

Design firm leaves London for new base in Berkshires
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news & notes from the region

Design firm leaves London for new base in Berkshires

BY JOHN TOWNES

A couple with a London-based website development and graphic design firm recently made the leap from Great Britain to the Berkshires.

Richard and Abby Tovell launched the American version of their business, T Square Design Studio, in April, after purchasing a house in Housatonic that also serves as their office.

Both of them have experience that has included working for other agencies and as freelancers during their careers.

Richard is a native of England who is a graphic designer. While he works in a mix of media for various types of clients, he has developed a specialty of producing the graphic elements of educational and information displays and exhibits for museums and other public sites, as well as supplementary print material.

Abby is originally from New York, and has worked with electronic

and online marketing and design since 1991. She was transferred to London while working for the firm KPE. She subsequently worked for awhile as a freelancer. During that period she met her husband, and they decided to start their own agency in 2006.

T Square’s services include working with clients on development of a brand identity and marketing strategies, website design and development, and the creation and design of physical displays and print material, among others.

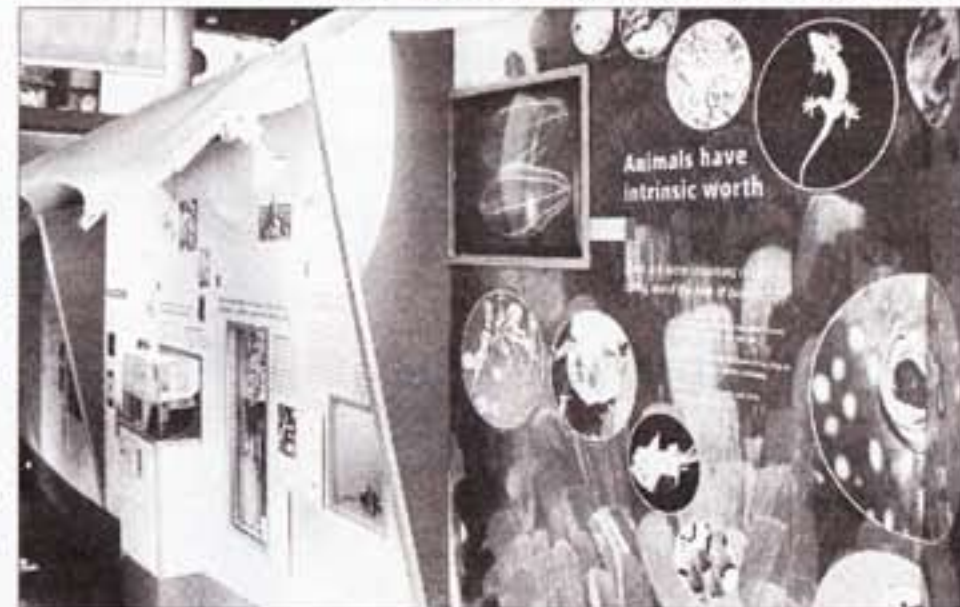
“We each do different types of design, but there is also an overlap,” Abby Tovell said. “It works out well because our skills complement each other, and we are able to offer clients a wide range of services. We also can bring different perspectives to projects.”

When based in London, their client base was primarily in the United Kingdom with some American accounts. Their clients have included Health Products for Life, Perfect Day (a financial services firm), the Horniman Museum aquarium, the Rievalux Abbey visitors center and Me Time beauty salon, among others.

Tovell said the couple will continue to work for some of their existing clients from their new Berkshire base.



Abby and Richard Tovell (joined here by Spike, their Parson Russell Terrier) have shifted their graphic design firm from busy London to the quiet village of Housatonic. Their work has included displays for clients such as the Rievalux Abbey visitors center (left) and the London Zoo (right).



“These days, with the Internet and other technology, it is less important where you are physically located,” she said. “We have a number of clients we have never met in person, because our communications have all been through the telephone, email and faxes. So it doesn’t really matter whether we are talking or sending emails to them from England or here.”

Their goal for T Square Design Studio (413-212-8019 or www.tsquareds.com) is to combine these existing clients with new ones from this area. Tovell said they are currently trying to establish contacts in Berkshire County, as well as those she had made when she worked in New York. “We’ll go anywhere for a job, but we’re particularly interested in working with organizations and businesses in the Berkshire County area,” she said.

She added that, while Richard’s work is most suited to museums and other institutions, her own emphasis is on small businesses and start-ups. “That’s a good fit for me,” she said.

She noted that the Berkshire Creative organization has been especially helpful to them, in terms of suggesting ways to make contacts and other advice.

Tovell said that they had planned to move to the Berkshires

for awhile. They have two young children and had wanted to leave the city and move to a more rural environment.

The couple had come here regularly for visits, and she said both of them felt a strong affinity for the Berkshires. “We love this area,

and have family and friends around here,” she said. “We really appreciate the combination of a creative and rural environment.”

When she was growing up, she explained, her family had spent a lot of time in the Berkshires, and she had gone to summer camp here. Her father currently has a home in Richmond.

“My husband was also familiar with this area before we met, because he had been a camp counselor in the Berkshires when he was young,” she noted.

Tovell said that they had previously kept postponing a move because the thought of starting over with their business seemed impractical.

“We had thought about doing it for years, but we held off,” she said. “However, with the recession, we figured we’d have to do a lot of marketing of ourselves over there, to keep business coming in. So we figured, since we had to do that anyway, why not do it here instead?”◆