

West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



Life Members
Albert Hobson
Jane Renshaw

Patron
Mike Painter

January 2020
Issue 274

Club Meeting January 11th, 2020.

A Cut Above

The sometimes controversial topic of sharpening chisels kept everyone entertained at the Saturday morning meeting of the club at Shepley in January.

Club member Mike Chambers was leading the discussion, as he had offered to share his life-time's expertise on sharpening to start the new year.

Spread before him on two trestle tables was an amazing array of homemade chisels and other paraphernalia that Mike had made or accumulated over the years.

He stole a march on many of the other members as he was apprentice-trained as a mechanical engineer and awarded his City and Guilds (with a distinction in maths) when still a fresh-faced youth. So we were talking about experience going back quite a few years.

One of his apprenticeship tasks at one point was to sharpen drills, although his more interesting years were as a repairer of forklift trucks, visiting and being fascinated by many different workplaces up and down the country.

His sharpening tools included oil stones and whet stones, as well as fine abrasive paper (160 or 180) glued to a block of wood and a diamond 'stone'. There was even a piece of marble which, Mike said, would not sharpen a chisel but would give a good finish.

And if the surface of your oil stone becomes hollow, take it out in the garden, he said, find a convenient flagstone, add sand and water, rub rub stone against flagstone, and it will eventually become flat again. Mike also explained in detail how he made his own chisels, mainly from allen keys, and how copper or chrome tubing could be cut to make a ferrule for a home-made chisel. He also explained about the intricacies of sharpening drills and had several to show us.

His final advice was to 'stick to one way' when using a sharpening technique - meaning one person's way - and then move on to other ways if they seemed an improvement.

'I won't argue that my way is right,' said Mike. 'I suggest you find someone you can trust and practice that way.'

Janet Smith

Next Meeting, February 11th, 2020

Following last month's meeting I managed to persuade Mike Chambers to give us a hands-on demonstration of his sharpening techniques for our February meeting. I'll be doing an explanation of the theory of creating a sharp edge and hopefully answering some of the questions raised at last month's meeting – namely what is a hollow grind and why we use grinding wheels the way we do to avoid this.

I'm sure that old hands and beginners alike can gain a lot from attending as sharpening is critical to completing clean crisp carvings. No doubt there will be many interesting points that we can all incorporate into our sharpening regimes.

We want this to be an interactive session so please bring along your chisels, sharpening gear and a workmate for advice and encouragement.

Chris Smith.

British Hardwoods Open Day

A poster for a timber sale and open day. The background is a close-up of wood grain. At the top, there is a white silhouette of a tree with the text 'BRITISH HARDWOODS Timber Shop' below it. The main text reads 'TIMBER SALE and OPEN DAY' in large, bold, white letters. Below that, it says 'SATURDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2020' and '10AM - 4PM'. A list of activities follows: 'SPECIAL GUEST "THE BLIND WOODTURNER"', 'TIMBER SALE OF NATIVE, EUROPEAN, AMERICAN & CANADIAN HARDWOODS', 'CRAFT MAKERS STALLS', 'WOODWORKING & WOODTURNING DEMONSTRATIONS', 'CLASSIC HAND TOOLS', and 'ALL WELCOME'. At the bottom, the website 'www.britishhardwoods.co.uk - 01535 637755' and the address 'UNIT 9 RIPARIAN WAY THE CROSSINGS BUSINESS PARK CROSS HILLS KEIGHLEY BD20 7BW' are listed.

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Timber Shop

TIMBER SALE
and
OPEN DAY

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CROSS HILLS KEIGHLEY BD20 7BW

Many of members will have bought timber from British Hardwoods at the Harrogate Show over the years I'm sure but did you know they have two Open Days a year?

The next one is on the 8th February so whilst we'd like to see you at Shepley for the sharpening workshop if you aren't attending and are looking for timber for a project it would be a good time to visit British Hardwoods.

The free Chippy's Pencils and BHW Mugs make it a worthwhile visit.

(Don't think they stock Lime carving blanks so call and check before).