

GlassCuts

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the Voice of Stourbridge Glass Museum

STOURBRIDGE
GLASS MUSEUM

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A ROYAL AFFAIR

Wednesday 19 April 2023 - A very special day for all concerned at Stourbridge Glass Museum when the Duke of Gloucester, Cousin to the late Queen Elizabeth II, formally opened the Museum after 12 years of fundraising by the charity Trustees of British Glass Foundation to find a new home for the world renowned Stourbridge Glass collection after it was put into storage following the closure of Broadfield House Glass Museum, transforming what was a derelict site into a multi-million pound world class glass museum. Guests included Ian and Brian Harrabin, Directors Complex Development Projects Limited, who were the developers of the whole site; Larry Priest and Dean Shaw, Directors BPN Architects, who were the original architects, Will Farmer and Eric Knowles, BBC Antiques Roadshow, Bob Warman formerly of ITV Central News; and Alderman Dave Tyler and his wife Barbara.

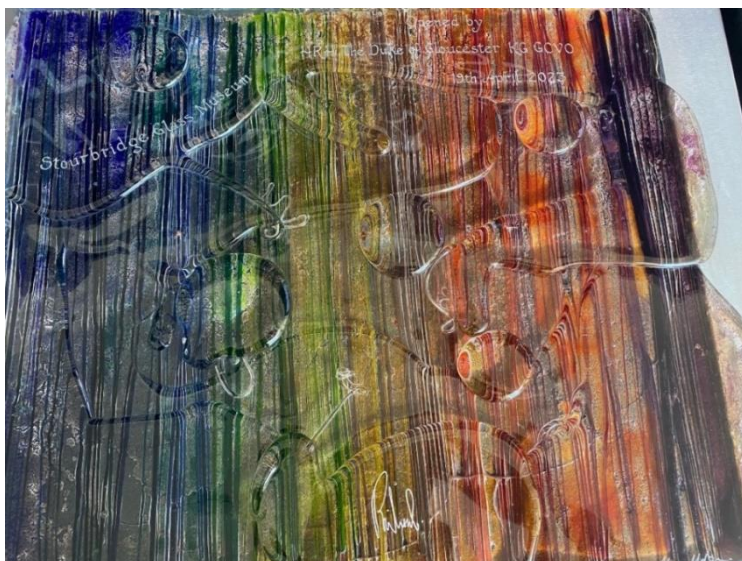


Ian Harrabin, Managing Director of developers Complex Development Projects who restored the complex of buildings said:

‘It has taken many years of partnership effort to restore this historic glass factory and deliver the Museum, but it has all been worth it. The collection and display are exceptional. The museum is a great asset for the community and keeps the rich Stourbridge glass heritage alive.’

Accompanied by The Lord-Lieutenant of the West Midlands, Sir John Crabtree OBE, and the High Sheriff for the West Midlands, Wade C Lyn CD, CBE, DL, HRH The Duke of Gloucester was introduced to Mike Wood MP for Dudley South; Barbara Beadman MBE immediate Past Master of The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London and formerly Chairman of Friends of Broadfield House Glass Museum; Alexander Goodger MA, Manager of Stourbridge Glass Museum and Graham Knowles, Chairman British Glass Foundation.

Graham Knowles invited HRH to sign a glass plaque donated and specially made for the occasion by Allister Malcolm, resident glass artist, and engraved by Terri Colledge, resident cameo glass engraver. HRH was introduced to Allister Malcolm in the hot glass studio where he was told gas prices have increased from £12,000 p.a. to over £80,000. Paul Cameron and Christian Dunn of Interpower Europe who were also present are now in the process of changing over the gas furnace and Lehr to electric ones. The last glass blowing using the gas furnace was today and this was switched off when The Duke of Gloucester left so that this could be dismantled to make way for the new equipment.



