

A Kraken Christmas

As our time in the Joinery Shop continued, we learned many useful joinery methods including T-halvings, mortise and tenons, dovetails and scarf joints. Some were easier than others, but we all had something to show by the end of our time there. By comparing these to the first pieces we produced, it was clear to see improvement and progress.

During the Tuesday student meeting, it was announced that there would be a Christmas tree decoration competition at the upcoming college Christmas party, which had to be either boat, Christmas or woodwork themed. I decided to make a Kraken sea-monster snow globe, complete with stricken shipwreck out of modeling clay, which looked somewhat garish among the beautiful wooden stars and ropework wreaths.



After joinery we moved back into The Cabin where we met our new tutor, Maynard for the next module: Caulking. While on the phone to my mom one evening, she said that "Caulking with Maynard" sounded like it could be a program on the BBC, perhaps on a Sunday evening after *Countryfile*. I'd certainly watch it!



We looked at the different types of caulking irons and mallets, very fancy they were too, but Maynard explained that sometimes the best tool for the job is the one you make from whatever you have to hand and adapt to suit. I've done a little bit of caulking out in the wild on Tall Ship *Zebu*, using an old beech mallet, a bolster chisel and a bent screwdriver. I can confirm, they worked perfectly well! We talked about the different types of caulking and ways to

seal it; mastic, bitumen, lead etc. We even made our own white and red lead putty. We prepared some lengths of oakum by separating, stretching and rolling it against our legs,

then it was over to the caulking wall to have a go. This was very noisy and a lot of fun! My favourite part was using the pneumatic mastic gun — *what a mess!*

The next unit was Decking, Graving and Trenails. We looked at the different parts of a boat's deck and made our own mini version, which we later caulked with mastic. While the mastic was drying, we went into the Boat Workshop to watch other students fitting and roving steam-bent planks onto one of the clinker dinghies. They worked very quickly as a team, with everyone playing an important role. It was very interesting.

We were invited to the *Excelsior* Sailing Trust Christmas Social,



hosted at an art gallery over in Norwich. This was a lovely event and a great networking opportunity. It was nice to see some familiar faces and meet lots of new people from the East coast sailing community. There was even an auction

which got quite exciting; a beautiful wooden clock by a local artist went for hundreds of pounds! All of the proceeds went back into the Trust. It was a really wonderful evening.

During our last week before the Christmas holiday we split into two groups, three had a go at wire splicing and the rest of us tried painting, oiling and varnishing. We also touched on adhesives and had a little play with fibreglass. I had time at the end of the unit to finish off my decking project, getting it oiled and dried ready to be a Christmas present.

The Christmas party was a blast, with almost the entire staff/student body coming together like a big family. The principal cooked for everyone (the risotto was gorgeous!) There was music and prizes; my Christmas Kraken took second place in the tree competition!



We did a Shipshape Secret Santa, and my 'Santa' made me a beautiful cross-stitch of *Pilgrim of Brixham*, which I adore! It was so lovely to spend time with my Shipshape shipmates before we went off for the holiday, especially as Mesha and Hannah would be leaving to start their placements in January and Bronwen was coming to the end of her time on the programme.

I'm going to miss those ladies so much! Best of luck to them, I'm looking forward to seeing them again at some point in the new year!

Pupdate - Bumper Christmas Special!

December has been an amazing month for dogs! So many, I can't really fit them all in. Other December dogs include the return of Panda the Greyhound (Great-hound more like), Coco the Retriever: 10 months old and bigger than her big sister Bonnie, Katie the Jack Russell, who has beautiful eyebrows and Lilly... some sort of lovely Ewok.



Jinn Rottweiler, My girl :)

Does not act her age.

Sofa cuddles fix everything.

Can count to 3 in French, Spanish and Japanese. Video evidence available upon request.

Thinks Mel Gibson is the Devil.

Does a smashing Elton John impression. A real 'must-see'.

The very best girl.



Simba, My big bro's doggo.

Huskador. 100% would ride into battle.

Massive dog. Wants to sit on your lap and cuddle.

Voice of an Angel.

Excellent childminder, very competitive rates.

Very good boy.



Jenson and Bea, The Telford Two.

Father and Daughter duo.

Jenson is blind but his motto is YOLO!

SO. MUCH. FUR! So much....

Two of the best looking dogs I've ever met.

Hereditary double-jointed tails.

Very good dogs.



Monty and Bonnie, Bennett family dogs.

Cousins with polar opposite personalities.

Monty is scared of plastic bags. And eye contact. And everything else.

Definitely raised by cats.

Bonnie is very smart. Once starred in a Nottingham art gallery exhibition "Where's Bonnie?"

Very good dogs.



Monty, Hannah's best boy.

McDonalds fries are life.

Can out-sleep any dog, any day. Will bet you a round of McFries he can.

Crazy boy. Crazy for cuddles.

Barks with Glaswegian accent.

Looking sharp in his tartan jacket.

Very good boy.