

# West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



October 2013  
Newsletter Issue 222

Patron  
Dr Ingrid M Roscoe  
Lord Lieutenant of  
West Yorkshire

Life members  
Anne Hobson  
Albert Hobson

## Thompson Dagnall - Wood and Stone Sculptor

### Larger than life

A giant snake that eats children, an oversize squirrel displaying more nuts than it ought to and lumps of timber and stone weighing as much as 92 tons which need a police escort. Phew.

But it's all in a day's work for the inspiring sculptor and carver, Thompson Dagnall.

Underneath that leather cap lies a genius for working with wood and stone, but with the added flair of turning that craft into art.

Thompson was speaking at the October meeting at Shepley and showing us some of his work, much of it displayed outdoors, in a set of slides. Everything is bigger, bolder and more audacious than real life, such as a colossal crab, enormous legs astride a waterway in Wirral. There was a giant green man, staring out of a growing tree, a huge black crow with a glint in his eye which turned out to be a coach screw, and a 'walking' snake, carved so that children could walk along its back.

Some of his work can be seen at Beacon Fell in Lancashire and at Boggart Hole Clough on the outskirts of Manchester as well as other sites, mostly dotted around the North West..

Perhaps his most stunning piece, the stone carving representing the Tolpuddle martyrs, is on display in the village of Tolpuddle, Dorset and was his first foray into stone rather than timber.

When working with timber, Thompson uses three different sized chainsaws and an array of chisels, most of which appeared to have seen better days. He beseeched us to buy an old rusty butter knife if we ever saw one, because the steel would be thin and flexible and, once cleaned up with a new handle, would be the perfect tool. He urged us to try carving in the green as it was possible to do so without cracks and it cuts 'like cheese', even across the grain.

And another interesting tip was not to use varnish which settles in the cracks, lifting the lower points. Instead, the play of light on wood is enhanced by using a buff polish like beeswax, he said, increasing the shine on the more prominent parts of the piece.

Thompson, who may visit us again next summer to give a demonstration, was indeed a larger than life character, the creator of larger than life artwork. You should have seen the size of that squirrel and its nuts.

Janet Smith - Asst Sec



For those who are interested Thompson and his wife, Jacqueline, operate a Hardy Plant garden over in Bretherton, Leyland, Nr Preston and throughout the year they have gardening and carving demonstrations. I understand that Thompson finishes the demonstrations off by playing his guitar and singing, regretfully not everything in life is good! Their next open day is on the 6th December and entitled:

**Christmas from the Garden 6th December 1-3pm**

**Jacqueline will demonstrate how to make Festive arrangements for the home. Learn how to make a blue spruce door ring, a choice of table arrangements and a mantelpiece swag using a variety of materials many of which can be sourced from your own garden. This will be followed by mulled wine mince pies and carols to get you in the mood for Christmas.**

**For more information or to book ring Jacqueline on 01772601433.**

**The cost of the Demonstration and refreshments is £8 per person.**

**There will be seasonal items for sale and a free raffle.**

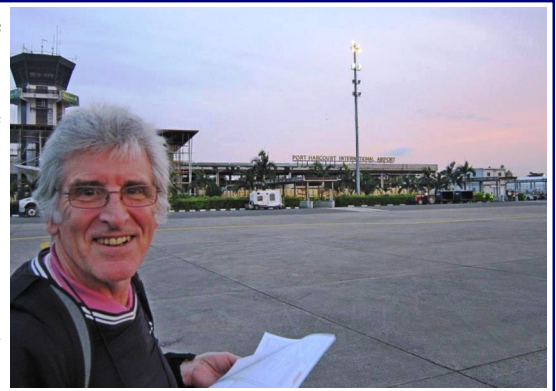


Jacqueline also does talks to groups on flowers and gardening and I understand she is very good . We could perhaps invite her over for a talk in spring.

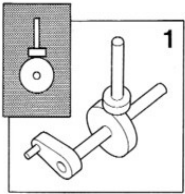
**Shepley meeting 9th November 2013: Graham Lockwood** will give a talk on the mechanism relating to the automatons that he is very expert at making.

I can't get hold of Graham at the moment to discuss just exactly what he is planning. He could possibly still be in Port Harcourt in West Africa flying kites, see pictures. Having sailed into there many, many years ago the best thing I remember about the place is the quickest way out!

