



CHANCE  
GLASSWORKS  
HERITAGE  
TRUST

# *The Flash*

the email bulletin of CGWHT

[www.cgwht.org](http://www.cgwht.org)

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Hallo and welcome to *The Flash*, the official *ad hoc* email bulletin of Chance Glass Works Heritage Trust (CGWHT).

## PROGRESS UPDATE AND LATEST NEWS

### Forthcoming presentation

For anyone even remotely interested in Chance this is surely one not to be missed ...

### Step indside the Great Exhibition 1851



Unless you are very old (and I mean really, really old) you probably didn't get to the 1851 Exhibition. But you can change that, because at 19.00 on 14th December 2016, David de Haan is leading a guided tour of the Great Exhibition in a talk for **History West Midlands**.

'The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, 1851' – to give it its full title – was held in Hyde Park that year and over 6 million people visited. That's about 1 in 3 of the entire population. When the design for the building was first published in June 1850, Punch dubbed the architectural style 'Early English Shed', but by 2nd November had been won over as the light and airy building grew, and changed the description to 'Crystal Palace'. The name stuck.

It was a temporary exhibition which ran six days a week from Thursday 1st May until Wednesday 15th October 1851. With days lost for Sundays, private views for exhibitors, plus the Opening and Closing ceremonies, the public had access on 141 days between 9am and 6pm. Queen Victoria visited 41 times!

From plans, catalogues and prints, the layout and content of the 1851 Exhibition has been reconstructed, making it possible to visit stand after stand in the order the Victorians would have seen them. Individual exhibits have been identified, foreign products marvelled at, and the whole atmosphere of the original Crystal Palace will be brought to life.

If you come to this talk you will be able to say you did visit the 1851 Exhibition after all!

So don't delay order your ticket for this unique History West Midlands event.

Places are strictly limited

**Price** £15 per person (including refreshments)

**Date** Wednesday 14th December 2016

**Time** Doors open 18:30 for 19:00 start

**Venue** Austin Court, 80 Cambridge Street, Birmingham, B1 2NP (near the Library of Birmingham)  
[austincourt.theiet.org](http://austincourt.theiet.org)

Booking information and more at: <http://historywm.com/step-inside-the-great-exhibition-1851/>

## Website

**www.cgwht.org**, already crammed with information and becoming more so by the day, has recently undergone its first major overhaul since its launch just a few months ago. For the technically minded we have relocated to a new server but the first thing most people will notice is its revamped front page that now includes faster viewing of imagery together with direct access at a click to our contact details, newsletter sign-up and a slick entry point to the all-important **Latest News**.

There is also rapid access to our **Donation** facilities and a downloadable **Gift Aid** form is now available online.

A range of social media feeds are now available on our opening page (*see also panel at end of this issue - Ed*) and we welcome people to tweet or post their Chance memories or images, visits to lighthouses or anything else of interest so that we can accumulate followers and re-tweets. There are also many people who have worked at Chance or have since revisited since it became derelict and we would welcome their contributions.

To top it all we now have analysis facilities that will be increasingly helpful as developments progress but we are already in a position to confirm that our endeavours are attracting interest across the globe with website 'hits' as far afield as Europe, USA, and Australia.

Our thanks go to all who have contributed to this upgrade, with particular appreciation to Matt Scarth of **The Web in a Box** <http://www.thewebinabox.co.uk/> for his expertise and assistance.

## Happy hallo, sad farewell

We are delighted to welcome three new members to the CGWHT Board of Trustees: **Paul Mountain** (Solicitor) **Steve Lomas** (Accountant) and **Lizzy Jordan** (Bid writer). Profiles of each will appear on **www.cgwht.org** in due course, in the meantime we welcome their input and a combination of their very considerable expertise at what will doubtless prove to be a particularly exciting period of CGWHT's development.

Regrettably this all comes commensurate that we say cheerio to **Sue Howarth** who, owing to a change in her career circumstances, has decided it is time to move on. As one of our founding Trustees Sue has played a leading role in steering CGWHT to its present position as sole facilitator to regenerate the iconic Chance site. Whilst we are saddened by her departure, we are encouraged that she has offered her continuing support and we offer her our thanks and sincere good wishes in equal measure. Bye bye, Sue. Much obliged.

