

H O M E  
I N T E R E S T

# BUCKS BUDDING NEW DESIGNERS

IT'S A FACT - ST GILES FURNITURE  
ALLOWS ME TO INDULGE MY PASSION  
FOR FURNITURE DESIGN! BY TOBY SMITH

**H**aving our own factory enables us to design and manufacture a highly diverse range of both traditional and contemporary styles of furniture. It's always exciting to get involved in new projects and see them through to completion in a customers'

home. My own father went to the college in High Wycombe to learn the skills he has today for cabinetry and French polishing and it prompted me to start thinking how as a locally based company we may be able to work together with the students at Bucks New University taking furniture design courses.

High Wycombe has long been known as an important centre for furniture research and manufacture with a strong heritage indicated by the number of furniture makers who historically came to the area, many of whom still exist today. Over the years a rich and diverse programme has been developed for students at the local college now known as Bucks New University, which enables them to work together and acquire many furniture making skills whilst indulging their creativity for design at the same time. This particular course already boasts an alumni which includes many leading designers and cabinet makers now running their own businesses.

A passion for design and making beautiful furniture is what binds us all together and inspired me to contact the course leader Andrew Shenton recently to see just how our company could become an integral part of various aspects of his course. I am very happy that as a result of recent events we will now be sponsoring a competition to support a project for the second year students taking part in the Furniture Design and Craft course. This part of the course historically requires some form of desk to be made so the brief for the students will be "Working From Home" whereby all students will need to work on the design brief and present a comprehensive set of drawings documenting their design journey. We will then choose five designs which will be directly sponsored by St Giles Furniture who will cover a large part of the building costs for these students. These designs will then be exhibited in our own showroom in Gerrards Cross and showcased at a special evening for the local press and our customers' who will vote for their favourite design.

We feel that this is a very topical choice for the students since these days traditional working practices no longer apply for many people and a large proportion of the working population often now work from home.

Personally I was also delighted to be invited to the Summer End



Stunning chair by  
Harry Williams



Hall stand with a  
difference by Jack Pearson



Desk by Jack Pearson

of Year Show at the National School of Furniture this month. To celebrate this event I have set up a "St Giles Furniture Award" to be presented each year to the winning designer.

**THIS YEAR OUR WINNING DESIGNS WERE A STUNNING CHAIR BY HARRY WILLIAMS, ALONG WITH AN IMAGINATIVE DESK BY JACK PEARSON WHO ALSO WON "RUNNER UP" WITH HIS VERY DIFFERENT HALL STAND!**

The criteria for selection this year was "excellence of design combined with excellence of craft" and the designs exhibited were stunning showing huge talent and attention to detail in furniture design.

I am thrilled that the St Giles Furniture name will be linked to this event with an annual award for the winning piece which I had great difficulty in choosing this time round and actually had to select two winners and a runner up!! These pieces will also be exhibited in our showroom and we are looking forward to having them on display to promote young talent in this area and the next generation of furniture designers' in South Bucks!

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