

# West Riding Woodcarvers' Association



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Patron  
Dame Ingrid M Roscoe  
DCVO FSA  
Lord Lieutenant of  
West Yorkshire

Life members  
Albert Hobson  
Jane Renshaw

## November 11th: Stuart Smith - Battle of Monte Cassino, Italy 1944.

Another great talk by Stuart which touches on his grandfather's Monte Cassino experience during WW2 and then moves on to the bombing of Monte Cassino Abbey the Anzio breakout and the liberation of Rome.

Email in from Stuart after his talk.

Hi John,

It was great to see you and your group again and it was pleasure to deliver my talk about the Battle of Monte Cassino.

In response to one of the questions, which a member asked was: *What happened to 'Anzio Annie'?* (which was the railway mounted artillery piece in the Alban Hills.)

I've done some further research and the answer is as follows:

- Initially the Germans would have used existing railway tracks to get it to the closest position to where they intended for it to be placed. (They had from September 1943 to January 1944 to get this organised). Then, when the existing Italian track finished the German military engineers will have constructed track with the specific intention of getting the gun to its location (The Alban Hills).
- After the Anzio break out and the breach of the Gustav Lines the Germans retreated to positions North of Rome.

On 7th June 1944 (Liberation of Rome - 4th June 1944) the allies discovered the two 'Anzio Annie' guns (Krupp K5s) in railway sidings in a town called Civitavecchia (nr Rome). Both of the guns were loaded onto USN ships and sent to the Army Ordnance Museum at Aberdeen, Maryland. One of the guns was used by the American military for firing tests. The other gun remained at Aberdeen until 2010 until it was broken down and trucked to its new home at the US Army Ordnance Training and Heritage Centre, Fort Lee, Virginia along with the other Aberdeen exhibits.

Stuart

Please pass this information onto your group and thank you to the member who asked the questions.

Kind regards, Stuart.



**Saturday 13th January 2018.** Practical hands-on carving session on the Pontefract Panel at Shepley. Extended meeting from 10:00am to about 3:00pm. Pea and Pie lunch at £2:00 per head.

Called for by the team in charge of the Pontefract Hospice panel. This will give everybody involved, and members not directly carving a plaque for the panel, the chance to get their chisels out in the company of members from their sister carving classes.

As mentioned above, the session is also open to people not working on panel carvings but just working on their own carving. There should be plenty of experienced tuition around from such as Peter Keene, Mike Chambers, Trevor, Dennis etc.

The floor will be covered with dust sheets but you will need to bring along a workmate and, obviously, some chisels etc and no doubt a few plasters.

**December 9th: Christmas Luncheon John Foster - Victorian Bakers.** Our speaker for the Christmas get together was John Foster, who some people may know from the very interesting BBC 2 program Victorian Bakers.



**A lovely Christmas card has been received from Ingrid expressing her pleasure at once again attending our Christmas luncheon and thanking the club for the gift, to her and Marshall, of a lovely Christmas hamper.**

**Many thanks to all who brought carvings for the display. A great turnout of remarkable carvings.**

### **All Saint's Daytime Carving Class.**

**Unfortunately, this class had to be cancelled.**

Regretfully, it proved impossible to continue this daytime class which is a real shame as it means that unless a member goes to either of the Monday night classes he, or she, will not have the benefit of carving in a group atmosphere. We are also missing the invaluable advice from such people as Dennis, Trevor and others with incredible talents and many years of woodcarving experience.

There has been a suggestion that we take up an offer, made by Margaret and Jeff on behalf of the Brighthouse Central Methodist Church, that we hire one of their rooms for a few hours each week, or every two weeks, to keep people who can only attend daytime classes involved and carving together. The downside of this offer is that we would have to bring along our own means of holding devices, such as a workmate. There is a car park just next door so items would not have to be carried very far. Not sure if we could leave workmates on site from week to week, this would have to be investigated.

The other alternative is that we again try to locate a school with a woodworking room that is available during the day for hire. From past experience a school that will allow us to use their premises while the children are attending is going to be very difficult to find. We then have to take into account how many people are willing to attend. Without a certain number of people attending, sufficient funds cannot be raised to cover the cost of the room hire.

## Royal Armouries World War 1&2 panels:

Just a brief up-date on where we are with the proposed move of the two panels from their current location into the War Gallery.

It has been agreed with the personal at the Royal Armouries that this would be a beneficial move for both the Royal Armouries and our club and would ensure that the panels get the recognition that they deserve from visitors to the Royal Armouries. The pictures below show their current location, with the poor lighting, and the proposed new location in the War Gallery.



Panels isolated and unseen from the War Gallery unless you walk down the corridor.



New location along the wall in the War Gallery.



View from where the panels will eventually be located.

The downside of this eventual move is the cost. Because the panels will be located along a six foot wide walkway they will, without protection, be open to people handling them and the possibility of damaging them. The proposal is that they be enclosed behind either glass or perspex. They will also need lighting correctly and expert advice has been taken on this subject. We estimate that the total cost, assuming we carry out all the work involved, will be in the region of £2,500.

I recently approached the Leeds Community Foundation, who in 2010 helped us with the funding for all material and the cost of the booklet printing, to see if they could again help us with the £2,500. Unfortunately, on Christmas Eve I got a letter saying that on this occasion they could not help but referred us to a lady called Kaye Wilson, Funding Advice Specialist, Voluntary Action Leeds. I understand that Kaye is the person who has her finger on all grant availability within the Leeds area. I have written to her asking for a meeting and at the present moment await a reply.

The other funding option is to look at the possibility of everybody involved in the original project contributing to the costs for moving the panels. One way or the other we must ensure they are moved this year.

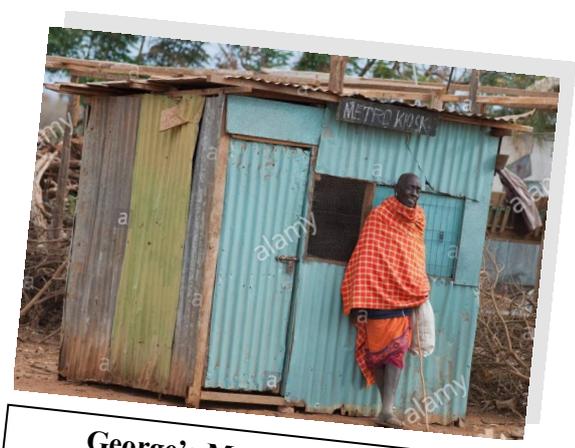
Incidentally, I was talking to a local scout leader over the Christmas holidays and twice a year, for the last nine years, he has taken his scout troop to the Royal Armouries for a conducted visit. During eighteen visits he has never come across our panels.....! This says a great deal about the current location of the two panels. They deserve better.

## George's Man Hut.

George Crawshaw has asked if I can put a request in the Newsletter for old woodworking tools.

George is involved with the Halifax Man Hut group and he has been teaching them stick making and is now moving onto woodcarving. But they are struggling for tools, mainly woodcarving chisels, but any type of wood-working tool will be gratefully received.

So if you have any old tools will you please bring them along to Shepley this coming Saturday and hand them over to George. Many thanks.



George's Man Hut Club.

## Brooksbank and Queen Elizabeth Grammar School carving classes.

Both of these classes have benefitted from our display at the North of England Woodworking Show last November. Brooksbank has welcomed three new members and QEGS has seen at least one new recruit and possibly a couple more to still join in the new year.

Brooksbank now has an embarrassment of people with 25 on the books and QEGS has a very healthy 17.

