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**The
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**CELEBRATING
CLERKENWELL DESIGN WEEK
22-24 MAY**

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The unique spring system that gave rise to the iconic Anglepoise lamp was invented 80 years ago this year. Yvonne Courtney sheds light on the story behind the bright British brand

For design-led businesses, innovation is about more than simply bringing out new products, and it is a credit to Anglepoise that it continues to stand out in today's competitive lighting market. It hasn't always been an easy ride. But, for decades, the unassuming lamps have been working consistently hard, casting their yellow glow over many a creative's desk or technician's bench.

Synonymous with precision engineering and timeless design, the Anglepoise lamp was, in fact, created by accident. British car designer George Carwardine was always testing springs for use in suspension systems. In 1932 he developed an "equiposing" system of four springs that could hold itself rigid when moved into different positions. This system then became the key component in ultra-practical "task lights" he devised for the engineers in his own workshop.

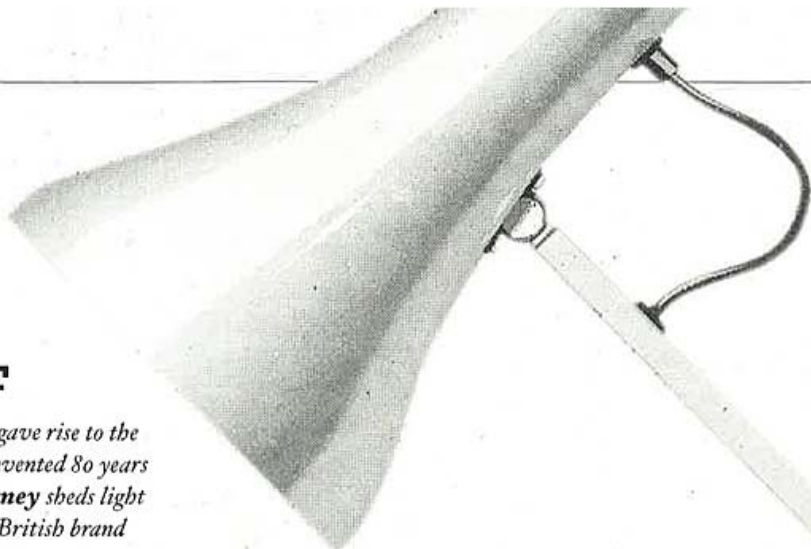
As interest and demand grew, Carwardine licensed Redditch manufacturer Herbert Terry & Sons (whose London office was in EC1) to produce his industrial design. The first model, the four-spring 1208, came out in 1934. It proved so popular that a domestic version, the three-spring 1227, was launched the following year. Its advertising campaign claimed that a 25 watt bulb in an Anglepoise was as efficient as a 60 watt bulb in an alternative light.

Further models ensued (including the revised 1227 of 1939, which is considered to be "the classic") and production continued through the decades. When war was declared, the *Telegraph* told its readers that the Anglepoise made the "ideal black-out lamp". The BBC equipped its offices with Anglepoises – although in 1949 it issued a memo to staff forbidding their use unless other lights in the room were also on. This was down to a belief that working in a confined space with only the light from a low-wattage lamp would nurture furtive ideas and produce degenerate material.

By the 1990s, Anglepoise was under increasing pressure from cheaper imports. By 2001, the company, now run by fifth-generation father and son John and Simon Terry, realised something drastic had to be done. Looking through the archives, Simon came across a quote from the Eighties from legendary designer Kenneth Grange: "The Anglepoise is a minor miracle of balance – a quality in life that we do not value as we should." Grange was immediately appointed design director and tasked with overhauling the company. Key to this was rejuvenating some of the original models.

Grange's magic has ensured the continued success of the brand, which is being celebrated locally this May as part of Clerkenwell Design Week. For the festival, it is bringing its range to the Farmiloe Building, where it will also be launching new models. Tried and tested for what is now nearly a century, the Anglepoise lamp has proved hard to beat, making it a true design icon.