Allister Malcolm introduced HRH to Heidi Keating, age 6, who won a recent glass design competition run by The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers and Primary Science Teaching Trust – her winning design was made into glass by Allister and this was presented to her by HRH. Also present at the presentation were Barbara Beadman MBE and Leigh Baildham, Past Masters Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London; Paul Wenham, Clerk to Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London; Sue Martin, COO of the Primary Science Teaching Trust; Kulvinder Johal, PSTT Regional Mentor; Barbara French, PSTT Communications and Events Manager and Sally Cowley, Heidi's mother and Annabel Tittensor, Teacher, St Bede's Catholic Infant School, Widnes.



HRH then moved to the Activity Room at the museum to meet with Corrina Field, Learning & Public Programmes Officer, and 12 children from the local Brook Primary School, their Headteacher, Marie Fellows; Teaching Assistant Ruth Masters and Kate Figgitt, Museum Learning & Access Manager at Red House Glass Cone. Corrina explained that the children were making crowns for the King's Coronation and HRH talked and joked with the children and asked to see how the crowns looked when worn; the High Sheriff also tried on a crown made by the children!



HRH was then introduced to Harrison Davies, Curator, who showed him around the ground floor gallery pointing out the cameo glass for what Stourbridge is famous. HRH was particularly fascinated by the story of the Portland Vase and its 19th century recreation and the technique of cameo glass. He was delighted to meet Terri Colledge and Ian Dury who created the 2012 version. It was also lovely sharing the story of the Grade II Listed building with HRH as well, he really appreciated the restoration of the historic factory site for the museum. He was delighted to see the contemporary glass from the University of Wolverhampton alumni and pieces on display from BBC's 'Make It At Market'. It was clear from his questions he has a real appreciation for glass as a technology and art form. HRH mentioned he and the Duchess of Gloucester have their own collection including Danish glass.



Harrison and HRH then moved to the upstairs gallery where Chris Day spoke about his work, After The Darkness, The Light which was a joint commission with Stourbridge Glass Museum and The Contemporary Glass Society which was unveiled by Will Farmer, Trustee of British Glass foundation on 26 August 2022.



Ian Dury and Terri Colledge, creators of the 2012 Portland Vase, spoke about the original Portland Vase and their replica. HRH asked Terri if she would do anything differently and she replied no because it was just perfect! Copies of Graham Fisher MBE's signed books "The 2012 Portland Vase Project" and "Jewels On The Cut II" were presented to HRH.



HRH was then introduced to volunteers at the museum and Trudy and Steve Auty who explained about their temporary exhibition at the museum to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Carnival Glass Society which runs until 5 November.



HRH then unveiled the glass plaque he had signed on arrival and was presented with a small glass memento of his visit by Graham Knowles. Graham said it had been wonderful to have the opportunity to showcase what had been achieved and that HRH was very knowledgeable and was genuinely interested in the displays. He said “we have a great team spirit among our volunteers and small staff team evidenced by the comments book and the fact we are No 1 on TripAdvisor”.



Funding of £1,056.900 was awarded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund towards the internal fit-out of the museum and Glyn Morgan MBE was present to represent NLHF and was impressed with what the Trustees have achieved in preserving the 400 year glass making heritage for generations to come. Funding was also raised by various Trusts and Foundations all of which are acknowledged on a special panel in the museum.

Funding of £78,662 has recently been awarded for the landscaping at the entrance to the museum by FCC Communities Foundation. This work was carried out by Jack Moody Landscaping Limited and a spectacular lighting structure is due to be installed in the centre later this month by Simworx Limited of Kingswinford. This has made a vast improvement to the area and for the local community.

HRH then left for a visit to Dudley Council, Council House, Dudley; The Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre, Zoological Drive, Dudley and Black Country Living Museum where he is Patron.

An honour and an amazing visit for the local area and the communities.





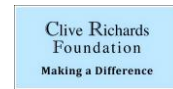
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... also Dudley MBC, Fieldings Auctioneers, Enovert Community Trust, Ibstock Enovert Trust, Clive Richards Foundation



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 : John Ellerman Foundation : The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London : The Pilgrim Trust : FCC Communities Foundation.

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

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