

# SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

Happy New Year!

Firstly, I want to wish you all a Happy New Year for 2024. I must apologise for my quietness during 2023 as I haven't produced a Newsletter since Autumn/Winter 2022. Where did the time go? Anyway, Happy 2024.

So, what does this mean? To me personally and for my company a new year often brings a sense of hope, fresh opportunities, and a chance for new beginnings. A chance to set goals, make resolutions, and feel motivated to make positive changes in my life. It's a time to reflect on the past year, learn from experiences, and look forward to what the future holds. It can also bring new challenges, adventures, and unexpected opportunities for growth and personal development. Ultimately, it's a chance to start a new and embrace the possibilities ahead.



## REFLECTIONS & HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023

2023 was a difficult year for a small business. The continued impact of the pandemic and economic instability made this a difficult year. Fortunately, I have managed to weather this storm and my small business has continued to flourish and grow from strength to strength. However, I have only been able to achieve this through the continuous support and repeat business from my customers both existing and new – thank you. I also want to mention and thank the wonderful independent shops who support my small business and display and sell my work in their lovely shops. Without this sales avenue, it would make selling even more difficult.

*Life is too short and unpredictable not to live it exactly as you please!*



## HIGHLIGHTS

One of the personal highlights for me continues to be going into a shop and seeing my work. Although I don't own and run my own shop, my products can be found in some lovely independent shops in the region. For those just recently subscribing to the newsletter, perhaps just a little recap where you can find my products:

- ✚ Strickies Hub (Yarm)
- ✚ Boggle Hole (Northallerton, Harrogate, Knaresborough)
- ✚ Seaside Chic (Seaham Harbour)
- ✚ Sutton Bank Visitors Centre (Thirsk)
- ✚ Helmsley Walled Garden (Helmsley)
- ✚ Preston Park Museum Shop (Eaglescliffe)

Of course, I also sell my products on my website: [www.theglassforge.co.uk](http://www.theglassforge.co.uk) and at local craft events.





## NEW ADDITIONS

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In 2023 I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to display my work in Helmsley Walled Garden shop. For people who are not familiar, this is a historic garden located in the market town of Helmsley in North Yorkshire. They have a lovely little shop attached to the gardens who support small independent businesses and is certainly well worth a visit. My husband and I and our little dog make many trips throughout the year to visit the gardens to see how they change through the seasons. It is absolutely beautiful, and the adjacent cafe is also a must!

I also would like to mention that I joined Little Boggle Hole in Knaresborough. You will probably be familiar already with Boggle Hole in Northallerton and Harrogate and have seen my products in their wonderful shops. Boggle Hole sell handcrafted and hand finished products by a selection of local designers and artist. Again, if you are looking for something handcrafted this shop is well worth a visit.



## HOST AT HOME OR AWAY

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In Autumn 2023 I designed and introduced my 'Host at Home or Away' workshops. This is an extension of the popular workshops I already deliver, but rather than coming to me, I will come to you. This is a great way to bring The Glass Forge Workshop to you. Although this is only a recent development, I have already held a workshop for a Hen Party of 15 in a lodge near Richmond and I am holding a workshop in Great Ayton for a 60th Birthday surprise 😊

If you are looking to challenge yourself and try something new, I would love you to join me in one of my workshops. If you would like to explore this further -please follow the link below:

<https://www.theglassforge.co.uk/events/>



## HOST A TALK

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Another fabulous addition to my portfolio is 'Host a Talk'. In 2024 I will be attending several venues and giving a talk which covers an insight and brief history of glass, and in particular glass fusing.

I am already booked up for a number of events and can't wait to share and introduce what has captured my heart and explain how I have been drawn by the lure and beauty of fused glass.



## CRAFT FAIRS

During 2023 I was extremely busy participating in local craft events. I absolutely love to do this as it gives me a chance to speak to customers and hear their views. I attended both summer and Christmas Fairs and visited some lovely venues and met some wonderful people. It was also really nice to see customers return who I have met at previous craft fairs.



## EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2024

Since 2021 I have had the pleasure of renting my own space in Strickies Hub which can be found in Strickland and Holt, Yarm on the 1st floor. This has been a wonderful experience which has allowed me to showcase my products, which I suppose feels like I have my own little shop, although on a very small scale. It has been lovely to overhear customers commenting on my work, without knowing that I was the designer maker. Thank goodness it has always been positive comments! However, as the quote goes "nothing last forever but the certainty of change." In January 2024 Strickies Hub is closing its doors. Although I will be sad to see this close as it has been an amazing opportunity, and I have had a wonderful time since it opened, I am pleased to say that this is not the end and that I am not moving far, but in fact I am moving downstairs into Strickland and Holt. For those who are not familiar, Strickland and Holt is an independent store based in Yarm. My products, along with other exhibitors, can be found from mid-January, next to the entrance of the coffee shop. I hope that you will come and visit my new space.



## LAST, BUT NOT LEAST...THANK YOU!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank both returning customers and new customers alike for your continued support in my business. I really do appreciate your support more than words can express and never take this for granted. Your belief in my small business means the world to me. I'm truly grateful for every purchase. Thank you for being a part of the journey.

Wishing you all the best for 2024 and I hope that this year is everything you wish for.

*Rachel x*

