

# West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



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Patron  
Dr Ingrid M Roscoe  
Lord Lieutenant of  
West Yorkshire

Life member  
Albert Hobson

## David McDonald—The Royal Yacht Britannia

### Life on board the Royal Yacht

Local man David McDonald told of his life as a radio operator on the Royal Yacht Britannia that was the sea going home of the Queen and the Royal Family for more than forty years. David was a radio operator and the resident DJ for three years in the early 1960s.

David told of his pride in being a member of the Association of Royal Yachtsmen who still visit Leith on a regular basis to assist with the up-keep of this beautiful vessel. The Britannia is now berthed and serving as a visitor attraction in Leith.

Britannia was the only ship in the world whose Captain traditionally was an Admiral. Nowhere on her side will you see her name, yet she is recognised around the world. She was built for the dual role of becoming a hospital ship if needed.

David told how the Britannia was launched from the John Brown & Company shipyard in Clydebank on 16 April, 1953. For over 44 years she served the Royal Family, travelling over one million miles to become the most famous ship in the world. To Her Majesty The Queen, Britannia proved to be the perfect royal residence for glittering state visits, official receptions, royal honeymoons and relaxing family holidays. For Great Britain, she was a majestic symbol of the Commonwealth and a proud ambassador.

The crew of Royal Yachtsmen were volunteers from the general service of the Royal Navy. Officers were appointed for up to two years, while the "yachtsmen" were drafted as volunteers and after 365 days' service could be admitted to "The Permanent Royal Yacht Service" as Royal Yachtsmen and served until they chose to leave the Royal Yacht Service or were dismissed for medical or disciplinary reasons. As a result, some served for 20 years or more. The ship also carried a platoon of Royal Marines when members of the Royal Family were on board.

The Royal Yacht's last foreign mission was to convey the last governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten and the Prince of Wales away from Hong Kong after its handover to the People's Republic of China on 1 July 1997. Britannia was decommissioned on 11 December 1997.



**March 15th Shepley monthly meeting:** Please note that this meeting is not on the second Saturday but on the third Saturday of March.

Everybody by now will appreciate that speakers are getting very difficult to find but we have managed to book Axminster Tools, Warrington to come along on the 15th March (they were unavailable on the 8th March).

Phil Lewis, the Store Manager at Warrington, will be kindly sending along two of his staff. Peter will give a full demonstration of the Tormek Sharpening system and Dan will talk about and display various hand tools connected with carving and general woodworking.

I have asked if they can bring along also a range of Flexcut chisels as I know we have a number of members who are interested in adding some of these very versatile chisels to their toolbox.

For anybody who has not visited the Axminster Showroom at Warrington I can assure them that it has the best range of tools in one location that I have ever seen. The showroom is vast and very nearly anything you see in their catalogue is on display.

I promised them that I would inform our members about their Birthday Event on Friday and Saturday 4th - 5th April where they have 13 different exhibitors demonstrating their products, including our old friend Peter Berry.

Just on the question of speakers, I have just been e-mailed by the Speaker Finder, Derrick Hogan, at the Lancashire and Cheshire Woodcarvers who are desperate for speaker for 2014. They are obviously having the same problems we are. We have agreed that we keep close ties and cooperate in sharing speaker contacts. Derrick is also going back through our on-line newsletters to see if they can attract some of our past speakers to Rochdale. At least somebody will be looking at the newsletters!!!!

**Anne Hobson.**



It is my very sad task to remove the name of Anne, a Life Member, from the front of this edition of the club newsletter.

I'm sure everybody in the club is now aware that Anne sadly passed away earlier this month after a long illness that resulted in care home assistance over the last few years.

Anne, along with husband and fellow Life Member Albert, were very much involved in the formation of the West Riding Woodcarvers Association and both have played a leading part in its growth over many years.

Anne's funeral on the 19th February 2014 at Holmfirth was very well attended by members of the club.

Anne will be sadly missed and in these difficult times our thoughts are with Albert and his family members.

It's not often that I find space in the newsletter to thank a couple of ladies who month in and month out turn up at the Shepley meetings to look after everybody by providing refreshments. So on this occasion may I, on behalf of everybody in the club, thank Margaret and Joyce for the sterling work they put in. Also our thanks to Marion and Jim who also help out.



Joyce



Margaret

Stewards are required on Wednesday 26th March at the Forget-Me-Not Hospice 'Open Day' to talk to visitors about our panel.

Please contact Adrian with names.

**Royal Armouries:** Adrian and I attended a meeting at the Armouries on the 30th January 2014 to discuss the location of the WW1 & 2 panels and the lack of information available to visitors in directing them to the panels.

Very nearly all the people we were associated with both prior to and at the hand-over in November 2010 now seem to have left the employment of the Armouries. We discussed the history of our association with the Armouries and left documentation relating to previous meetings where we had been promised video display material around the two panels.

The conclusion of the meeting was that the new team would take away our concerns and look at the possibility of using, and displaying, the video footage we collected over the built-time of the panels. They also promised to look at our suggestion that a pull-out banner - similar to the WRWA pull-out banner we purchased some time ago - be displayed at the bottom of the steps and the lift entrance directing visitors to the panels on the third floor.

We can now only wait their response but at least they did appear interested and sympathetic to our concerns. Time will tell!

Our communications with the National Memorial Arboretum seem to have dried up at the moment but seeing that funding has knocked back the build programme until at least August 2014 this is probably not surprising.

We did, incidentally, advise the Armouries' personnel that others, including the National War Museum and the National Memorial Arboretum, had shown an interest in displaying the panels.

**Shepley display:** Many thanks to all the members who brought along carving for the February table display. There was a fantastic display this month and it makes such a positive difference to the half time break when there are loads of carvings to look at and discuss.

It doesn't matter if the carvings have been completed years ago or just yesterday, all are welcome. On second thoughts I will take that comment back. It is only the second time in many years that I have brought my carving of the Wheelwright along and its the second time that Trevor Metcalfe has come along with his identical carving and plonked it down right at the side of mine. Now that's not fair. But there was comments that mine was the better of the two, but only just!! And I live in fantasy land!



Trevor Stanley - Dog.

Darrell Edwards - Green Man.

Malcolm Cooper - Stick Head.



Darrel Edwards



Jim Longbottom - Beetle. Mike Ryan - Koala Bears. The other, Trevor or John????

