

# THE BRITISH GLASS FOUNDATION

*its formation and development 2009 – 2022*

## AND THE OPENING OF STOURBRIDGE GLASS MUSEUM

Graham Fisher

### DOCUMENT NAVIGATION

*Much of the information related herein is based on contemporaneous notes and reportage compiled since 2009 and is reproduced below in its original format for authenticity.*

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### THE STORY SO FAR

Here's a prediction; it is nothing more but I am confident it will come to pass.

One day, probably when most of us currently alive will have long since shuffled off Shakespeare's mortal coil, historians yet to be born will record events as yet to unfold in the definitive interpretation of Stourbridge Glass Museum and its wider role within the world of glass.

But that is for then, this is the now. The official opening of the new museum offers a landmark starting point yet the prequel of how a disparate group of enthusiasts came together with a common aspiration to secure a new home for the internationally renowned Stourbridge Glass collection, and how over the following formative years they developed that aspiration into the reality of the museum opening, is a tale unto itself.

This is how they did it ...

### A BRIEF HISTORY

**Editor's note:** reference is made to 'the new White House Cone museum of glass', a dated nomenclature that has served it suppose. Under professional re-branding the facility is now known as **Stourbridge Glass Museum**. It is the same building; only the name has changed as part of corporate consolidation.

**ERDF** refers to the **European Regional Development Fund**. **HLF** refers to the earlier **Heritage Lottery Fund**, now known as the **National Lottery Heritage Fund** since rebranding in January 2019. Both ERDF and NLHF are principal sponsors of Stourbridge Glass Museum.

The Stourbridge Glass collection is without question one of the most important of its type in the world and deserves a permanent home that is appropriate, sustainable and fit for purpose in the long term. The Stourbridge Glass Quarter in this context is centred around Stourbridge and the surrounding area and includes the former Broadfield House Glass Museum, Red House Glass Cone (formerly Stuart), Ruskin Glass Centre (formerly Webb Corbett/Royal Doulton), various factories and studios plus numerous retail outlets and entrepreneurs operating in all aspects of glassmaking and decoration. The glass collection represents one of the finest holdings of British 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century glass in the world and includes stunning examples from every major period of glass production in this country, the highlight being cameo glass, the speciality of Stourbridge factories at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The collection also includes essential glass archive material such as pattern books from Stevens & Williams, Richardson's and Thomas Webb & Sons, together with two major glass libraries from Robert J. Charleston, former Curator at the Victoria & Albert Museum, and H. Jack Haden, a local historian who amassed a valuable collection of local Stourbridge material.

The glass library is one of the finest in the country and includes the complete microfiche catalogue of original glass catalogues owned by the Corning Museum of Glass in America, the only museum in this country to own this valuable research facility. Notable archive pieces include the only surviving 'Pull-Up' machine invented by John Northwood 1<sup>st</sup> in the 1880s to decorate glassware at Stevens & Williams, and a rare complete example of a Bohemian copper-wheel engraving lathe which was used by the legendary Joseph Keller. In the 1980s the foundations of an entire 17<sup>th</sup> century glass furnace were rescued from the estate of Sir Charles Wolseley near Rugeley in Staffordshire.

As the Stourbridge Glass Museum looks set fair - notwithstanding pandemics, logistical encumbrances and other as yet unidentified hoops - to open in April 2022 it is an appropriate juncture to recount how we arrived here. This is all as seen through the lens of two who have been there from the outset: BGF Secretary Lynn Boleyn MBE, compiler of a progress report from 2012 onwards and Yours Truly who has expanded upon Lynn's comprehensive contribution. You can't get more 'prima facie' than that.

From the early days of despondency to an impending new beginning - *'but I have promises to keep/and miles to go before I sleep'* (Robert Frost) - we can but offer our future historians the foundations of events leading up to the opening of the new museum that may confirm us to be good ancestors inasmuch that we gave it our best shot.

So, we hop aboard our time machine and travel back to a chilly evening in early 2009. The location is Wordsley Community Hall near Stourbridge where the walls were close to bulging with attendees. Including me, here in my capacity as a broadcaster with a nearby radio station eager to be the first with the reportage. At the head table was an assemblage of various officials, Councillors and representatives of Dudley MBC. Their thankless mission was to explain the proposed closure of nearby Broadfield House Glass Museum, home of the Stourbridge Glass collection. Dudley Council had announced closure plans to the staff at Broadfield House Glass Museum on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009. The later public meeting at Wordsley can be most charitably described as 'techy' and I did not envy their task one iota.

I will leave the finer details to our future chroniclers but in essence the problem was that in a time of austerity the Council were obliged to curtail costs. *Et voilà*, close the museum. Sorted.

*Except ...*

Two facts became apparent during that meeting. Firstly, many of the representatives did not fully realise the significance of the collection housed in Broadfield House. Secondly there was an under-recognition of the affection in which the collection (and indeed the house) was held. Nevertheless, and with acknowledgement for the dilemma in which the council found itself, the closure was to go ahead.

The fall-out was immediate and within a short time the whole gamut from media exposure to support groups was mobilised. An early example of the latter was the 'Save Our Glass Heritage' campaign formed on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009 by a group of concerned locals following international outcry at the closure proposals. Though enthusiastic and active the group's scope was limited; something more cohesive and focused was required. The central issue was the status of the *collection* - note the word. The individual items could be placed in storage anywhere for safe keeping but quite apart from the fact they might not be accessible to the public there is the status of the collection itself. Should it be broken down as individual items stored in separate locations then it would lose its provenance as a collated representation of some of the finest glassware ever made. It simply had to have a new home.

Thus it was that a few weeks later I attended a packed meeting at Stream Road Methodist Church Hall in Kingswinford where local businessman, philanthropist and glass enthusiast Graham Knowles (much of the cameo on display at Broadfield House emanates from his family) headed a table together with Secretary Lynn Boleyn, who was later to be invested with an MBE for her work in another field.

The situation was laid bare and appeals were made for contributions. I waited until after the meeting to formulate proposals for a media campaign and a targeted distribution list for disseminating information. A few days after submitting this I was invited to the offices of Hulbert Property Group in Netherton where the fledgling British Glass Foundation (BGF), chaired by Graham Knowles, cordially invited me to become a Trustee with responsibility for PR and communications. Gosh.

The BGF was initiated on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010 and was formally launched in the splendid surroundings of Hagley Hall, near Stourbridge on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2010 with many celebrities from the world of glass attending. This was done with backing from numerous organisations including Friends of Broadfield House Glass Museum, The Glass Association and The Glass Circle (later to both merge as The Glass Society), Scottish Glass Society, Contemporary Glass Society, Glass Collaborations, British Glass Federation and the British Society of Scientific Glassblowers, to name but some. *(E&OE, apologies - Ed)*

The early weeks of the BGF saw a state of flux as participants came or departed but eventually the line-up settled to an eclectic group with hitherto nothing in common save the English language and a passion for glass, Stourbridge glass in particular.

The aforementioned Graham Knowles was a natural choice as Chair; in addition to me he was supported by recruitment consultant Meriel Harris and former CEO and chair of the legendary Stevens & Williams (later Royal Brierley), David Williams-Thomas. A non-Trustee but nevertheless crucial part of the team was Secretary Lynn Boleyn MBE who was later to expand her role as business manager. David Williams-Thomas became our Patron and shortly afterwards glassmaker Allister Malcolm, formerly resident at the by-now defunct Broadfield House, became both a Trustee and resident glassblower at the new museum. Over the ensuing years we recruited a further tranche of appointees to expand the breath of experience across the board.

So, at October 2021, the 'driving force' of Trustees behind the BGF comprised;

David Williams-Thomas (former Trustee and then Patron)  
Graham Knowles (Chairman)  
Allister Malcolm (Glassmaker)  
Graham Fisher (PR&Comms)  
Meriel Harris (Treasurer)  
Greg Cook (Museums specialist)  
Gavin Whitehouse (Accountant)  
Prof. James Measell (USA-based historian and scholar)  
Will Farmer (Auctioneer and TV Presenter)  
Dr. Audrey Whitty (Museums specialist based in Ireland)  
Lynn Boleyn (Secretary & Business Operations)  
Anna Muggeridge (see below)

together with independent advisers and Ambassadors:

John Hughes (ex-Black Country Living Museum)  
Viv Astling (ex-Chief Executive Dudley MBC)  
Charles Hajdamach (glass expert, author and former Trustee)

... all supported by a wonderful team of volunteers, some of whom continued from the Broadfield House days but with numerous fresh faces too.

Finance-man Phil Cook touched down with us briefly before retiring due to ill health. Glass expert John Smith was a Trustee until ill health also took its toll. In 2020 the group was consolidated with the appointment of Ollie Buckley as Museum Director together with a team of professional specialists based at the new museum. Anna Muggeridge was initially appointed Learning & Public Programmes Officer but on attaining her Doctorate in History shortly afterwards was invited to consider becoming a Trustee.

*(Again E&OE and apologies to anyone I may have omitted to name; your contribution is nonetheless appreciated within the Grand Scheme - Ed).*

Those early days were challenging, the biggest issue being BGF's credibility. From the outset BGF was determined to be seen as apolitical (hence no comment on the politics behind the closure of Broadfield House) independent and entirely philanthropic. It's problem as a new group was a lack of track record or provenance. Hardly surprising, but what to do?

I would contend that our greatest single achievement of the time was a concerted campaign to generate credibility and within a few months we were sitting at the top table with the decision-makers. Having established our *bona fides* we went on to attract the affections of other groups and individuals such that we became - entirely unintentionally but we embraced it with open arms - an umbrella organisation representing their collective interests. We also recognised the universal potential for promoting the history of glass, highlighting its contemporary practitioners and supporting the vision of glassmaking into a sustainable future. This, by any yardstick, was a world advanced from our initial objectives but we accepted the role enthusiastically.

Another priority was public support; we knew we would get nowhere without it. Key to achieving this was building our relationships across the media and in our promise to keep everyone informed of developments at the earliest. Thus, *inter alia* and in addition to regular press releases, was born our email bulletin *GlassCuts*. An initial foray with an accompanying newsletter was quickly discontinued as superfluous and *GlassCuts* was destined to become '*The Journal of the British Glass Foundation; the Voice of Stourbridge Glass Museum*' in an email periodical that now attracts contributions and readership from around the globe.

