

# Glasscuts

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

STOURBRIDGE  
**GLASS  
MUSEUM**  
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**NEW BOOK NOW OUT: The Blue Vase - the 2024 interpretation of an iconic cameo by contemporary Stourbridge glass artisans.**

Available from usual sources or direct from the museum. All proceeds to BGF. (SEE BELOW)

**ALSO ON SALE: Stourbridge Glass Museum – how it came into being.**

The remarkable tale of the period from the formation of BGF in 2010 to SGM official opening in 2013. Available from usual sources or direct from the museum. All proceeds to BGF.

## Reminder of the day

**SGM Heritage Open Day Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September**

See Information Corner (below) for details

## More great news for SGM

According to Trip Advisor - so, in other words, our visitors - we are now one of the *Top 10% of Things To Do Worldwide*. Which, by my reckoning, means that our wonderful staff are amongst the *Top 10% of People To get Things Done Worldwide*. Excellent, simply excellent; huge congratulations all round.



## And yet more great news for SGM

Sometimes this bulletin just writes itself. Ok, let's cut to the chase ...

\* *VisitEngland Attractions Scheme*. The beez-neeze in offering prospective visitors the reassurance of an official endorsement of standards.

\* Stourbridge Glass Museum was recently assessed.

\* **Stourbridge Glass Museum** has been awarded the accreditation of **VisitEngland Quality Assured Visitor Attraction**.

All we have to do now is to find the funds to give our staff and everyone behind the scenes who made this possible a solid gold gong three feet across with the word 'Thanks' engraved across the middle; nothing else will do. Marvellous.

### *Specific comments in the assessment included:*

Admissions: Jane & Tony are excellent ambassadors for the museum and scored full-marks for their faultless service and welcome. They were charming, personable, efficient and able to answer all of the questions posed.

Guides: Allister and Madeleine were working in the Hot Shop and were very happy to chat to visitors, explaining what they were working on and answering any questions posed.

Karen and Kevin provided great additional interpretation. They were engaging proactively with visitors adding anecdotal information on the exhibits and fully answering all the queries posed. Overall excellent service was provided by all staff and volunteers met on the day.

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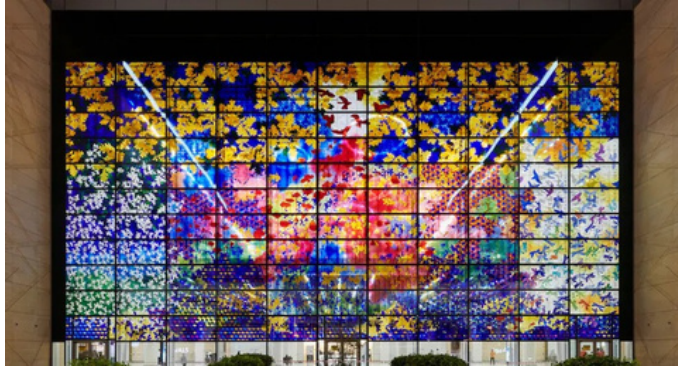
## Hello, there

A very warm welcome to Helen Taylor who joined the team on 19<sup>th</sup> August as our brand spangley-new Curator & Projects Officer.

Having a Postgraduate Diploma in Museum Studies from the University of Leicester and a BA in History & American Studies from the University of Wolverhampton, Helen was previously Museum Manager at West Midlands Police Museum where she led the museum's transformation from inception to operation, to what is now a top 5 'things to do in Birmingham' attraction on *TripAdvisor*.



She managed a team of staff and over 80 volunteers, very similar to the set-up at Stourbridge Glass Museum. Prior to this, at the Black Country Living Museum, she progressed from Assistant Curator to Collections Manager, where she worked with diverse material culture including decorative and industrial glass. Alexander Goodger, Museum Director, said '*I would like to welcome Helen and we very much look forward to working with her, I know she will be a great asset to the team.*'



## A legend moves on

We recently brought you news of a grant we have received towards the restoration of a panel from the iconic Churchill Precinct stained glass installation that used to sit in the eponymous shopping area of Dudley Town Centre. It was with our eyes fixed on the subject that we received the sad news of the

death of one of the medium's greatest exponents of modern times. Sir Brian Clarke, who died on 1<sup>st</sup> July last, just one day short of his 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday, was once described by the *Daily Telegraph* as 'the rock star of stained glass' in a tribute to his reinvention of this centuries-old form of expression that saw him undertake such monumental projects as the Pfizer building in New York and the Holocaust Memorial Synagogue in Darmstadt.

Brian Clarke was quite a character and what one might call a bit of a hellraiser in his heyday. The media have covered his life extensively but we are grateful to our Chairman for drawing our attention to the one in the *Daily Telegraph* of 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025 (with acknowledgements) that can be found [here](#).

