

# GlassCuts

The Journal of the British Glass Foundation;  
the Voice of Stourbridge Glass Museum

STOURBRIDGE  
GLASS MUSEUM

Celebrating BGF History 2009 – 2022

Click: [www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk/the-foundation/](http://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk/the-foundation/) or <https://grahamfisher.co.uk/resources>

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## Lighting the way



The bulging bookshelf in my office holds an eclectic array of works, mostly for reference or information, but there is one I regularly turn to at the end of a particularly busy day for a bit of light relief. *Taxidermy gone wrong* - yes, I know; just bear with me and you'll see where I'm going - is a toe-curlingly hilarious compendium of images of the hashes made in contriving barely recognisable cadavers with bulging eyes and botox lips that defy their original earthly form. Just don't try that at home, kds.

And similarly so it is with many 'artist's impressions' created at the outset of a project with seemingly as much lack of prescience as our taxidermist and which ultimately bear little resemblance to their original concept. Admittedly this is nowhere near always the case, but when it is so the results can be, erm, questionable.

Hence I resort to referencing this quirk in announcing some fabulous news that will, quite literally, attract the eye of anyone visiting Stourbridge Glass Museum. This extract from our latest news release (courtesy of Secretary Lynn) say it all ...

*'The British Glass Foundation, the charity that runs Stourbridge Glass Museum in Wordsley, have been successful in securing £78,630 from FCC Communities Foundation towards the external landscaping at the museum which includes a spectacular lighting structure, seating, cycle racks, artwork and interpretation panels. In addition to this funding the charity has also secured £4,846 from Dudley Council's Community Forums towards the professional fees for this project.*

*'The landscaping work was carried out by Jack Moody Landscaping and Civil Engineering Limited of Wolverhampton and the lighting structure was created and installed by Simworx Limited, based in Kingswinford. The lights can be changed for various events and festivals. The circular interpretation shows where the original cone used to be and reflects the heritage of the former White House cone and tunnels hidden beneath.*

*'The project has transformed the now fully refurbished former derelict Stuart Crystal site in Wordsley into a world-class glass museum and a new home for the renowned Stourbridge Glass collection. The museum was formally opened by HRH The Duke Of Gloucester on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023. Funding was secured from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for the internal fit-out of the museum.'*

This is just about the icing on the cake, the final piece in the jigsaw .. call it what you will, but it effectively marks the tangible completion of the fabric, fitting and landscaping of an aspiration first propounded by a fledgling BGF back in the day when few even knew who we were. (*They do now!* - Ed). We are, of course, mightily pleased to have achieved this in just over a decade. But there is a little something extra that is almost now lost in the ether yet which, to us, adds a special significance to this outstanding accomplishment in terms of our long-term credibility as an Organisation with whom the *Wonderful World of Glass*<sup>®GF</sup> can feel confident in doing business. And here it is:

As part of our very earliest promotional efforts BGF, in association with Dudley MBC and site owners Complex Developments Ltd, issued a book prepared by BPN Architects *Museum of Glass; product of a community*. Indeed I am looking at it this moment on the aforementioned bookshelf. The book outlined our proposals and ended with an optimistic pronouncement: *'This vision could be a reality in 2013'*. Fair enough, we stick our hands up in being just a tad out with the timescale, albeit through circumstances way beyond our control that delayed our 'soft' opening until April 2022. But as for the rest? Well, it has all come to pass and the rest is, as they say, history.



Yet the singularly most remarkable testament lies in the book's cover image; the museum that can now be seen in the flesh *is virtually an exact rendition of that original vision*, even down to our spectacular brand-spangley-new lighting feature. Remarkable, quite remarkable.

The BGF; proud to say we did exactly what we said on the tin. And not everyone can claim that. So do please, just for a moment, indulge us in feeling somewhat elated. Then come and share it with us; our superb team of volunteers and staff would be delighted to greet you. It is, after all, 'the People's Museum'.

## Another significant acquisition

With thanks to funding support from The Glass Society, we are delighted to announce that the Letters Patent of Benjamin Richardson are now safely reposed at Stourbridge Glass Museum. This comprehensive collection of 19<sup>th</sup> C documents and seals is currently being assessed and logged pending deliberations as to how they may be made accessible. Current thinking is along the lines of access for historical research and bone fide viewing by appointment but don't hold us to that just yet; it's early days. For now, let us celebrate the joy of us acquiring them, with thanks to all concerned. We'll keep you posted.