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ANGLEPOISE TIMELINE



1932 George Carwardine patents his four-spring lamp

1934 Herbert Terry & Sons produces the first, industrial Anglepoise, the 1208

1935 The first lamp for domestic use, the 1227, is launched



1939 A new 1227 ("the classic") is released

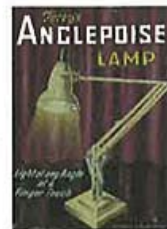
1969 The 1227 is replaced by the Model 75

1989 The Apex 90 refines the design of the Model 75

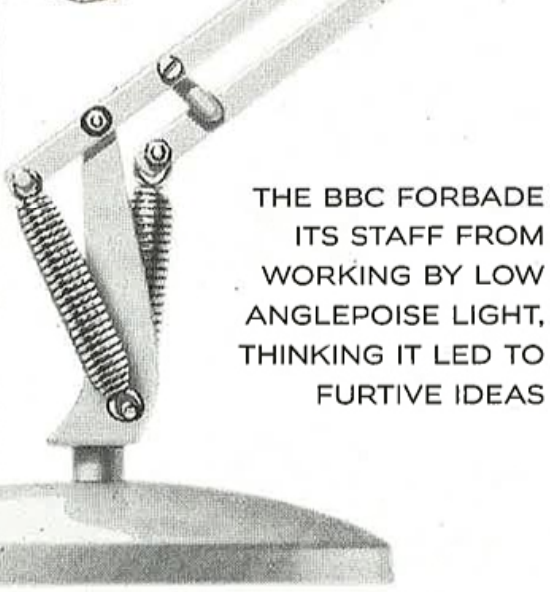
2003 Introduction of the Type 3, the contemporary version of the original 1227, designed by Kenneth Grange

2004 Grange revises the Model 75 and names it the Type 75. The giant Anglepoise floor lamp goes into production

2009 Anglepoise celebrates 75 years by reissuing the original 1227



2012 The 80th anniversary of Carwardine's invention



THE BBC FORBADE ITS STAFF FROM WORKING BY LOW ANGLEPOISE LIGHT, THINKING IT LED TO FURTIVE IDEAS

PETER'S PERSPECTIVE



Local architecture authority Peter Murray on why the Farmiloe is a design gem in itself

Apart from all the products, of course, one of the highlights of Clerkenwell Design Week (CDW) is one of the main venues: the wonderful Farmiloe Building on St John Street.

This exotic 19th century Venetian-style palazzo was, until relatively recently, the headquarters of George Farmiloe & Sons, a lead and glass merchant. The company moved to Mitcham in 1999.

Inside the courtyard building, the CDW visitor will discover the well-used warehouses that once stored a gallimaufry of building products. The brickwork is scraped and scarred by untold carts and lorries; the timber beams are worn by pulleys and ropes.

It is a rich and evocative place that still exists in its original form, thanks to luck and the difficulty with which the present owner, Tim Farmiloe, has had in finding a permanent use for it that does the "right thing" for Clerkenwell.

The public first discovered the building when Tim agreed to open it for the first London Architecture Biennale, a Clerkenwell-based event I founded in 2004. It was pretty much as it had been left. There were piles of invoices dating back 100 years, and the mahogany-partitioned offices still had their Bakelite phones and typewriters.

Since then, several plans have been drawn up to redevelop the site, but none has gone forward.

It is great that the industrial heritage of Clerkenwell has adapted so elegantly to the needs of the creative professional – but however much architects strive to retain old features, some of the grittiness of the original is always lost.

The Farmiloe Building is the real deal, hanging on in the face of a fast-changing world. Enjoy it while you can.

Peter Murray is chairman of Clerkenwell consultancy Wordsearch (www.wordsearch.co.uk). He is also founder-director of the London Festival of Architecture, which is on from 23 June to 8 July (www.lfa2012.org)