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## At SGM right now

There's a delightful exhibition running right now in Stourbridge Glass Museum courtesy of fellow BGF Trustee and glassmaking maestro Elliot Walker in partnership with Bethany Wood. Based across the road from SGM in Red House Glass Cone the two have collaborated together for around a decade and this latest display, cleverly entitled *Strike a Match* shows them at what is a very impressive peak of creativity. If you can't make the show, or even in you can, then *Artefacts*, the magazine of Friends of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, carries an insightful feature on their work. Issue 82 of Autumn 2025 is the edition to look out for.

[Artefacts- Autumn 2025](#)

Meanwhile, *Strike a Match* runs at SGM until Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2025





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## Our friends up t'north

Congratulations to Stephen and Kate up there in the sunny grasslands of North Yorkshire who are celebrating 30 years of Gillies Jones Glassmaking. Far away from our quarter they may be, but they still maintain strong connections with Stourbridge and its glassmakers and are always welcome visitors to our part of the world. As, indeed, are we in theirs. If you're passing that way they would be delighted to greet you at The Old Forge, Rosedale Abbey, Pickering YO18 8SA. I've been there, so I can tell you first-hand it's a magical place with a lovely welcome.

[gilliesjonesglass.co.uk](http://gilliesjonesglass.co.uk)



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## And a bit further up t'north

Our friends at the National Glass Centre in Sunderland have graced the pages of no less than *Private Eye* (No. 1656, 22<sup>nd</sup> August) in their ongoing saga for survival that seems to routinely swing from despair to hope. At the time of writing, redundancies loom on the one hand whilst in more positive vein the local councillor Denny Wilson has submitted an open letter stating that 'demolition (of the centre) should be the last resort'. According to the *Eye* funding is in fact available to continue glassmaking in Sunderland via a £7.5m grant for the conversion of a derelict warehouse. It is questionable whether the glass artists and teachers whose jobs are on the line will stick around until it opens sometime after 2028 at the earliest.



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## Ship-shape and Bristol fashion

The title refers to '*everything being in order, tidy and efficient*', but of course you already knew that. So it will come as no surprise to learn it is exactly what Stourbridge Glass Museum Director Alex reported to us when he returned recently from a highly productive visit to Bristol that included a tantalising glimpse into Bristol's Glass Revival.

The primary purpose of the trip was an invitation to view the exciting current works on the Glass Gallery at the Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, which is scheduled to reopen in its revamped form later this year. This is one project we are most definitely watching with great interest and anticipation.

Alexander was hosted by Giles Woodward. Many in the Stourbridge Glass community, and indeed beyond, will remember Giles's late father, Herbert, who served as Keeper of Glass at Dudley. Herbert also wrote books about Stourbridge Glass and helped form the glass collection when Head Librarian at Brierley Hill. But back with Giles, who provided a fantastic insight into the Bristol Museum's collections and was kind enough to show Alexander around not only the galleries but also a couple of the historic properties under the museum's care.

The trip also included a mini-tour of Bristol's current Wallace & Gromit sculpture trail, with a particular focus on finding the sculptures with connections to the Bristol Museum itself - a wonderful blend of the city's historic and contemporary creative spirit.

Adding a modern touch to the day, Alexander has put together a short video of the visit, set to a soundtrack from Bristol's own *Portishead*. (*The band, that is, not the docks – Ed*). We will be promoting this through our usual outlets in due course.

It is always positive to strengthen the bonds between institutions, and this visit underscored the close and friendly cooperation between SGM and Bristol's. We extend our thanks to Amber Turner (Bristol's Glass and Delft Curator, currently on maternity leave) for facilitating the invitation, and to Giles Woodward for his superb hospitality. The day was, we are told, perfectly concluded with a well-regarded bottle of Laithwaites Rosé.

We will, of course, be bringing you more updates on Bristol's Glass Gallery as their reopening approaches. In the meantime, on behalf of all at BGF and SGM we extend our best wishes for their success.





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## Keeping up with keeping up

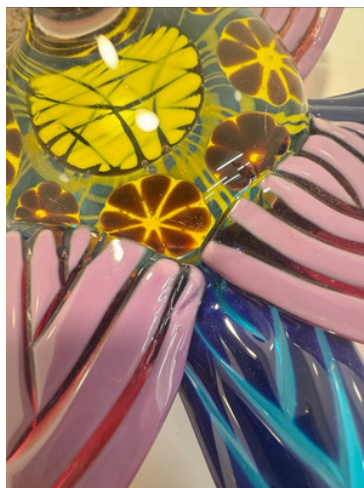
Here's a blast from the past. Raise a hand – wake up at the back, now – how many of a certain age remember a distinguished-sounding quintessentially-English broadcaster by the name of Bob Danvers-Walker (1906-1990)?