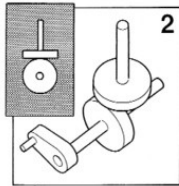
I understand the idea behind his talk is that he will go through the components of a simple mechanism and then distribute detailed paper plans to all who are interested with the encouragement to make the automaton mechanism and then design their own adaptation of a moving figure for the top.



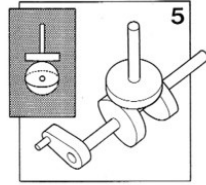
**WRCA Christmas Project**  
Simple Automata to be displayed at Xmas Dinner.



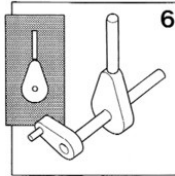
**1. Simple Cam and Follower.**  
The cam being 2x bigger, the follower will rotate twice as fast.



**2. Cam and Follower**  
Both diameters are the same and will rotate at the same speed.



**5. Two Cut-Away Cams & Follower.**  
As the first cam rises it rotates the follower clockwise but because it is cut away the second cam will come into play and rotate the follower anti-clockwise and so on, giving the follower an Oscillating motion.



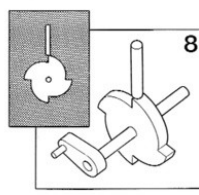
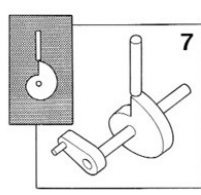
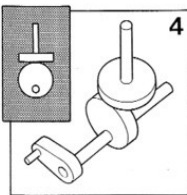
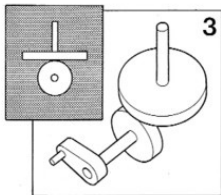
**6. Cam and Riser.**  
This cam has a single lift and the riser will quickly rise and fall once per revolution.

**3. Cam & Follower**  
The follower being twice the size of the cam will revolve at half the speed.

**4. Off Set Cam & Follower.**  
The shaft of the cam is off set. This means the follower will rise and fall as well as rotate.

**7. Cam and Riser.**  
Single slow lift cam and sudden fall.

**8. Cam & Riser**  
Multi rise and fall.



The finished efforts will be displayed at the Christmas Luncheon. You will all remember the very successful competition we had last year when Peter Berry took a workshop in November with the end product being a number of very interesting 'Little Fred's'. I'm sure we shall have some very interesting, and amusing, items to brighten up the Christmas Luncheon.



**Just to give some ideas for simple mechanisms Graham sent these diagrams for distribution to the keen ones amongst us.**

**Royal Armouries:** At our last meeting I reported that the building of the new Centre of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum has been delayed with building starting this coming year and a two year building program being planned. We are considering holding the two WW1 & 2 panels at the Royal Armouries for the time being but have asked for a meeting to discuss the location of the panels and the addition of information panels pointing the public in their direction. We have £120 being sent to us for booklet sales.

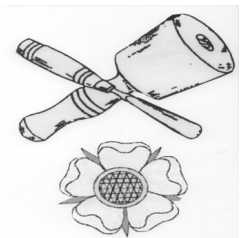
### Christmas Luncheon 14th December 2013:

This year the luncheon will be at the **Crosland Heath Golf Club, Felks Stile Road, Crosland Hill, Huddersfield, HD4 7AF.** Our speaker will be a lady from the National Mining Museum and her talk will be entitled 'Coal to Canvas' which should be of special interest to the many amateur artists that we have in the club.

**Our club Patron, Dr Ingrid Roscoe and her husband Marshall will again be joining us.**

## West Riding Woodcarvers' Association

**Christmas Luncheon 14th December 2013. Start 10.00am. Crosland Heath Golf Club, Huddersfield. £20.00 per person.**



I would like to book \_\_\_\_\_ places for the Christmas Luncheon please at £20.00 each.

My cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_, made out to West Riding Woodcarvers' Association, is enclosed.

My preference would be to sit near my friends \_\_\_\_\_

My name is: \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque and booking form to be returned to:

Adrian Lindley  
Mayfield  
13 South Croft  
Upper Denby  
HUDDERSFIELD  
HD8 8UA

**Guest entertainer: National Mining Museum - Coal to Canvas.**

**Guests are very welcome.**