## And yet another – plus a revelation



A little while back we heard whispers of a rather special item coming to SGM courtesy of a similarly special man. And lo, thanks to the efforts of SGM Curator & Projects Officer Harrison Davies and the munificence of our benefactor, it has come to pass. John Northwood III, for indeed it is he (*or is it? See last paragraph, this item – Ed*), has been a good friend to BGF and SGM right back to the days of the 2012 Portland Vase project which, of course, celebrated his cameo-engraver forebear John Northwood I. It's all down to Harrison, so we'll let him take up the story:

*'To follow up on my meeting today (31<sup>st</sup> May) with John Northwood, he has very kindly has put a piece on long-term loan to us to go on display in the SGM upstairs gallery.'*

*John saw the 2012 Portland Vase display and was also really pleased to see the Carnival Glass Society's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition which shows what his relatives went off and accomplished in America in glass under the Northwood family name.*

*The loaned piece was for John Northwood II, direct descendent of John Northwood I, at his retirement from the firm of Stevens and Williams Ltd., Briery Hill Glassworks in 1947. It was present on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1947 at the annual dinner of the Midlands Section of the Society of Glass Technology. The dinner was hosted at the Talbot Hotel, Stourbridge, and presented on behalf of his co-members in the Midlands Section as a token of appreciation for 60 years' service and contribution to the glass trade. John was about to celebrate his 77<sup>th</sup> birthday that May and the previous year had been his Diamond Jubilee of sixty years working in the glass trade. He had written the book on his grandfather, John Northwood I, and cameo glassware.*

*The chalice itself was designed by artist Ernest Dinkel, who was completing his final year as Principle of the Stourbridge School of Art and was presented at the dinner by Emmy Dinkel-Keet a well-respected artist, also married to Ernest. The engraving was by William G. Webb, instructor in glass decoration processes at the school, with the piece itself made by Charles D. Stanier, of Stuart fame, and both glass artists having competed in the Art Competitions of the Olympic Games in the following year 1948. Stanier had a reputation for both being a master craftsman, but also in helping form the Union of Glassworkers and Kindred Trades in 1919, and so was used in Stuart and Sons' advertising frequently as the face of Stuart's. It is believed by John the vase may have been made between both Stuart and Sons and the School of Art.*

*As well as donating the vase, John has been able to clarify some facts about the Northwood family tree for future reference and has been of enormous assistance to Stourbridge Glass Museum. Additionally, an article in the Pottery Gazette and Glass Trade Review records the proceedings of the dinner, presentation of the tribute chalice, and at the end notes: 'It was a connoisseur's piece, worthy of display in any museum'. Finally, this exceptional piece of glass is on display for all to enjoy, thanks to John's generosity'.*

But hey, we're on a roll here so let us conclude this absorbing news with a fascinating revelation. Although being 4<sup>th</sup> generation, the present John Northwood has always referred to himself as 'the third' due to one link being named Harry. John has been undertaking some family research recently which indicates his 'uncle Harry' was indeed a John but went by his second name so it looks like the present JN is in fact John Northwood IV. (*Bet that confuses the council tax office for a while! – Ed*) We are delighted to be invited to amend the record. Just remember you read it here first.



### Well done Barbara



In GC214 (12<sup>th</sup> Jan) we celebrated the news that Barbara Beadman, *inter alia* former proprietor of Plowden & Thompson with husband Richard, Founder Honorary member of Glass Beadmakers UK and immediate Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London, had been amongst the recipients of the first New Year's Honours list of King Charles III, being awarded an MBE for services to the glass industry. Since then, accompanied by Richard and children Claire and Helen, she received it in person at Windsor Castle on the 8<sup>th</sup> March. And thoroughly deserved, too.

'Our Barbara' may have a list of accomplishments approaching the length of the average glassblower's arm but she is hardly content to sit on her laurels and we look forward to working alongside the newly ennobled Barbara Beadman MBE for some time to come. Heartiest congratulations Ma'am, from all of us at BGF and SGM.

### Old and new

Our thanks once more to friends and colleagues at Fieldings Auctioneers (Stourbridge) for their latest *Something old for something new* auction that raised a sum not unadjacent to £220.00, every penny of which will, as always, go straight into BGF coffers. Much obliged.



