

NEWS

THE BLAST SHOP



October 2019

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NEWS FOR THE MEMORIAL INDUSTRY

TRADEX 2019: A REPORT



The NAMM Tradex in June seems a long time ago but we are still getting enquiries from people who visited our stand.

For those of you who didn't manage to make your way to The Warwickshire Event Centre in June, we will try and share some of the highlights...

On the morning of the first day, Rob presented our new memorial design and inscription package, MemorialDESIGNERUK via a huge wide-screen TV allowing all of the eager audience to see what was going on in great detail. The presentation went on for about an hour and it's fair to say that it went down a treat as everybody who started was still there at the end, and even better, most were still awake...

We had Cement Free fixing demonstrations going on throughout both days, with our Fixer Mason, Steve, showcasing just how quick and easy it is to install and then uninstall a memorial using our patented LockDown system. A few masons decided there and then to adopt the system into their own business.

Our BS8415 Tug-Of-War was really popular, with lots of visitors attempting to replicate the forces required by the standard. Despite some vein-popping and valiant efforts, no one managed to walk away with the demonstration mobile dustless Duplo we had with us; much to Rob's relief.

It was noticeable how many masons commented about how they didn't realise, or just couldn't visualise the amount of force our Peg and Tube has to sustain during a ground anchor test to BS8415 standards.



Dominic had the etcher going for most of the time and had produced etches on granite tiles from images that we were selling as a special trade show package. He was busy throughout the show, demoing and answering questions which resulted in several orders for The Sprint, mid-sized engraver. We are still offering a large selection of pre-made designs with any future engraver sale.

Lee had a bit of a disaster with his Peg & Tube display, as we had planned to put the same sand & gravel from the BS8415 test in a transparent frame to simulate the ground, but the frame collapsed...

Not to be deterred he salvaged what he could and even tried selling the sand & gravel!

All in all it was a good show for The Blast Shop and after speaking to visitors, a worthwhile event even with the lack of any wholesale memorial suppliers.

Despite our own valiant efforts over the phone, via social media and through our previous newsletters to inform potential visitors about the loss of the wholesalers due to NAMM's insistence on the frequency of TRADEX, there were still a number of visitors we spoke to who weren't aware of wholesaler situation, were expecting more, and were subsequently disappointed.

A successful show needs to be a success for everyone involved and hopefully NAMM will take the negative comments onboard so all valued contributors to the trade can get together for the next one.

MEMORIAL DESIGNER ROLLOUT UPDATE



We went to the trade show with a roll-out plan for the new software and were pleased that sales more than matched our expectations.

We comfortably hit our initial target of Memorial Designer UK software packages during the show. Masons seemed particularly impressed with the quality of the renderings and user friendliness. To provide sufficient support we limited the initial installations but we are now looking at the next batch of installs (probably in the New Year to avoid Christmas).

If you are interested, please let us know so we can add you to the waiting list and in the meantime you can see MemorialDesignerUK in action on our very own YouTube channel, **TheBlastShopOfficial**.

PRIZE DRAW WINNER

The winner of our prize draw competition was Artstone Memorials who correctly guessed (to the closest 100) the number of rolls of tape we had in our warehouse at the time of the show with 1755 vs 1844 actual rolls. Which all goes to show that even if you are ordering 10's of rolls of tape at a time, we should always have enough tape in stock to cover our regular customer orders.

CRAFTEX 2019



As the Wholesalers were not exhibiting this time round, the NAMM Craftex competition had a number of pieces from entrants who probably wouldn't normally exhibit; every cloud and all that...

The competition was stiff, but we are proud to say that the prize for, 'Most Innovative Memorial Design', went to our very own Lee, who represented The Blast Shop with a Steam-Punk inspired slate piece with elements of gilding, a deep carved Ammonite and even an integral clock!

MEET THE BLAST SHOP



It's that time of the newsletter again where we take a closer look at our staff and this edition we want to introduce our lovely Admin Assistant, Monika.

Monika, originally from Poland has been with us for over 12 years and there isn't much she doesn't know about booking collections, creating and getting your orders out and delivered and on time.

Monika loves spending time with her daughter, especially on holidays. She has a mischievous cat, Raven who has been bringing her some unusual presents recently – We won't say exactly what the presents are, but they *were* small, fluffy and wriggly...

Unfortunately, Monika doesn't get to answer the phone that often, but if you are really lucky, maybe you will get to speak with her.

GOLD LEAF PRICES

With the price of gold consistently reaching over \$1,500 an ounce, compounded by the poor exchange rate of the pound against the dollar, we have had no option but to increase the price of our gold leaf. At the moment Heavy Weight is £18.95 per book and Medium is £17.95. Let's hope they sort out Brexit and the pound strengthens.

For the record, our 23.5k Heavy is 159gms and our Medium 140gms spread across 400 books. Be careful with gold leaf because if you are paying significantly less, you may be getting a raw deal and not getting nearly as much gold per sheet – False economy.

On a brighter note, you can still save 50p per book if you buy stencil tape or Peg & Tubes at the same time.

GOLD LEAF RECYCLING

As the price of gold is so high at the moment, maybe it's time you sent us any waste gold leaf which you have hidden away to be assayed.

We'll send it to the foundry where it is melted down, separated from scrap and weighed. We'll then send you a personal cheque to its value in the post. Easy.

We offer this service with any gold waste, even if it's not from us. Assaying also provides the opportunity to check the purity of your gold is accurate at the recommended 98%, or 23.5 karat.

REFURBISHED DUSTLESS



With the Co-op closing its memorial business in Scotland recently, we have acquired a number of Goldmann Dustless sandblasters.

These sandblasters were methodically well looked after and maintained by ourselves and will be an absolute bargain once we've replaced any perishable parts.

Call Dom or Lee to secure yours now, as refurbished Goldmann's are rare, extremely popular, limited in quantity and will move quickly.

Which brings us nicely on to...

SERVICING

As we usually finalise our machine servicing by the end of October, before the Christmas rush, it's now last orders. So if you want to ensure your sandblaster is in tip-top condition during the busiest time of the year, please contact us now.