

Optical Heritage

History isn't heritage – that school experience of history rote of some long distance past events isn't the same as a group of technicians recalling those inherited experiences remembering "how we used to do it" of production methods and machines used.

Craft skills change with each generation; our optical forbears gave great service. Soon Poker arm, 122, Radmaster, hanging spindle, pitch pot, shanking pliers, melton cloth, red rouge even 524 and 722 will be history but just now, albeit for a dwindling few, they are heritage. (See below for photo quiz!)



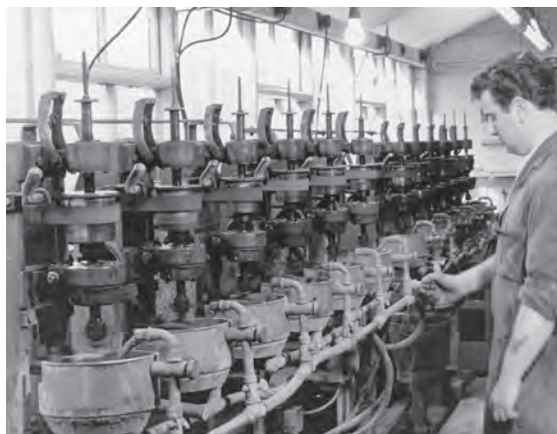
1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

The College of Optometrists maintains the British Optical Association Museum at their London headquarters (Curator Neil Handley). Mainly spectacle frames and eye testing equipment. Unfortunately their space is very limited so they are unable to store much in the way of optical production equipment. There is some in the reserve store of the London Science Museum and Norville hold a few items in our Gloucester Display. Very little else of optical production machinery has been preserved. Members of the Optical Antiques International Collectors Club do their best to keep on track.

www.college-optometrists.org/museum

www.oaicc.com

- 1. Poker Arm
- 2. 122 Hand Generator
- 3. Radmaster
- 4. Hanging Spindle
- 5. UKO Newfit 524

Norville have a small display of ophthalmic products, frames and lenses available to visit at our Gloucester Training & Heritage centre.

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Even today's Rx spectacle manufacturing, certainly of the style we undertake, is still a craft occupation. That means lots of individual people who, as each year passes, so does their knowledge and skill improve with practice. Many wonderful people have spent a significant proportion of their working careers making spectacles in our various Gloucester locations as we have grown over 70 years of spectacle making under Norville Optical, prior to that 50 years of F Norville Opticians, not overlooking our nationwide network of spectacle manufacturing locations, a total of 9 at our peak. We have completed transferring hundreds of photographs onto our website heritage section: spot someone you know. Enjoy the memories. www.norville.co.uk.