So, having established our credentials, where now? The need for a new museum, especially designated and ideally situated within the Glass Quarter, was paramount. The site of Stuart Crystal in Wordsley, derelict since 2001 when it closed with the loss of 220 jobs, seemed ideal so we negotiated with the owners Complex Development Projects Ltd, who were enthused by the idea. This was the perfect plot and was our Plan A. Truth is, we discussed several back-up ideas, one of which included the wholly impractical notion of attempting something with Broadfield House (hardly likely but we were determined) yet we promoted Plan A alone so as not to create the impression that we were ever seriously considering anything else. The Stuart site it was.

It was an especially significant attainment in securing an iconic building that until quite recently housed a major player right in the heart of the Stourbridge Glass industry. Stuart was the last 'serious heavyweight' in the quarter to go and was distinguished by many attainments, not least in supplying glasses and decanters for the White Star Line, owners of the ill-fated *RMS Titanic*. The company was totemic and held in high regard by both employees and locals alike, providing not only a source of work but a focus of pride, and its loss was keenly felt. The resurgence of the site as a world-class museum accentuating this heritage could only add to the *kudos*. The intention from the outset was therefore a long-game meld of historical attainment coupled with a promotion of the contemporary local glass scene combining in a sum greater than their individual parts as a beacon of excellence in inspiring glassmaking and its practitioners for the future. It merits an entire tale in itself and our future historians will find much to evaluate beyond this simply being a practical location for a museum. Spiritually, emotionally, almost sacredly; it just had to be here.

Thus began the painstaking process of securing funding and, in encapsulating endless months of effort within a few words, it is a long, long process. The ERDF granted the finance to convert the building, quickly followed by NHLF funding to complete the fit-out. Great stuff, but even so we had to endure many more months of hoop-jumping to clear all of the monies. Yet still the donations came in; from big-time philanthropists to dedicated individuals sending us a few bob, we attracted them all. And every single one, irrespective of the amount, is equally appreciated for the support it represents.

Fundraising never stops; there is always the need for an ongoing revenue stream. Which begs the question as to why people should be moved to support us. We believe we found the answer, which lay in our single-minded determination to create a 'People's Museum' where elitism would hold no sway; a facility where the good people of Stourbridge and beyond could equally share in their heritage and help forge its continuance in a celebration of both what was and what is yet to come. Having a defined aspiration, rather than a nebulous intent, tends to focus the mind and our supporters rallied to the cause magnificently. It should be recorded here that the venture always has been entirely philanthropic; no Trustee receives a penny-piece for the efforts and all monies raised go to 'the cause'.

The BGF, a registered Charity, is now widely recognised for its integrity and breadth of intellect, being the only party that could accept custody of the collections, and working closely with Dudley Council and Complex Development Projects Limited. Both the site and the glass collection are entrusted to BGF on a 125-year lease arrangement.

The BGF also works very closely with the other major tourist attractions in the area, e.g. Dudley Zoo and Castle, Black Country Living Museum, Wrens Nest Nature Reserve, Canal Trust & River Trust, the Glass Quarter, Ruskin Glass Centre, Red House Cone and also the major hotel chains. It is keen to link together and to highlight all the attractions and so attract visitors to the area to help boost tourism in Dudley and the local economic situation.

The charity has very close connections and relationships with The Corning Museum in New York, The British Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Following the designation of UNESCO Dudley Geopark status in July 2020, the new museum will also be included within the area of status upon its opening.

In January 2011 an outline ERDF application was put together by Complex Development Projects Limited (CDP) for Dudley Council in conjunction with the BGF for funding for a new museum on the derelict White House Cone site in Wordsley opposite the Red House Cone site.



*The derelict White House Cone site in Wordsley*

On 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011 the Museum of Glass booklet was produced detailing the plans for the new museum on the White House Cone Site. On 14<sup>th</sup> September 2011 a Memorandum of Understanding between the BGF and Dudley Council was signed cementing the relationship between the charity and the Council.

In February 2012 it was suggested by Dudley Council to include the Red House Cone site in the ERDF funding application and the intention was to join the two sites together via an underground tunnel. However this did not go ahead as it was felt that there would not be the ability to pitch for ERDF and NHLF before 2015. Discussions were then held for a “scaled back” version to include workshops/office accommodation to provide rental income towards the running of the new museum.

The outline ERDF application for £2,147,844 was submitted on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013 which was successful and a full application was invited.

Funding from *Growing Places* was applied for and approved in March 2014. This was for a grant of £645,699 to cover the purchase price of the offices (allowing the Council to acquire these from CDP and then gift them to the BGF) and also a *Growing Places* Loan of £400,000. This was originally intended to be a grant to cover any shortfall on the sale of Broadfield House Glass Museum but is confirmed only as a loan leaving Dudley Council/BGF to make up the shortfall if any. The loan will be used to part pay CDP during the construction of the building.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2013 a meeting was held with Dudley Council to discuss the BGF becoming a Museum Trust to take over the glass collections and legal agreements are being drawn up.

In May 2014 the BGF was successful with its *My Community Rights* Pre-Feasibility grant application for £10,000 towards its legal and accountancy costs to set up the Museum Trust.

On 10<sup>th</sup> July 2014 formal approval received for ERDF funding and in September 2014 we were successful with a Heritage Lottery Start Up grant application of £10,000 to cover research, consultation and to update the BGF's web site. A robust Business Plan was also drawn up.

On 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014 planning approval was given by Dudley Council for the building of the new museum on the White House Cone site. The Planning Committee Chairman said: *'This application ticks all the boxes. It is a welcome development that will bring together residential, a visitor attraction and a boost to the economy'*.

A meeting was held with Margot James MP for Stourbridge on 24<sup>th</sup> October to update her on progress. She agreed to provide a letter to Heritage Lottery supporting our application for funding stressing the importance of this project for the local community and for our heritage.

On 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015 demolition work started on White House Cone site in preparation for building work to start when ERDF was formally signed off.

Steady as she goes - all making good progress. Then, in 2019, came the Covid-19 pandemic. Everything on hold but much still going on behind the scenes to keep us on track.

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021 came our 'Big Announcement' via a special supplement to *GlassCuts 183* and the media. This was probably one of the most significant markers in BGF's history in which we announced:

- A complete rebranding of the museum 'to create a robust profile for the museum that will translate positively into developing its public perception for the longer term'. The facility formerly referred to as White House Cone museum of glass will henceforth be known and marketed as **Stourbridge Glass Museum**.

Its mission statement is: *'Stourbridge Glass Museum: at the heart of the community with a globally significant collection to educate and inspire'*

- The launch of a vibrant new website [www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk](http://www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk)  
The content was comprehensively populated before launch and it will be added to and updated regularly. It is open in nature and access is free of charge.

Initially the site includes

- a brief history of the Stourbridge Glass collection
- other history, including a 'from then to now of the BGF and the Stuart Crystal site'
- latest news from the world of glass
- exhibitions and galleries
- dates of forthcoming shows, presentations and events and how to become involved
- special notices
- educational and learning resources
- latest news from our hot-glass studio, including demonstrations and 'hands on' sessions
- admission details
- volunteers, and how to become one
- directions to our home
- repository for our publications
- ... plus much, much more. The sky really is the limit with this one.

- And, crucially, a confirmed date for the Grand Opening on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

2022 is serendipitous in creating a perfect storm in the world of glass, being the same year as the International Festival of Glass (based in Stourbridge and including the new museum as part of it), the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one of our key supporters the Contemporary Glass Society [www.cgs.org.uk](http://www.cgs.org.uk), and becoming an incorporated member of the recently-formed UNESCO Geopark area (our membership only being denied because we were not yet open when the status was granted). Globally the year 2022 has been designated the International Year of Glass <https://www.iyog2022.org> which BGF supports.

With apologies to any other 'glassy' celebrations for 2022 that I may have omitted or which we do not yet know about, the point is that 2022 may prove to be especially memorable, with the opening of a world-class museum housing one of the most revered collections of Stourbridge Glass in existence right at the heart of it.

Our media drive was extensive in scope but we never lost sight of relationships with our all-important local support base. *Village Voice*, founded by the late Chris Smith and now produced by his wife Gail, is a delightful little monthly magazine that focuses locally to the extent that it is produced in three different content-formats to accommodate differing areas of the southern Black Country. It doesn't get much more 'local' than that.

The consecutive September, October and November 2021 editions of *Village Voice* ran a triptych of features covering various aspects of progress on-site and behind the scenes. Then, for the December edition, Editor Gail kindly asked us to offer an end-of-year synopsis with - daringly - predictions for 2022. Here, *verbatim*, is what we submitted ...

The festive season is upon us but here at the British Glass Foundation (BGF) we have added reason for celebration since it denotes less than four months to go until the official opening of our prestigious Stourbridge Glass Museum (SGM), the 'People's Museum' [www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk](http://www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk)

As described in recent editions of *Village Voice* this is the culmination of over a decade of efforts to secure a new home for the world-renowned Stourbridge Glass collection. And so, as this year draws to its climax we are delighted to offer a review of precisely where we are right now, and what is happening in the little time left before we throw open the doors on this quite remarkable project.

We are immensely proud of what we have achieved but we never lose sight that we could not have done it without you. Key to this is our wonderful team of volunteers and our rapidly expanding outreach and educational programmes fronted by Louise and Donna. Visits to local libraries and community facilities have been successful in attracting further volunteers and spreading the news about our work. Expect to see more of these. We are currently identifying which locations should be on our series of monthly walking tours and we routinely liaise with local societies and history groups to ascertain their feedback and suggestions. We also intend to utilise our wonderful glass heritage to promote well-being, nature, archaeology and many other cultural aspects.

When the museum opens there will be monthly craft events for children and adults, and regular workshops with our resident glass artist, Allister Malcolm. Plus, of course, a packed programme of events, exhibitions, displays and pop-ups. We hope you will support us, and perhaps even join us.

There is also much occurring behind the scenes and when you walk through those doors to see our permanent exhibitions give thought to our Steven who is, as we speak, working tirelessly in readiness for the Big Day. His role, aided by Leicester University student Sungsook Seo alongside volunteers Stan and David is to locate, mark, label, clean, check and pack hundreds of precious items. No mean feat in itself, he has also finalised a programme of temporary exhibitions whilst simultaneously pursuing our 'Working Towards Accreditation' renewal which is crucial to our funding and sustainability.

