

MID-LOCKDOWN 'KEEPING OPTIMISTIC' EDITION

Greetings from the Editorial team

Hallo, and welcome to the first edition of *GlassCuts* since the world came to a grinding halt. At the time of writing we are in a state of hopeful half-expectation that the worst may be behind us and we may dare consider our return towards what we hitherto once considered 'normal life'.

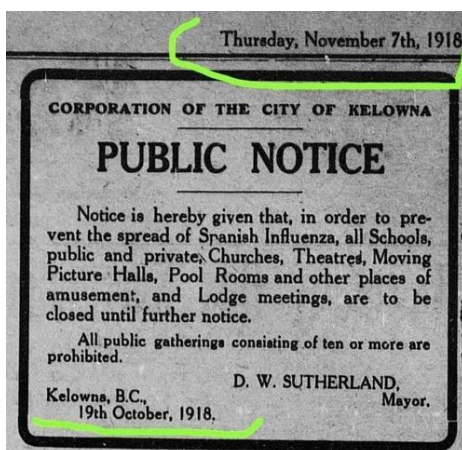
It's not going to be easy but BGF re-affirms its commitment to getting the job done and we thank you all for your support throughout a difficult time. That especially goes out to our wonderful team of BGF volunteers and advisers with whom we share their frustration by not being able to proceed as we would all have wished. But proceed, we shall.

We recognise that, amidst a pandemic the likes of which the world has not seen for many decades, the construction of a glass museum must be seen in context. BGF extends its profound appreciation to all those key workers and countless other true heroes whom for the greater good have worked above and beyond, some to the extent of paying the ultimate price.

Meanwhile, back in the *Wonderful World of Glass*^{®GF} we offer this review of a few matters of interest that have arisen during our enforced inactivity.

Do please reciprocate by availing yourselves of *Living la vida lockdown*, at the end of this issue, and tell us what you've been up to out there.

Déjà vu ain't what it used to be



Notice is hereby given that, in order to prevent the spread (of disease) all schools, public and private churches, theatres, moving picture halls, pool rooms and other places of amusement, and lodge meetings, are to be closed until further notice. All public gatherings consisting of ten or more are prohibited.

Signed: D. Sutherland, Mayor.

Sound familiar in 2020? Well, it's actually an edit issued on 19th October 1918 in response to the deadly Spanish Flu epidemic that reputedly infected over 500 million and led to 50 million deaths between the arctic and the southern seas. This particular decree was issued in Kelowna, British Columbia (Canada) but could have been equally applicable contemporaneously across vast swathes off the globe.

Our thanks to BGF Secretary Lynn who dug out some fascinating facts from long ago that show we are not alone. Office workers in face masks, casualties being load *en masse* into ambulances, it's all happened before.



Not surprisingly, legendary soothsayer Nostradamus is in the thick of it and a quote from his (in)famous book of predications foresaw it all. Apparently. Might have been a lucky guess.

Fortunately the gap between Covid-19 and its comparable pandemic predecessors, namely Spanish Flu (20th C), Cholera (19th C) and Plague (18th C) seem to share a common interval of about 100 years, so let us hope that fortune is on our sides for the next few generations.

Flying the flag

Keeping momentum going is difficult at the best of times but when the entire world is shut it becomes substantially trickier and more essential. BGF is thus grateful to those who have assisted in keeping us in the public eye or continued to express support. Key amongst these is our resident glass-maker Allister Malcolm who has been steadfastly waving the banner for us on several fronts:

- In early-lockdown we received this from him...

'I am very proud to announce that a 'Bubblewrap' piece (featured GCs passim - Ed) has been purchased by Glassmuseum-Lette. <http://www.glassmuseum-lette.de/en/exhibition/current/> Their Museum is closed due to the current crisis but they tell me this exhibition will reopen and carry on for longer than originally planned once it is safe to do so.' <https://www.facebook.com/224069450941299/posts/3484921681522710/?d=n>



- The [White House Cone museum of glass](#) remains closed for now and all activities suspended, including those of Allister who was obliged to commit glassmaking sacrilege by shutting off his furnace. But this is far from an idle time for him as he routinely carries out essential maintenance tasks on-site whilst also populating cyberspace with updates. In the depths of lockdown he produced a delightful video that shows where we were at the time and offers a few happy moments of the better times we all hope will return soon. <https://youtu.be/721Ur8ayRbw>

- *Other little gems and submissions from AI include:*

A short pre-lockdown presentation detailing the production of, and the story behind, a stunning piece - The Glass Slipper. <https://youtu.be/7Ug2Kc5fWs0>

One for the youngsters; making a Prince Rupert Drop (that's the clever little glassmaker's party-piece of the item that shatters entirely due to internal stresses). The 'junior artiste' here is identifiable from the TikTok tag [@glassblowersdaughter](#)

Editor's note for non-techies: TikTok is currently the fastest growing social media for the under 20s and BGF welcomes a presence amongst the next generation of glass enthusiasts.