Possessing a beautiful ear-melting diction described as 'clear, fruity and rich with just the suggestion of raffishness' his mellifluous tones were '*the voice of Pathé news cinema newsreels*' (remember them?) during WWII and for many years afterwards.

In those days, and it wasn't so very long ago, '*all the news that is news*' was recorded in location in some far away land, processed, shipped back to blighty and distributed. Usually at 'the flicks' where, in the absence of much else on offer in the way of entertainment, many people tended to gather not only to watch the latest Errol Flynn blockbuster but also catch up in what was going on around the world. Which meant that, say, an earthquake in Tibet or some chappie climbing Everest for the first time might take days or even weeks to find its audience. Life, it seems, was always being lived about a fortnight behind reality – which indeed it was. But at least it gave one time to assimilate it all at a reasonable rate of mental knots.

Nowadays, picture the poor Editor who is bombarded with rolling news that changes by the second in front of their very eyes, courtesy of modern technology. Wonderful stuff it is, too. But, oh, sometimes just trying to keep up is a nightmare on the grey cells.

If you're wondering where this stroll down memory lane is going, well, I'll tell you. We have a fella by the name of Allister, our resident glassmaker at SGM, who is doing rather well for himself. With due acknowledgements to every other glassmaker out there who may also be doing well for his/her self, but let me stick with our man for the mo'. No sooner we get news of something he has done in the Hot Shop, and before we can send it our via more 'traditional' media channels such as *GlassCuts*, Allister is off doing something else that merits reportage.



Winner of The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers Doodle Competition ~ Handmade in glass by Allister Malcolm and team.

News of his recent participation at a conference expounding commercially sustainable glassblowing and carbon footprint reduction, marvellous as it be, is then overtaken by his 2025 Doodle's competition, for which he has been inundated with way over a thousand entries; and so it goes on. By the time we reach our publishing deadline he has already moved three strides onwards.

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It's great stuff, and speaking as Your Editor I just love the pace of change that progress brings. It does, however, mean that we have to re-evaluate our ways of keeping you, our loyal followers, up to speed. So, whilst *GlassCuts* remains our principal mode of disseminating information (whilst also acting as a historical record in perpetuity – every issue since Edition No. 1 is logged and filed for reference) we also encourage our readers to follow our work via social media and other outlets as may be *de rigueur* at the time. It's all part of the grand mix, and represents just more ways of getting our message across and to keep our supporters up to speed between issues of *GlassCuts*. Our social media contacts are listed in this, and every other, bulletin.

Incidentally, it is reported at the time of writing that that *YouTube* is now second only to the BBC in the broadcasting hierarchy (surpassing ITV!) and anyone in the meejah-game who does not respond to such changes is in for a bit of a hard time. Not us; we're on it.

We like to think we are at the right point of the curve in our development so you can follow Allister and what we do here at the Museum, and indeed the BGF, in real time via our increasingly popular social media feeds. We see these as opportunities to expand our communications remit but die-hard *GlassCuts* fans can rest assured their favourite email fanzine will remain a central part of our output.

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## Much obliged

Should you catch a glimpse of the August edition of the AIM (Association of Independent Museums) newsletter you'll find a delightful write-up of our recent receipt of Sustainable Project of the Year award (as reported GC266). Many thanks to AIM for that. [Aim-museums](http://aim-museums.org).



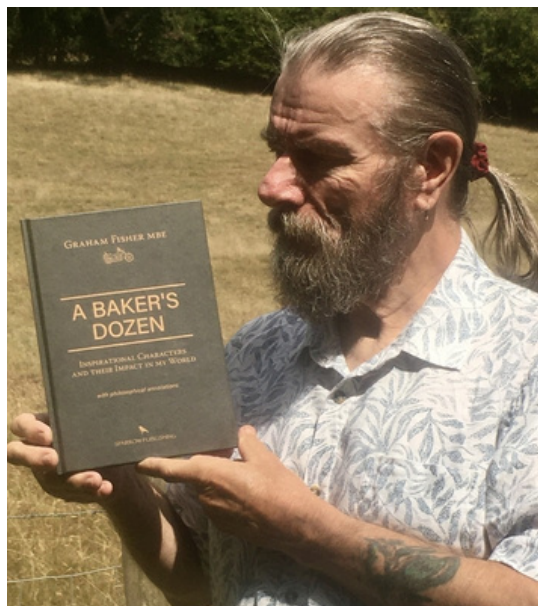
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## Friends like these

Your Editor has just released his latest book. A little off-piste from his usual fayre, this one is entitled *A Baker's Dozen* and is a series of vignettes about influential people, some of them local and possibly known to you. It is available from all the usual outlets including Amazon or direct through [grahamfisher.co.uk](http://grahamfisher.co.uk) at £15.00 + p&p. Nothing whatsoever to do with glass. Or even canals.

