

West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



May 2013
Newsletter Issue 217

Patron
Dr Ingrid M Roscoe
Lord Lieutenant of
West Yorkshire

Life members
Anne Hobson
Albert Hobson

John Farrar - 11th May 2013

Well he would, wouldn't he?

For a man who claims to be fascinated by 'what can be achieved with a gouge', John Farrar had a fairly prosaic first memory. Imagine the cute baby John, blue eyes and dimples, sitting in his pram listening to a local girl asking if she could take him for a walk.

But John's earliest memory also included wood – well it would, wouldn't it? Because the girl came through the wooden gate, the house had wooden floorboards below and wooden trusses in the roof above; in fact, as John said, take away wood and the house falls down.

This tale was John's entrée into several humorous stories and entertaining recollections as he began to talk us through some of the 'most unusual carvings' brought to the Shepley meeting by some of the members.

There was the ebony carved face – found in the former Belgian Congo by John Murphy and swapped for a tin of beans – and a giraffe from Arthur Brook which no one seemed to want until he came along, and then a trickily carved elephant-within-an-elephant. Other gems included the beautifully crafted nutcracker from Dennis Farmer, which John believed was possibly a valuable antique, and the strange unfurling 'flower' bought for a tenner in Southport by Colin Pratley.

There was a hugely moving story behind the bamboo carving presented by Malcolm Cooper. It belonged to his wife's aunt and uncle who were taken prisoner in Singapore by the Japanese in the Second World War and who endured horrific treatment at the hands of their captors. Amazingly, they survived and both lived into good old age.

However John chose as the 'most unusual carving' one from David Holt, of an elegant ebony carving of perhaps an African woman, which David picked up in a shop in the Cotswolds. David also picked up the prize – a nice bottle of wine.

John's conversation about the different woods led someone to root out an old box belonging to the club with named examples and for John to tell us about a display of every type of wood at the Lady Lever Gallery in Port Sunlight.

John also mentioned more than once, just how friendly and welcoming the woodcarvers club is and what a nice bunch we all are. Well he would, wouldn't he? **Janet Smith**
Asst Sec.



David Holt
The Winner



Arthur Brook
Runner up

Meeting on Saturday June 15th 2013 at Shepley:

I sincerely hope that everybody got my message, by email or pigeon post, that the meeting that we usually hold on the second Saturday had been put back by a week.

The reason for this is that I had contacted no less than nine people, or organisations, to try and find a speaker for our June meeting but without any luck. David Holt and Jane passed to me an article that was in the Huddersfield Examiner regarding the talk that the Geology Trust had given to the West Riding Stonecarvers. I also happened to speak to one of the stone carvers, over a pint of Tetley's, and he was full of praise for the gentleman that had given the talk.

On contacting the Geology Trust inevitably he was unavailable but the Chairman of the Trust, Alison Tynon, who lives only a mile away from Shepley Church, offered to give a talk but was tied up on the second Saturday. Hence the movement of the meeting back one week to the 15th June.

The talk should be very interesting as it will cover the local geology and Alison will talk about the stone used for carving all the beautiful monuments and statues we have in the area.

A lot of time has gone into arranging this meeting and I know that Alison has changed her arrangements around to accommodate us so please can we have a good turn out for what should be a very interesting meeting.



Colin Pratley

Forget-Me-Not Children's Hospice Panel

Things were going along quite nicely until I received a phone call late last Friday afternoon from the hospice informing us that a long awaited official opening date had now been agreed. The only downside being that it is on the 21st June 2013!!!!

I understand that our good friend and Patron, Dr Roscoe, has been involved and that a 'Royal' would be involved. These things are usually kept secret - not now - for security reasons so we haven't a clue what is happening beyond the fact that the official opening will take place on the 21st.

Obviously, after all the work that has gone into the new panel ideally it should be on display and part of the royal visit.

We have contacted the hospice and told them that with all stops pulled out we are 99% certain that we can have the panel finished and hung by the 21st June. At the moment the main panel is at Derek's workshop and he and Colin have fixed all the carvings on the backboard, the frame is finished and polished up and Graham is working with Derek to fit and connect all the moving carvings mechanisms - not an easy or quick job.

