

Birmingham, 07/02/2014 - Precious Team visit NEC Spring Fair

The annual Spring Fair International www.springfair.com held at the National Exhibition Centre near Birmingham is the UK's premier Jewellery and Giftware show. This year the fair ran from February 2nd to 6th inclusive, and two members of the PRECIOUS team, Gay Penfold (JIIC Centre Manager) and Frank Cooper (JIIC Technical Manager) visited the fair on Tuesday 4th in order to meet with exhibitors and visitors. Their focus was firmly fixed on the Jewellery and Watch event in halls 16/17, where they had arranged to meet with a number of key individuals from the UK Jewellery and Watch industries.

Their first stop was at the stand of Deakin and Francis

www.deakinandfrancis.co.uk

where they discussed with MD James Deakin how AM technology might be applied to their range of high value and well-designed cufflink products. This company, which was established in 1786, are highly innovative in their design approach and technology usage and asked to be kept updated about the progress of the Precious project. Next stop was to meet with Elizabeth Hunt the sales and marketing director of Allied Gold Ltd, a London based Jewellery and Silversmithing company

www.alliedgold.com who also asked

to be kept updated about news and progress of the project. During the day there were many encounters with associates and companies that the JIIC has worked closely with on a variety of projects over the years. All of these contacts were apprised of the Precious project.



Precious partners at the Delcam ArtCAM stand, Spring Fair International, NEC

During a lunch meeting with Michael Allchin, Birmingham Assay Master and Stella Layton the Birmingham Assay Master designate (who takes over from Michael when he retires at Easter) were impressed to hear of the plans for and progress of the Precious project and how their 'marking room' (where the assay mark is applied) will soon be seeing some novel pieces designed and manufactured using the AM process for Precious metals. Prior to the next appointment Gay and Frank passed the stand of Prism-Design Ltd

www.prism-design.co.uk manned by old friends and associates on completed projects Barry and Sally Milburn. As designers and innovative specialists both Titanium and Precious metal jewellery manufacture, Barry and Sally were intrigued to learn more about the design freedoms offered by the AM processes. The duo also discussed Precious with Fei Liu, an alumni of the School of Jewellery, and an award winning designer who is famed for exporting his expressive and innovatively designed jewellery to Chinese retail outlets as well as fine jewellery specialist outlets in the UK www.feiliu.co.uk.

Next stop was to the central catwalk area where Simon Rainer, Chief Executive of the British Jewellers Association (BJA) was chairing a seminar "Setting up in retail: A guide to entering the jewellery market" - this was also of interest as Precious is concerned with ways in which retailers, large and small, could be approached with new ideas and designs, as part of the Precious remit is to interact with retailers as well as the manufacturers. They took full advantage of the networking session at the end of the seminar to update a number of interested parties about the new business potential of the AM of Precious metals.

The pair had a scheduled meeting with Gary Williams the current Chairman of the British Jewellers Association (BJA) who is also part of the Presman Mastermelt Company. Gary Williams was intrigued to hear about the potential offered by AM of Precious Metals and looked forward to 'spreading the word' to his Association members. Their next stop was to Hockley Mint Ltd stand, www.hockleymint.co.uk to catch up with CEO Gary Wroe about all things technical, innovative and new in the jewellery manufacturing and casting world and ensured that he was informed about the work of the Precious project. The afternoon presented an opportunity to attend the prize-giving ceremony at the Weston Beamor casting and Domino Jewellery stand where CEO Andrew Morton presented the three winning students with prizes for a recent "live" project undertaken by HND students from the School of Jewellery. Many of the students from this cohort will now go on to the specialised Design for Industry BA Hons. course at the School of Jewellery which contains a module, taught by Frank Cooper, specifically aimed at designing and manufacturing jewellery for the AM process.

Acknowledgements

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For more information please contact:

Petra Lugtenburg – pcl@delcam.com