So why is he blatantly plugging it here? Well, those nice people in the shop at Stourbridge Glass Museum have kindly offered to put it on their shelves next to his other works. Here's the deal; *the full proceeds from this outlet, and this outlet alone (ie. Stourbridge Glass Museum),*

will go direct to BGF coffers in promoting The Cause. Buy one on your next visit and save the p&p as well. Plus it makes a wonderful early-Christmas gift. You know it makes sense.



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## Off the wall

We aim to bring you news of all the weird and oddball aspects that go towards making the *Wonderful World of Glass*® so fascinating but even by our standards this one is way out there in randomsville. So, the tale is there were a couple of friends of mine walking around Cardiff when they spotted this in a shop window. Now call me an old cynic but I recall the time that bloke in Gornal High Street tried to sell me a genuine diamond-encrusted titanium-shell Rolex with the promise that if it broke within 24 hours he would give me my fiver back. But no, undeterred, it appears this is entirely genuine – an actual piece of glass from the Manhattan Project that led to nuclear bombs etc. (you know the rest), and all for change out of £3k cash. You can just about read the legend on the image so I'll leave it with you, but the thing that struck me was how our friends over the pond are so exercised by the notion of lead leaching from cut crystal, or radioactivity coming off the teensiest

amounts of uranium in the eponymous glass, yet someone saw fit to reverse the exercise by bringing into the UK a lump of the stuff so heavily irradiated that it has substantially changed its colour. Answers to that one on a postcard please. There, I'm off for a lie down now. (*Spotters Tim and Harry, c/o Dragonfly Cruises*)

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# Stourbridge Glass Museum Updates & Events

Details of forthcoming events are [here](#) or to subscribe for updates of events and other GDPR- compliant communications from SGM, including **GlassCuts** and promotions, direct to your inbox.

## Gifts & 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:

**HSBC Bank**  
**Branch Identifier Code: MIDLGB2108U**  
**Sort code: 40-38-07**  
**Account number: 72076780**

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**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**.

You can donate when you visit in person, if you are a UK taxpayer we can add **Gift Aid** at no extra cost to you.

To donate via **Just Giving** visit: [justgiving.com/britishglassfoundation](https://justgiving.com/britishglassfoundation)

To donate via **PayPal** visit: [paypal.com](https://paypal.com) and donate to [bgf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk](mailto:bgf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk)

To donate through our **website** visit: [stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk/donate](https://stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk/donate)

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.

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## 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)**

\* Reader Jo Toon has sent us some images of a vase she has acquired. 'It's beautiful and perfect' she says 'Even though it's a dull day, the colours in the glass are amazing'. And that's about all she knows about it. Which is where you, Dear Reader, come to the rescue. Information via the usual address please and we'll pass it on.



## 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. Our sponsors and supporters also here.

- Alan J. Poole newsletter latest edition. [alanjpoole@aol.com](mailto:alanjpoole@aol.com)
- Contemporary Glass Society latest news [cgs.org.uk](http://cgs.org.uk)  
*Monthly Glass Network Digital also available.*
- 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. [glassassociation.org.uk](http://glassassociation.org.uk)

## From the Hot Glass Studio:

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

Keep up with developments down at the studio and his work via Al's media feeds.

His latest news is also now available [here](#)

## 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** or **OffCuts**. Usual address. There's no fee, but if you've got a few bob lying around in a spare pocket we can always find a good use for it.

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## And finally ...

My other half and I were having an argument recently. She said '*I don't understand what this human cloning is all about. I replied 'well, that makes two of us'. She got very angry and threw five cricket balls at me. So I told her 'just one more, and it's over.'*  
It's fun living in our house.

(*very late news: I hear the man who invented the powerboat has died. His funeral is tomorrow, followed by a big wake. Boom boom!*)

**Graham Fisher MBE FRGS Trustee, PR & Comms *pp* British Glass Foundation**

[britishglassfoundation.org.uk](http://britishglassfoundation.org.uk)



## Volunteering at Stourbridge Glass Museum

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 Stourbridge Glass Museum? 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 [here](#).

## 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 [blackcountryradio.co.uk](http://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.

## Second time around

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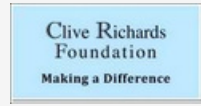
## Keeping in touch

BGF Secretary & Business Manager Lynn Boleyn MBE  
01384 900447 [bgf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk](mailto:bgf@britishglassfoundation.org.uk) Stourbridge Glass Museum, Stuart Works, High Street, Wordsley, West Midlands, DY8 4FB

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

**Full details of BGF partners, supporters and sponsors at:**

[britishglassfoundation.org.uk/the-foundation](http://britishglassfoundation.org.uk/the-foundation)

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

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