



Stölzle Glass Group

Opening of upgraded Stölzle Flaconnage factory in Knottingley, West Yorkshire, UK

On Tuesday, 6th July, 2010, Stölzle Flaconnage officially opened the multi-million pound upgrade carried out on their Knottingley, West Yorkshire factory.

Some sixty clients and suppliers from both the UK and abroad gathered at the reborn factory site. After a buffet lunch, they were given guided tours of the glass and decoration centres. Sixteen members of the Stölzle Brass Band came over from Austria to play for the guests. In the evening there was a drinks reception in the Tournament Gallery of the Leeds Royal Armouries Museum, and a demonstration of medieval weapons and armour. Dinner was in the Museum's War Gallery, followed by a whisky tasting in the Wellington Suite.

At the dinner Johannes Schick, CEO of the Stoelzle Glass Group and Chairman of the Board of Stoelzle Flaconnage (STF) spoke of the ups and downs that had been experienced over the past six years.

'I visited STF together with Dr Grupp two days after I joined the Stölzle Glass Group and immediately realised two things: first that the old fashioned way things were being run needed to change and, second, that the glass being produced was of fantastic quality and I sensed a great team spirit amongst the work force. We tightened all our operations and increased efficiency throughout the factory, turning round the financial situation. By the end of 2005, however, the furnace needed urgent and costly repairs and we had to consider whether the company could continue. The decision was taken to give the furnace another three years of life and in 2006 and 2007 we made tremendous progress in all areas.

'In spring 2008 we took our first major investment decisions. These were to increase capacity from a 4 to a 5 line operation and to double the decoration centre. All the installation work was completed, motivation was



Then, at the beginning of 2009, the economic and financial crisis hit. It caused the temporary shut-down of two lines and a significant decrease in manning. It was impossible to say for how long this situation would last. However in May 2009 we drew up a master plan for our Prestige and Beauty business, a plan that was to make STF the STO Group flagship in that division. That is when the decision was taken to revamp the entire factory and the idea of the Customer Centre was born. In addition we decided to advance the furnace rebuild by one year, to invest in Cold End equipment on 3 lines, to enlarge the Cold End area and to build a new mould shop; a major CAPEX package which over the last two-and-a-half years would reach £15million. I personally had the pleasure of convincing our owner that the investment should go through. Despite the economy being in the deepest financial crisis, Dr Grupp showed complete trust in us and approved the investment.

‘The changes and developments that have resulted in the new STF have been a great step forward not only for the company itself but also for the Group, for West Yorkshire and the North of England, but, above all, for all our employees, who now work in an environment that encourages their endeavours to ensure that all our glass containers, whether decorated or not, are perfect when they leave our plant.

‘That is the key and so we invite all our partners, suppliers, designers and, most importantly, our customers to give us their trust. This is what we need so that we can make them happy in the way we fulfil their demands and convince them they do better with us than without us.’

The upgrade, carried out in the teeth of the recession, has introduced state-of-the-art decoration machinery and increased the size of the decoration facility by over 50%; installed a major investment new furnace, and a brand new Customer Centre, together with a mould design department. It has brought an already efficient glass moulding and decoration factory into the twenty first century and placed it at the forefront of the Prestige Spirits and Perfumery and Personal Care markets.

There are four production sites in the international Stölzle Glass Group: Great Britain, Austria (its headquarters location), Poland and the Czech Republic. Sales offices are in France, the US, Moscow and Vienna. Altogether STO services clients from more than eighty countries. The Group produces glass for two main areas: Healthcare and Consumer, and Prestige and Beauty. The Group is part of an international private company: CAG Holding GmbH, which belongs to Dr Cornelius Grupp.