All of our operations are ultimately co-ordinated by Museum Director Ollie who has already established his credentials as a driving force within the organisation.

Our sponsors continue to express their faith by way of grants and donations. Typical of these is the latest from the Glass Society who have graciously donated £3,000 towards our forthcoming talks programme. We have also secured £65,522 from FCC Communities Foundation for the external landscaping together with £4,846 from Dudley Council's Community Forums towards professional fees for this project. A full list of sponsors and donors is at [www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk](http://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk)

Yet this is just a taster. Take a look at the BGF and SGM websites where you can learn more and see why we are all so excited. And keep bang up to date by subscribing to our free email bulletin *GlassCuts*. Then make sure you have a note in your diary for 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Because that's when dreams really do come true.

In the meantime we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a 'glassy' New Year.

*The Blackcountryman* ('*The Black Country's Premier Heritage Magazine*'), the quarterly publication of the eponymous society, also carried an illustrated three-page spread in its Winter 2021 edition (Vol 55 No. 1) detailing the (then) current status at Stourbridge Glass Museum, together with a fulsome review of my latest book *In My Opinion*, copies of which were donated to BGF on its launch in September 2021. [www.blackcountrymagsociety.com](http://www.blackcountrymagsociety.com)

In December 2021, *Art Quarterly* <https://www.artfund.org/about-us/art-quarterly> the official magazine of the Art Fund <https://www.artfund.org> requested an article for publication in their March 2022 edition outlining the history of Stourbridge Glass and the creation of Stourbridge Glass Museum. This included details of the Stourbridge Glass collection, the 2012 Portland Vase Project and the Eila Grahame collection, a bequest of 136 glass objects acquired for Dudley Museums Service with Art Fund support that will feature in the displays.



The final edition of *GlassCuts* for 2021 (issue 191 dated 15.12.21) carried more good news as its lead item, reproduced here *verbatim*:

## **HOT +++ HOT +++ HOT +++ HOT +++ HOT +++ HOT MEDIA OUTLETS PLEASE NOTE**

### **JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT IT COULDN'T GET ANY BETTER !!!**

A mere seconds, yes seconds, before we hit the 'Go' button on this last issue of 2021 we received confirmation from the **Heritage Fund** [www.heritagefund.org.uk](http://www.heritagefund.org.uk) that our recent application for additional funding had been approved and we will shortly be in receipt of a further **£76,900.00** in addition to our original grant of £980,00.00 of 2018. This now brings the total HF grant to **£1,056,900.00**.

The additional funding will cover a range of requirements including essential repairs and conservation, temporary exhibitions and a year of PR & Marketing. If you really would like to know chapter-and-verse then we will be happy to give details, but for now we would simply like to revel in the sheer exhilaration in receiving the extra funding that will go a long, long way to ensuring the job will finally be done.

Our unbridled thanks to the Heritage Fund and to our fundraising team fronted by Jacqui Watson who helped prepare the ground and provide the compelling case that we really are worth it. We have only just received the letter and are still digesting it but, as always, we wanted you, our loyal supporters to hear the news first.

plus this:

#### **In the news**

As reported in *GCs passim* 2022 has been designated International Year of Glass. We are delighted to note that the IYOG Newsletter for Great Britain and Ireland (Edition 4) dated 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021 cites the opening of Stourbridge Glass Museum. This is a most welcome recognition of our efforts on a grand - international - scale - of which we are understandably pleased. Our thanks and support to the organisers of IYOG, the progress of which we will be covering in future editions of *GC*.

and also ...

We have been advised by Freelance Picture Editor Venetia Clarke that: '*Stourbridge Glass Museum's opening is included in a feature about celebrating glass as the United Nations has declared 2022 the Year of Glass. This will appear in **Waitrose Weekend, Issue 584** free in stores from 13<sup>th</sup> January*'. Many thanks, Venetia, and much appreciated.

Despite the constraints imposed upon us all by a worldwide Covid pandemic we reckon this was quite an upbeat way to conclude 2021.

Our 'public' opening date is 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022, with a 'preview' on the 7<sup>th</sup> and an 'official' opening in September. The 2022 Commonwealth Games centred around Birmingham and the Black Country will add a wider dimension to what the area can offer. Ultimately, we propose to become part of a coordinated 'trail' around the amazing heritage and cultural aspects of the Black Country and surrounding area.

There is very much a synergy at play here; Black Country Radio [www.blackcountryradio.co.uk](http://www.blackcountryradio.co.uk) is hosting a series of podcasts examining the Commonwealth Games from the perspective of the canals that criss-cross our region and in view of our museum's canalside location BGF continues to cultivate links with the Canal & River Trust [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

Similarly we work alongside the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) <https://www.rgs.org> in promoting *The Crystal Canal* that runs through the Glass Quarter (see *Royal Geographical Society - Discovering Britain in Notable Events and facts to date*, sub.)

In the meantime, and with acknowledgements to my colleague Lynn Boleyn MBE, below is a synopsis of notable events from 2009 - 2022. A consolidating narrative is our email bulletin *GlassCuts*. This has been the repository for all of our achievements since day one and will doubtless prove a valuable contemporary resource. Every issue is lodged on the website [www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk](http://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk)

For more information on **Stourbridge Glass Museum** or to follow the work of the British Glass Foundation our contact details are:

**Museum Director Ollie Buckley**

Direct Line: 01384 900447

Email: [info@stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk)

**BGF Secretary Lynn Boleyn MBE**

Direct Line: 01384 900447

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

**Both by snail-mail at:**

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

The British Glass Foundation website may be subject to review and possible consolidation within Stourbridge Glass museum at a later stage in our development. Any such decision will, of course, be widely trailed.

From 2009 to 2022 we promised consistently that we would get the job done. It is now time for others to judge the result. Thank you for your continuing support.

## NOTABLE EVENTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

*As revised by author; with acknowledgements to Lynn Boleyn MBE for her compilation of the original.*

### The Museum

The charity is committed to making it special for everyone but especially for disabled people to include sensory displays with sight, sound, smell, touch, feel, movement, etc, making it a beacon of excellence for everyone regardless of age or ability. Entrance fee details are on the website.

The vision for the Museum of Glass is the creation of a visitor attraction for tourists and local people retaining and discovering their rich heritage. This is intended to be a place that inspires imagination in the young and innovation in the glass industry with glass making taking place on site.

Visitors will arrive at an open courtyard that provides the setting for the remains of the White House Cone, now a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

### BGF Publications

#### *GlassCuts*

Eclectic, apolitical, independent and non-partisan, *GlassCuts* was always intended to focus on the glass world in general but Stourbridge in particular, and especially on the efforts of BGF to find a new home for the Stourbridge collection. Contributions on just about anything to do with glass and those who make, decorate, sell, repair or in any other legitimate manner are involved in it, are welcome.

It is primarily intended as a promotional vehicle in BGF's efforts to help secure a permanent and fitting home for one of the finest examples of Stourbridge heritage in the world. However, as our Chairman Graham Knowles also points out: "*it will offer future generations a glimpse of what was going on in the world of glass in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and thus ultimately will become an important archival document*".

It wasn't always thus, and original plans were for a formal quarterly *Newsletter*, with the informal *GlassCuts* providing a brief intermediate update of snippets - especially news items and matters pertaining to the Museum proposals - that were too late for one *Newsletter* but which couldn't wait for the next. It was thought that a bulletin of a couple of pages or so issued three or four times per annum in between *Newsletters* would be just the ticket. However, *GlassCuts* is typically between six and ten pages issued every two weeks. Its frequency has effectively negated the requirement for a regular *Newsletter*, the last edition of which was number 5 of March 2013. This deluge of information, which now emanates from countries across the globe and seems to grow almost exponentially, includes various glass related events across the country.

March 2013 saw the introduction of BGF and Virgin Money Giving QR codes (*Virgin Money Giving no longer exists - Ed*); scanning the code with a suitably enabled smart phone accesses those sites direct.



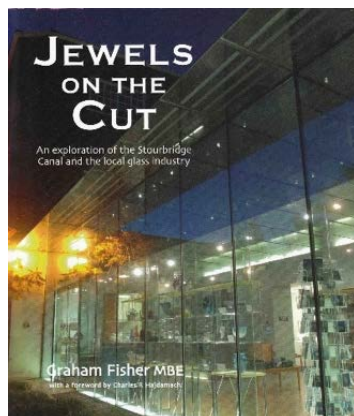
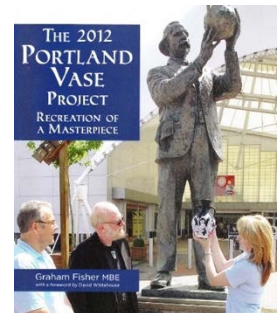
In addition to *GlassCuts* and the *Newsletter*, BGF's promotional output also includes the website [www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk](http://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk) and its blogspot, news releases to media and other material including books, brochures, flyers and leaflets, presentations, personal appearances and lectures.

## Other Publications



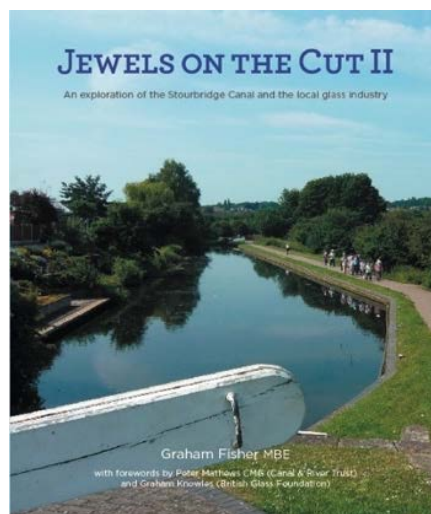
BGF Trustee, Graham Fisher MBE FRGS, has written many books on Stourbridge Glass and produced *'The Crystal Mile - Along The Stourbridge Canal'* an enchanting DVD which explores the heart of glassmaking and other industries from the perspective of a walk along the Stourbridge Canal.

His books include *'The 2012 Portland Vase Project - Recreation of A Masterpiece'* with a foreword by the late David Whitehouse, Senior Scholar, Corning Museum of Glass, NY; *'In Our Time'* a celebration of Stourbridge Glass; *Whiskers on Kittens*, a celebratory romp through the Stourbridge Glass Industry; *Tales From the Barn* the musings of a Black Country ex-pat now domiciled on the Welsh border; *In My Opinion*, a series of essays and comment on contemporary local issues, and *GlassCuts*, the voice of the British Glass Foundation.

