After part surgery by Mike Painter.

Our grateful thanks to the ladies, and gents, in the kitchen who did their usual terrific job with a smile for everybody.

Also thanks to everybody who brought items for the sweet.

I think we had more carvings on display at the November meeting than have been displayed for many months and there were some really good Royal Armouries carvings on display.



On your behalf may I welcome new member Graham Hughes to the Club and offer my apologies to Liz Willoughby whose photo I forgot to put on the list of members I circulated last month.



I understand that Eric Schofield has had a slight set back that prevented him coming to the Christmas Luncheon. Also I believe that Trevor and Freda Kilvington are not in the best of health at the moment. On behalf of all members we wish them all a speedy recovery, a lovely Christmas, a great New Year and a steady improvement.

Christmas Luncheon on the 12th December at the Meltham Golf Club was attended by 82 members and guests. The food, service and atmosphere was all we have come to expect of this annual, and increasingly popular, Christmas gathering.

We must give special mention to Jane who always makes this a most joyous occasion with her terrible jokes - actually, by default, I won the worst joke award, even though I can't remember sending it in, so I have little right to pass comment. Jane initially won the worst joke contest not me and should have got the prize of a bottle of bubbly but asked Alan to pick another one. So in the New Year we shall have a glass together, hers a small one and mine a large one - I don't want to spoil her!

On a more serious note Jane each year does a great job, and amazingly got everybody sat in the right seats this year, and without her unusual, quirky and lovely sense of humour the occasion would greatly suffer. Our thanks also to Wendy who again ran the raffle that made, I think, about £125 for the Kirkwood Hospice.

One disappointment was the lack of carvings for the Rose Bowl award. Out of 82 persons present we had the rather slim pickings of only 11 carvings, why?????. The eventual, and inevitable, winner was Trevor Metcalfe with his unbelievable relief carving of the 'Workshop'.

Alan Scott with his golden memories of the variety theatre appeared to amuse everybody with his antidotes of famous people he had known during his career on stages throughout the land. I can't display any photos as our friend Frank was too busy devouring the buffet to take any. What was very striking was just how racist the jokes were in those days before all this 'political correctness' came along.

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: Steve Burt - Operations Director and Philip Abbott - Collectables Manager. from the Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds will be attending the meeting. They will take the opportunity to view as many carvings as possible for the two Panels and give a brief talk on their plans for the Panels and the history and workings of the Armouries.

March 12th 2010: Still to be filled - any ideas????

April 10th: Annual General Meeting.

May 8th 2010: Still to be filled - any ideas????.

June 12th 2010: The Rocking House Shop, Fossgate, York.

Books and plastacine recommended by Michael Painter:

Manual of Traditional Woodcarving by ED Paul Hasluck. Amazon £10.04

Atlas of Human Anatomy for the Artist by Stephen Rogers Peck. Amazon £7.91

Eyewitness Art Perspective by Alison Cole. Amazon £9.57

Plastacine from Newclay Products Ltd, 1 Battle Road, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 6RY. Similar pack from Amazon £2.50 pack.

Royal Armouries Museum Panels up-date.

Review of social/progress meeting at the Fleece Inn, Elland. At the meeting 24 carvers out of the 51 turned up. A number of carvers brought along their partners to enjoy the social side only for them, unfortunately, to freeze along with the rest of the carvers..

The meeting was a disappointment on a number of fronts. The relatively low turn out, the room was dark (we had been promised new lighting was to be installed but it wasn't) it was cold with only a small electric fire and one bar gas heater covering a large room on a very cold night. And in a way the meeting failed to fulfil the purpose it was intended for.

The original intention of the meeting was to record the progress of all carvings by the 51 participating carvers and that each carver would be able to have his carving evaluated and be offered guidance and encouragement. This didn't happen and a number of the carvers present were disappointed. Mike Chamber's tried his best to give advice to the carvers present but time restraints made it virtually impossible.

It was agreed at the latest Sub-Group meeting that any follow up meeting, in the New Year, should be at another location and that thought and planning must be taken to ensure that the original purpose of these meetings is fulfilled.

Up-date report on World War 1 and 2 Panel pictures. All 1st WW plaques were now with carvers, at the last count, seven being completed and thirteen of the 2nd WW Panel carvings being worked on. All the carvings should be completed, if possible, by the end of June 2010 before actual assembly of the two Panels. The frame will be machined ready for assembly before the carvings are completed.

Up-date Glass information sheet: A meeting was held with Celia Kilner on the 8th December to review any progress made on the design of the glass sheet. Because of previous commission commitments undertaken by Celia, little progress has been made. This is not a problem at the moment as certain details relating to the wording, date and dignitary named on the sheet have still to be finalised. It was agreed that the first priority was to establish a realistic price for this aspect of the Royal Armouries project. An original budget price of £600 was established for the completed glass sheet. A meeting is going to be arranged with the glass company very early in the New Year. After discussion regarding the poppy and barbed wire design, it was agreed that the wishes of the majority of our members would be accepted and the field of poppies and the barbed wire would run from the bottom left of the sheet progressively climbing towards the right hand side.

Booklet and pictures. Immediately in the New Year we shall start to seriously collect text relating to each individual carving. Will each carver please forward any information they may have in their possession. Please remember this is *your* carving and you will, if you have researched the subject, possibly have more accurate information than anybody else. All information to Anne Ellwood or myself please.

Hand-over date: A meeting at the Royal Armouries has been arranged for the 6th January 2010 to discuss, amongst other things, the eventual hand over date which we anticipate could be on or around the 11th November 2010.

This will be the last Newsletter of 2009, thank goodness do I hear, so may I take this opportunity of wishing everybody a very Happy Christmas a terrific New Year and I sincerely thank you for your company over the very interesting and enjoyable last twelve months. Two thousand and ten should be quite a year with the Panels due to be completed and presented to the Royal Armouries in November. *JM Sec.*



Just got in the post a Christmas card from Dr Ingrid Roscoe addressed to all her "woodcarver friends".

Raffle: Sales £58.00. Prizes £24.00. Profit £34.00.

Winners: Arthur, Jane, Dick, Dennis and ????

Management meeting: January 14th 2010. Round Hill pub 7:30pm.

Armouries Sub-committee meeting: To be arranged Round Hill pub 7:30pm.