Meet the team is a series of self-explanatory vignettes, starting with someone we featured in GC when she first arrived with Allister and who has since gone on to undertaking her own commissions, Madeleine Hughes (from pre-lockdown) ... <https://youtu.be/dQLM2okeqJ>

- As a practising glass artiste Allister has his own professional website and social media feeds but in his capacity as a Trustee of BGF he also independently manages, monitors and contributes to the White House Cone Facebook stream. This is more usually populated by matters connected with our own operations but in the circumstances BGF issued a press release via its usual channels to extend its support to the wider glass industry in [welcoming contributions from anyone](#) wishing to share news, promote their work or maintain contact with colleagues. **Note:** this facility will remain open post-Covid for a period to be reviewed.

Great news from Ireland

Dr Audrey Whitty is Head of Collections and Learning (Deputy Director), National Museum of Ireland with considerable practical experience including a spell working at Corning Museum of Glass, New York. She is also, we are proud to say, a BGF Trustee. Early in lockdown she appraised us of the Global Fine Arts Awards and, in particular, a nomination for an exhibition by Alison Lowry at the National Museum of Ireland, which falls under Audrey's purview. The exhibition opened in March 2019 and is ongoing, albeit physically closed due to the current pandemic. So in May 2020 we shared in Audrey's delight to learn that Alison's work *Dressing Our Hidden Truths* has been rewarded with an Honourable Mention in the awards. <http://globalfineartawards.org/index.php/2019-award-winners/>



Much obliged (1)

The Glass Society kindly requested a status update for their magazine *Glass Matters*. The Glass Society - *'the organisation for all who are interested in the fascinating world of glass and glassmaking'* was formed in 2019 by a merger between The Glass Association and The Glass Circle. BGF wishes the new Society and its members all good fortune. <http://www.glassassociation.org.uk>

Post script: Phew, it doesn't get much closer to the deadline than this but we're certainly not complaining. Just as we were right on the point of pressing the 'send' button, we received news from The Glass Society of a substantial donation to BGF funds. Both the former Glass Association and Glass Circle have been staunch supporters of BGF from the outset and we are delighted beyond measure that the new amalgamation continues to have faith in our work. In return we can only promise we will not disappoint.

Much obliged (2)

BGF has continued to receive support from many sections of the all-important local media who have in various ways helped us maintain a positive image in the public eye. BGF therefore wishes to express its appreciation by recording them individually. Our apologies to anyone we may have missed - let us know and we'll make amends.

Stourbridge News
Express & Star and associated Chronicles series
Village Voice magazine
Black Country Bugle
The BlackCountryman (Black Country Society)
Black Country Radio 102.5FM

Many thanks also to all individuals and societies who have continued to express support and offer donations.

Much obliged (3)

Many of the images that accompany BGF's promotional work are courtesy of the-man-behind-the-lens, Simon Bruntnell. A long-time supporter of BGF Simon works discreetly but efficiently behind the scenes on our behalf. For which we are very grateful and thus happy to give Simon the acknowledgement he merits. <https://www.bruntnell-astley.com>

Cone lit up

As a mark of respect to the tireless efforts of NHS worker the Red House Cone at Wordsley was illuminated to spectacular effect, and certainly in a way its original proprietors could never have envisaged, in an effulgent blue glow that could be seen for miles around. <https://edition.pagesuite-professional.co.uk/html5/reader/production/default.aspx?pubname=&pubid=9e22cad0-28e3-4b5f-ac32-94f4e1a5b623>



Space precludes us from mentioning all similar gestures of support, both aesthetic and tangible, that permeated the media but as an example of diversity in adversity it was reported that the University of Wolverhampton had turned their attentions to making face shields of NHS frontline staff.

We are aware of others in the locality who are engaged in efforts to tame Covid-19 We hope to be reporting on some of them in due course.

