

Read 'awl' about it

The Lockdown Newsletter from the Cannock Chase Shed

ISSUE No. 15



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The Shed Knowledge Base

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- The amazing sculptures of Li Hongbo



Submissions and suggestions to:
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Shed News

Following the latest government guidelines, when we reopen the shed will be displaying a QR code for members to scan on their way in. This is to assist with the Test and Trace procedures.

To scan the app, members will need to have the NHS Covid 19 app installed on their phones.

The app and further information about it can be found at:
<https://www.covid19.nhs.uk/>

NHS
Test and Trace

**LET'S HELP STOP
THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS**



Upcoming Projects

**DOWNLOAD THE
NHS COVID-19 APP**

Download on the
App Store

GET IT ON
Google Play



Lynn Evans, from Friends of Hednesford Park has sent us this image of the display stands that she would like us to make. We think she would like around 10 of these.

There is a metal tubing frame underneath the oak covering, which needs welding together before the wood is assembled on to it. We can't do the metal welding at the shed, so that might have to be made for us, unless a member has a facility for metalworking and welding two parts together.

Dave and Graham's greenhouse groundworks

I have a spare patch of ground in my garden and didn't know what to do with it. I'd thought of three options, a vegetable patch, a wildlife pond or a greenhouse. I finally decided on an 8 x 6 greenhouse and ordered it at the beginning of June.

Because of Covid there was a delivery of up to 30 weeks, just in time for Christmas I thought.



I cleared the area of weeds in July and started digging out the trench for the shuttering at the beginning of September. The only problem I had was the manhole cover which the greenhouse came over part of, but I got round that with a concrete lintel.

Graham said he would come and help me with the shuttering and concreting and he knew someone with a cement mixer, which Tim kindly fetched and returned

in his van. It took us two days to put down the shuttering, the height of the concrete was dictated by the clearance of the lintel over the manhole. It then took us another day to put down the concrete.



I got an update on the delivery of the greenhouse and I've been told it could be the the end of October fingers crossed.



I would at this point like to say a big thank you to Graham without whose invaluable help and hard work this would never have got done except for hiring a builder to do it. I would also like to say we are NOT available to do anything like it ever again.

Dave



JUST AS THEY THOUGHT THEY'D FINISHED....

MESSRS HEATH & ROBINSON STRIKE AGAIN



Remember the copper water feature, well and truly boded by Heath & Robinson? Well, having installed it in the garden and getting water flowing, they thought that was the end of it. After a few days of running, the water flow slowed down significantly. An investigation revealed debris being stuck to the pump inlet, almost blocking it.

It was too late to incorporate a gravel filter box now, so an alternative idea was sought. Eureka – tights! H & R got hold of a suitable plastic flower pot, drilled some holes around it, and covered it with a pair of tights! Or to be strictly correct, pop socks, whatever they are!

The pump dropped into the pot through the sock opening at the top, and the whole pot was lowered into the sump under the feature. After a week of running, the flow remarkably stayed the same, and the water looked clearer too. Well that was one bodge that appeared to work very well, and for free. Worth a try if you have a pond without a filter.

However H & R made a schoolboy error of judgement with the feature, revealed some days later. Pumping all day long, they found there was about a one and a

half metre circle of wet water all around the feature visible on the patio slabs. Trouble was that after two or three days, the water sump underneath was virtually emptied and the water flow slowed to a trickle again. They concluded it was consuming water by splashing off the leaves, even though they couldn't actually see it happening.

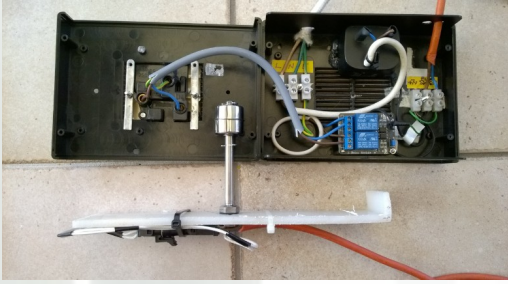
Their first boded solution was to angle the slabs surrounding the feature down towards the sump, hoping to get any splashed water to drain back into the sump. That failed miserably, as it still used loads of water by evaporation, because it was splashing over such a large area.

