

# SGT NEWS



## CRAFTING A FUTURE FOR CUMBRIA CRYSTAL

LEN ENGLAND addressed the North West Section recently, summarising the history, manufacturing operations and current trading objectives of Cumbria Crystal.

Cumbria Crystal was started in 1975 in the market town of Ulverston, South Lake District with skilled glassmakers from Stourbridge, who then trained local labour. Antique style, clear uncut crystal was produced initially, followed by the development of a range of cut patterns based on classical designs from the 17th and 18th centuries.

The company currently employs a predominantly young workforce of 33 people and continues to produce totally hand-crafted full lead crystal ranges of table and giftware, each named after an area in the Lake District. In addition the flexibility of skills enables reproduction work and special commissions to be undertaken, often involving hand engraving or sand etching.

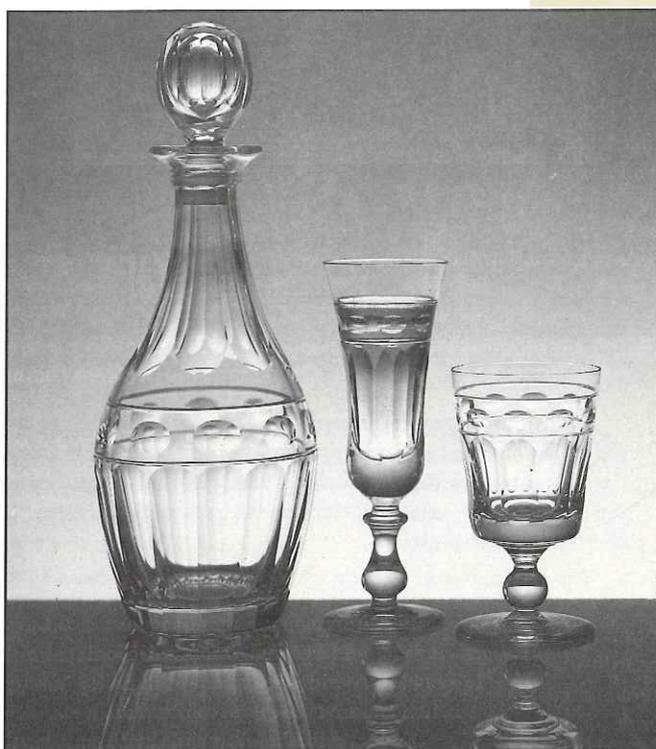
This concentration on entirely own-craft manufacture, high quality, distinctive designs and customer service has enabled Cumbria Crystal to focus at the 'top end' of a crystal market which is becoming increasingly dominated by ill-defined, machine-made and semi-imported lower lead content crystal. The style, genuine origin and high

quality characteristics, including clarity and refractive brilliance, resulted in the company gaining a prestigious Government contract from 1984 to supply British Embassies throughout the world.

Since a change of ownership in 1989, the new management has improved operational efficiency, heightened brand awareness and increased cash flow by opening two factory shop outlets in strong tourist locations.

With 50,000 visitors each year viewing the complete manufacturing process, Cumbria Crystal is one of the Lake District's major attractions.

*Claret and vintage champagne glasses and wine decanter from Cumbria Crystal's 'Helvelyn' range.*



## SCIENCE AND ART IN GLASS

The Society is represented on the committee organising the above symposium, to be held at the Royal Institution of Great Britain in London on October 19th to 21st 1992. Topics include transparency, colour, structure, utilisation and novel glasses. A varied range of speakers has been arranged, including Jim Ainslie (British Telecom), Roger Araujo (Corning Glass Works), Michael Cable (University of Sheffield), Richard Catlow (Royal Institution), Simon Cottle (Sotheby's), Peter Dreiser (glass engraver), John Finney (Rutherford & Appleton Laboratory), Eva Jiricna (Eva Jiricna Architects), Alan Leadbetter (Daresbury Laboratory), Peter LeComber (University of Dundee), Sir Alastair Pilkington (Pilkington plc),

Patrick Reyntiens (stained glass artist), Ian Ritchie (Ian Ritchie Architects), James Roddis (Royal College of Art), Oliver Watson (Victoria & Albert Museum) and Jerzy Zarzycki (Universite Montpellier II).

Further details may be obtained from Professor G N Greaves, Daresbury Laboratory, Warrington WA4 4AD, UK.



## LOCAL SECTION CONTACTS

*For details of forthcoming local section events in your area, contact the appropriate Honorary Secretary. All SGT members and non-members welcome.*

### London

– Mr M C Brew, United Glass Ltd, Porters Wood, St Albans, Herts. AL3 6NY. Tel: 0727 59261.

