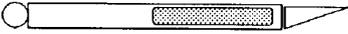


NEWS

THE BLAST SHOP



Winter 2014

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NEWS FOR THE MEMORIAL INDUSTRY

NAMM TRADEX IS BACK

Following a number of years where the NAMM Tradex show has been run alongside the National Funeral Exhibition, NAMM is returning to holding it's Tradex separately. The new show will be held at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre on 19/20 June 2015. Whilst this does mean that the show is held in the same year as the NFE, Natural Stone Show and StoneTec it will be the only show specifically for memorial masons. The NFE started off with support from many wholesalers but over time this has dropped off. Hopefully the new Tradex will revitalise suppliers to the trade because there will be more space available at a lower cost. The NFE is notoriously expensive for exhibitors, particularly those with larger stands. NAMM Tradex should therefore be able to offer far more for masons than the 5-6 stands that were present at last year's NFE but if you can't wait until 2015 then...

2nd BLAST SHOP OPEN DAY

Book now to avoid missing out on our own mini trade show! Spaces for Friday 28th February are almost gone and Saturday 1st March is filling up fast, contact us now to avoid disappointment! Our open day in September was over subscribed and it looks very much like this one will be too so why are people flocking to see what we have to offer?

Our open days are not like a traditional trade show where you



get to see a few bits of new equipment or the latest designs of memorials. They are a unique opportunity for you to try out some of our equipment for yourself. If you like it then that is great and we will be more than happy to sell you stock at our best prices but if you don't then at least you haven't bought the latest fad at a trade show only to find it sat on the shelf gathering dust. There's nothing quite like being able to create your own PhotoBlast stencils and blast them to work out whether they are going to fit into your business. Most people are pleasantly surprised by how easy it is to create stencils and we are now selling our artwork so you can be sure of producing high quality designs without having to learn how to manipulate images in Photoshop. That said, you should be in a position to create your own artwork after the morning presentation on PhotoBlast stencils.

TRADE STANDS

The day would not be complete without trade stands. This time we will have NAMM, Bridge insurance and CJ Imports. There will be ample time during the day to visit their stands and see some of the latest offerings from the memorial trade.

FIRST LOOK

Visitors will get the first opportunity to see some new material handling equipment fresh out of the docks (assuming the weather allows our container to be unloaded!). In our own business we have been looking



for a way to enable one person to safely unload a crate of memorials without using our static gantry which isn't located in the most convenient position in the workshop. We have now found a small jib that can be placed on your forklift arms which allows you to lift memorials out of a crate and shift them sideways to get to the one at the bottom of the stack (it's always the bottom one isn't it!).

Alongside the jib we also have a new scissor clamp capable of lifting 600kg. The clamp has longer jaws than normal to spread the load out. We use the clamp with our portable one man gantry

which will be on display in the warehouse where we will also be demonstrating the Blast Shop peg and tube and lockdown fixing techniques.

We've started getting questions again about adjustable fixing methods for 4" bases. Although we patented an adjustable system 13 years ago we didn't manufacture it as we considered it could be open to accidental incorrect adjustment and that a simple, one size fits all system was a safer option for our fixers to use.

Our final new product is a continuous sling and spreader bar. This sling allows you to flip over any size memorial (or work surface) with ease. Rather than having to drop the memorial onto a truck it is possible to put the slings around the memorial at table height and flip it over in-situ. We use it to turn memorials over prior to blasting the grave number onto the back.

NEXT GENERATION MEDIA

About 15 months ago we wrote an article warning people to be careful if they had any dealings Next Generation Media. Complaints continue to appear on the web about problems when dealing with NGM and some other advertising/media companies who operate in the same way, ie don't deliver what you pay for and tie you in to rolling contracts which are difficult to get out of. These companies generally operate out of the Lytham St. Annes or Blackpool area but can have offices elsewhere. When you investigate further you uncover a tangled web of businesses which sometimes only operate for a short period of time before being collapsed. So here is a list of companies run by directors who according to some people on social media do not deliver all they are contracted to deliver. Two companies with the name Next Generation Media and one called Next Generation Media Group operating out of Skyways Business Park, Blackpool; Skyways Multimedia Ltd; Next Generation Contract Ltd; Arranging A Funeral.Co.UK Ltd; Arranging A

Funeral.Co. UK.Contracts Ltd; AAF(UK)Ltd; PS Publications; On Screen Media UK Ltd; MPB Publicity Ltd; DPI & B Holdings Ltd; Club Scene UK Ltd. Don't think this isn't relevant to you because directors of these companies are specifically targeting memorial masons and funeral directors to obtain advertising for inclusion informative publications, folders and screen advertising on behalf of local authorities and other similar bodies involved in the death care industry.

PHOTOBLAST COURSES

After our first open day we felt that there was enough interest in PhotoBlast designs to run an advanced training course on creating and blasting the stencils. We will be running the first of these courses in September. Already spaces are filling up so if you are interested in learning more about how to create your own stencils (including those dreaded half tone designs) then please get in touch.



LOCAL AUTHORITIES

In the last few months NE Lincs local authority have started trading in memorials. In the past this sort of trading has been fought by a NAMM stance letter that was written a number of years ago but legislation has now been brought in that makes this sort of trading legal. There are a number of hoops that the council has to jump through but they are legally allowed both to sell memorials and advertise that fact within the cemeteries. Clearly this is not good news for local masons but legally there appears little we can do to fight it. At the moment this practice is only taking place in NE Lincs but it may well be picked up by other authorities. Currently it is being fought at a local level but if the practice spreads then a national

campaign will obviously be necessary. If you become aware of similar practices in your area then please get in touch, the sooner we start fighting the more likely the authority is to back down.

SMART BLADES

We have been suggesting that people fit smart blades for a long time, they make the job of setting up plotters much easier but there are times when smart knives are not smart enough. Recently we had a design that featured a circle sitting on a line. When the smart knife passed the same are for the second time it cut through the backing liner. Actually setting up a blade in a holder isn't as daunting as people think. Set the knife pressure higher than you would normally need but back the knife right off (usually by turning the blade adjuster counter clockwise). Gradually extend the blade down by 1/4 to 1/2 a turn at a time. Once you are scoring the backing liner and no more, you can the drop the knife pressure to the point where the tape is just cut through – job done! Given it is that easy why do people use the smart knives? Maybe because it only costs £9.95 to resharpen a blunt blade!

CLASSIFIEDS

2011 Renault Master Dropside 3.5T 2.2100DCi, Rear Wheel Drive with Dell 500kg folding tail lift and rear tool storage. 22,000 miles, FSH, Sat Nav, Air Con, Bluetooth, Electric Windows, Mud and Snow tyres all round etc etc. Available May/June £13,500 plus VAT ono. Contact 07973 957169 for more details.

