

Eddie Glew Rope Weave course, March 2016

Mary Ponting



On a beautiful spring morning the first of two groups arrived at Penllyn Village Hall in the Vale of Glamorgan. All of us were amazed by the baskets Eddie had brought with him, especially the two made using the rope weave he was going to teach us. We were horrified when Eddie threatened to destroy the larger basket to retrieve the weight that now permanently resided inside it.

Eddie attributes the popularity of this rope weave to the work of Klaus Titze and showed us a book of his. Although none of us could actually read it the pictures were impressive.

We started the day by making a round base using a technique, new to most of us, of joining in the new weavers such that both ends are on the bottom of the base. For those that went on to make a shallow fruit bowl this meant that the inside of the basket had no visible joins and looked really neat. The final trimming was done after the stakes had been inserted.



When it came to pricking up the side stakes Eddie showed us the technique taught to him by his Father in which the stakes are pricked up at what seemed like an alarmingly large distance from the edge of the base weave. It was actually just far enough away from the base to allow the waling to sit in between the base and upright stake creating a

foot on the bottom of the basket. Final adjustments can be made by rapping the stakes a little further into the base after having put the first round of waling on.

We used a five rod wale, in front of three behind two, starting with tips. After the first round an extra rod was added in on each stroke and this quickly developed into the rope weave. From then on we all went our separate ways and made completely different shaped baskets. Some people added in simple “packing”, using a contrasting willow, like Eddie had done in his smaller basket. This effectively re-routes the rope weave creating nice curves and changing the shape of the basket. Others added handles by taking all five “bunches” of willow, twisting them together to form the handle, and, then feeding them back between another five stakes further round the basket. It was quite hard work using 5 foot willow but we all made it to the required height/width letting the willow just run out before attempting the border. This started as you would for a five rod behind two border but then, in keeping with the rope weave, each horizontal would pass in front of three behind two before being joined by an upright. Neither would you leave behind any rods, the whole “bunch” would be roped into the border. This was quite challenging towards the end but if anyone can teach borders, it’s Eddie. Nearly everybody completed their first basket in one day and went on to make a second, some with oval bases. The second group did likewise. A selection of our very different baskets are pictured below. It was an amazing four days of intensive basket making enjoyed by all.

