



CHANCE
GLASSWORKS
HERITAGE
TRUST

The Flash

the email bulletin of CGWHT

www.cgwht.org

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Hallo and welcome to *The Flash*, the email bulletin of Chance Glass Works Heritage Trust www.cgwht.org

We open this first edition of 2017 of with a message from CGWHT Chairman Mark Davies ...

I am pleased to report we are making significant progress towards our vision of regenerating the Chance Glassworks. We are continuing to develop some very constructive and supportive relationships with strategically important stakeholders. As a result, we hope to have some very positive announcements in the near future.

Mike Gibbs of Sherborne Gibbs Publishing www.sherbornegibbs.com has very kindly supported the production of a film about the project and that will be released shortly. Our website and social media presence has progressed enormously thanks to the sterling efforts of our Trustee and raconteur Graham Fisher (details below). We have an increasing number of followers on Twitter @ChanceTrust and we are seeing some amazing stories and pictures through our Facebook Group page that attracted some 120 members within 48 hours of launching it.

Thank you for your continuing support of Chance Glass Works Heritage Trust.

Mark

PROGRESS UPDATE AND LATEST NEWS

Website and PR news

Our routine statistics analysis indicate that we are receiving a wide diversity of 'hits' from as far afield as continental Europe, the USA, South Africa and beyond. We are particularly pleased by the statistics for our 'Bounce Rate'. This represents the percentage of visitors who enter the site and then leave ('bounce') rather than continuing on to view other pages. An average Bounce Rate for e-commerce is around 60%, with top performers operating at around 36%. CGWHT recently achieved a bounce rate of 36.6%.

The Flash continues to receive favourable comment and is now widely recognized as the 'public face' of CGWHT. Our Readers Write section is proving particularly rich seam of information, all of which is logged and archived for posterity and future reference.

The statistics for our social media exposure are also most encouraging so do follow us via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Pinterest. All are on the home page of www.cgwht.org

CGWHT is grateful to all readers and subscribers who have helped make this happen.

Welcome aboard

We are delighted to announce a further addition to the team. Appointed at the Trustees meeting of 12.1.17, Chief Officer of Witton Lodge Community Association, Afzal Hussain, brings to the table his years of accumulated experience of project management and community-focused leadership. Welcome aboard, Sir.

Other developments

Our Chairman Mark Davies has been travelling around the country recently and brings us a singularly most encouraging tale from the far north. He tells us:

'I had a very productive meeting with Lynda McGuigan of the Museum of Scottish Lighthouses recently (it was a bit of a drive!) <http://lighthousemuseum.org.uk> and she has agreed to let us have the lighthouse lens that was originally installed at the Butt of Lewis Lighthouse on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. Here is a picture of a lens that looks the same as the one we could be getting ...



It's a first order lens measuring 10ft in diameter and 6ft across. Two people can easily stand in the middle of it! The base is 6ft in diameter and in addition they are also prepared to give us a turntable and a turning mechanism and a lamp.

The whole thing weighs about 4.5 tons. The lens will be on long-term loan and they are aware that is going on top of our lighthouse, so hopefully it will be there for quite a while. Apparently the Northern Lighthouse Board are really enthusiastic about the idea.

Our lens is in bits at the moment, it will need polishing up and the mechanism will need some work. We have also got to make sure its packaged and transported, so we have a new project.'

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 CGWHT representative; contact us via **info@cgwht.org** to discuss.

Just Giving gifts can be made via the dedicated 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**

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.

Links to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest are at the top of the home page.

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 eight 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

- **A delightful image** has come our way showing the Chance site and the inland waterways that served it. We are advised by our contributor, with due acknowledgement to all concerned, that the image is from Alan H. Faulkner's 1978 booklet *Claytons of Oldbury*, a Robert Wilson Publication printed by Chester Printers Ltd., Corby and the twelfth book in a series covering all aspects of boating on inland waterways. (Spotter: Eric J. Ruff, FCMA, Curator Emeritus, Yarmouth County Museum, Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada)



Mrs. Violet Walters in charge of DART as it turn on a rope on leaving Spon Lane top lock in July 1955. The extensive glassworks of Chance Brothers Ltd. are on the right. (J. G. Parkinson).