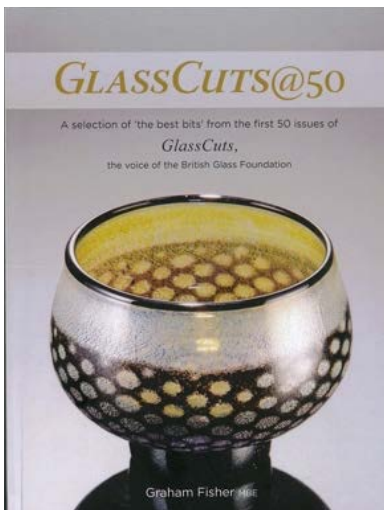


### Jewels On The Cut

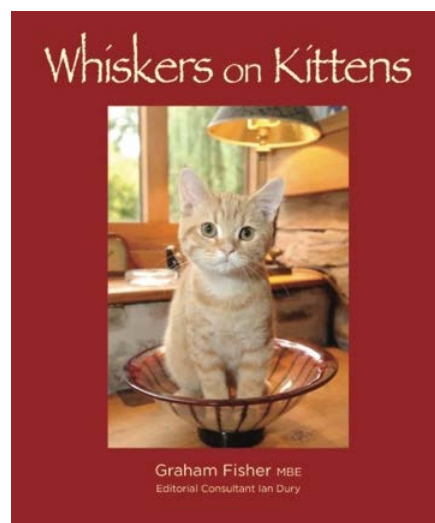
An exploration of the Stourbridge Canal and the local glass industry by Graham Fisher MBE (... followed by extensively updated v2 in 2017)



## GlassCuts@50

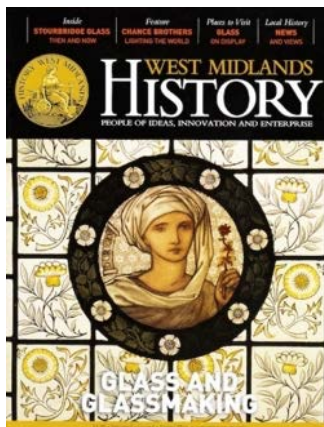


*GlassCuts@50* is a limited edition publication celebrating the first 50 issues of *GlassCuts* (compiled by author).



**Whiskers on Kittens**  
a celebratory romp through the  
Stourbridge Glass industry

## West Midlands History Magazine



An article by Graham Fisher MBE FRGS '*The Stourbridge Glass Industry: Then And Now*' was included in the Spring 2014 edition of the West Midlands History magazine whose Editor is Dr Malcolm Dick. The magazine also featured articles from Charles Hajdamach and James Measell.

## Other Publications

James Measell - *Thesis of John Northwood*. Launched at the Glass Association annual meeting in September 2015 and published in book form.

## Fund Raising And Community Awareness Events Held

### *Three Centuries of Glass Auction Sale, 9<sup>th</sup> April 2011*

29 Glass Artists and 7 private individuals generously donated pieces to be sold in aid of funds to the BGF. Within the overall remit of the BGF to protect and save the glass collections at Broadfield House Glass Museum one of its aims is to support and promote contemporary glass artists. It was pleasantly ironic therefore that it should be a group of glass artists who were among the very first to donate unique examples of their work to help raise much needed funds to allow the BGF to carry out its work. The Trustees are very grateful to Will Farmer and all the staff at Fieldings Auctioneers for including these items in what has become the best and most comprehensive annual glass auction in the country where £7,100 was raised for the BGF. Bidders who were successful in acquiring one of the donated pieces will no doubt feel a proud sense of involvement and support for a cause which has touched the hearts of glass collectors and artists around the world. Will Farmer and Eric Knowles, both of Antiques Roadshow fame, who both attended the official launch of the charity, have been extremely supportive to the BGF where Eric often refers to himself as a Patron of the charity.



*Cameo Vase by Jonathan Harris, sold for £820*



*Stevens & Williams Vase, sold for £1,000*

### **Charles Hajdamach's Visit To Corning Museum in New York – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2011**

Renowned glass expert and at the time a BGF Trustee, Charles R Hajdamach paid a visit to the world famous Corning Glass Museum where he delivered a presentation that was streamed live on the web, one of only four of the lectures from the entire three day seminar to be done like this. Whilst in New York, Charles presented a copy of the BGF book 'Museum of Glass' to Karol Wight, the new Executive Director of The Corning Museum of Glass (on the right) and Jane Shadel Spillman, Curator of American Glass, on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2011 at the 50th anniversary seminar at The Corning Museum of Glass.



*Jane Shadel Spillman, Charles Hajdamach and Karol Wight*

### **Hagley Hall Gala Day – 22 August 2012 'From Rome To Stourbridge - 2000 Years of Cameo Glass'**

Attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of Dudley and David Whitehouse (who sadly died in 2012) from the Corning Museum in New York, this event, held at Hagley Hall in Stourbridge, generously supported by the Glass Association and Friends of Broadfield House Glass Museum, was a huge success and a commemoration of cameo glass in which the Stourbridge glass industry has historically excelled.

The event featured talks by renowned speakers, Dr Paul Roberts, Curator of Roman Art and Archaeology Department at The British Museum, who spoke on Ancient Roman Cameo Glass, and Charles Hajdamach, author and former Trustee of the BGF who spoke on The Glories of Stourbridge Cameo Glass.

To commemorate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of glassmaking in Stourbridge the 2012 Portland Vase was unveiled by its creators, Richard Golding, Ian Dury and Terri Colledge. The original Portland Vase at The British Museum dates back to AD5 to 25. The team also re-created the historic Auldjo Jug – another important piece of Roman Cameo glass, also held at the British Museum and also the amphora Portland Vase.



*The Mayor and Mayoress of Dudley Cllr Melvyn Mottram and Michelle Mottram with (l-r) Ian Dury, Richard Golding, Graham Fisher MBE, Dr Paul Roberts, David Whitehouse and Terri Colledge (centre)*

**International Festival of Glass – 26<sup>th</sup> August 2012  
World's Longest Glassblowing Challenge**

The 5<sup>th</sup> International Festival of Glass celebrated 400 years of glassmaking in Stourbridge with glassmakers from around the world sharing their skills. As part of the festival Allister Malcolm, resident glass artist at Broadfield House Glass Museum, went head to head with Elliot Walker, glass artist at Red House Glass Cone in a grueling endurance test to put on the world's longest glassblowing demonstration raising funds for the BGF.

The Mayor of Dudley started off the challenge with a spot of glass blowing himself. The community spirit and support was sensational. Around £3,000 was raised from this event with additional funds raised at the annual Decades of Design sale at Fieldings where these unique items were auctioned on 27<sup>th</sup> October raising a further £9,830.



*Mayor of Dudley Cllr Melvyn Mottram with Elliot Walker*



## The 2012 Portland Vase Project



As previously alluded to, the 2012 Portland Vase was unveiled at Hagley Hall on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012.

The original Portland Vase is Roman, lies in the British Museum and is probably one of the most enigmatic pieces of cameo glass the world has ever seen. The vase was spectacularly recreated not once, but twice, in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, by Stourbridge craftsmen. There is a connection here for inland waterways fans; they were made within yards of each other, on opposite sides of the road that goes over the Stourbridge Canal Main Line at Wordsley. Both the Richardson-Locke attempt (which was uncompleted; the figures weren't finished) and the Northwood-Pargeter effort housed in the Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY. There were a couple of further recreations in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, notably the amphora interpretation of 1990 by Steve Bradley who completed the entire process himself, from blowing the blank to effecting the decoration and making a stand. There is also the 1987 undertaking by Josef Welzel, who reproduced an amphora with lid.

Ian Dury announced in 2011 his intention to recreate the Portland Vase with the intention of demonstrating that Stourbridge still has the skills within its ranks, and to lay to rest the myth that the Stourbridge Glass industry is dead. The rest is, as they say, history. Supported by numerous artisans and back-room enthusiasts, all sharing the same passion, the aspirations of 2011 became the realities of 2012 when, on that incredible day in September, glassblower Richard Golding blew the blanks upon which Terri-Louise Colledge was then let loose to weave her magic.

The team produced a total four flat-bottomed vases, one amphora and an Auldjo Jug, this last piece being a possible precursor to the original Portland Vase.



Of these, one flat-bottomed vase, the amphora, and the Auldjo Jug were engraved, together with a replica base disc. A 'spoilt' vase was to be carved with Greco-Roman sporting figures, in recognition of 2012 being London Olympics year.



The Auldjo Jug was first to be fully completed, quickly followed by the flat-bottomed Portland Vase. They were 'officially' displayed to the public at Hagley Hall on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012

The story of this momentous achievement is recorded in the official biography *The 2012 Portland Vase Project; 'Recreation of a Masterpiece'* by Graham Fisher MBE.

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013 almost exactly a year since the official launch of the Portland Vase and the Auldjo Jug, Terri Colledge informed us that she had finished the last vestiges of carving on the final piece in the jigsaw, the amphora Portland Vase.



*Terri-Louise Colledge and the amphora vase*

It is also worth recording for posterity that, assuming the original Portland Vase was engraved by a man (a wholly reasonable assumption), and knowing the provenance of all the others, this represents the first time in history that a Portland Vase of any description has been fashioned by female hands.

Ian Dury has very kindly offered all these pieces on permanent loan to the BGF to display in the new museum affording visitors the opportunity to see the entire completed collection under one roof.

### **Parkhead Canal Festival 2012**

The BGF supported the Parkhead Canal Festival in 2012. Canals and glass are, of course, inextricably linked and the BGF are delighted to support the work of Dudley Canal Trust. Graham Fisher is a waterways enthusiast and a former Harbourmaster for previous Parkhead Festivals. He is a qualified skipper and was engaged at the time, *inter alia*, by Dudley Canal Trust to conduct guided boat trips through the limestone caverns.

### **Centuries of Glass Auction**

A further auction sale was held at Fieldings on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2013 which raised £605 for the BGF. Some pieces were kept back for a future sale due to bad weather.

### **Birmingham Lives History Fair**

Graham Fisher had a stall at the above Fair on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2013 which featured history societies and genealogy groups together with sales of books, postcards and souvenirs. Graham also took along the 2012 Portland Vase.

