

Dodge Interiors

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Dodges celebrates 160 years in Sherborne

In 1847 William Dodge bought 74 and 76 Cheap Street in Sherborne and started selling handmade boots. 160 years later, Adrian and Simon Dodge, William's Great, Great Grandsons, are celebrating Dodge's birthday in Sherborne, on the very same high street - Adrian at Dodge Interiors and Simon at Dodge & Son Antiques.

Adrian Dodge comments: "When our Great, Great Grandparents set up their shop at what is now The Abbey Book Shop, they could never have dreamt that, 160 years later, their family name would still be on a name board in Cheap Street. The location has been central to our success; people come to Sherborne because of its individual shops and the friendliness of the town. We value our roots in Sherborne and the support that has been extended to our family business by the local community."

Dodges has trained its own teams of upholsterers, carpet fitters and curtain and cabinetmakers over the years. Many of the staff have worked for Dodges for 20, 30 and even 40 years*, bringing a wealth of experience and knowledge to the furnishing and antiques business.

"Our family's expertise in selecting, designing and maintaining interior furnishings and antiques and has been passed on through each generation and we are proud of what we have achieved. Our approach has always been to offer the very best quality soft furnishings, interiors and furniture in the region, alongside a team of skilled and knowledgeable staff. There have been many milestones in our history – properties up and down Cheap Street, refurbishment work and a World Record - and we look forward to another 160 years with many more high points!" said Adrian Dodge.

To mark 160 years, Adrian has re-made one Augustus Rex sofa, which won the World Record for the longest sofa for the market in the late 1980's at 12 foot 3 inches. This is on show and for sale in Dodge Interiors' showrooms.

A brief history of Dodges in Cheap Street...

- In **1847** the Dodge family commenced trading on The Parade in Sherborne at 74 and 76 Cheap Street. When Adrian and Simon's Great Great Grandfather William died, 74 Cheap Street was sold and their Great Great Uncle William continued trading in number 76. The business was passed through the generations of Adrian and Simon's Great Grandfather Augustus (1850's), their Great Uncle Gus (1880's) and their Grandfather Harold (1890's). In the **1880's** Gus also lived at 57 Cheap Street (now Bateman's Opticians) and started an ironmongers.
- In **1907** – exactly 100 years ago – Great Grandfather Augustus bought 33 Cheap Street, which is still the principle part of Simon's Antique Shop. In **1918** Grandfather Harold returned from World War 1 and continued trading at 33 Cheap Street.

- Grandfather Harold's Son, Jack, (Adrian and Simon's Father) joined the business in **1945** when he returned from World War II. Then named Dodge & Son, Jack bought 28 Cheap Street, bringing the soft furnishing and carpet business to the high street.
- Adrian returned to Sherborne in **1972** and started working with his Father. In **1976** another property was bought, 30 Cheap Street, expanding the business further and Simon also started working in the partnership.
- By **1982**, 31 Cheap Street had also been bought; giving Dodges four properties, positioned opposite each other on Cheap Street (number 28, 30, 31 and 33). At this stage, the stores were completely refurbished and the first floors converted to create a total of 10, 000 square feet of shopping space.
- In **1988** Dodges achieved the world record for the 'longest sofa for the market' (12-foot, 3 inches), designed by Adrian Dodge and awarded by The Guinness Book of Records.
- In **1998** Simon's wife, Felicity, joined the business and began expanding the reproduction furniture side of the business, offering a high end catalogue of custom-made traditional and country furniture.
- In **1999** Samantha Dodge, the fourth generation Dodge in the Company, joined to run the London Interiors showroom. Samantha returned to Sherborne in **2003** and expanded the interior design service to encompass Dorset and its surrounding counties, whilst also maintaining links with London. In **2006** Dodge Interiors and Dodge & Son Antiques underwent a complete refurbishment, 24 years after the initial expansion programme.

For further information about Dodge Interiors Ltd please call Adrian Dodge on tel: 01935 818150, email: ad@dodgeinteriors.com or visit Dodge Interiors' new website: www.dodgeinteriors.com

For further information about Dodge & Son Antiques please contact Simon Dodge on tel: 01935 815151 or visit www.dodgeandson.com

For further press information or images please contact Abbie Tinsley at Positive PR on tel: 01935 389497 or email: abbie@positivepr.co.uk. Caption reads: Celebrating 160 years in Sherborne - 3 generations of the Dodge family on a world record breaking Augustus Rex sofa, Cheap Street, Sherborne. From left to right - Adrian, Samantha, Jack, Wini, Felicity and Simon

(011) May 2007

***The Dodge's team and the number of years members of staff have worked for the two companies: -**

Dodge & Son Antiques:

Simon Dodge (MD, Dodge & Son Antiques), 31 years

Felicity Dodge (Business Manager, Dodge & Son Antiques), 9 years

Andy Cowley (Furniture Restorer), 25 years

Dodge Interiors:

Adrian Dodge (MD, Dodge Interiors), 35 years
Samantha Dodge (Interior Designer), 8 years
John Harper (Carpet Manager), 2 years
Claire Burden (Bed Manager), 21 years
Bridget Butcher (Sales and Management), 36 years
Maria Grimes (Purchase Ledger), 10 years
Mandy Pullen (Expert Seamstress), 20 years
Margot Elliot (Bed shop and Fabric Manger), 17 years
Karen Charter (Sales and Management), 7 years
Roy Lane (Upholsterer), 45 years
Daphne Roddis (Workshop Manager), 18 years
Anne Stent (Expert Seamstress), 22 years
Mike Butler (Curtain and Track Fitting Expert), 6 years
Peter Loveluck (Fitting Expert), 31 years
Howard Legg (Carpet Fitting Expert), 32 years
Simon Bowen (Carpet Fitting Expert), 13 years
Tom Chant (Carpet Fitting Expert), 22 years
Karen Armes (Wages & Sales Ledger), 6 years

A total of 414 years experience with Dodges!