

PICTURE SUPPLEMENT



During the high winds of 30th October 2000, a large beech tree was brought down in the rear garden of a house in Fetcham near Leatherhead. The owner, David Jeffs not wanting the timber to go to waste, surfed the Internet for details of any wood related groups in the area. He came across the AWGB site that contained details of Cheam Woodturners. Len Saunderson was duly contacted and passed the information on to Colin Simpson who made an appeal at our November meeting for volunteers to tackle the tree. For those of you that would like some details of the tree, it was about ninety-foot high, weighed in at around thirty tons and was fourteen feet around the base. Many feel that Beech can be a bit on the boring side, but luckily enough this particular tree had a dose of Honey Fungus together with some interesting heartwood.



Having arranged with the owner to start work on this mammoth task, a team of eight of us turned up one Saturday morning in December to see if we could make a dent. The good old British weather made its untimely appearance, no sooner had we got started than the heavens opened, yes we were wet through. Fortunately David kept us supplied with copious amounts of steaming hot coffee. During a break in the clouds work began in earnest, with up to five chain saws cutting away the tranquillity of a Surrey garden was soon lost.



As you can see from the photographs a lot of timber was cut and converted however there was a long way to go, so as bones began to ache a halt was called. As we left for the day, one wag was heard to say to the owner "you wouldn't know we had been here, apart from the mess". Since the first outing two further visits have been made to reduce the heap further.

Now the tree has been cut up and distributed around those willing, but tired, team members, the roughing out and drying begins. If the pieces I managed to procure are anything to go by, then there will be some lovely Beech bowls and vases around this time next year. Our thanks go to David and his family for their hospitality and concern that the timber should not go to waste or just be burnt.

Frank Clarke, Chairman