### Mayor's Civic Awards 2013

Allister Malcolm, Trustee and resident glass artist at Broadfield House Glass Museum was invited again to make the prizes for the prestigious annual Civic Awards.



### A Black Country Experience; July 2013

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the British Cartographic Society included a boat trip through the Dudley limestone caverns, a visit to the Black Country Living Museum, a guided canal walk through the Stourbridge Glass Industry and a visit to Red House Cone which included a presentation by Graham Fisher on the 2012 Portland Vase.

### Royal Geographical Society - Discovering Britain



'*The Crystal Canal - A Self-Guided Walk Along The Stourbridge Canal*' is the latest in the Society's *Discovering Britain* series (as at September 2013) and examines the myriad glass works and other industries from the perspective of the canal that runs right through it.

Based on Graham Fisher's *Jewels On The Cut* the guide is available as a free audio or PDF download. The PDF can be printed off as a hard copy and Graham has also provided a MP3 voice track so that it can be used as an audio guide. Featured locations include The Bonded Warehouse, Ruskin Glass Centre and Red House Glass Cone. There is also reference to the work of the British Glass Foundation seeking to create a new canalside world-class museum to house the renowned Stourbridge Glass collection.

The walk can be downloaded from:

<http://www.discoveringbritain.org/walks/region/west-midlands/stourbridge-canal.html#tabbox>

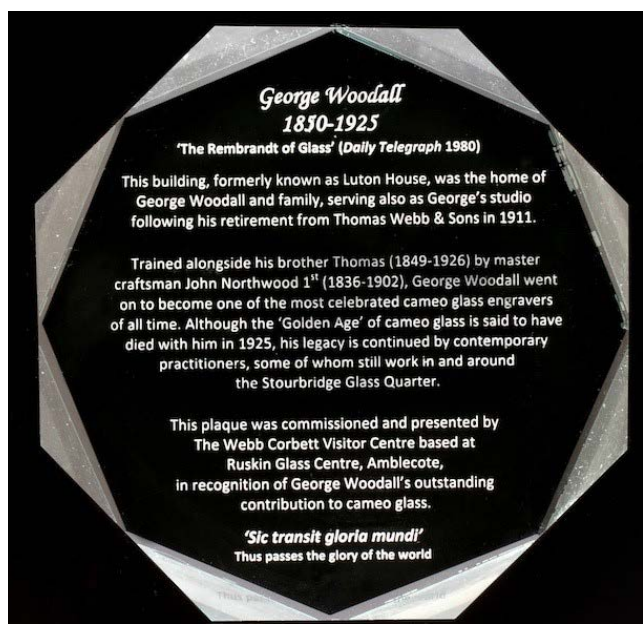
### An Audience with Graham Fisher MBE – More Miles than Venice

Graham delivered a presentation on the Black Country waterways with an emphasis on glassmaking and the Portland Vase at The Rhydspence Inn in Herefordshire on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013. (*repeated regularly at different venues since*)

### Archives Awareness Week

Graham Fisher manned a stand all day at the brand new Dudley Archives Centre on 16<sup>th</sup> November. Although not fully operational it was opened to the public as part of the Archives Awareness Week. Graham presented the story of the 2012 Portland Vase which was on display on his stand.

## The George Woodall Plaque



12<sup>th</sup> December 2013 saw the unveiling of a rather distinctive plaque at the Thai Dusit restaurant (now called Salathip Thai) in Market Street, Kingswinford. This was the former home of George Woodall (arguably the greatest cameo engraver of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century) and the occasion was the culmination of many months' work - mostly by Ian Dury of Stourbridge Glass Engravers but supported by the BGF - to install a commemorative plaque. This was duly done, and, with Ian Dury officially unveiling it, the near-iconic building had its historical status fittingly recognised.

Assembled guests included the restaurant owner Mr Guy Chanukal, Cllr Patrick Harley (Group Leader, Conservative Group DMBC); Cllr Natalie Neale (Kingswinford North and Wall Heath); Ian Dury (Stourbridge Glass Engravers and Project Coordinator); John Workman (Black Country Bugle) Chris Smith (Village Voice) and Mike Perkins (Amblecote History Society).

It is the intention of the BGF to install further similar plaques in the future.

## Winter Festival Weekend; 20<sup>th</sup> November - 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013

As part of the Festival held at Broadfield House Glass Museum Allister Malcolm organised a competition for youngsters and visitors to blow the biggest bubble featuring one of his special works as a prize. Funds raised from this totalling £44.70 were split equally between the Friends of Broadfield House and the BGF.

## Dudley Archives Centre



## Red By Night



The Black Country Living Museum's *Red By Night* event on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2014 was attended by glass artist and BGF Trustee Allister Malcolm who gave glass making demonstrations as well as handing out BGF leaflets and promoting the cause.

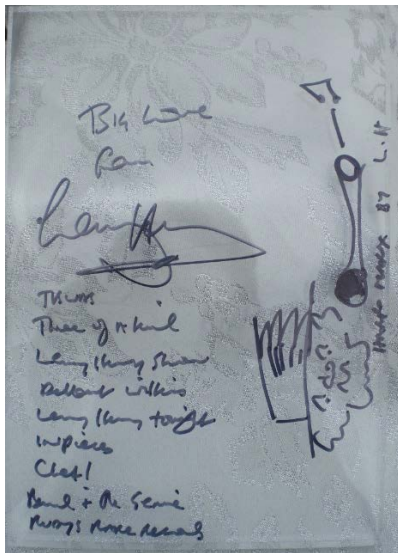
## A Black Country Evening with Graham Fisher MBE

Graham Fisher was guest speaker at the Pedmore Sporting Club's Charity Dinner on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2014 at Stourbridge Golf Club where he spoke to local businessmen about Stourbridge glass, the proposed new museum and the 2012 Portland Vase Project. Pedmore Sporting Club is a local charity set up in 1970 and to date has given away over £1,260,000 to local worthy causes. Graham has addressed many similar events since and, along with Allister Malcolm, is seen at 'the public face' of BGF.

## Celebrity Doodles 2015

Following on from the World's Longest Glass Blowing Challenge Allister Malcolm's Celebrity Doodle project raised £10,800 at the Fieldings Auction in October 2015.

Doodles were obtained from celebrities which were then used as a source of inspiration for artists to create a piece of glass. The finished art works were auctioned off at Fieldings Auctioneers. Doodles were received from many celebrities including Steve Bull (ex Wolves and England footballer); Sir Trevor Brooking (ex West Ham and England footballer); Lenny Henry (comedian and actor); Frankie Valli (Four Seasons); Tony Hadley (Spandau Ballet); Emma Thompson (actress) and Raymond Blanc (Chef).



### About the site owners and the official launch

After more than five years of working alongside Dudley MBC, site owners Complex Development Projects Ltd and other interested parties, monies were secured via the European Regional Development Fund and (then) Heritage Lottery Fund (now National Lottery Heritage Fund) together with a degree of matched funding from BGF's own resources. Groundworks commenced in 2015 and in June 2016 the completion of the new *White House Cone - museum of glass* was marked by its first official event *The Heat is On!*

Organized by master glassmaker and BGF Trustee Allister Malcolm in association with Bruntnell-Astley, this inaugural showpiece marked the firing of the glassmaking furnace, the first such furnace here since the final days of Stuart Crystal, and celebrated the splendid new building as a focus for decades to come in helping promote the area's rich glass heritage and its practitioners whilst also acting as a beacon of excellence for the glass artisans of the future who are yet to emerge. *White House Cone - museum of glass* will be officially opened and fully operational when the Stourbridge Glass collection is transferred to here sometime mid-2017.

BGF continues to work closely with Dudley MBC in promoting the collection and on the wider stage of the glass world seeks to independently represent all other charities, glass organizations, glass artists and any others who have an interest in preserving, promoting and developing the glass heritage of Stourbridge and beyond.

## Other Events

**Editor's note:** 'The best laid plans ... etc.' The information reproduced below was as envisaged at the time. Although the Ruskin dig did take place there was no subsequent 'awareness campaign' and there was no dig or lighting at the White House Cone site. The Ruskin information is included here for context only.

The BGF in conjunction with Bryant Priest Newman, architects, are looking to arrange an awareness campaign in the local community to include open days, questionnaires and events. It is the intention to get local primary and secondary schools involved and perhaps look at a stained glass window project showing the story of the White House Cone and the different types of glass that was made in the Glass Quarter.

Following on from the awareness campaign it is intended to arrange an excavation at the White House Cone site, similar to the one that was undertaken at Ruskin Glass Centre in May 2014 (see below). This would then be followed by the possible lighting of the ancient cone where it once stood after the site of the dig has been covered up. Press coverage for this would be huge and we could possibly apply to the Arts Council for funding for this as well as Heritage Lottery and possibly also include a sculpture done by a local artist for the site.



Senior heritage consultant Kate Page-Smith with layers going back to the 1830s



Volunteer Adrian Horton is pictured with a couple of glass bottles found at the site

It is hoped in the future to arrange a display at the British Museum in London with perhaps showing all three Portland Vases –the original one owned by the British Museum, the one from Corning and the 2012 Portland Vase, showcasing the importance of cameo glass.

Dr Paul Roberts contacted the BGF in June 2014 to offer to put on a small exhibition for the charity and discussions are now taking place with Laura Philips at the British Museum.

The BGF sought other donations of contemporary, vintage and antique glass items for a major Fieldings glass auction in March 2016 which with the previously unsold pieces produced not only further income for the BGF but promotional exposure. The charity would like to set up a free valuation service run by volunteers but where donations could be given to the charity for this service if visitors wished to.

## Donations Received

On 15 October 2011 a cheque for £1,000 was presented by Barbara Beadman, Chair of The Friends of Broadfield House Glass Museum, to the BGF. The amount had been agreed by the Friends at their AGM as a gesture of support for the work of the BGF.

Donations received to date total £31,285.54 including Gift Aid. (This figure has since increased substantially. Details of our major donors are listed in *GlassCuts* and on our website - Ed)

The day to day running costs of the charity is mainly met from other sources meaning that almost £26,000 remains intact in our Bank account to be used for the new museum.

## British Soft Drinks Association Gifts Historic Collection to BGF

The British Soft Drinks Association, which is the national body representing the collective interests of UK soft drinks manufacturers gifted to the British Glass Foundation their collection of historic glass soda siphons and bottles.

