

THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF BRYAN DONKIN

Gas Valve Manufacturer Bryan Donkin Valves celebrates the 250th Anniversary of the Birth of Industrial Revolution Pioneer, Inventor and Company Founder.

Chesterfield-based gas valve manufacturer, Bryan Donkin Valves Limited, part of the global AVK Group of Companies, has celebrated the 250th anniversary of the birth of its founder, Bryan Donkin, with the unveiling of a specially-commissioned painting depicting many of his inventions alongside products developed by the company he founded in 1802.

Born on 22 March 1768, Bryan Donkin FRS FRAS was a leading pioneer in the industrial revolution, inventing the paper-making machine and the tin can. He was also an engineering partner of other illustrious pioneers including Brunel, Telford and Babbage.

Donkin also invented the steel pen nib and, so fundamental to the company that still bears his name, the gas valve. The Bryan Donkin Company he founded now has a global presence, with sister companies as far afield as AVK Polska in Poland and Syntec in China.

The commemorative painting, by local artist Lily Hammond, was unveiled at AVK's flagship gas valve facility in Staveley, East Derbyshire by Richard Donkin, great-great-great grandson of Bryan Donkin and by Lily herself. Paul Hubbard, Chairman of the AVK UK Companies, then presented the Bryan Donkin Archive Trust with a cheque to fund the restoration of Bryan Donkin's grave in Nunhead cemetery, South London.

Paul Hubbard said: "We are celebrating a true pioneer who accomplished so much in his lifetime and whose products and inventions continue to benefit the world. Where would we be without the tin can? Or the paper-making machine?"

"Moreover, where would I and my colleagues be had this great man not invented the gas valve that is still in use in multiple forms around the globe?"

"Our links with Bryan Donkin's family have continued down the centuries and we are delighted to welcome them to Staveley where they can see the international legacy of their forebear's

achievements. We continue to benefit from the reputation and prestige of the Bryan Donkin name as a by-word for engineering prowess and invention."

Richard Donkin said: "The Donkin family is proud of what my great-great-great grandfather achieved. He sat at the top table with others who genuinely changed the world for the better. He co-founded The Royal Society, developed the first paper making machine and even the tin can which is still preserving food for millions around the world today".

"It is an honour to unveil this painting which depicts some of his achievements and others that the company that still bears his name have developed over the generations."

As well as being a prolific inventor, Bryan Donkin was renowned as a civil engineer who straddled the industrial revolution, working with Thomas Telford on the development of the Caledonian Canal; with Marc and Isambard Brunel on the Thames Tunnel; and with Charles Babbage on the very first computer.

Building on their founder's reputation for innovation, Bryan Donkin Valves Ltd's technical team continues to develop new products for the global gas industry and to continuously improve processes for the manufacture of the products at Staveley. Fifty five new products were launched in the last three years by AVK companies in the UK, including Bryan Donkin Valves. Recent innovations include an anti-corrosion polyurethane coating to protect valves when installed underground; a 400mm polyethylene spigotted valve for the Irish market; and a DN800 gate valve for the North London mains diversion.

Last year, the company became the first manufacturer in the gas distribution sector to achieve the ISO/TS 29001:2011 international standard for its entire design-to-delivery, gas valve manufacturing process of the Donkin gas valve range.

A champagne reception for invited guests which included a number of descendants of Bryan Donkin, archivists and trustees, and also retired and current members of staff, followed the unveiling.

More about Lily Hammond can be found here www.lilyhammondart.com

For more information about Bryan Donkin Valves contact +44 (0) 1246 479100



Left to right - Bridget Barry*, Caroline Donkin, Charles Donkin*, Paul Hubbard, Rosie Deakin*, Gerald Deakin, Richard Donkin*

*Great, great, great grandchildren.



Richard Donkin and artist, Lily Hammond unveiling the painting.

