

Mystic Carvers Club

P. O. Box 71
Mystic, CT 06355



January, 2021

The purpose of this organization is to: stimulate interest in carving as a hobby or a profession and as an art form. Our goal is to provide instruction in carving and to aid others in the practice of carving.

Our regular monthly meeting will resume when the danger of contacting Covid 19 becomes low and it is safe to be together again at The Quianbaug Fire House 50 Old Stonington Rd. Stonington, CT

Check out our Web Site. @ www.mysticcarvers.com

Hello Fellow Mystic Members,

Well, here we are, another month has passed and not much has changed with the pandemic slowing down. Although many of us are now getting our vaccines and hopefully this will work. We can only pray that it does. I don't know about you, but I for one am getting so tired of staying in and not seeing family or friends. Yah we see a couple of friends now and then but Christmas was very quiet and New Years passed without any celebrations. Soon we should all be able to visit again and go on with life as we once knew it. Let's pray.

In the mean time, keep on chipping, if you are doing any carving. I have been catching up on some unfinished projects around the house. That's a good thing.

So folks, get out there and get your shots and pray that it works. Hopefully we will be able to meet again as a club this summer.

Stay safe, stay well and see you all soon.

Alice

Also, please do not send in any membership dues until further notice.

Attached are photos of the refurbished sign done by Ray Johnson, John George and myself. Everything was replaced except for the Indian and some letters. I should point out that the original sign was constructed by Ray Johnson, Hollis Price and others in 1995. The back side of the Indian was dated with Hollis's name. Let's hope it lasts for another 25 years!

On another note we plan to meet and carve at the firehouse on Sunday the 31st from 9 to noon. We wear masks, and social distance. Please call Ray Johnson 860 639 9802 if you plan to attend as it's limited to the first 20 people that call. Hope you are well and safe.

Hilaire Cote



Thanks Ray, John and Hilaire, you did a great job.!

Note from Dennis:

We have been contacted by a wood carver, Ray Branch, from the Triad Woodcarvers (www.triadwoodcarvers.com) in Winston Salem, North Carolina. He had been researching other woodcarving clubs in the U.S., found us and was curious about how our club runs. I provided him with answers to his questions and other information about things that we do as a club that they may want to incorporate into theirs.

It was a pleasant, two-way conversation via emails and he had nice things to say about our organization. It was apparent that he had done a great deal of research about us as he already knew about our work on the Mayflower Project, our annual Retreats and Shows etc. His questions were mainly about our monthly meetings, fundraising and how we operate each club function.

The Triad Woodcarvers are a large Club that is interested in growing.

He stated that Mystic Carvers are welcome to attend and compete in the Charlotte Woodcarvers' Showcase of Woodcarvings. Normally, this show is held in February, but has been deferred for 2021 to June 25-27, 2021. This two day show is the largest in the Southeast with about 150 carvers from 15-20 states entering 800 or so carvings in competition. If any of your Club come down, look them up. The Triad Woodcarvers will have a booth at this Show. Check www.charlottewoodcarvers.com for show details and show brochure

This is the note that Dennis sent to Ray describing our club and the things we have done and still do as club members to promote the art of woodcarving.

I thought Dennis did such a great job describing all our activities that you might want to read and just remind you all of what a great club we all belong to.

Thank you Dennis for all the work that went into this reply to Ray. It's nice that someone like you still has a memory for all this stuff. But, then again, you are still younger than many of us. Ha Ha

Alice

Hello Ray Branch,

My name is Dennis Tormey and I am a member of the Mystic Woodcarvers Club in Mystic, CT. Alice Mellor contacted me and asked me to respond to your emails.

The Club started back in the 70's I believe, long before Alice and I joined in 1996. It originally was housed at the Mystic Seaport, a seafaring museum in CT. However, as the club grew and branched out to non-nautical projects we outgrew their workshop space and have since rented a large meeting room at the Quiambaug Firehouse in Mystic. We meet, or used to pre-pandemic, on the last Sunday of every month from approx. 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

The Club is approx. 130 members strong, about 40 - 50% of whom are active members. We welcome new members, and a more experienced carver sets up a novice table(s) to teach the art of carving at every meeting. That carver brings an easy project to teach and charges new carvers a nominal fee (\$2 - \$3) to cover the cost of the wood. That person is also exempt from having to pay dues for that year (\$10 annually).

We also hold 5 - 6 seminars a year there. These are run by carvers we have found that offer more advanced carving projects. A club member finds said carver, negotiates a fee with him/her, schedules the event, announces the event on our calendar at Club meetings and tracks the list of carvers who are interested in learning the skill that carver offers. Fees have ranged from \$40 - \$125 for a one to three day weekend event. Our treasurer collects the money and cuts a Club check for the amount due. The cost is split by the number of students in the class. Often, the same teachers return every year.

