

James Tourgout



CROWN steward Christopher Jowett cut a ribbon of a different kind to open a new community stone workspace on Portland.

He used a sledgehammer to crack open a stone ribbon, specially carved for the ceremony at the Drill Hall on Tophill.

Portland Sculpture and Quarry Trust (PSQT) held the ceremony to celebrate the newly refurbished and equipped workspace.

There is also a new exhibition area and project space for use by craft workers from Portland and wider afield.

A spokesman for the trust said: "It was a very enjoyable day with the amazing sound that was heard by everyone when the carved ribbon stone was split by Christopher Jowett, Crown Steward, with just three strikes.

"The carving of the beautiful flowing ribbon was by Guy Stevens and the stone was skilfully set up and positioned by quarryman Ralph Stone to dramatically fall in two halves with just one strike to each plug and feather."

Mr Jowett used the traditional stone-working technique with plugs and feathers to cut the stone ribbon.

The development at the Drill Hall was partially funded by the European Agricultural Fund for European Development 2007-2013: Europe investing in rural areas, Dorset County Council, Arts Council England and Portland Sculpture and Quarry Trust.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was followed by a speech from Professor Denys Bruntsen, who envisaged and led the development of the UNESCO Jurassic Coast world heritage site.

Julian Smallshaw, from the Institute of Quarrying Education and Training, spoke about the potential for PSQT courses to be endorsed.

Some 60 students from the Portland Academy also performed a production called Walk Through Time at the ceremony.

They will perform it again at the

STONE RIBBON: Crown Steward Christopher Jowett cuts the stone ribbon. Inset, the Walk Through Time performance



CRACKING DAY FOR NEW ARTS SPACE LAUNCH

Drill Hall as a fundraiser to take the performance to Brazil for the Olympics in 2016.

There were demonstrations of carving skills and display of work by local stone carvers and artists.

Guests could also see an exhibition in the new naturally lit gallery space of the Gift for Portland Project where models, maquettes, drawings, books, costumes and stone carvings

were shown by architecture students from the University of Brighton who discussed their work, based on the myths and legends of the island.

The complex also has new facilities for work in clay and kiln firing. The opening was well attended by councillors, the community, teachers from the Portland Academy, John Tweed from the sailing academy, Port-

land Mayor Les Ames and Hannah Lovegrove of Chalk and Cheese Local Action Group.

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