## WHAT'S ON AT SGM

Full details of our packed programme of events are contained in our brochure (available free of charge from the Museum and other local outlets) or via the Stourbridge Glass Museum website by clicking here: <https://www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk/events/>

*And here's a further reminder of the two forthcoming presentations that are taking place at the museum as part of the Carnival Glass Society's current exhibition. See the supplement to this edition for full details and booking.*

### More stained glass



In the last edition (GC221) we carried a piece about the Margaret Rope Society and her contribution to stained glass. Well, in continuance of the theme our regular reader Mr Walsh has reminded us of a pre-pandemic broadcast of *Bargain Hunt* featuring a fascinating glimpse of how stained glass windows are repaired, presented by Eric Knowles. Mr Walsh happens to recall the programme as it was filmed near his part of the world at Cheam and has kindly drawn our attention to it. Click [here](#) and go to 24mins 22 seconds; it's fascinating.

***Now read this not-unrelated cautionary item ...***

#### Craft at risk

Here's something that could easily pass under the radar. Until, that is, it happens to you. As it did to me. A little while ago I was bequeathed a venerable old clock. Pendulum, cogs, winding key, no battery – those under a certain age may need to Google that lot but as one with a certain leaning for how things used to be, I thought it was worth spending a few bob on getting it going. The 'few bob' turned out to be substantially more than that, but it was worth it for the pleasure of my reinvigorated timepiece ticking languorously through the small hours in a comfortingly reassuring manner that consoles me with each mesmerising tinkle of the chimes that I, too, am still alive. Possibly.

So I was fair horrified to realise that the nearest place I could get it repaired was over 20 miles away. And the nearest place after that being some considerable distance beyond, which is when I learned that the noble art of repairing ancient timepieces is on something called the Heritage Crafts Red List.

Now that's definitely worth Googling so I've saved you the trouble if you just click [here](#). But I warn you, prepare to be horrified. The list of crafts that are under threat, at serious risk or just plain vanished is staggering, as if the philistine behemoth of unchallenged progress has blithely ravaged our heritage almost without notice. And, lest one should imagine it has no impact on us here in the *Wonderful World of Glass*® then I note that mouth-blown sheet glass making, on the 'crucially endangered' list until earlier this year, is now officially 'extirpated' or 'locally extinct.'

So, we are greatly concerned to hear that stained glass has joined the list. But we are equally pleased to have received a release from the British Society of Master Glass Painters who propose rectifying this with their *One Thousand Friends* appeal. <https://www.bsmgp.org.uk> is where it's all at.

## More grim news



We are desperately sad to be the bearer of much negative vibes in this issue but, be it good, bad, or ugly, news is news and must be reported as such. Even so, if you haven't already heard the latest by the time it hits the streets then it will come as much of a shock to you as it did to us via a release we received from The Glass Society.

After nearly 100 years on site and having struggled through Covid when two key employees died, Nazeing Glassworks, one of the oldest and most venerable glassworks in the land with roots extending back into the earliest days of glassmaking in the UK, is destined to close in August of this year.

The museum will also close and its contents auctioned, offered to local museums, or sold via the Nazeing Glass website. Of particular note are approximately 120 pieces of highly collectable Whitefriars glass that will need a new home.

Interested parties are referred to the Nazeing Glass website [www.nazeing-glass.com](http://www.nazeing-glass.com) or direct to proprietor Stephen Pollock-Hill at [s.pollock-hill@nazeing-glass.com](mailto:s.pollock-hill@nazeing-glass.com)

We can but hope that one day the present parlous state of some sections of the glass industry may all seem like just a bad dream. In the meantime, on behalf of BGF and SGM we offer our thoughts and best wishes to all affected by this truly tragic loss. Oh dear.

## GIFTS AND DONATIONS

to BGF funds, for which we thank you

Funding and maintaining a revenue stream is an ongoing requirement. We greatly value your contributions. BGF Trustees are unremunerated; all monies received go to the cause. Donations can be as one-off contributions or standing order.

BGF routinely reviews its donation procedures. Enhancements are announced as and when but we currently accept donations direct by cash, cheque and BACS. **We would respectfully ask that all cheques and orders be made payable to BRITISH GLASS FOUNDATION.**



This is the QR code for the British Glass Foundation. Scan to browse the work of the BGF or to make a donation.

