

The True North Caricature Carvers: by Mark Sheridan



I live in Kingston, Ontario and along with John Paul Andre, a fellow carver and friend who now lives in Nova Scotia, we decided to create a “Zoom-based” caricature carving group a couple of years ago.

Our group started as a means for a few people to continue to meet and chat despite the temporary shutdown of clubs and shows over the recent past and it’s expanded now to include a prepared agenda with topics of conversation led by individual group members, a Youtube channel presenting our full one and a half hour meetings as well as individual fifteen to twenty minute segments covering the specific individual topics, and about a hundred members mostly from Ontario, but including three other provinces, a few States and three or four other countries.

We call ourselves the True North Caricature Carvers (TNCC) and boast that our most northern member is from Scotland and our most southern “True North” member is from Australia! All of our Zoom calls are held the third Thursday of each month between 6:30pm and 8pm EST. Prior to these calls, an agenda is sent out along with the Zoom coordinates to all of the members on our distribution list. Naturally, time zone differences and other commitments keep many of our members from attending all of our meetings, however, we normally have thirty-five or so carvers attend our calls with others reviewing the meeting and content through Youtube days after the call.

I suspect that almost everyone now has some experience in using Zoom, but if you haven't, just go to the [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us) website and download their free software. It's easy and quick. Once this is downloaded on your computer and after you receive my monthly summary of agenda items, you'll just click on the link in my email message prior to our meeting time and you'll join the call automatically.

We have many novice carvers who are just starting out in caricature carving so we really try to gear our discussions to benefit the newcomer. In addition to discussing individual topics of interest to all caricature carvers, we've organized two recent "Virtual Shows and Competitions" and are planning another for the spring of 2023. There are no costs associated with being a member of our group or with entering the virtual competitions and all of our presenters are volunteers who enjoy sharing their knowledge and experience.



The Ontario Wood Carvers Association (OWCA) sponsors the TNCC group in that we utilize the more extensive Zoom platform that the OWCA has as an annual subscription and provides to the TNCC at no cost. The OWCA also is supporting us in providing the TNCC with a table to promote our group and its activities at the Ontario carving shows planned in 2023. Our collective hope is that the OWCA can use the TNCC model as a means to encourage additional like-minded carvers

in creating their own Zoom gatherings...perhaps a Relief Carving group, a Chip Carving group, etc.

That's about it in a nutshell. Nothing terribly fancy, we're just trying to encourage people to share what they know and have some fun with it. And we're definitely having fun!

If you think that you might be interested in joining us or if you have any questions, just let John Paul or me know.

Thanks, Mark.

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