H & R didn't want to keep having to top it up with fresh water every day, so another cunning plan was hatched. If they could find a source of water, maybe they could install a water level switch underneath the feature, and get it to start another pump to top up the feature, by running small diameter tubing from the butt to the feature.

That was a plan. So a stainless steel float switch was sourced from Ebay as in the picture, which was mounted on a plastic plate and attached to the underside of the feature. As it was low voltage to be used with the switch, the cable run wasn't very critical along the edge of the garden into the garage.



The chain of disasters...



Of course this needed an electrical box which would respond to the float switch by turning on a small pump in a water butt. H & R used all sorts of parts available to do this, such as an old phone charger to provide the low voltage.

Once the box was constructed, it was necessary to procure a water butt and somehow plumb that into the guttering. There was no downpipe to insert a diverter, and the guttering was a non standard size, so no fittings available for them to insert a downpipe joint.

Ebay once again came up trumps with a universal outlet that screwed onto the gutter and needed one hole underneath. This fitting would take standard downpipe, so was ideal to position the butt directly underneath the guttering and resting the pipe on the bottom of the butt.

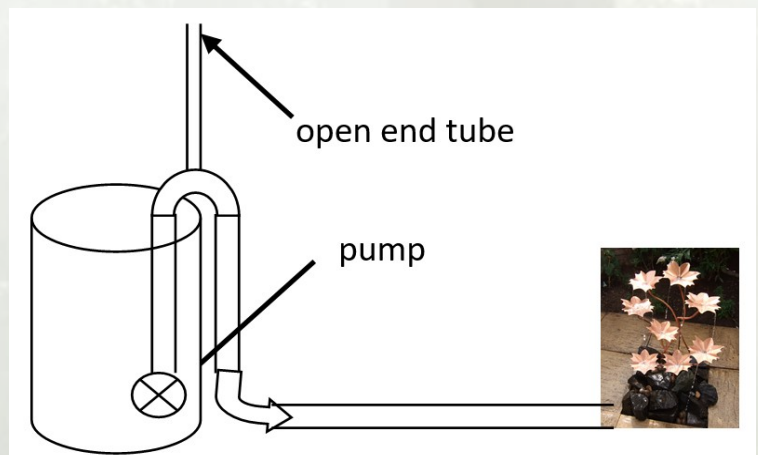


So now, the pump could be placed in the butt using a small diameter black tube from those slow dripping watering kits that never worked properly. That returned the pumped butt water back to the feature.

The electrical controller box was fitted to the wall, and the system was tried out manually. Amazingly, it worked, pushing out just enough water to push the float switch up and stop the pump. But, oh dear, the water didn't stop running even though the pump was turned off. H & R thought about this for a moment, and realised that the water was being siphoned out of the butt, with the pump kick starting it. The siphon wouldn't stop till the butt was empty and the garden flooded, so something had to be devised to break the siphon.

Good old Google and YouTube came to the rescue with a few ideas. One of them was adaptable to a water butt, so H & R set about trying it. The idea was to make an air vent at the highest point of the tubing, so this would allow air back into the siphon to break it, after the pump switched off. A plastic tee was inserted in the tubing at the top of the water butt, and another tube from the tee taken up vertically for about a metre, and left open at the end.

And by George, it actually worked too. As soon as the pump stopped, the siphon stopped. So the top-up system worked really well automatically, and was left to run with the water feature.



Feeling very chuffed at this point, it started to rain heavily, and didn't stop for days. Now they've had too much rain, and the water butt is overflowing, and the water feature is overflowing. I sense another project coming for H & R to auto-drain the butt, or stop the water entering, or stop the water feature pump with ambient light and dark. Plenty more bodes to come. Maybe for another time eh?

Ta-ra for now, H & R

The Shed Knowledge Base

Selecting the best timber for your projects.



It's a well known fact that when you use wood for projects, it can twist and warp and there's very little you can do about it or is there?

If it's possible to select the wood that you need from the suppliers stock, you can usually eliminate some of the risks, but you do need to understand some of the theory of how logs are cut into boards and what happens when the boards dry out so you know what you're looking for.

The most stable boards are the ones that have the shortest annual rings, because maximum shrinkage as the wood dries out is along its annual rings. So these are the boards you should try to select.

