

NEWS



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VOLUME 25 ISSUE 2

NEWS FOR THE MEMORIAL INDUSTRY

TRADEX 2015
FEATURING CRAFTTEX
- EXCLUSIVE TO RETAIL MASONS ONLY -
FRIDAY 19TH & SATURDAY 20TH JUNE 2015

SHOW TIME!

For the first time in a number of years we're very excited about the upcoming NAMM Tradex show. Previously held alongside the National Funeral Exhibition, NAMM have split their show from the Funeral Directors and have really tried to focus it on masons and memorialisation. NAMM have managed to get the support of lots of wholesale suppliers which means that there is over 575 m² dedicated to memorials, the rest being allocated to suppliers and manufacturers of memorial specific equipment. Tickets are free but you will need to register to get them. More details are on the NAMM website and can be found at www.namm.org.uk/tradex-2015 including a link to the booking page. Trade shows like this don't happen often, it may be 2 or 3 years before we get another one like it so don't miss the opportunity to see what is available within the trade.

CRAFTTEX

NAMM run a competition during the show to showcase the talent we have in the industry. This year The Blast Shop is proud to be

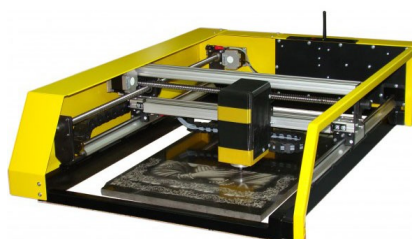
sponsoring the "Gritblast ornamentation with Colour" category (which we secretly hope won't be won by Odlings ☺). Mike spent most of the 1980's entering and winning the competition with a variety of designs but then retired to give someone else a chance. This year Rob will be entering the competition for the first time, it remains to be seen if he can be as successful as his dad!

OUR STAND

At 30m² our stand is the largest stand we've ever had in a trade show. We might even have space for chairs this year! We do however have a lot of things to get onto the stand so it's a good job we have the space. First off we have a

NEW ETCHING MACHINE

Fresh from our suppliers in Europe we have a new Impact Engraver.



The new machine has a lot of useful new features such as the ability to etch wirelessly which means that you don't have to have a computer in the workshop. There are two sizes of the new etcher, on the stand we will have the larger of the two models capable of etching designs 40cm x 60cm; the smaller version will etch areas up to 30cm x 40cm. The latest model comes with new software which allows you to download the design to the engraver and then etch it offline. Improvements to the material detection system means that the machine is capable of etching closer to the edge of the granite than the old version. The new head is also twice as fast as the outgoing one.

RAYZIST LETRALITE

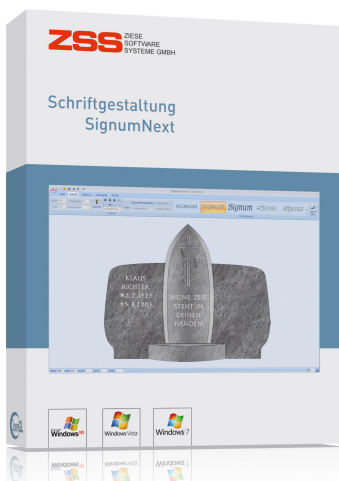
For the last 12 years the Letralite PhotoBlast creation kit has been available for less than £500. This deal is set to end after the show so get it whilst you can. The kit comes complete with everything you need to create your own stencils. At the show you will be able to see how the system works, create your own stencil and then in true Blue Peter fashion you'll be able to blast one that we made earlier. PhotoBlast stencils have evolved over the last 20 years from a screen printed blast resistant ink up to the self adhesive, light sensitive resist we use today. Come and see how much detail you can get with PhotoBlast stencils and how simple they are to blast.

GOLDMANN EQUIPMENT

Not content with just showing you what a Goldmann dustless machine looks like we're installing a compressor on the stand so that you can actually have a go with our sandblasting equipment. The Blast Shop was initially founded after securing a distributorship for Goldmann sandblasting equipment and 30 years on we still think it's the best value for money sandblaster you can buy. If you had bought a dustless machine 30 years ago you would still be able to sell it now for £1500, given it only cost you around £3000 that's better residual value than most things you buy these days. On the stand we have 2 dustless machines for you to play with, the 40P is the workshop workhorse, fitted with a 6mm nozzle this machine is perfectly capable of growing with your business. The other machine is the portable Duplo sandblaster. The Duplo can be easily dismantled to fit into the boot of an estate car if necessary. It's designed to be operated in the cemetery but is equally at home in a smaller masons workshop where it can blast any size memorial from small vases to full size cover slabs.

