

Portrait of a Local Artist

"I love the isolation of Portland and its rugged, elemental, wind swept scenery."

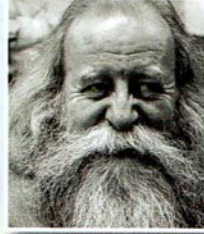
So says artist Chris Wood who "spent a wonderful week on a stone carving course in Tout Quarry".

"We carved locally sourced Portland Oolitic Limestone, which was formed 145 million years ago. By day we worked in the quarry, standing at our 'bankers' (slabs of stone about the size of a table) on which our embryo sculptures took shape. We used a nylon mallet with a wooden handle, which absorbed the shock that is transferred to your wrist when you tap the end of the gouge. By the end of the day amateurs like me certainly knew how hard they had been working! Portland stone is relatively soft and you don't have to beat the living daylights out of it to chip away small pieces of the surface. Little and often is the way to do it - keeping up a steady rhythm. In conclusion, the process was somewhat noisy, dusty and exhausting - but well worth the effort. I stayed in a former 19th century lighthouse, which was converted into an RSPB bird sanctuary and hostel that housed about a dozen people. The evening banter over a few beers was an interesting mix of sculpture, art and bird watching."

He adds: "As a marine artist the waterside at Weymouth cannot fail to be an inspiration with its collection of brightly coloured fishing boats with their marker buoys and flags fluttering in the breeze. The light in Weymouth and Portland is spectacular and whilst I now prefer to work in oils you can only really do the scenery justice by using watercolour, which offers fresh and crisp tints."

Chris Wood's work can be seen in Jack House Gallery, 121 High Street, Old Portsmouth and Atelier Gallery, 86 Castle Road, Southsea.

www.chriswoodartist.com



Part of '2 HR' by Chris Wood.



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