

Tibor Cserncvicz

A CRAFTSMAN AT WORK

AS PHOTOGRAPHED BY

Gordon Ridgewell

Tibor Cserncvicz arrived in Saffron Walden Essex along with 15 other refugees from Hungary in 1956 and I have been privileged to have know him most of that time. He firstly worked for Acrow Engineers and later for the Welding Reseach at Abington. He settled in Saffron Walden and eventually married a local girl and they still live in the town.

In 1976 he saw a course advertised from Cambridge Technical College for making Violins (Fiddles). He attended the course to get some basic knowledge and after many years of crafting wood has now been making Chellows and Violins for some 15 years. As a Hungarian he was used to hearing music played on a fiddle, he had never seen a piano until arriving in England. He does not play but does a very good job of making the instruments.

I attended a "wood sale" day with him at Hatfield Forest and watched him inspecting trees and later selecting planks of Maple and Sycamore. The wood takes some time to dry, about 1 inch per year. His planks vary in thickness from 1 to 3 inches so most of his wood is ready to work after about 12 months. He cuts most of it in half and glues it together to get a mirror image of the grain. All work is done by hand and eye. The exact size of the finished Fiddle is very important, he was explaining about the large fiddles, that is the ones which are 1/8 inch larger than the normal size.

He mends and repairs instruments as well as make new ones.

It is a pleasure to see him at work

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01799 523833