### Midlands

– Dr G R Mattocks, 'Whitemead', 18 Blakebrook, Kidderminster, West Midlands DY11 6AP. Tel 0562 824153.

### North East

– Mr J Henderson, GB Glass Ltd, Lemington, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 8SX. Tel 091 267 4109.

### North West

– Dr D Martlew, Pilkington Technology Centre, Hall Lane, Lathom, Ormskirk, Lancs L40 5UF. Tel 0695 54210.

### Scottish

– Mr D A Rennie, United Glass Ltd, Glasshouse Loan, Alloa FK20 1PD. Tel 0259 218822.

### Yorkshire

– Miss R M Sales, 20 Blackbrook Drive, Sheffield S10 4LS.

# LONDON CALLING!

**A talk on the geological occurrence of glassmaking raw materials and a successful Friday 13th(!) dinner/dance are examples of recent London Section events. PAUL STEVENS reports.**

Last February, the London Section held a joint meeting with the Mineralogical Society. David Highley of the British Geological Survey presented a fascinating picture of how and why different ores are formed in the places where they are found. He concentrated mainly on the UK, covering a wide range of raw materials from sand and calcium carbonate through to the rare earth elements. This was an extremely interesting paper and anyone who would like a similar presentation for their Section can contact David on Nottingham (0602) 363100.

## ENJOYABLE DINNER

The annual dinner and dance was successfully held, despite the inauspicious date, on Friday 13th March at the Sopwell House Hotel and Country Club, St Albans. Feedback from participants (albeit somewhat hazy) indicates that a very enjoyable time was had by all. There were two well received speeches, by John Lomax (London Section chairman) and Barry McCray of United Distillers (Gordon's Gin) Packaging Operations.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

How does an organisation get the most from its funds without having to pay out large sums for bank charges? After discussing this

question at some length at a recent meeting of the Section's executive committee, the conclusion was that the best solution was to invest in a building society treasurer's account; if any other Section committees have alternative suggestions, we would like to hear from them.

Along with other Sections, we have been putting some thought into how to build for a secure future for the SGT. Affiliation, in particular with the Institute of Materials, was a recurring theme, as a larger organisation will give greater opportunities for the cross-fertilisation of ideas. Moreover, universities tend to produce materials science graduates who are more likely to wish to become affiliated to such groups.

It was also considered that it should be possible to support a Young Persons' Group, which would help to inject a continuous stream of fresh blood to augment the experience of existing members.

PAUL STEVENS



## SGT STAFF PROFILE

Jenny Lawless was born in 1939 at Market Weighton, East Yorkshire and educated at Selby Girls' High School. Following her particular interest in mathematics, she joined the Aerodynamics Department of Blackburn Aircraft (now British Aerospace) in 1955 and then moved to the Astronomy Department of the University of Manchester in 1957 to work on a USAF contract for mapping the moon. After a short spell spent in Leeds, she married and settled in Sheffield in 1961, joining the Society in 1962 as editorial assistant to administer the general work involved in processing material for the journals through to publication.

After a period of absence during which she raised a family (two sons now 26 and 23), she spent six years in Iran with her husband and returned to the Society in

1979, once again associated with editorial work but with the additional responsibility of maintaining the service to those who purchase our journals.

Jenny's interests lie particularly in her home and family, dressmaking for family and friends and a recent addiction to 'Guardian' and other cryptic crosswords!

## LEAD GLAZES.... PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

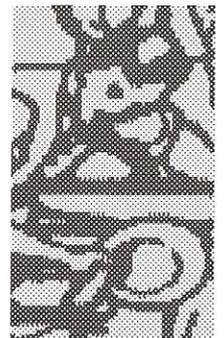
At the 370th ordinary general meeting of the Midlands Section (March 2nd 1992, Pedmore House, Stourbridge), Ivan Wozniak BSc(Tech), MTechSci, MICeram of Cookson Ceramics Ltd gave a talk on 'The future of glazes'.

Mr Wozniak first gave a brief history of concern over the use of lead glazes, starting with the need in 1896 to notify illness due to lead poisoning in the UK and concluding with the American Food and Drug Administration limit of 0.5ppm of lead release for cups and mugs in 1991 and the Proposition 65 in California for a limit of 0.023ppm.

Lead silicates were first used for glazes in 1913 and in 1947, the earlier use of glazes containing lead oxides was banned. Cookson Ceramics had investigated a series of advanced borosilicate glazes, including alkaline earth and bismuth borosilicate glazes as alternatives to lead glazes.

The results of acid resistance, alkaline durability, viscosity, flow resistance and bubble formation measurements were presented and a bismuth borosilicate glaze was shown to be a suitable replacement for the lead glaze previously used.

G R MATTOCKS



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