For donations by BACS our bank details are:

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To donate *PayPal* visit: <https://www.paypal.com/uk/for-you/transfer-money/send-money> and donate to [bqf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk](mailto:bqf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk)

To donate through our website visit: [www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk](http://www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk) and hit the 'Donate' button.

Donations made by a UK taxpayer can attract Gift Aid, which is a great supplement to our funds and costs the donor nothing. All we need to claim this is your Gift Aid declaration; contact us for details if you have not already supplied us with relevant particulars.

*Please note:* In acknowledging the support of donors *GlassCuts* generally will not reveal either the details of the donor or the amount donated unless the donor indicates otherwise or the circumstances are in the public domain or public interest. This does not preclude the possibility of details, including the amount donated and/or the donor's particulars, appearing elsewhere in BGF material.

**In addition to cash** BGF is similarly grateful for donations of good quality glass to sell in our shop. All funds raised from the sale of donated glass go into a separate Collections Account towards future acquisitions for the museum. To make a donation directly into the **British Glass Foundation Collections Account** use sort code: **40-38-07** and account number: **52291789**.

## Notes and queries

Whilst we are happy to facilitate this *ad hoc* information exchange on unusual items of interest BGF cannot undertake valuations or offer comment other than that supplied by our correspondents. Submission does not guarantee publication. No responsibility ... etc (*usual caveats apply*)

Keep 'em coming. Our track record for solving your little difficulties is admirable. And if we can't sort it, we almost certainly know someone who can.

## From the Hot Studio:

[www.allisternalcolm.com](http://www.allisternalcolm.com) **Facebook** @allisternalcolmglass **Twitter** @allisternalcolm **Instagram** @allisternalcolmglassltd

There's a mixture of good news and sad news this time around. Allister has kindly updated us ...

### *In memoriam (1)*



BGF supporter Ed Burke passed away earlier this month. I attended his funeral yesterday (31<sup>st</sup> May). He participated in the World's Longest Glassblowing Demonstration (2012) and produced a piece 'Keep calm and blow glass' to help raise funds and promote our cause in the early days. It is now in the permanent collection. Ed was an inspiration and I would like to record a few words about him.

I met Ed 25 years ago. At that point I'd been stumbling along in glass professionally for only six months and was starting to feel overwhelmed. Ed and Margy represented a level of success that I felt I could only dream of achieving. Ed surprised me as to how much knowledge and advice he was patiently willing to share. He generously imparted his knowledge and experience in how to survive in business. Over the next decade we shared trade show stands in the UK and in the USA. Evenings included pints in Irish bars and cocktails. At one comedy club in New York I tried to disguise my laughs whilst the comedian on stage poked fun at the Elton John look alike that I was sitting next to!

It was at the New York Gift Fair that Ed's skills however almost became redundant. It's a busy place & buyers arrive on your stand firing questions about your products. You are expected to know prices in US dollars then if the price includes shipping & duty. There's no time to flick through the paperwork to double check your facts, It can be stressful. At the end of Day One, and true to form, E&M glass had taken tens of thousands of dollars-worth of orders. But Ed hadn't taken a single one! I forget his son Charlie's age at this point but Charlie had come along to keep Ed company. At about the age of 14 these harsh faced New Yorkers had practically been queuing up to place their orders with Charlie all day. They simply loved the fact that he knew all the information. This all happened whilst Ed looked on with a sense of pride and maybe with an expression that would have read: 'I'm still here you know guys'. We laughed about it at the end of the day, with many other Brits asking if he would hire out his son for their stalls the following day.

Ed was too modest a man to ever think it, but he was a role model for me in many ways. He not only proved that with commitment you could achieve success in glass, but you could also be rich beyond this by enjoying a family life. They were so close. It was this juggling act that I admired the most. Both Terri and I saw how Timmy's jokes of Klingons gave everyone a laugh whilst Josh also gave so much joy. I watched a husband and dad work hard for his family. He helped shape who I've become. Nice one Fella!

