



West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



Life members
Anne Hobson
Albert Hobson
Norman Walsh

Newsletter Issue 185

May 2010

The report of the meeting attended by Chris Scaife was kindly written by our Assistant Secretary, Malcolm Till, who does a far better job than me and, if I can twist his arm, has a job for the future.

This will be a very quick Newsletter as I don't have a great deal of time at the moment and Malcolm has done all the hard work.

Attached with this Newsletter is a copy of minutes of a meeting at the Royal Armouries on the 18th May 2010. The meeting was very encouraging and progressive and I think it better that all members have a full copy of the minutes than I try to précis what took place, with the possibility of leaving out some interesting point.

Chris Scaife - Robert Thompson the mouse man.

The Meeting began promptly with 45 members present. There were apologies for absence from Margaret and Jim Durrans, Margaret Myatt, Eric Schofield and Jim and Margaret Longbottom.

Adrian with Jane opened the meeting with a list of forthcoming events from now until the Christmas lunch on December 4th which was stated by Jane to now take place at the Brighthouse Sports Centre.

Under A.O.B. mention was made of the July, Holmfirth Arts Exhibition and a call was made for volunteers. There was a pronounced silence and lack of enthusiasm but volunteers were forthcoming later in the meeting.

Reference was made to Dick Wood who has had a triple heart by pass and feels he should tender his resignation. A letter written by John Murphy was read out by Adrian which soundly praised in a kind and humourous way Dick's many and varied contributions to the club over many years in several different venues. This was greeted with applause as was the suggestion following shortly that he might be offered life membership as a gesture of thanks. This would be considered.

The meeting organisation matters concluded, Adrian introduced the speaker; Chris Scaife a member of the Thompson team member to talk about Robert Thompson, the company that he started and its origins.

He began by modestly introducing himself and his place within the company and how this first arose. He is now amongst other functions the archivist and guide in the museum on the site.

Moving on to Robert Thompson he illustrated the original small site of the workshop and its accompanying blacksmith's premises. Robert Thompson as boy was sent to a Cleckheaton wire works as an engineering apprentice. After five years he rejected engineering, returned to Kilburn joined his father. Influence by carved work he had incidentally seen in his away years, began to work in wood. His father died a few years later and young Robert took over the small firm. Further influenced by the then prominent Arts and Crafts Movement he transformed the firm by degrees into the now world famous Mouseman company we have all to greater or lesser degree we known about and established its unparalleled reputation for quality.

Chris spoke on widely different matters with excellent and not excessive illustrations. He dealt with tools and the oak timber and its lengthy seasoning before passing on to examples of Thompson's work across this country and indeed overseas. He proved an interesting speaker who had something to offer everyone in his somewhat small but attentive audience.

After the customary break which on this occasion seemed to come round unexpectedly quickly, there was a short question and answer session. His talk was so well organised and comprehensive however that few questions arose. The meeting was closed shortly after twelve to genuine applause.

Our next meeting on the 12th June 2010 is a talk by Graham Harker from the Rocking Horse Shop, York. Graham was a little bit worried that he couldn't fill the full two hours but I have assured him that when it comes to questions we will keep him going until after 12:00pm. I understand that Adrian announced that Mike Chambers and Trevor Metcalfe would give a talk on how they individually tackled relief carving in July. Adrian, through no fault of his own, was a little premature as only Mike had been asked if this was OK. But I'm sure if we gang up on them they could be persuaded to give a little talk in July.

June 12th 2010: Talk and demonstration by the Rocking House Shop, Fossgate, York.

July 10th 2010: Still to fill. Maybe Mike and Trevor.

August 14th: Jonathan Albutt - Stone carver.

September 11th 2010: Joint meeting with the Lancashire and Cheshire Woodcarvers. Russell Birch - Netsuke carvings .

October 9th 2010: Birstall Woodturning Club will be coming along to give a demonstration of turning. We have agreed to give them in return a talk/display on carving.

November 13th 2010: We are holding open this date as we may all be engaged in the Royal Armouries Panel presentation.

December ?? 2010: Christmas Luncheon.

Most member's will now be aware that our good friend Dick Wood, who has done an awful lot for the Club, has regretfully had a triple heart bypass but I understand he is now on the mend. Dick has, unfortunately, had to tender his resignation from the Club.

Dick's letter to the Club was read out to the members at the last meeting but quite a number of members, because of holidays etc, could not attend. For these people I had copied Dick's letter and my reply.

R. Wood

*106 Grey Lea Drive
Waterloo*

22. 4. 10

Dear John,

*It grieves me to write this letter,
but I think you will understand. I am told that I
cannot drive for a month or two, and that it will
be a few months before I am out of the wood.
Therefore I will be missing more meetings than I can
attend, so after a lot of thought, I tender my resignation
from the club. I have enjoyed 20 yrs of membership, and
made some very nice friends, who I will never forget,
I was looking forward to having my picture taken
with the War Panel, but it is not to be.*

Dick.

Dear Dick

It is with great sadness that I read your letter informing me that you are being forced to resign from the club for health reasons.

Without a doubt the monthly meetings and occasional outings will never be the same again. Who will now ask our speakers the questions we all would love to know the answers to but were too shy to ask? Coffee cups will be hanging around the room long after we have all departed and chairs will never get put out on time.

Many members, who have been associated with the club far longer than I, will testify to the enormous amount of work that you have done over the years at both our previous meeting rooms at the Church of the English Martyrs and at our present location at Shepley. I for one know the hours that go into finding speakers for the monthly meetings, a job which you took on admirably when nobody else stepped forward.

I'm quite sure I speak for all your many friends when I wish you a speedy return to good health and, irrespective of whether you are a member or not, you will always be very welcome at any future club events.

Your last comment stated you were looking forward to being photographed with the Royal Armouries Panels and your regret that this may now never happen. If we have to carry the Panel across Huddersfield to your home we shall arrange for you to be photographed with them when completed. Also the name of Richard Wood will forever be proudly displayed in the booklet alongside a photograph of your lovely carving of the Remembrance Cross.

The April meeting at the Lindley Bowling Club had a very good turn out. Our thanks to Margaret, Mary, Carole and Barbara for arranging the pea and pie supper. We shall have to keep hold of these ladies as they again managed to cover costs and generate a profit of £25 which covered the £25 cost of hiring the room.

A further meeting has been arranged for the **17th June 2010**. We seem to have got into a slight mess regarding a meeting in May as some of the carvers thought it was on, including the Bowling Club, and some thought it was cancelled. It was actually agreed that we would give it a miss in May as so many people were away on holiday but, unfortunately, our communication skills are not up to our carving skills. Our apologies to Frank, in particular, who again booked the room, and anybody else who was inconvenienced. I shall write to the Bowling Club apologising for the mistake and book the room for the 17th June. Some form of supper will again be put on by the ladies. I'd better now inform them of that!!!

The carvings of the 1st World War, apart from just a couple, have now been handed in and Dennis is dipping them in sealer. John Farrar's son has machined the timber for us, (Nethercoats who were going to machine the timber, unfortunately, went out of business) and Bryan has now put together both frames ready for mounting the 1st WW carvings.

Raffle: Sales £53.00. Prizes £21.00. Profit £32.00.

Management meeting 27th May 2010 7:30pm Round Hill pub.