



The 1st of December saw the 81st British Jewellery Giftware & Finishing Federation Benevolent Society Ball take place at The St Johns Hotel Solihull, with Jewellery & Watch as Headline Sponsor.

Incorporated within this longstanding annual Charity Event were the National Association of Jewellers Member Awards which are designed to flag up all that is most excellent about the UK's extremely diverse jewellery industry: its bright new talent, its design skills and creativity and its capacity to truly serve its customers whether they are other businesses, on-line jewellery buyers or the consumer in the High Street.

The Benevolent Society Ball attracts guests from the jewellery, giftware, surface engineering and luggage and leathersgoods associations which are member organisations of the British Allied Trades Federation.

David Simons, the Benevolent Society's Chairman, was delighted that over 400 guests attended the black tie event with many companies using it as the perfect occasion to celebrate Christmas with staff and their colleagues. He was equally delighted to thank Lynn Snead, Jodie Littleford of T H March, and Gill Price for all of their hard work in organising this highly successful night out.

The Benevolent Society was particularly grateful that Jewellery & Watch had agreed to become the Headline Sponsor for the Charity Evening. This is yet another indication of how this progressive events company continues to engage and work closely with all Sectors of the Jewellery & Giftware Trades for the benefit of all.

A Charity Auction was conducted by David Doyle of Jewellery Brokers, the Society's Vice Chairman, (with a little help from youngster Tom Bennet, whose parents Steve & Sarah Bennet own Gemporica) and early indications are that over £40,000 was raised on the evening for the Charity. Lots donated for the Auction included Lunch for 10 at The Assay Office Birmingham with Lord Digby Jones as guest host sponsored by Laurence Blunt. This Auction Lot proved so popular that David felt obliged to sell this Lot twice to both Mark Smith of T H March and Sam Willoughby of Reed Exhibitions!

A stunning hallmarked Britannia Fine Silver Bowl made by leading Silversmith Andrew Macgowan and sponsored by Stuart Wibberley and all at Cooksongold was bought by Asa Harrison of Cooksongold, and a very generous donation from Clogau of a Champagne Afternoon Tea by at Kensington Palace with overnight accommodation was bought by Maggie Field the previous owner of Sutton Tools.

Another highly sought after Auction Lot was the second T H March Clay Pigeon Shooting Day and Dinner with fiercely competitive bidding by several interested parties. Eventually Oliver Sutton and Tom Green of Charles Green secured this fabulous day out for their Company.

The final Lot that was keenly bid for, and so was also sold twice on the evening so as not to disappoint, was a Day at Dan Skelton's Racing Stables. Dan's Father Nick Skelton is our Country's oldest Gold Medal Winner and as a top show-jumper has just been nominated for the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award. These two days were bought respectively by Gary Wroe of Hockley Mint and Patrick Sheehan of H S Walsh. The Benevolent Society and attending guests were delighted with the outstanding generosity of all of the evening's bidders!

The hugely successful Tombola and Raffle were generously supported as always by the Federation's Giftware Association and Michael Papé of Ravensden PLC and his company who generously donated some beautiful Orang utan and other plush soft toys that went down very well with the guests as they bought either these or larger Tigers with all of the proceeds going directly to the Charity.

The Benevolent Society was also pleased to receive a substantial donation from the Surface Engineering Association, and were delighted that the current BATF President Michael Sweeney attended the Event.

Tables at this year's event were taken by many companies, including the CMJ, Cooksongold, Charles Green & Sons, Gemporja, Continental Jewellery, Diamonds Please, Weston Beamor, Hockley Mint, Clogau Gold, C W Sellors, T H March, Mastermelts and Rivermounts, to name but a few.

The date for next year's Benevolent Society Ball is Thursday 30th November and it will again be held at The St John' Hotel, Solihull following the success of this year's Ball. Early bird tickets at a special rate can be obtained by contacting either Laura Banner or Gill Price at the Federation (07985 611209 or 0121 237 1138).