The control panel, that Trevor has made, is in my workshop at the moment. David Hey has spent hours and hours designing and fitting most of the electronic gear. David cannot complete his work until the timber has been finished polished and the sound cards have been recorded by David Holt - too many David's in our club - and Peter.

Yesterday, I had our local nameplate friend around to discuss what nameplates are required for the different switches and they will be ready on Tuesday morning. Tomorrow, Monday 9th June will see the control panel polished up and on Tuesday 10th David Hey and Trevor will fit the nameplates, the switches - that cannot be fitted until the nameplates are in place - and the sound cards, after Peter has recorded on them. With any luck everything should work and the panel, that just goes into the back of my Saab estate with one inch to spare, will be taken to Derek's to marry up with the main panel. Then all the wires have to be connected to the various motors and the sound card speakers fitted.

I understand that on Wednesday Derek and Trevor are planning to go over to the hospice to fit the hanging baton onto the wall. We are just praying that the stud wall is strong enough as the panel plus control board is quite heavy and we don't want it falling on a child, or a Royal.

To make things more difficult the only transport that we have to move the panel around is Derek's camper van, and guess what, he goes on holiday on Friday 14th June!

What is happening on the day we have no idea. Obviously, the hospice will not accommodate everybody in the club so we shall just have to play this one by ear. Maybe we can organise a viewing for the club one night before the hand over, we shall investigate the possibility.

Depending on the printing of a booklet, the plan would be to take the panel on tour. The venues would include the Halifax Agricultural Show, usually about 18,000 attends on a good day, the Huddersfield Parish Church and Wakefield Cathedral are all on the agenda for discussion.

John Farrar's poem. Why Worry? There are only two things in life worth worrying about, whether you are well or whether you are ill. If you are well you have nothing to worry about. If you are ill, you have two things to worry about, whether you live or whether you die. If you live you have nothing to worry about. If you die you only have two things to worry about, whether you go to heaven or whether you go to hell. If you go to heaven you have nothing to worry about. If you go to hell you will be so busy shaking hands with all of your friends that you won't have time to worry!

Holmfirth Art Show

We shall again be taking part in the Holmfirth Show in July and the club organisers would like you to please bring carvings for display to the June Shepley meeting for Margaret to take away.

Member's who have small carvings that they have produced for sale to the public also please bring these to the meeting and hand them to Peter Keene. I understand that we now have quite a collection and all the money raised will help towards the cost of the children's panel.

There will be a stewarding schedule put out at the next meeting and Derek and Margaret have asked that you please put your name down. I will be circulating a full stewarding list before the show starts on the 7th July.

It was reported at the last meeting that, due to ill health, **Malcolm Till** would not be renewing his membership with the club.

Malcolm did, in a conversation with me, wish all his many friends in the club his very best for the future and the continuing success of the club.

Many of us, myself included, owe Malcolm a great deal for the many hours that he patiently, and sometimes not very patiently, gave his time freely for the benefit of us lesser mortals during his years as our tutor at the various carving classes.

I'm sure we all thank Malcolm for his time, kindness and generosity and all the hours he spent teaching. We also trust he has a speedy return to good health.



Overgate and Kirkwood Hospice

The club has been invited to look round the new extension to the Kirkwood Hospice and 50 places have been booked, by Jane, on Tuesday 18th July at 7:20pm.

If you intend to have a look round, and have the opportunity of renewing your acquaintance with our millennium panel, then please let Jane know.

Dennis, Bryan and I are waiting to have a meeting with the architects that are re-vamping the entrance way to Overgate Hospice.

It would appear that the building work could mean that the Overgate panel will have to be moved. This, as most of us know, will cause no end of problems as the panel was designed and produced with a 135 degree angle to fit around a bend in the wall.

Regretfully I have to report that **Barbara Bromhead** is not very well at the moment and is attending a hospital in Leeds. We all wish Barbara a speedy recovery. Jane, on behalf of the club, has sent Barbara a lovely bunch of flowers. Well I assume they were lovely!