Now for the boring bit. There are two ways that logs are sawn or "converted" into boards: Quarter sawing and Plain sawing

Quarter sawing, which produces the most stable materials, relies on cutting the boards so that their annual rings are as short as possible and is usually used on hardwoods as these materials are used to manufacture furniture or similar products and need to have great stability. It produces the most waste and the boards produced are therefore more expensive.



PLAIN SAWN



Plain sawing on the other hand, (also known as Slash Cut or Through and Through) is predominantly used for softwoods. It is a less time consuming process and produces little waste, so materials produced this way are cheaper. However, there are only a few boards in each log which have short annual rings and which can be considered as more stable. These are the two or three boards from the centre of the log, so look for these when you are selecting your construction materials. The boards from further away from the centre of the log will tend to warp as the annual rings shorten, thus giving a cupped board.

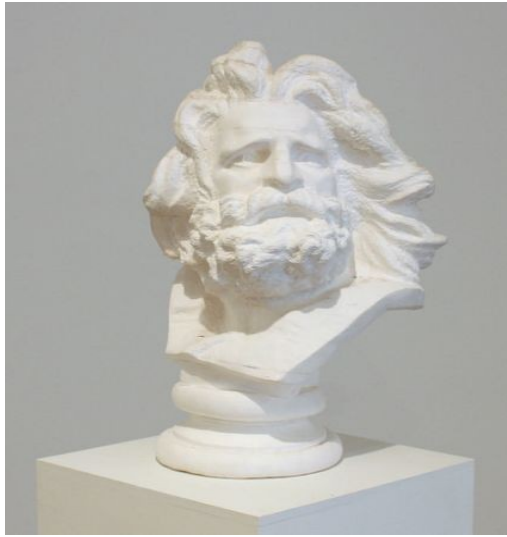
TIMBERBOARD or FURNITURE BOARD

A way of getting around the problems of warping is to buy "engineered" timber, sometimes known as "timberboard" or "furniture board". This is achieved by cutting boards into narrow strips, then gluing the strips back together with their end grain going in alternate directions. The surfaces of the boards are then machine sanded ready for use.



Phil Arm

The incredible paper sculptures of Li Hongbo



Li Hongbo is an extremely talented Chinese sculptor, and his chosen medium is paper.

You could be forgiven for thinking that aside from his choice of medium his work is very similar to that of a great many other sculptors. However, look a little closer, and you will find that his works of art are constructed from as many as 20,000 individual sheets of paper, painstakingly glued together in a concertina fashion.



His sculptures stretch with a fluid movement not dissimilar to that of a 'slinky' (a timeless toy made of coiled wire, which could be made to walk down stairs),
Check out the following links to see more of his sculptures, and the process used to make them.

[Li Hongbo](#)

[The making of Li Hongbo's artworks.](#)

[Can 2000 paper guns... be something beautiful?](#)

This article was suggested by Avril. If anyone else comes across something that they think would interest other members, I'd love to hear from you – contact details are on the first page.

Many thanks to all the contributors to this newsletter, your help is greatly appreciated.

Just for Laughs...

The other day, my wife asked me to pass her lipstick but I accidentally passed her a glue stick. She still isn't talking to me.

Anti Joke:

What do you call a dog with no legs? It doesn't matter what you call him, he isn't coming.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it over and put it back in your pocket.

~ Will Rogers

I didn't think wearing orthopedic shoes would help, but I stand corrected.

I was having some trouble with my computer, so I asked my 13 year old son to help me out. After tapping a few keys he had fixed the problem for me. Impressed, I asked him what had been wrong, "Just a one D ten T issue" he replied. When I asked him to explain, he told me to write it down... so I did...

1D10T

If you mix Tabasco in your hand sanitizer it will not only kill germs but also teach you not to touch your face and eyes. 🌶️🌶️🤧

For Sale:
Parachute,
Only used once,
never opened,
small stain.

What's Irish and stays outside all year?

Patty O'Furniture

"The problem with stealing quotes off the internet is that you never know if they are genuine."

-Abraham Lincoln

I just swapped our bed for a trampoline...

My wife hit the roof.

Saw a store that has a sign that reads, "We treat you like family!"

Yup, NOT going in there.