The collection comprises about 20 soda siphons and 50 glass and ceramic bottles. Jill Ardagh, Director General of the British Soft Drinks Association in London, said "We are just about to move premises and sadly will no longer have room for our collection of historic glass soda siphons and bottles. I am very pleased that we have found a good home for the collection and it is heartening to know that the collection can find a new lease of life in both safe and appreciative hands".



Following publicity regarding the collection the BGF was able to find a new, permanent home for the collection where the majority of it will be on display at the British Glass Manufacturers Confederation in their brand new foyer in Churchill Way, Sheffield. The surplus bottles were donated to the British Bottle Museum which is in the middle of a heritage centre at Elsecar.

## The Kny Collection

The BGF has been offered six pieces from the near priceless Kny Collection. The collection was initially loaned to the BGF for the Dudley Archives Awareness Day. The owner then approached the BGF to ask if we would accept the collection for the new museum when it is built.

## The Richard Golding Piece

In March 2015 Richard Golding of Station Glass, Leicestershire made a one-off piece in collaboration with Allister Malcolm based on Allister's 'Celebrity Doodles to be auctioned to raise funds for the BGF.





## OUR PROFESSIONAL PARTNERS AND ACCREDITATIONS

The BGF is very appreciative of the continuing support shown by all its professional advisers especially Higgs & Sons, solicitors, and Clement Keys Chartered Accountants both of whom have offered sterling support to the charity from the very start of their journey. The BGF was given a special mention in Higgs & Sons Yearbook 2012/13 'A Touch of Glass' where Kirsty McEwen, Associate, wrote 'Glass is a huge part of our local culture and we are lucky to have such a wonderful collection right here in the Midlands'. Kirsty was instrumental in helping to set up the charitable foundation and has since provided legal advice and help to support the plans to become a museum trust.



Clement Keys on 7 November 2011 purchased the Blue Basket which had been donated to the BGF by renowned glass artist Jaqueline Cooley. Simon Atkins, Partner at Clement Keys said: 'The Blue Basket is a truly beautiful piece that will add an extra dimension of depth and quality to our premises from the moment it goes on display. We have been delighted to have worked with the BGF in its start-up phase and have assisted the Trustees with the establishment of the charity, the setting up of a gift-aid scheme as well as providing training in the area of finance and accounts. We fully support the work of BGF and wish them every success in working with Dudley Council to achieve the best for the glass collections'.



*Simon Atkins with Jaqueline Cooley*

## Accreditations

*I'm writing in support of Broadfield House Glass Museum. I've spent a significant amount of time studying the glass and research materials at Broadfield House. The only reason I visited the region was to study at the museum, establish a relationship with museum staff, and learn the rich history of glass production in that area. That experience was critical to my growth as glass specialist. I now manage all education programs at The Corning Museum of Glass. It is located in Corning, NY, which is a small town in an old glass production area, much like the Stourbridge region. Although the industry has almost completely disappeared, there continues to be significant local and corporate support for the glass museum. It is now an international destination and brings great recognition and financial advantages to the area. Broadfield House could and should be an international class museum. It has the potential grow and be a great boost to the local economy. Now that glass has become one of the most desirable mediums for art and craft, it's timely to invest in the future of the museum, not diminish it.*

*I have shared what I learned at Broadfield House, as well as my passion for the museum and history of the region, to hundreds of students over the years. In addition to my current position at The Corning Museum of Glass, I've been the glass professor for the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York City, the Smithsonian Masters Program in the History of Decorative Arts in Washington, DC; Winterthur Museum, and Sotheby's Institute of Art.*

*Losing the museum would be a disgrace. Everything about it is a treasure, including the glass architecture.*

Mary Cheek Mills,  
Education Programs Manager  
Corning Museum of Glass, NY

*I congratulate the British Glass Foundation at their launch on Wednesday 24th November and I am sad not to be able to be here at Hagley Hall in person. The foundation is doing excellent work in their efforts to secure the future of the collections of the Broadfield House glass Museum and to help Dudley Council to find a suitable home for these. The collections at Broadfield House are of great importance for the Region, but also Nationally and Internationally. They represent the best of British glass made in Stourbridge, an area that was at the forefront of high-taste in international glass during the second half of the 19th century. Stourbridge attracted the most inventive and skilled artists during this time and their products were sold world-wide. On a local level, the glass industry has dominated the area for over 100 years and since its demise, the Broadfield House Museum has been instrumental in keeping this rich part of Britain's heritage alive. I hope that a suitable home or the collections can be found soon so that the Museum can be a continuing source of inspiration and education for future generations.*

Reino Liefkes  
Senior Glass & Ceramics Curator  
Victoria & Albert Museum, London

I would like to add my best wishes for the newly formed charity - The British Glass Foundation. I believe it is really important for the history of glass to be preserved through the protection and display of glass items which represent that history. It is important for future researchers and writers who need access to the glass and the documents associated with that glass; and it is important to provide inspiration and information for glassmakers in the future. I believe the glass and documents at Broadfield House are a precious legacy for which we are all responsible, and I wish the British Glass Foundation every success in preserving this legacy for those like ourselves, who will appreciate it in the future.

Dr Angela Bowey  
New Zealand

*Glass is a huge part of our local culture and we are lucky to have such a wonderful collection right here in the Midlands.*

Kirsty McEwen  
Associate, Higgs & Sons

*Obtaining grants from ERDF and NHLF is never easy or straightforward but with the support of our partners we are resolute in trying to secure the necessary funding for this project in order to build a wonderful new Glass Museum for our world famous collection.*

John Polychronakis  
Chief Executive Dudley Council

*I am pleased to support the efforts of the BGF to preserve these important glass collections. The Foundation is doing excellent work in their efforts to secure the future of the collections of Broadfield House glass Museum and to help Dudley Council to find a suitable home for these.*

Ian Austin MP  
Dudley North

*Since its inception in 2009 the BGF has gained the respect and support of the whole glass trade locally and internationally. The work that has already been done by the BGF has proven that the collection at Broadfield House has a tremendous future and can be entrusted into safe hands of the BGF. With 3 major tourist glass related attractions in the space of 1 mile, plus other local glass attractions, we will be able to showcase glass manufacturing past and present, which enable the various Tourism markets and providers a chance to promote a co-ordinated story of Stourbridge Glass to a much wider audience for group travel and casual visitors alike. Also this facility will help the local communities and schools of the area connect with the legacy of generations of family members who were the craftsmen and women who contributed so much to the glass industry that made Stourbridge glass recognised the whole world over.*

Ian Dury,  
Glass Heritage Officer  
Webb Corbett Visitor Centre

*The Friends of Broadfield House Glass Museum (since disbanded - Ed) are fully supportive of the BGF in their mission to ensure that the collection of glass continues to have a local home, grows and is available to all to see, enjoy and study.*

Barbara P Beadman,  
Chair, Friends of Broadfield House Glass Museum

## MEDIA, PRESS AND PROMOTIONS

There has been an enormous amount of media coverage on local television; in local and national newspapers, magazines, local radio, etc and a very small selection is shown here.

*Express star 7/9/13*

### Replica vase donated to museum



Chairman of the British Glass Foundation Graham Knowles, trustee Graham Fisher, co-ordinator Ian Dury and engraver Terri Colledge

## Cameo copy offered in testament to a 'glorious glass-making past'

A replica of a famous cameo vase is being donated to a group set up to preserve a glass making heritage and will take centre stage at a new multi-million museum.

Ian Dury, of Stourbridge Glass Engravers, co-ordinated last year's ambitious project to recreate the Portland Vase, which dates back to 25AD.

It was unveiled at the 2012 International Festival of Glass which also coincided with the 400th year of glassmaking in the town.

Smaller pieces including a new version of the Auldjo Jug were also hand-crafted as part of the project.

Now Mr Dury has offered the whole col-

**Report by Heather Large**  
[heather.large@expressandstar.co.uk](mailto:heather.large@expressandstar.co.uk)

lection to the British Glass Foundation, which is working with Dudley Council and a developer on plans for the museum.

It will be built on the former Stuart Crystal works site, known as the White House Glass Cone site.

Under the plans it will showcase Stourbridge's famous Glass Quarter and house collections from across the region. A bid for European funding to get the project off the ground has been submitted.

Mr Dury said: "It was always my intention that these pieces should remain in Stourbridge in recognition of our glorious glass-making past and in testament to the skills that we still have in this area."

Chairman of BGF Trustees Graham Knowles said: "This is a simply amazing gesture from a man who has the experience and knowledge of the local glass industry to put his faith in the direction that the BGF hopes to take it into the 21st Century. It is not only us who are grateful.

"The entire world of glass will appreciate the sheer magnitude of this bequest and what it represents."



DUDLEY & WYRE FOREST

# Express & Star

Plans lodged for first phase of long-awaited museum project

## REVAMP TO START AT GLASS FACTORY

By Heather Large

**THE first stage of a multi-million project to restore a fire-ravaged former glass factory has been announced.**

Repairs are needed at the Stuart Crystal site in Wordsley which has been earmarked for a £5million glass museum.

The buildings, off Camp Hill, have been continually targeted by vandals since a major blaze in 2011.

The most recent was in April when cardboard and other rubbish was set alight. A large hole has been left in the roof in one of the buildings and floors have also collapsed.

Site owners Complex Development Projects Ltd has now submitted plans to Dudley Council to carry out the first phase of repair work. Director Ian Harrabin said he hoped the work could start within the next three-four months.

The application lodged with Dudley Council says: "The buildings have unfortunately suffered a deterioration in condition since vacated.

### Arson

There is the constant issue of vandalism and several arson attacks which have resulted in the deterioration of the historic structure." It adds: "The structures are in a dangerous condition and the proposals seek to carefully take down the collapsed roof and floor structures and to re-build these structures to follow the mass and form of the original buildings." A second planning application for the full museum project will be submitted later.

Wordsley councillor Derrick Hemingsley has welcomed the project.

"It will be a marvellous improvement to the area. It should be fantastic when the museum is open."

Plans have been in the pipeline for five years for the glass museum on the site linked to the nearby Red House Glass Cone via an underground tunnel. It will house collections from across the Black Country including Broadfield House in Kingswinford.