SIGNUM

The latest version of Signum comes complete with a new hand drawn font. 25 years ago we drew our first font which was based on the Trajan alphabet. Only available in the original version of Signum, this font proved exceptionally popular with masons who bought the package. With the latest



version of Signum we have added another hand drawn font. This one is more modern in style giving a contemporary feel to the more contemporary memorial shapes we offer in our own business. The latest version of Signum is a significant step forward, offering realistic drawings and integration with your email system to send pictures direct to your customers. Signum is the only software available in the UK specifically designed from the ground up for memorial masons, a CAD packaged designed to work the way you expect.

CEMENT FREE KERBSSETS

We've been playing with ideas for cement free kerbset fixings for a while and finally we have a solution. Our stainless steel fixings put very little pressure on the granite but still secure the kerbs allowing easy removal should you require. As with all mechanical fixing techniques, the kerbset is secure as soon as you leave it which means that the kerbs will not move due to pressure from the weight of the chippings.

NEW 3 HEAD POLISHER

Our final new product for the show is a three head polishing system. Designed as a cost effective alternative to a large Jenny Lind. The three heads ensure that the hand polisher remains flat on the granite meaning that you don't round off the edges as much as you would with a small single disc system. It uses three 5" pads which both spin and rotate around each other using a gear mechanism. As



they are rotating around each other the swirls that can be created with single head systems are not apparent which ultimately creates a higher final polish. In addition, the action of the three heads rotating

around each other means that the planetary polisher is capable of polishing five times faster than traditional single head devices.

PINK/ORANGE TAPES

We've just taken delivery of our latest batch of StoneMask tape and have now settled on the colour for our Orange tape. It's more yellow than the last batch but hopefully you shouldn't confuse the Pink and Orange tapes now when ordering. We've also taken the opportunity to wind the rolls differently. For the last 12 months we have been rewinding the rolls we use so that the backing liner was on the outside rather than the inside of a roll. We found it helped to ensure the roll didn't unwind while going through our plotter. We try to improve our products based on our experiences but if you disagree and think we've made a mistake then please get in touch.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Blast Shop has been pushing for some time to get masons to respond to the issue of Local Authorities selling memorials. Rob presented the case on behalf of the memorial industry at the MAB organised House of Commons debate earlier this year. It's difficult at times to find time to do something about it but it is vital that we react now and put pressure on the new government to review the Localism Act 2011. Included in this newsletter you will find a printed letter that you can send to your local MP (an electronic version is on the NAMM website). All you need to do is fill in the relevant information and post it to the MP at House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. If you use window envelopes then you should find all you need to do is put a stamp on the envelope and add your name and the MP's name (twice) to the letter. If you don't know who your MP is then the full list is available online at: tinyurl.com/39wprh3. We've made it as easy as we can because it's important, our trade is under threat, if we don't do something we might not have a trade to pass on to future generations.

House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear

As a local business within your constituency I would like to express my concern that some Local Authorities are intending to use the Localism Act 2011 to set up in direct competition with local business. This has happened in North East Lincolnshire where the Council is currently using tax payer's money and council facilities to set up in direct competition with local business, this action may be the deciding factor in their survival during these harsh economic times.

I cannot believe that this was the intention of the Act and I further believe that by doing this they may well be operating a Restrictive Practice and abusing their trusted position by working against their residents.

Please could you help by raising these concerns with the appropriate Parliamentary department and ask the question: *'Was the ability of Councils to trade in competition with small family businesses who have been trading for generations planned by Central Government or is it an unintended consequence of bad legislation'?*

If it is an unforeseen consequence of bad legislation, what action if any do you, as our elected representative in Parliament intend to take?

Can you also assure me that our council will not be acting in this way?

I look forward to your reply.

Yours Sincerely