## New friends

CGWHT is now a member of the Heritage Trust Network. This is the new name for the Association Building Preservation Trust, the umbrella body for any not-for-profit groups concerned with historic buildings and heritage assets at risk. [www.heritagetrustnetwork.org.uk](http://www.heritagetrustnetwork.org.uk)

We are also pleased to announce our informal association with the British Glass Foundation (BGF). Recent discussions between representatives of BGF and CGWHT - your Editor declares an interest as a Trustee of both - have helped to identify a number of common grounds where it is felt that cooperation and cross-pollination could be mutually beneficial. These include community engagement, enhancement of social infrastructure preservation and restoration of artifacts, interpretation of historical provenance and, of course, glass.

As part of this synergy between CGWHT and BGF, henceforth *The Flash* will be distributed to BGF members alongside the BGF's own free email bulletin [GlassCuts](#).

Learn more about BGF, and subscribe to [GlassCuts](#), at [www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk](http://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk)

## Taking a Chance in Brummagem

Our attention has been drawn to the huge range of Chance-related exhibits and artifacts held by Birmingham Museums Trust. Many are in storage but some are on display in the Think Tank and the main museum in the city. [www.birminghammuseums.org.uk](http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk)

## Take a look

Some excellent images, including spectacular views of the tunnels under the Chance site. <http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/chance-bros-glassworks-smethwick-2005-2015.194835>  
(Spotter: Mark Davies)

## Gifts and donations

Donations are always gratefully received. For details of the various ways you can support us financially visit our website and simply hit the **Donate** button whereupon all will be revealed. Alternatively, we are pleased to accept donations direct.

CGWHT is constantly reviewing its donation procedures. At present we accept donations direct by cash, cheque, BACS and on-line.

For donations by **BACS** either as a one-off payment or on-going standing order. Our bank details are:

Unity Trust Bank, Chance Glass Works Heritage Trust  
sort code 60-83-01 a/c no: 20350455:

**Cheques, postal orders, etc** payable to CGWHT (*please, do not post cash*)

c/o ER Grove & Co Accountants:

Grove House: Coombs Wood Court: Steel Park Road: Halesowen: West Midlands B62 8BF

**Cash** against receipt can be accepted direct by a CGHWT representative; contact us via [info@cgwht.org](mailto:info@cgwht.org) to discuss.

**Just Giving** gifts can be made via the **Donate** button on our website or by clicking here: [www.justgiving.com/CGWHT/donate/?utm\\_source=website\\_cid794102&utm\\_medium=buttons&utm\\_content=CGWHT&utm\\_campaign=donate\\_purple](http://www.justgiving.com/CGWHT/donate/?utm_source=website_cid794102&utm_medium=buttons&utm_content=CGWHT&utm_campaign=donate_purple)

Potential donors are advised that contributions via Just Giving may invoke commission fees that are beyond the control of CGWHT.

Donations made by a UK taxpayer can attract **Gift Aid**, which is a great supplement to our funds and costs the donor nothing. All we need to claim this is your Gift Aid declaration; contact us for details if you have not already supplied us with relevant particulars or visit the **Donations** area at **www.cgwht.org** where you will find a downloadable **Gift Aid** form that can be completed and submitted on-line..

Please note: In acknowledging the support of donors *The Flash* generally will not reveal either the details of the donor or the amount donated unless the donor indicates otherwise or the circumstances are in the public domain or public interest. This does not preclude the possibility of details, including the amount donated and/or the donor's particulars, appearing elsewhere in CGWHT material.

All donations are greatly appreciated. CGWHT is entirely philanthropic and its Trustees are unremunerated. CGWHT policy is that all monies received go directly to the cause.

## REGULAR FEATURES AND REMINDERS

### Ways to help

We are compiling a register of enthusiasts and are constantly seeking volunteers to support us in every aspect including fundraising, administration, marketing and site regeneration. All are welcome, especially those able to offer technical assistance. We are also seeking commercial development partners and sponsors, and are looking to appoint new Trustees.

We will also be seeking to compile an information-bank based on the experiences of former employees and anyone with a Chance story to tell. Contacts are shown below.

### Where can I find out more about CGWHT and Chance?

**www.cgwht.org**, provides copious information about us, the history of Chance Brothers Glassworks, research resources, contact details, imagery, latest news, our blog and back-issues of *The Flash*.