Additionally we hold an annual Retreat, and have for the past 20 years plus. This is run by myself and Carol Roffey. We have a core group of 9 - 10 experienced carvers who voluntarily agree to lead carving classes over a 4 day weekend in the Fall. I say volunteers as we do not pay them for their time but house and feed them for the duration of the Retreat. Over the years we have lost two venues where we have held these retreat. One closed and the other priced themselves out of our market.

We usually have 60 - 70 carvers from various areas sign up for the annual retreat. They have come from New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Florida and Canada. As an example, if you came you would fill out a registration form you printed from our website (www.mysticcarvers.com), submit the registration form and your payment in the form of a check, and indicate on the form which Instructor you wanted to learn from. Carvers begin to show up mid-afternoon on the Friday the Retreat begins, and leave after lunch on Monday. The venue provides you with all meals starting from Dinner on Friday through Lunch on Monday. It also provides you with lodging. You attend classes, led by the Instructor you chose, and are joined by others in that class who also chose that

instructor and remain in that class all weekend. Evenings we have smaller break-out sessions where volunteers lead smaller project lessons.

This year we are fortunate to have contracted with Enders Island in Mystic, CT. to hold our retreat. Check them out on the web, or check out pictures on our website or Face book page “ Mystic Woodcarvers “ to see how fortunate we truly are. That said.....COVID-19 may interfere with this year’s plans. Currently they are restricted by the State of CT. to how many people they can have present at their facility.. Hopefully those restrictions will relax as more of us are vaccinated and our positivity rate decreases.

Tuition this year is \$240 for commuters and \$360 for those staying overnights with us. Carol and I struggle each year to keep the numbers attending up and the costs down. We have never run “in the red “, but we have come close!

As a Club we also hold an annual summer picnic and Christmas party.

The Mayflower project was the brainchild of member Mary, who is also a DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) member and affiliated with the Plymouth Plantation in Plymouth, Massachusetts. She knew that the Mayflower replica, built in 1957, was being refurbished at the Mystic Seaport and asked them for the wood they were removing. She organized a campaign to have Mystic Club members carve this wood into palm-sized hearts that we would then give back to the Mayflower Project to help with its expenses. They sold them for \$25 each. She also came up with the idea to have us carve relief scenes from the 1620 landing of the Mayflower and canvassed volunteers to carve them which were later assembled into a frame of the Mayflower profile. You ask what benefit did that brings to our Club Number one, knowing we were helping defray some of the cost of such a worthwhile project. And, since folks like your self are aware we did that, perhaps others are also which gets the word out there that we exist.

Also you asked about whether we have a Show and Tell table. Yes we do. Carvers bring in projects they have worked on to every monthly meeting and Elaine holds each one up during the meeting and asks the carver to talk about them.

We have an Annual Show the first Saturday of every May. Carves from other groups attend the show also and have several tables per group where they show their work and demonstrate the craft. A few sell their work. There is a competition where ribbons are awarded after judging. There is a nominal fee per entry, which offsets the costs of the ribbons. Carvers must be Mystic Club members, or register on the spot and pay their annual \$10 dues.

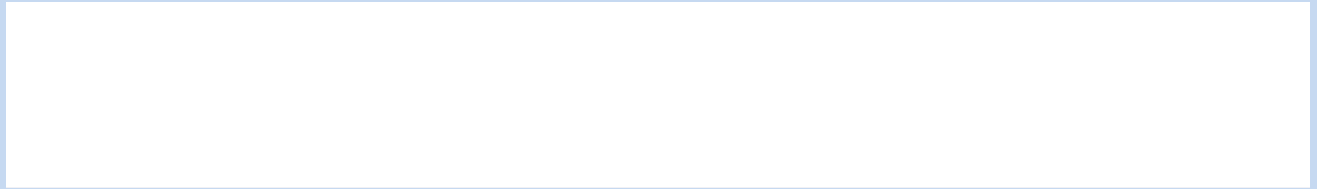
We also attend, and represent the Club, at a large Woodworking Exposition at the “ Big E “ Show in Agawam, Massachusetts. Club member’s volunteer for three hour shifts each to cover this 2 day event. Our Club banner announces who we are, we bring examples of our work and carve while there to demonstrate the art. This is a massive Show! We are one of only two woodcarver club tables in a sea of woodworkers. Our novelty attracts attention.

As in any organization we find we have the same core, small number of members who volunteer to keep this Club, and it’s events running. We are fortunate to have Carol as our president, Alice as our vice-president and newsletter editor, Ben as our treasurer and Elaine as our novice coordinator. I am the secretary (minute keeper) and Retreat co-coordinator (with Carol.)

Thank you for your inquiries, we welcome hearing from another wood carving enthusiast. I found who I think is you on Facebook, nice carvings....and hat. I'm there also, there are several people with my name on Facebook but I'm the only one who is a carver.

Keep chippin'

Dennis Tormey



Carving Groups: (I don't know which clubs are meeting until the Covid precautions are lifted.) Check with your club.