The firm is waiting to hear the outcome of a bid for £2.15m from the European Regional Development Fund towards the project. The museum plans are being led by Complex Development Projects, which owns the land, and Dudley Council in partnership with the British Glass Foundation.

The project suffered a setback when the fire broke out in May 2011. The roof of the factory collapsed during the blaze, which also gutted the building and damaged some of the walls. A housing estate is also being built by Morris Homes Ltd in a neighbouring section.

# First looks at showpiece blueprints for centre which will put area's rich heritage on the map



STATE-OF-THE-ART: A first glimpse at how the museum's interior would look.

## £1M OK TO MUSEUM

AMBITIOUS proposals to turn a derelict Wordsley glassworks site into a glittering new museum are moving ahead as the project has scooped over £1million in funding and a plan for the first phase has now been submitted.

Complex Development Projects has been working with the British Glass Foundation on plans to transform the listed former Stuart Crystal factory site into a world glass centre for the last few years.

An application by Morris Homes for 48 new homes on part of the site was approved 12 months ago and described as a key part of making the £2.5million museum scheme viable.

By Bev Holder

01384 358225  
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Now a plan for the first part of the project has finally been submitted to Dudley Council and the Growing Places Fund has awarded £1.8million towards the scheme.

Ian Harrabin, managing director of Complex Developments, said: "It has taken almost a decade to save the Stuart Crystal buildings and I really believe we are now almost there.

"This wouldn't have been possi-

ble without the very strong support of the council and the community in particular the British Glass Foundation who have supported us through thick and thin.

"The building will make a great home for the new museum."

He said the historic former glassworks buildings in Camp Hill have been left in a "terrible state" after a series of vandal attacks and he added: "It's had loads of fires and has been lying uncov-

ered for many years - the roof has been burnt out.

"We need to start."

The submitted application is for initial work to repair the structure of the listed buildings before a detailed proposal for the glass centre is put in.

If all goes to plan work could start in September and Mr Harrabin said the museum could be open in late 2015.

Turn to page 3

Front Page of Stourbridge News 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Work on visitor attraction lined up to start within weeks

# JOB JOY WITH £5M HERITAGE MUSEUM

A £5m project to build a museum showcasing Stourbridge's glass-making heritage, is to start this year.

The scheme, which will create 23 new jobs, has been backed by council planning officers.

It is hoped the visitor attraction which will be created on part of the former Stuart Crystal site, opposite the Red House Glass Cone in Wordsley, will be ready to open to the public in 2016.

It is anticipated the museum will attract more than 640,000 people a year.

The scheme has been heralded by planning officers at Dudley Council as a "welcome opportunity to renovate and bring back into use buildings which are of historical importance to the borough".

The proposals, submitted by Complex Development Projects Ltd, also include 18 apartments built on a separate part of the site and 11 commercial units.

The scheme has been recommended for approval and a final decision will be made by councillors at a meeting on Monday next week.

### Impact

The application says: "The proposal would help create jobs and support economic growth, whilst bolstering tourism within the borough.

Managing director of Complex Development Projects Ian Harrabin said: "It's a very exciting project and I'm sure it will have a big impact on this part of the borough."

The firm is waiting to hear the outcome of a bid for £2.15m from the European Regional Development Fund towards the project with the rest coming from grants.

Chairman of the British Glass Museum Graham Knowles said: "We are delighted that the planning application has now been submitted for the new glass museum in the former Stuart Crystal factory buildings - this is a big step forward.

The museum should be open in 18 months time and will be a great new home for the borough's stunning glass collections currently held at Broadfield House and Himley Hall.

"With its long history of glassmaking and being opposite the Red House Cone this site is the perfect location for the new museum," added Mr Knowles.

The museum will showcase the borough's glass treasures and highlight the area's heritage through interactive displays.



With its glass front the new glass-making museum in Stourbridge will feature a light sculpture representing where the White House Glass Cone once stood

Front Page of Express & Star 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014. Wordsley glass museum plan approved



A derelict Wordsley glassworks is to be transformed into a new £5.5m museum to house the borough's prized glass collection after proposals were approved by council planners this week.

Councilors on Dudley's development control committee gave the thumbs up last night (Monday) to the scheme by Complex Development Projects to turn the vandal-hit former Stuart Crystal site into a world class tourist attraction. Members of the committee said they were delighted to approve the plan which has been on the cards for more than a decade.

Councillor Kieran Casey welcomed the plan for the listed Camp Hill site and added: "I'm very happy to see this application. It's long overdue. It's been a vacant site for some time now."

As well as the museum which will feature an iconic glass frontage and open courtyard, the attraction will include a canal-side restaurant/cafe, striking light sculpture marking the spot where the old White House Cone once stood, tunnels linking the facility to the Red House Glass Cone plus 18 loft apartments. Committee chairman Councillor Qadar Zada said: "For me this application ticks all the boxes. It's a welcome development that will bring together residential, a visitor attraction and a boost to the economy. I look forward to seeing this once it's fully developed."

Cllr Nic Barlow added: "It lends itself very nicely to that area. Anything that enhances the canalside area around Stourbridge is welcome."

The developers have been working together with the British Glass Foundation to bring to fruition the ambitious scheme which has been awarded £1.3m from the Growing Places Fund and £2.15m from the European Regional Development Fund. Graham Fisher, BGF spokesman, said after the plan was approved: "It's absolutely astounding that we've reached this stage this fast. I'm delighted. We're not there yet but it's a major step forward. The people of Stourbridge must be so proud to be getting something that's going to put us on the world map."

## First looks at showpiece blueprints for centre which will put area's rich heritage on the map



STATE-OF-THE-ART: A first glimpse at how the museum's interior would look.

# £1M OK TO MUSEUM

**By Bev Holder**  
01384 358225  
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Twitter @StourbridgeNews

AMBITIOUS proposals to turn a derelict Wordsley glassworks site into a glittering new museum are moving ahead as the project has scooped over £1million in funding and a plan for the first phase has now been submitted.

Complex Development Projects has been working with the British Glass Foundation on plans to transform the listed former Stuart Crystal factory site into a world class centre for the last few years.

An application by Mori Homes for 48 new homes on part of the site was approved 12 months ago and described as a key part of making the £5.5million museum scheme viable.

Now a plan for the first part of the project has finally been submitted to Dudley Council and the Growing Places Fund has awarded £1.3million towards the scheme.

Ian Harrabin, managing director of Complex Development, said: "It has taken almost a decade to save the Stuart Crystal buildings and I'm really pleased we are now almost there.

"This wouldn't have been possible without the very strong support of the council and the community in particular the British Glass Foundation who have supported us through thick and thin.

"The building will make a great home for the new museum."

He said the historic former glass works buildings in Camp Hill have been left in a "terrible state" after a series of vandal attacks and he added: "It's had loads of work done and has been lying unoccupied for many years - the roof has been burnt out."

"We need to start."

The submitted application is for initial work to repair the structure of the listed buildings before a detailed proposal for the glass centre is put in.

If all goes to plan work could start in September and Mr Harrabin said the museum could be open in late 2016.

Turn to page 3

Councilor Hilary Bills, Dudley's cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "We are delighted the proposals for the former

Stuart Crystal site were approved by planners last night, as part of our long-term ambition to celebrate the borough's globally renowned glass heritage. We look forward to the plans on the site taking shape to create a major tourist attraction, however, no decisions have been taken on the future of Broadfield House Glass Museum which remains open as normal."

Work on the Stuart Crystal site is expected to get underway in the New Year and the museum could be up and running by early 2016. (Not our fault that it wasn't, honest! - Ed)

# Museum to close as council confirms new era for glass

**By Bev Holder**  
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IT'S the end of an era for a world famous Kingswinford museum but the start of a sparkling new future for the borough's prized glass collection.

Broadfield House Glass Museum is to close at the end of next month. Dudley Council has confirmed, and the borough's internationally important glass collection is to be transferred to the British Glass Foundation which has been working with Complex Development Projects Ltd to bring to fruition a new £5.5m state-of-the-art glass museum in Camp Hill, Wordsley.

Work has been underway for some months on the old Stuart Crystal glassworks site after planning permission was awarded last autumn but the project can now move forward at a pace after a £2.15million grant from the European Regional Development Fund was confirmed this week.

Council bosses say efforts to transfer the borough's glass treasures from the authority's care on a 125-year lease to the British Glass Foundation are now getting underway and the cataloguing and preparing of the delicate pieces, many of which are priceless, will take up to nine months.

The new museum, which will be based opposite the historic Red House Glass Cone, will showcase the borough's glass collection in a more accessible and visitor-friendly way than is possible at Broadfield and the development will involve sympathetic restoration of the listed former Stuart Glass

Works and preservation of the remains of the old White House Glass Cone, which is classed as an ancient monument.

It is hoped the new multi-million pound facility which will feature an iconic glass frontage, will become a world class visitor attraction.

The development will also include an open courtyard, canal-side restaurant/cafe, office space for new business start-ups and 18 one and two-bedroom loft apartments.

Developer Ian Harrabin, of Complex Development Projects Ltd, said the listed buildings on the site had been "pulled back from the brink" after repeated vandalism attacks but work was basic standard by Christmas.

He added: "We've got a fantastic mixed use project with the museum, offices and the flats all together. It will be something very special."

Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, Dudley's cabinet member for planning and economic development, said: "This new museum will not only act to preserve a historic building but will also make a great addition to the borough's tourism and cultural offer by showing off our glass collection in a purpose-built facility which will be fully accessible.

"We are delighted to have received the offer of European funding as without this the new museum project man of the British Glass Foundation, said: "We are delighted to have received the offer of ERDF funding for a brand new glass museum, which will eventually house the borough's stunning glass collection.

"With its long history of glassmaking and being opposite the Red House Glass Cone this site is the perfect location for the new museum."

"We have been working very closely with the developer, Complex Development Projects Ltd, and Dudley Council over the last few years to make this happen and we are pleased European money is coming into Dudley which will benefit the local

Broadfield House, which has been home to the borough's glass collection since 1980, will close its doors to the public at the end of September so the collection is ready to be installed in the new museum in autumn 2016.

During this time the glass will not be available to view but many pieces can be seen online.

Proceeds from the sale of the Compton Drive museum will form part of the council's contribution towards the costs of the new museum, which will be run by the British Glass Foundation.