Editor's note: Narrowboat *Dart* was built in 1928 in Stoke-on-Trent for the Severn & Canal carrying Company. She was purchased in 1948 by Claytons of Oldbury. In 1968 she was shortened to 58ft and converted to a pleasure boat, being further restored in 2013 and powered by a Gardner 4LK.

Thomas Clayton (Oldbury) Ltd. operated a fleet of wooden narrow boats especially equipped to carry bulk liquid - tar, crude oil and creosote - and all named after British rivers. They were built at different boatyards but maintained at a dock in Oldbury. Due to the preservative nature of their cargo several still survive. The company continued trading until 1966 and used horse drawn boats in its fleet until the last. Only one unconverted Thomas Clayton horseboat, *Gifford*, survives. Unconverted Thomas Clayton motorboats still extant include *Spey*, *Stour*, *Tay*, *Towy*, *Severn* and *Umea*.

• **CGWHT supporter and Chance aficionado Mike Fenton** tells us:

'Chance Brothers has been something of a passion for me for many years now both in collecting and research. I thought I may share some of the more valued items I have which you and your readers may find interesting.'

The first show photographs of a Chance Brothers Paraffin Lamp that recently came into my possession. It was manufactured between 1889 and 1890 and was used during the construction of the Forth Rail Bridge.



The second shows an enamel badge given to employees who carried out essential work during the First World War.



The final set shows a medal awarded to a George Allen who was born in 1851 and who seemingly began his work at the age of 15. At the beginning of the 1870s his job title was that of a Glass Polisher, a decade on he worked as a labourer as he did 10 more years later. By around 1910 he was described as a Glass Packer.

It appears that George died around 1931 in West Bromwich where he had lived all his life. The final image (overleaf) shows a group photograph from 1916 showing those who were awarded long service medals in that year; it is believed that George Allen is pictured here but he has yet to be identified.'



Our thanks to Mike for sharing this and, of course, if you can identify any of the faces in the picture or offer further information then please do let us know.

• **Yet more intriguing imagery**, this time courtesy of our friends at the Association of Lighthouse Keepers ('Keeping Lighthouse Heritage Alive') www.alk.org.uk

One particular framed image approximately 2ft square is being generously offered on long-term loan to CGWHT. It is known to have to have hung in the office of Mr Barrett, engineer for Chance Lighthouse Division, and it believed to date from 1954-55. It has since been in the safe keeping of former employee John Fletcher, to whom many thanks. More on this in due course; in the meantime here is a couple of examples to whet the appetite.



• **And finally for this issue**, a heartwarming and completely unsolicited endorsement from a long-standing friend and colleague of your Editor:

'Good morning Graham,

Can I say what a wonderful surprise it was for me to learn of CGWHT while attending last night's (16th November 2016) Canal & River Trust annual Partnership Meeting (declaration of interest; I was addressing it - Ed).

Having spent about half of my working life at Chance Brothers, initially at Smethwick and finally Malvern, it was always a dream of mine to have recognition by any means of this outstanding company and the people that made Chance a world renowned organisation.

I do not need to remind you of the achievements this company made in the fields of glass and science and I can be of any assistance to help build up this heritage archive then please do not hesitate to contact me.

I first went to chance Brothers in 1971, just after a period of rationalisation by the then owners Pilkington. They basically split the company in two for production of flat glass and tubing. Also on site was Fiesta making fancy giftware items and Chance Proper, previously sold off and producing microscope slides.

My final ten years were spent in the Malvern works that survived the culls of 1976 and 1981 at Smethwick. It was here in 1992 that two others and I procured a management buyout, the first and probably only occasion in Pilkington's history. Sadly we had to change the name as Pilkingtons held the copyright of Chance Brothers Ltd, but to this day we are still alive and well, trading as Chance Glass Ltd.

Please pass on my best wishes to all at Chance Glass Works Heritage Trust. And once again can I say what a pleasure it was to meet up with yourself and Mark.

Regards,

Alan Hazeldine

Director (retired) and shareholder
Chance Glass Ltd.

More soon.

In the meantime, *Take a Chance*.

Graham Fisher MBE

PR & Comms CGWHT

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