Ed Burke 1961 – 2023. RIP





*Are friends electric? (© G. Newman)*

In somewhat happier vein the news from the studio is that our electric furnace is now fully operational and we've been creating new work from it. We will be unveiling those latest pieces shortly so keep an eye out. So far we've learnt a lot about how to save energy due to the monitoring equipment that comes with the furnace. It has been a steep learning curve which has been not only interesting but very valuable in terms of enabling us to continue with our love of glassmaking. We will be sharing more information on the studio's developments in the coming weeks as we have more exciting news to reveal. As can be seen, the furnace has already had a funny effect on both Maddy and Scarlett.



### Exception proves rule

In order to maintain our impartiality we never, ever advertise. Never, ever. Oh, go on then, just this once. Here goes - *Al's IPA. Available now at Stourbridge Glass Museum. You know it makes sense*'. (Editor's note: if you hold your ear close to the page, the sloshing noise you hear is my reputation going down a pan.)



### Just a reminder ...

If you've got something 'glassy' to say and you want it said to somebody else, consider sending it to us and we'll do our best to help pass the information via *GlassCuts*. Usual address.

### In memoriam (2)

We are saddened to learn of the death of Scottish master glass blower Tom Young MBE at the age of 84 years. A full biography of Tom can be found [here](#).

## And finally ...

My mate was telling me how he had been thrown out of Russells Hall Hospital when he visited his diabetic relative who was suffering hay fever. He was baffled. *'Ah cor understand it'* he lamented *'all I did was take him the usual gifts, yer know, flowers, chocolates ...'*

I'll let him get his own coat.

Graham Fisher MBE FRGS  
Trustee, PR & Comms  
pp British Glass Foundation  
[www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk](http://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk)

## PARISH NOTICES

tell us the news from your world

*Send us yours and we'll try to mention it. No guarantees other than we'll do our best.*

- \* Latest news from the *Contemporary Glass Society*. [www.cgs.org.uk](http://www.cgs.org.uk)
- \* *Alan J. Poole newsletter* latest edition. [alanjpoole@aol.com](mailto:alanjpoole@aol.com)
- \* *The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London*. Updates. [info@glass-sellers.co.uk](mailto:info@glass-sellers.co.uk)
- \* *The Glass Society Events Schedule*. <http://glassassociation.org.uk>
- \* *ArtLight newsletter*: Caution GLASS! Exhibition and more. [newsletter@artlight-magazine.com](mailto:newsletter@artlight-magazine.com)

## Getting involved

Would you like to be part of a vibrant and enthusiastic group of volunteers dedicated to supporting the British Glass Foundation and its work at the new glass museum e.g. on front of house reception meeting and greeting the visitors?

Full details are on our web site:

<https://www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk/volunteer/>

Or contact our Volunteer Co-Ordinator Moemi Madigan at [info@stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk) or telephone 01384 900447.

## Promotional opportunities

Award-winning *Black Country Radio* and *BCR Xtra* broadcast throughout the Black Country on 102.5 FM and also via DAB and on-line around the world. Part of BCR's remit is to promote local events. If you are organising an event that satisfies the criteria of not-for-profit, charitable or philanthropic and is community orientated then you may be eligible for no-fee promotion.

Go to [www.blackcountryradio.co.uk](http://www.blackcountryradio.co.uk) hover over 'Local' and click 'Local Events Guide'. Submit the form you'll find at upper left under '+ Add Event'. Your announcement will then appear on the *Events Guide*. Allow sufficient notice and the event may be 'voiced' and broadcast live on air during daytime broadcasting. Depending on the number of events, yours might be broadcast several times; there's no guarantee but it should appear at least once. Meanwhile it stays on the *Events Guide* listings on the world-wide web until the day itself. And it's all entirely free of charge.

Keeping in touch

**BGF Secretary Lynn Boleyn MBE**

Direct Line: 01384 900447

Email: [bgf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk](mailto:bgf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk)

Snailmail: Stourbridge Glass Museum, Stuart Works, High Street, Wordsley, West Midlands, DY8 4FB

**THE BRITISH GLASS FOUNDATION GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT GIVEN BY THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND AND THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND**

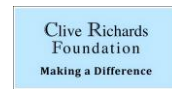


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... together with many other contributions from other trusts, foundations and individuals. (E&OE)

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No responsibility etc. etc ... (usual caveats apply)

We welcome you passing *GlassCuts* on to anyone you feel may be interested in our work. You know the rest but if in any doubt then please communicate with us directly in the first instance via [bgf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk](mailto:bgf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk)



**British Glass Foundation**

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