

Talented members make story characters and wildlife from wood

The Solent Guild of Wood Carvers and Sculptors is always creating wonders

Showing skill, patience and years of experience, members of a wood carving club enjoy spending their Saturday afternoons doing what they do best.

The Solent Guild of Wood Carvers and Sculptors meet at Portsmouth Grammar School to spend time on their personal projects and show each other new techniques.

As a group, they create a number of items including plaques, story characters, wooden boxes, ornaments and lots more.

In the relaxed atmosphere of the workrooms, the members share ideas and catch up with each other.

Some members are more experienced than others but those who are new to it do not feel intimidated.

Jean Cripps, from Stubbington, has been a member for seven years but before she joined she had never picked up a chisel.

Jean said: 'I have always been interested in wood carving and things like that but had never joined a club.'

'Solent Guild said I could just come along and I haven't looked back.'

'I was a bit nervous because I had never picked up a chisel before I came along but people help you and show you different techniques on how to do different things. I wish I had started years ago.'

Jean makes a variety of

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different items including a Celtic knot mirror and a mouse.

Other members of the guild like to make characters from novels.

Bert Cox, 84 from Waterlooville, has made several of the characters from Alice in Wonderland.

He said: 'I am currently working on Tweedledum and Tweedledee but I have already made the Mad Hatter, the White Knight and the White Rabbit.'

'The Saturday sessions are just a really good opportunity to get some work done in an enjoyable atmosphere.'

'We can relax and help each other and we all take a genuine interest in each others' work.'

As well as their individual pieces, the club had also come together to make plaques.

One of these is currently displayed in the arcade outside the Naval Museum in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

It was made for the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar and features HMS Victory.



SKILLED Members of the Solent Guild of Wood Carvers and Sculptors

Picture: Paul Jacobs (132914-2)

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY GROUP

WE'VE launched Heart of the Community to shine a light on groups and clubs across the area.

So we want to hear from you. Tell us about the group you're in, what it does and why you love it.

If you would like to feature on this page, contact Ellie Pilmoor on (023) 9262 2138 or email ellie.pilmoor@thenews.co.uk

MEET THE LEADER

WITH a passion for woodcarving, George Palmer loves his job as the chairman of the sculpture club.

The 66-year-old has been into carving for more than 30 years but was appointed as chairman of the Solent Guild of Wood Carvers and Sculptors only a year ago.

Since then, George has flourished in his role of ensuring that the members are happy and organising events in which

to show their pieces.

He said: 'I love being part of the club and ensuring our members enjoy their time here.'

'As chairman, I make decisions with the committee about events we hold and attend and the best way they suit us.'

'In the winter, we meet at Portsmouth Grammar School for an all-day session.'

'Then, in the summer, we go to shows in the area and do demonstrations of our work

and the different projects we are working on.'

As well as working on their own pieces, Solent Guild also invites speakers and people in to do demonstrations.

This gives members the chance to learn new techniques or work with different tools and materials.

The club, which has 40 members, is laid back and George said it is easy to keep it that way.

He added: 'We all work together and I think that is why we have so many members.'

'It is comradeship for the members as well as the chance to work on their pieces.'

'When I first joined, I was welcomed like I had been here for years and this is the same for all the members.'

'They go up and see what other people are doing and they are all supportive of one another.'

