

NEWS



Fire Service 'disappointed' at increase in arson attacks

From front page

deliberate fires in the Stafford area and have been working closely with our colleagues at Staffordshire Police to address this issue.

"This is incredibly disappointing given our Flames Aren't Games campaign ran throughout the Easter holidays highlighting the dangers and consequences of starting fires. We are concerned that this has not acted as a deterrent in this particular area and we will be continuing to work with young people to get these important messages across.

"Fortunately, we do not believe anyone was seriously hurt during these fires, but there was considerable damage to some of the properties, which is of course devastating to the residents.

"We ask everyone in the area to be vigilant and look out for any suspicious behaviour. If you have concerns that someone is starting a fire deliberately, please call the police and if you spot an actual blaze, please call us straight away.

"Please also help us to educate young people by warning your children not to set fires. They could face a Prison sentence or a £5,000 fine."

One resident told the *Newsletter*: "I first noticed the remains of several fires whilst walking my dog in the woodland between Hall Close and Pioneer Way about two months ago. The fires then became bigger and more threatening including a skip outside the allotments in this area, a tree by the entrance to Brocton FC, two large hedge fires to the rear of two properties on Silkmore Crescent, a large hedge fire at a property on Silkmore Lane and two large hedges fires at a property on Meadow Road.

"It is obvious the arsonists responsible need catching as soon as possible, they have no respect and are damaging property, causing risk to life.

Another resident added: "Everyone seems to be of the understanding that the arson attacks are a recent event. But this is not the case - there have been fires in the Silkmore/Queensville area starting in November last year."

Parents have been urged to speak to their children about the dangers and consequences of setting fires. More information on the Flames Aren't Games campaign can be found by visiting www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/your-safety/campaigns/flames-arent-games.

Pottery finds led Lynn to designing jewellery

Mum's new collection is inspired by industry

By Leah Cassady

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A JEWELLERY designer from Stone has released a new collection - inspired by Staffordshire's industrial past.

Half Canadian, half British Lynn Davis was born in Vancouver but moved to the UK in 2008, after meeting her now husband Tim on a cycling holiday in France.

The 41-year-old found it tough being away from home and so tried to immerse herself in the culture and history of the local area. While tending to her first garden, she would find shards of pottery and began collecting them.

After finding pieces in other areas - along the canal, the common and in other counties - Lynn decided to research her collection to help her feel connected to the area.

It wasn't long before her love for this collection merged with her love of jewellery making and *Unearthed* by Lynn was born.

The mother of one said: "I've always been interested in making jewellery and even had a bead party for my 13th birthday.

"A few years after earning my degree in business, I yearned to learn something more creative and began the Jewellery Art and Design Program with Vancouver Community College.

"Now I use my skills to create jewellery incorporating a shard of history, it upcycles unearthed, man-made materials into jewellery with a story that creates connection and evokes memories and stories."

In August 2017, while out searching for pottery with a friend, Lynn came across slag - a mixture of metal oxides, sulphides and silicon dioxide that came from working with iron.

She said: "It struck me how it looked so much like a rock, blending in with the other stones on the path. But when examined closely, my friend pointed out that it had indications of lots of layers and swirls and colours. It



Jewellery designer Lynn Davis. Below some of the pieces.

felt like holding a little piece of history tied into the industrial revolution.

"Like the pottery shards, I felt this connection to history and to a place and that was the start of my inspiration. We collected a few pieces and I held onto them, keeping them with my pottery shards but they then remained forgotten until December 2018.

"At that time, I received a commission request to shape and set some rough garnets.

"Stone cutting is not a skill I possess and so I contacted a hobbyist stone cutter.

"Whilst talking to him about the garnets, I began thinking about those shards and asked if he would be willing to

see how workable they would be. "We weren't sure what we would encounter, it's technically glass so it could shatter or have loads of

imperfections but he accepted the challenge.

"Fortunately, he was able to shape and polish them to make some cabochons and so I created a small collection using the first shards I found."

Each piece

of *Unearthed Jewellery* comes with a copy of the provenance uncovered, which includes where it was unearthed, what it was from, and more.

And so after researching the slag, Lynn discovered the National Slag Collection in the UK and that Staffordshire has multiple blast furnaces which are likely to be where the slag shards she finds along the Staffordshire canal, from Aston Marina up to Barlaston, originated from during 1700-1800s.

She also found that slag was purposefully manufactured and used to create vases and glass for Tiffany lamps.

Speaking about working with slag she said: "Like the pottery shards, I love the connection they provide to history as well as the questions they evoke and mysteries they hold about where the shard came from and who made it.

"I also love the idea of unearthing something that we discarded, and challenging people to look at it differently.

"I find it interesting that manmade items we throw away can be upcycled and made into something beautiful. I prefer to leave the shards as irregular in shape to take advantage of the best colours and patterns in each piece.

"Slag glass has so many layers, colours and textures to it. To me, its appearance is like a semi-precious stone - similar to larimar, agate, malachite, jasper or Lapis."



Residents say 'yes' to Barlaston Neighbourhood Plan

Continued on page 12

consultations with the borough. "Notwithstanding the above, many thanks go to Mrs Karen St Leger and residents of the village who gave their time to consultation groups and responded to surveys and questionnaires."

A Neighbourhood Plan gives residents a say in how they would like their area to develop in future years.

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is formally "adopted" it becomes a legal document that can help determine future planning applications in that area.

A planning application can be refused permission if it does not comply with details contained within a Neighbourhood Plan covering the area earmarked for the development.

And "emerging" Neighbourhood Plans - those that are in the preparation

process but have yet to be formally adopted - can carry some weight during the decision-making process.

A Neighbourhood Plan can only be formally adopted if more than 50 per cent of voters at a referendum in the area covered agree to it.

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