

Glover and Smith



If you are looking for a success story, look no further than the chocolate box perfection of the Wiltshire countryside. Among the picturesque villages, with their double-barrelled names, you will find a neat trading estate on the site of an old railway station, and there you will find Glover and Smith.

Twenty years ago, Ed Glover was putting the finishing touches to the kitchen he was building at his home, and was having difficulty finding suitable cupboard door handles, so thought he would make them himself. He made a mould from what looks like “minibrix” from the toy box, to create a cupboard door handle shaped like a snail.



With the shrewd eye of entrepreneurs, he and his wife, Judy, took soundings in the market place and correctly predicted the potential commercial interest in articles of this kind. The first retail outlet was *Liberty's*. From these small beginnings in the Glover garden shed the business developed from handles to tableware, particularly spoons, trinket boxes, jewellery and other pewter artifacts.

Ed and Judy are passionate about nature and natural forms and their designs are based principally on nature, shells, leaves, acorns, star fish and seahorses.



There is a small staff. Ed himself is responsible for making the very detailed moulds. He is a qualified photographer, so an obvious choice to take the photos for the brochures and the website. Judy, trained in art and design, is very much involved with design ideas and marketing. Steve is a graphic designer by profession, who has now taken charge of the website and the publicity. In the workshop downstairs are Andy and Matthew

who is a silversmith, which may point the way to future developments. Two part-time members of staff deal with packaging and everyone takes responsibility for quality control.

Ed Glover says that every piece they sell is handmade in their studio and that great care is taken to use the highest quality pewter. Modern pewter is lead-free, an eco-friendly, non-tarnishing, recyclable metal, safe to use with food and easy to care for.

We asked him a number of questions about his interest in pewter.



Designers, Ed and Judy Glover

What is your first recollection of pewter?

In Bath, at the Roman baths, my Dad explaining to me that the stone moulds had been used by the Romans to make pewter bowls!

Where did you learn about how to use pewter?

It started at school – with cuttle fish casting.

When did you start making pewter items, what and why?

As you have mentioned above, I began making handles for our kitchen, where we needed something better than we had. It grew from there.

What methods do you use?

All of our work is centrifugally cast; we hand finish after vibro-polishing.



Hare sculpture

What inspires your designs? Where do the ideas for your work come from?

Nature, and British History; and the desire to have beautiful designs. It was that approach that led to my creation of the Spitfire Wing desk. (A further article will follow about the Spitfire Wing desk. Ed)



Small pewter keepsake box

How does the price of tin affect you?

Greatly; higher prices have put us off many designs that we have prototyped, for instance tableware with large (and therefore heavy) handles.

What is your market?

Our big growth area is with online sales, direct to the public. But we also supply around 200 shops, galleries and Heritage sites, as well as English Heritage, Highgrove and The National Trust in England and Scotland

How do you reach that market?

Our website is a very important part of our sales effort; also we attend retail shows, and trade shows, too.

What are your current work and exhibition plans?

Judy and I exhibited very successfully in Tokyo in June, followed by a busy summer of shows, such as: Hampton Court and Tatton Park. (This interview was conducted in July, this summer! Ed.)

Mary Kearney and Alan Williams

Contact: <http://www.gloverandsmith.co.uk>

Glover and Smith Designs
Unit 10, Wilton Business Centre
Kingsway
Wilton
Salisbury
Wiltshire SP2 0AH



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Editor: Alan Williams

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