Register for updates free of charge via **info@cgwht.org** or **Contact** on the website.

Follow us on social media (see website or panel below)

And do please tell others about CGWHT.

Please note: Because our emails are usually addressed to more than one recipient they may fall into your 'spam/junk' folder. To avoid this, consider marking **info@cgwht.org** as a 'safe sender' or your 'not junk' system-equivalent.

### Events

If you are organizing, or have knowledge of, any charitable or philanthropic events with a connection to Chance Glass, and would like to promote them in *The Flash* please submit them for consideration. Allow as much time as possible ahead of the event, preferably a minimum of 8 weeks.

Please note that whilst every effort will be made to mention your event, submission does not guarantee inclusion and the Editor's decision is final.

## Readers write

**www.cgwht.org** is proving to be pure rolled gold and here is another 24-carat example we recently received via our contact form. It's from Black Country ex-pat Mr Ruff, now resident a long way from these shores. He tells us ...

*Attached are some images that I took in August, 2016 in Spencer's Island, Nova Scotia, Canada. They are of the present lighthouse (often called the 'pepper pot' design which is common in smaller lights in this part of the world), its Chance Brothers lens and the accompanying plaque.*



*I am the former Director/Curator of the Yarmouth County Museum where we have a Second Order lens from the Cape Forchu Lighthouse at the end of Yarmouth Harbour. This was initially built in 1839 and was paid for partly by the merchants of St. John (now Saint John), New Brunswick who felt that a lighthouse at the mouth of the Bay of Fundy would be beneficial for their trade (\*). The museum's lens was installed in 1908. Sadly, this is a Paris-built lens and not one of the Chance Brothers' lenses. (Being initially from the Black Country - Langleigh - this has always been a disappointment to me). You can see more of this at <http://yarmouthcountymuseum.ca/index.php/museum/permanent-collection/fresnel-lens>*

(\* Editor's note: the huge tidal range on the lower reaches of the River Severn is second only to that in the Bay of Fundy, officially the highest tidal range in the world. Small wonder they wanted a lighthouse there!)

*In addition to my job as curator, and a passion for ships, my interest in Chance Brothers comes as a result of growing up only a couple of miles from the Chance Brothers Glassworks until I was eleven when my family moved to Canada. I've been a member of both The Friends of the Black Country Museum and the Birmingham Canals Navigation Society for many years.*

Eric J. Ruff, FCMA  
Curator Emeritus  
Yarmouth County Museum  
Yarmouth, Nova Scotia,  
Canada

Our thanks to Mr Ruff for his contribution to our burgeoning collection of information on this astonishing company from around the globe. Welcome aboard, Sir!

--- oOo ---

And yet more Chance-nostalgia with some wonderfully evocative images that have come our way courtesy of Jordan and her mother Jennifer, and which we are pleased to show to a wider audience on their behalf. Lizzy, who you will note from above is a newly appointed CGWHT Trustee, tells us:

*Hi Graham,*

*Here is an image of my great, great grandfather William Sedgley working on the engine at Chance's. He was the night watchman at Chance Glass.*



He worked at Chance for 54 years and received the following medal to commemorate his service with the company ...



I have also located an image of great great grandfather William in his uniform. The other image is that of Frank Shaw, son of William and my great grandfather.

(Editor's note: In view of the period these images were taken, the discrepancy in surname may not require too much explanation).

Frank was an engineer and produced gliders at Chance's that dropped the troops in Germany during the First World War - I believe this was the factory's key output at the time? He didn't have to fight as this was a protected profession but he chose to sign up with the Royal Engineers in 1916. We think he signed up in West Bromwich.

Many thanks for your interest,  
Lizzy



We are indeed indebted to Lizzy for supplying us with this intriguing addition to the Chance saga. She is keen to learn more about her family history and would be interested to hear from anyone who could tell her more or to identify any of the members of the Royal Engineers. Lizzy Jordan can be contacted via [mail@refuturecollective.com](mailto:mail@refuturecollective.com)

More soon; thank you for your support.

In the meantime, *Take a Chance.*

Graham Fisher MBE  
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Please note: These are 'live' links - click to try - but, depending on operating systems, may need inserting manually into your browser.

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Attention is also drawn to our **Privacy Statement and Policy** at [www.cgwht.org](http://www.cgwht.org) - *The Trust*.

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