

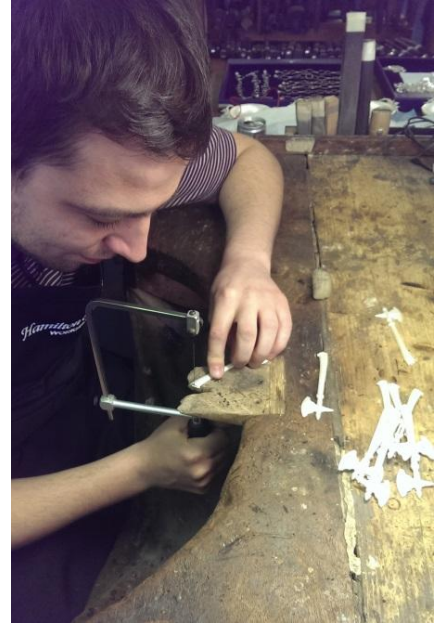


Paul Kircos

Progress report for the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation

Thanks to the generosity of QEST and the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation, I have been able to continue my apprenticeship with the renowned jewellers, Hamilton & Inches of Edinburgh, which began in 2013. I am an apprentice Silversmith and will be specializing in the art of chasing as I progress through my 5 years of training.

In my first year I have been challenged with learning a number of different skills, from making small pieces of individual silver jewellery to collections of silver jewellery designed in-house. I have started learning to make quaichs, a traditional Scottish welcoming cup, which comes in a variety of shapes and sizes. I have also worked on individual commissions, which includes a heart for the Variety Club of Scotland, a large 'treble clef' trophy and decanter stoppers with stags heads and pheasants. Additionally, I have been involved in the cleaning inspection and repair of numerous trophies for The Royal Highland Show held annually at Ingliston, Edinburgh.



Having now embarked on the second year of my apprenticeship, I will carry out one day a week chasing in copper. I will soon transfer these skills to silver pieces and increase the time devoted to this over the ensuing years of my apprenticeship. Chasing is the art of moving the metal to create pictures and shapes using hardened steel punches of many shapes and sizes. The metal is supported by pitch (Bitumen mixed with oils and plaster to give the correct support).



I have represented Hamilton & Inches at numerous events, including The St Andrews Day celebrations sponsored by London Scottish Rugby club held at the Savoy in London, promotions at The Balmoral and Caledonian Hotels in Edinburgh, and was featured in the Edinburgh Festival, both demonstrating my skills at the bench and helping to promote the Hamilton & Inches workshops. A highlight was meeting Camilla, The Duchess of Cornwall at the Edinburgh Fashion Festival.

I am looking forward to facing new challenges that will develop my skills and, in particular, working on more special commissions and individual pieces. I will be training with the polisher to learn this aspect of the trade, which will enable me to consider this when manufacturing. Additionally I will be improving my wood working skills to make trophy bases and other support pieces.

The QUEST Andrew Lloyd Webber Apprenticeship has made an enormous difference to my life, as I can now pursue the career I have dreamed of but not had the opportunity to embark on. I am incredibly grateful for this opportunity.

Report submitted by Paul Kircos, October 2014