Clr Ahmed said Dudley Council would "continue to work closely with the local

13th August 2015



4-1-16

## Reflections on glass museum



Work continues on the new Museum of Glass, Camp Hill, Wordsley, which is opposite the Red House Glass Cone attraction

# Work gathers pace on new home

It was once home to one of the best known glass works in the Black Country.

Now work on a modern home in its place promoting the history of the glass-making industry is nearing completion.

The multi-million pound Museum of Glass is being built on the site of the former Stuart Crystal glass works in Wordsley.

Work is gathering pace with the structure of the building now in place at the site opposite the Red House Glass Cone attraction. Cladding has been fitted to the outside of the building along with a glass front entrance.

Work will be completed immanently on the outside structure of the museum ready

### Report by Andrew Turton

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for it to be fitted out. A grant of £2.1 million was given to the project from the European Regional Development Fund.

Money from the Heritage Lottery Fund - HLF - totalling around £900,000 will be spent towards fitting out the inside of the museum.

The British Glass Foundation, which will manage the attraction, is currently working on putting a management structure in place to run the attraction. Once this is in place the group should be able to secure the full cash sum from the HLF to allow the fit-

ting out to take place. This process will take up to 18 months with the museum expected to be up and running by Spring 2017.

In the meantime trustees of the foundation have been in talks about hosting pop-up exhibitions at the museum.

These would allow people a glimpse of the building in the months before it is finished as well as allowing artists the chance to showcase their work.

The foundation is also running a competition to name the new museum. Foundation trustee Graham Fisher said: "It will be the people's museum and we want their involvement as much as possible." Eighteen canalside apartments are also being built.

**No going back now!**  
Confirmation of opening date, Stourbridge News

# Stourbridge News

#ThereWithYou

July 29, 2021

READ BY 91,040\* PEOPLE IN PRINT AND ONLINE EVERY WEEK

65p



## Opening date set

By Bev Holder  
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AN opening date has now been confirmed for Stourbridge's long-awaited state-of-the-art glass museum.

Plans to open a world class facility to house Stourbridge's prized collection of glass have been slowly but surely moving forwards despite the Covid-19 pandemic and a date has now been set for the museum to finally open its doors to members of the public.

It had been initially referred to as the White House Cons Museum of Glass but it has now been confirmed the museum in Camp Hill, Woodley, will be known as Stourbridge Glass Museum.

A spokesperson for the British Glass Foundation (BGF), which has been driving forward the plans for the new museum since the

closure of the old Broadfield House Glass Museum in Kingswinford back in 2015, said: "This new identity will create a visionary profile that will translate positively into developing its long-term brand and perception."

A new website has also been created [www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk](http://www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk) and an official opening date set for April 9, 2022.

Graham Knowles, chairman of The British Glass Foundation, said: "This is fantastic news. "After more than 10 years of effort, which would not have been possible without the unflinching support of our sponsors, backers and partners especially Dudley Council, European Regional Development Fund, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Complex Development Projects Ltd, we are almost there."

He added: "It is also thanks to the public that we are now touchingly close to achieving our ultimate ambition of finally opening the 'People's Museum'



Stourbridge Glass Museum. Pic - Daniel Sutton

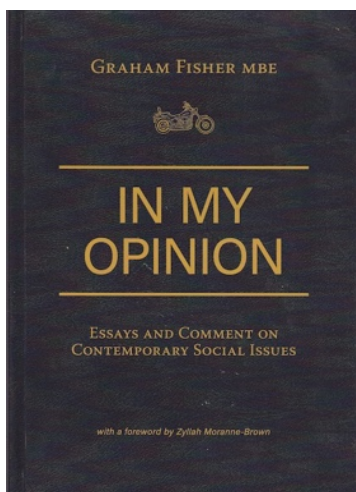
that provides a new home for the internationally renowned Stourbridge glass collection."

Councillor Simon Phipps, cabinet member for regeneration and enterprise at Dudley Council, added: "It's wonderful to hear that despite the challenges of the past year, the newly branded Stourbridge Glass

Museum remains on track to soon open."

He added: "The new museum in the heart of the Glass Quarter will be an exciting new visitor attraction for the borough and we look forward to our continued close working relationship with the British Glass Foundation."

### New book launch September 2021



*In My Opinion: essays and comments on contemporary social issues* by BGF Trustee Graham Fisher MBE, with miscellaneous observations of glass and glassmaking. Part proceeds donated to BGF.

## Heritage open days September 2021 (*GlassCuts 186*)

### Heritage Open Week and forthcoming events

Our events supremo Louise is already hard at it compiling a list of forthcoming attractions at SGM; you can find out more by the 'Keeping in touch' panel below or by staying tuned to *GlassCuts*, our website and our social media streams. In the meantime we give her and her colleagues Donna and Steven together with our Museum Director Ollie and our volunteers a huge 'thank you' for their efforts throughout the recent Heritage Open Week held in late September and centring around the museum.

Louise reports on four tours of the museum that attracted a total of 49 visitors. For his part your Editor was delighted to assist on the guided canal walks along 'The Crystal Canal' <https://www.discoveringbritain.org/activities/west-midlands/walks/stourbridge-canal.html> culminating at SGM. Over two walks we entertained 53 visitors and attracted much positive feedback that makes us think this may not be a 'one-off'. Other events have been equally well supported; images are on our social media streams. Well done to all concerned.



## The Allister Malcolm glass slipper September 2021 (*GlassCuts 186*)

### Warning: worldwide fame alert

We open this issue with news that has got us all so excited we wonder how we are containing ourselves. Here's the story and it is, quite literally a fairy-tale ...

Some while back we introduced you to a delightful piece made by 'Our Allister' in the SGM Hot Studio. It was a glass slipper, but more than that we were not at liberty to say. The Organisation commissioning it applied rather strict sanctions on AI along the lines of 'if you tell anyone we will have to send the boys round and eliminate you' and that was that. Until now.

We can now reveal, and are overjoyed to do so, that the Organisation was The Sony Corporation and the slipper is a central prop in their latest blockbuster *Cinderella*, already the Number 1 film being streamed in the USA and by all accounts destined to be a worldwide cinematic sensation. And smack in the middle of it all is Allister's glass slipper.

This is just a monster piece of news that, after more than 20 years at the coalface carving an already enviable international reputation, is likely to propel Allister Malcolm to worldwide recognition. And it couldn't happen to a nicer bloke.

On behalf of everyone associated with BGF and SGM we congratulate Allister to the rafters and wish him long and continuing success. And, best of all, he's 'one o' we.'

*Cinderella*, filmed at Pinewood Studios, is now available on Amazon Prime; here's the official trailer: <https://youtu.be/T1NeHRuPpoM>

And if you would like to try and create your own glass slipper, here's how it's done. He makes it look so simple. But only after a couple of decades of practise: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/yvqi9903hzdk761/Glass%20slipper%20making%20of.mov?dl=0>



Image by Simon Bruntnell shows later version mounted on cushion.

Allister Malcolm at work in his hot-studio at SGM. (Image: Sarah Hall)



## AND FINALLY FOR NOW ...

\* 2022 is the year that the Contemporary Glass Society (CGS) celebrates its silver anniversary. Not surprisingly there's a lot's going on, a major part of this being their collaboration with Stourbridge Glass Museum (SGM) in a rather special project, as an extract from the CGS news release explains: *'to commission a piece of contemporary glass to welcome and draw visitors into the Entrance Foyer area. This commissioned piece of work will be part of the Museum's permanent collection and will be installed and officially unveiled during the International Festival of Glass in August 2022.*

*The aim of the work is not only to celebrate 25 years of the Contemporary Glass Society but also to stop visitors in their tracks with a work that dazzles and is thought provoking. It will be displayed in the entrance foyer of the new Museum as a beacon to encourage visitors to explore the amazing glasswork on show at the Museum.*

*We had many interesting proposals and three were selected for further scrutiny and interviews. The artists shortlisted were Chris Day, Sacha Delabre and Anthony McCabe. It was a very hard decision between these three artists all of whose proposals would have complemented the space. However, we were captivated by the storytelling and inclusive history of the UK and in particular glass making in Stourbridge that featured in one presentation.*

*The winner was Chris Day with his piece entitled 'After the Darkness the Light'.*

The commission fee was jointly funded by CGS and SGM, and both CGS and SGM staff attended the shortlisting and interviews. You can't get much more collaborative than that. This is a substantial effort drawing many strands together so we felt it appropriate to present the Society's own press release *verbatim* alongside edition 192 of *GlassCuts*. (all GCs are lodged on the BGF website - Ed)

More about CGS at: [www.cgs.org.uk](http://www.cgs.org.uk)

More about Chris Day at: <https://www.chrisdayglass.com>

\* The work onsite continues apace with news that The Hub are on site from today until 25 February undertaking our internal fit-out. The hub are a team of locally-based specialists who have already impressed us greatly. We know we are in good hands - <https://www.thehublimited.co.uk/about-us/>

\* The first annual SGM 'What's On' brochure is due out soon.

\* A visitors' souvenir booklet to accompany the 2012 Portland Vase display is being prepared by the author and his publisher Mary Spence MBE (Sparrow Publishing) for launch on or around opening.

\* A membership scheme is being formulated.

\* Plus we continue to receive an increasing number of requests for information from numerous individuals, societies and media outlets.

**Fit-out begins, as seen at 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022:**



Downstairs space



Upstairs space with Touchscreen shell

More at: <https://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk/internal-fit-out-begins/>

17th January 2022. The iconic Stuart Crystal finds its own new home.

Details of refurbishment in GC176 (17<sup>th</sup> March 2021) *et sub.* (All GCs lodged on website)



*The museum exterior as at January 2022:*



And that's it. This is about as close to the opening in April 2022 as the vagaries of publication allow me to get. So, historians of the future, whatever happens from here onwards it's down to you. Good luck and best wishes.

But whatever your verdict on our endeavours to date, please remember they have been universally supported from the earliest days by a lot of good, sincere and hugely talented people out there in *the Wonderful World of Glass*<sup>©GF</sup>

# STOURBRIDGE GLASS MUSEUM

*'Stourbridge Glass Museum: at the heart of the community with a globally significant collection to educate and inspire'*

*Prepared and presented by ...*

**Graham Fisher MBE FRGS**  
*Trustee with responsibility for PR & Comms*  
[www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk](http://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk)  
[grahamfisher.co.uk](http://grahamfisher.co.uk)

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**February 2022**