Mystic Woodcarvers Club: Last Sunday of each month, 10 to mid afternoon. At Quiambaug Fire House, Old Stonington Rd. (off Route 1) Mystic, (See web site at: www.mysticcarvers.com) Carol Roffey croffey@comcast.net

Danbury Group: Hat City Carvers - Thursdays 12:30 to 3:00, call 203-746-1544 or contact Martin Sprock, mjsindbyct.yahoo.com, for information and directions. Meetings are held at Danbury Senior Center, 10 Elmwood place, Danbury, Ct. 06810

Enders Island Group: Meets each Tuesday from 9 to 2 Contact: Ray Johnson, wcvray@hotmail.com

Westerly Senior Center Club Group: Meets Thursdays from 9:00 AM till noon at the Westerly Senior Center. Contact Gene Good 860-599-2567.

Rockville Fish and Game Club: Cut ups. Club House on Fish and Game Road, off of CT Rte.31, Vernon/Tolland Ct line- near exit 67 off of I-84

They meet every Thursday. The first Thursday of every month we start a new project. Hours are 7 to 9, we meet at the Rockville Fish and Game Club, on Fish and Game Road in Tolland (near the Vernon/Tolland line). Sessions are free and open to anyone interested (you pay for materials). For more info call Ed Ertel at (860) 875-6187. . erteled@yahoo.com

Canterbury, CT Finnish American Heritage Society: Route 169 (North of Route 14) Wednesday Afternoon, 1-4 PM Contact John Harris John.Harris@snet.net

Columbia Carvers: Senior Center carving groups: Carving group meets weekly at the Columbia, CT senior center every Tues, 9:30am-11:30 - No age limit, no fees. Call Art Austin (860-228-3395) aataustin@hotmail.com for information.

Rocky Hill: Group meets every Wednesday from 1:00-3:00 in Rocky Hill. It is Located at 961 Old Main St. in the Town Hall. Call Warren for info 860-742-3253.

Farmington Valley Carvers: Farmington Community and Senior Center, meetings every Monday from 10 to 12. Located on New Britain Rd., Unionville, 860-747-6348 CT. Contact Ray Seymour. Fridays from 10-12: Contact Dave Freese 860-673-2154 dbfreese@aol.com

Nutmeg Wood Carving Club Wethersfield Art League, 193 Wells Rd., Wethersfield, CT at the Red School House, Thursday from 1 to 3:30 PM Call Mary-Grace Larke: 203-248-4143

Mansfield Misfit Woodcarvers: Meet Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 Mansfield Senior Center. Contact Emile Poirier, 860-487-2685 poirieremile@yahoo.com

Ellington Sr. Center, 40 Maple St. (CT RTE 140) Ellington, CT, (across from the High School) Wednesdays, 9:30- 11:45 they will start a new project the 1st. of every month-cost of materials only New comers welcome. Contact: ED Ertel- 860-875-6187

CWCA Ct Forest & Park, Middlefield, CT (old rte 66) 10 to 2, 1st. Sundays
Contact Leo Hein, Pres. 860-675-5473

The Following people have volunteered to keep the club activities moving along:
The club members thank you for your endless dedication and help!

President-Carol croffey@comcast.net 860-603-2449

Vice President –Alice Mellor-carveral@sbcglobal.net 860-450-9198

Treasurer-Ben Anderson (860-536-1762) bander063@live.com

Secretary-Dennis Tormey-dtormey5519@earthlink.net 860-337-0053

Carving Coordinator: Recruit members to lead a carving project at each monthly meeting: ensure back up plan is in place if needed.

Monthly Project Coordinator-Elaine Clark clarkbr9@aol.com

Show Chairman: Provide leadership to ensure the May Show is run successfully.

Show Chair – Sheryl Popowycz, Carol Roffey, spopowycz@gmail.com

Retreat Coordinator: Provide leadership to ensure that the October Retreat is run successfully.

Retreat Coordinators -Dennis Tormey dtormey5519@earthlink.net 860-337-0053
& Carol Roffey croffey@comcast.net

Library Custodian: Maintain club's library by monitoring current inventory, look for additions and see that inventory is maintained properly.

Library Custodian –Bob Arpin 860-884-2535

Mail Man: Collect mail from Post Office and bring to monthly meeting.

Mail Man - Bill Welsh (860-536-7008) or wwelsh71@yahoo.com

Newsletter Distribution: On a monthly basis see that the club Newsletter is written, copied, addressed and mailed to those not receiving via email.

Newsletter Editor & Distribution- Alice Mellor (860-450-9198) carveral@sbcglobal.net

Membership Chairman: Look for opportunities to increase membership, eg. Have apps and table set up at Show and Retreat., Maintain Membership list. See that new members are welcomed and engaged in club activities.

Membership Coordinator– Hilaire Cote (860-599-5722) nsduckhouse@yahoo.com

Website Coordinator: Dennis Tormey & Carol Roffey croffey@comcast.net

Equipment Coordinator: Maintain club's equipment (sharpening and lights) are in safe operating condition, repaired if needed. Ed Ertel

Novice projects to continue sometime in the near future??
I guess this gives everyone time to think of a new project.