

West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



Patron
Dr Ingrid M Roscoe
Lord Lieutenant of
West Yorkshire

Life members
Anne Hobson
Albert Hobson

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Graham Lockwood - Automata design

The Beginnings of a Movement

Animating some of our members may be a tall order, but Graham Lockwood's talk on Automata and Moving Mechanisms for wooden sculptures certainly got the ideas flowing at our latest monthly meeting.

Bringing to life his talk, with a variety of working prototypes, Graham talked us through his evolution from, as I understood it, a speaker at one of our gatherings to interested WRWA member into our resident expert on wooden mechanisms.

Developing his 'know how' teaching children how simple mechanisms create movement using a rotating shaft with cams, wheels, levers and push rods, Graham set to work explaining the basics. It was clear that his early classes fired up the young minds as there were several ingenious automata – the grisliest of which was the Condemned Man in the Electric Chair, jiggling rather authentically when the handle was turned. This automata was joined by a frightened Elephant rearing up when a rapidly running mouse crossed its path and a singer and musician rocked it to the music.

Graham's own automata included "Dry Run", a Scuba Diver practicing in full gear but obviously in the Kitchen at home. Made as a thank you gift for an excellent diving experience in Australia, it didn't quite make it as Graham confided he couldn't let it go once it was made. So it remains in chillier climes, laying flat out on a kitchen stool flapping his flippers.

Graham explained how increasingly more movement can be achieved with relatively simple combinations of the basic mechanisms and a little thought.

One of the key reasons for Graham's talk was to give members the basics to take away and put into practice in an Automata Christmas Competition. Handouts and advice were freely distributed with brief to go away and bring back your own Automata at the Christmas Lunch to be judged and a WRWA Champ to be named on the day.

A great talk I'm sure those who attended will agree. Lots of interesting ideas that we could all have a go at. *Chris Smith*

14th December: Our annual **Christmas Luncheon** will this year be held at the Crosland Heath Golf Club, Felks Stile Road, Crosland Hill, Huddersfield. For those who are not conversant with the location of the golf club the post code, for your Sat Nav as I'm sure you will all have one fitted into those fancy motor cars, is **HD4 7AF**. If you need directions and a map, just log onto www.croslandheath.co.uk.

As with all golf clubs they have a strict dress code requesting that visitors refrain from wearing denim jeans, trainers, collarless shirts or baseball hats. Come to think of it, the normal day dress for most of us! Suits aren't necessary but a smart jacket and tie would be appreciated for the men. The ladies, as always, will be immaculately gowned, bedecked with jewellery and smelling nice, unlike the guys, who usually smell of wood dust, bees wax and wood sealer.

Coffee will be served at 10:00am for a start at 10:30am. Our speaker for the day will be Gwendolyn Whitaker from the Yorkshire Mining Museum. Her subject is 'Coal to Canvas'. Should be interesting, especially for the artists amongst us!

Dr Roscoe, her husband Marshall and their driver Glenn, have a very long drive over from the York area so will be joining us a little later in the morning, but will be there for the start of lunch. A parking bay right outside the door has been arranged as we don't want them parking miles away after a long drive, and Glen is not getting any younger!

We are dispensing with Jane's 'Dirty Jokes' competition this year as some of the offerings last year bordered on the down right filthy. But I am informed by Jane that she has plenty of good one liners to brighten the morning.

We would again ask that we have plenty of members' carvings for the display, old ones and new ones are always welcome. I'm sure Dr Roscoe and Marshall will be interested to see what we have produced, if anything, besides our carvings for the children's hospice panel. This year we are hoping that a number of those present have taken up Graham's challenge to produce and display an automata. It is appreciated that the time line from Graham's talk to the luncheon date is very short but here's hoping that we see a few interesting creations. There will be the prize of a bottle of bubbly for the winner.

We have asked our Patron if she would kindly hand over to the children's hospice, on our behalf, a cheque for £2,000. This sum represents the money we have collected on the booklets that were produced to compliment the panel. I would point out, as I'm sure Adrian has previously, that we have already paid out in excess of £2,000 for the printing of the booklets. We trust that they, and eventually the publication of the story of the panel in the Woodcarving magazine, will continue to bring funds into the hospice. Romaine Maret, from the hospice, will be on hand to accept the cheque.

As usual, our annual Christmas raffle, in aid of Help the Heroes (as voted for at previous meeting) needs your assistance with prizes. Please turn out those expensive, but never used or wanted, presents and bring them along to raffle for a worthy cause. Wendy and Bryan and others, will again be on hand to receive your gifts and sell you tickets.



Shepley meeting 11th January 2014: David Holt has been working hard and come up with a speaker to kick of the New Year. So if they are terrible and the computer and video gear doesn't work, for once we have just one person to blame –David!

So on the 11th January we have coming to Shepley a lady called Jan Scrine from The Milestone Society. Probably like most of us I didn't know there was a Milestone Society but I am reliably informed that they were established in 2001 with the aim of identifying, recording, researching and interpreting milestones and waymarkers from all areas of the British Isles. They also cover tollhouses, the history of turn-pikes and canal milestones.

The Yorkshire section of the Milestone Society is very active in our region and I'm sure Jan will be giving us some interesting facts and figures about the local history connected to her unusual hobby.

Carving Classes: Please note that the classes close for the Christmas holidays as follows.

All Saints Huddersfield: Tuesday class last day 17th December. Thursday class last day 19th December. School opens again on the 7th January 2014.

Queen Elizabeth Grammar School: Monday evening class last day 9th December. Classes start again on the 6th January 2014.

Brooksbank School: Monday evening class last day 16th December. School opens again on the 7th January 2014. (Please remember we shall all be off down the pub on the last Monday evening.)



This labour of love by our good friend **Mary Stott** had to be included in this month's newsletter. Mary has, between the carving of four panel carvings, been working on this remarkable carving since 2007. When you look at the detail you can understand why it has taken a few years of Brooksbank classes to complete. (The fact that Mary, and many others, spend half the night talking instead of carving could have something to do with the time its taken!)

It depicts part of the beautiful gates of the Halifax Piece Hall and Mary has translated the Latin in the circle into English and depicted the words around the sides of her carving. Well done Mary and a remarkable achievement that we shall ensure it gets the publicity it deserves.



To the right is a section of the Piece Hall gates from which Mary worked.