Cyberspace saves the day

Deep into lockdown back in early May I received an intriguing email from collector and specialist Mark Holford who said: *'I have been asked by the Glass Art Society (America's main artist body) to give a lecture on my collection to form part of their virtual annual conference. Their live conference, which was to be in Sweden, has of course been cancelled. It is slightly different from the previous version that I gave to the Contemporary Glass Society as it focuses a little more on my role as a collector. It will be recorded before a small invited audience. I have also asked five artists who have been important in my collecting career to take part: Richard Jackson & Sally Fawkes, Philip Baldwin & Monica Guggisberg, Katharine Coleman, Colin Reid and David Reekie. Would you like to be a member of the audience?'*

Mark and I worked alongside each other back in 2015 when I sat under his Chairmanship on the International Festival of Glass Biennale judging panel so I was delighted to accept.

Thus it was that at 6pm on the evening of Thursday 7th May I was sat in front of my computer screen as part of a 'virtual lecture' that was as fascinating as it was novel. Sitting at ease in his home against a backdrop of shelving housing part of his extensive collection, Mark regaled us with tales of his compilation whilst alongside he showed images of individual pieces. The magic of it all was that the makers were in his audience and were invited to describe what they had made. The hour or so we were all in mutual communication simply flew by and I am sure I was not alone in wanting more. The session concluded with an open floor for comments and I was pleased to express support on behalf of BGF.

There will be few good things that will come out of Covid-19 but this is one of them. I have seen the writing on the wall and the upsurge in streamed presentations such as this is up there writ in big letters. My congratulations to Mark and his team in pulling together a superb initiative and my thanks for the invitation to be part of it. The full video is here: (GF's message of support is at 1:15:40): https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=187&v=Le1egllqMNU&feature=emb_logo

Living la vida lockdown

So, what have you out there in *GlassVille*® been getting up to in order to stay sane? Let us know and we'll publish extracts from the most enlivening responses.

In mid-May Stephen and Kate of Gillies Jones up in North Yorkshire did exactly that by way of a lovely email informing us: *We are posting photos of life in lockdown in Rosedale to [instagram](#) & [facebook](#) - take a look if you'd like to see the moors and a recap of our 25 years of working life in Rosedale.*

More please.

Keep the faith; keep it glass. And do stay safe. After all, we've got this great idea for a museum that we'd very much like you to visit.

Graham Fisher MBE
Press & Publicity,
pp British Glass Foundation
www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk

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 White House Cone *museum of glass*?

Specialist skills or knowledge are welcome but not essential. We are committed to equal opportunities and full training will be given where necessary. To find out more, contact us via the usual address and we will be delighted to do the rest.

Promotional opportunities

Black Country Radio broadcasts throughout the Black Country on 102.5 FM and also via DAB and on-line around the world. If your event satisfies the criteria of not-for-profit, charitable or philanthropic and is community orientated there is no charge.

Go to www.blackcountryradio.co.uk hover over 'Local' and submit the form you'll find under *Events*. 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.



These are the QR codes for the British Glass Foundation (left) and Virgin Money Giving (right).

Scan to browse the work of the BGF or to make a donation. If you are donating by VMG then please note that VMG's own commission fees, over which BGF has no control, may apply.



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



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... also Dudley MBC, Fieldings Auctioneers, Enover Community Trust, Istock Enover Trust, Clive & Sylvia Richards Charity



BGF would also like to acknowledge the following, *inter alia*, for their support and generosity ...

Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Growing Places Fund : Garfield Weston : Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust : The Headley Trust : The Charles Hayward Foundation : W.A. Cadbury Charitable Trust.

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

Full details of BGF partners, supporters and sponsors at: www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk/the-foundation/

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter



<https://m.facebook.com/The-White-House-Cone-Museum-of-Glass-1783619608579416/>



<https://twitter.com/whitehousecone>

Please note: These are 'live' links - click to try - but depending on your operating system you may need to insert manually into your browser.

Disclaimer

The coronavirus pandemic is a serious matter, so as a mark of respect for all those who are suffering directly or indirectly from its consequences our piece of stuff-and-nonsense that is the *Disclaimer* is suspended for the duration.

In the meantime we are still obliged to comply with the provisions of Data Protection and so, as usual, we must remind you that *GlassCuts* exists solely for the information of its supporters, our Privacy Statement is outlined in detail on our website and subscribers can withdraw at any time just by telling us to stop.

We also 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 or the contacts section at www.britishglassfoundation.co.uk

Thank you for your understanding. Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.



www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk

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