



TEN YEARS OLD!

To mark our 10th year of opening as Flame, the Gasworks Museum of Ireland, a celebratory luncheon was held in the Dry Coal Shed on 28th Sept last, to which members and guests were invited.

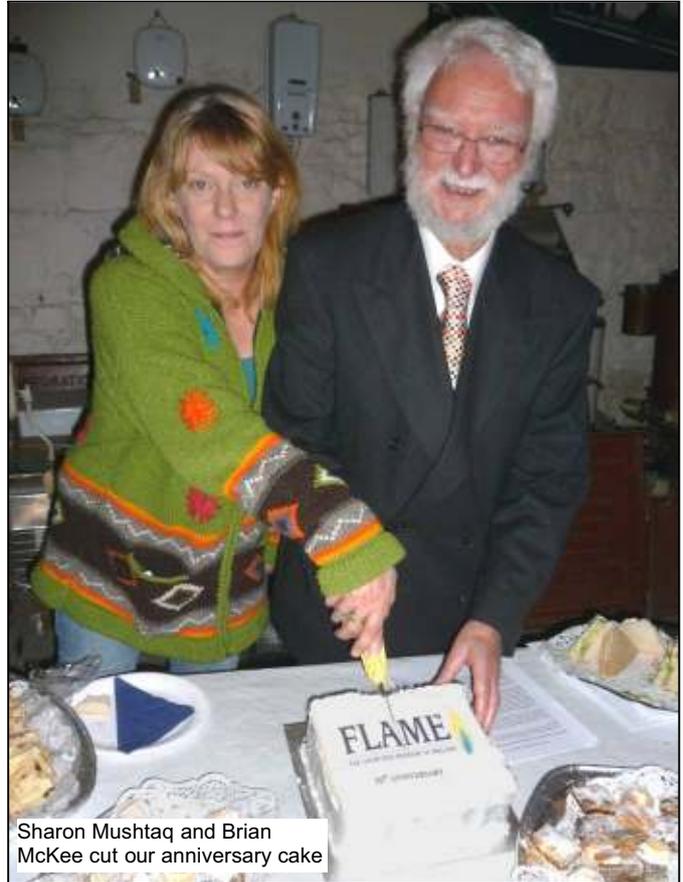
After welcoming everyone, our Chairman Brian McKee recalled that the Gasworks originally opened on 17th September 1855 and served the town for the next 132 years until closure in 1987. It's now part of an exclusive group of preserved gasworks, the others being Biggar (Scotland), Fakenham (England), Athens (Greece), and Dunedin (New Zealand).

He continued: "I have a telescope which was given to me by my late wife, Betty, shortly after we moved to a flat overlooking the Marina some 10 years ago. To enjoy it properly, it is supported on a tripod. There is a parallel with the Museum as it, too, is supported by a tripod. Its three legs are - financial, members, and visitors.

Our financial support comes largely from Carrickfergus Council and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. Our members, some of whom are also volunteers who help us run the museum, are an integral part of this support system, as are our many visitors.

Without their combined support, I am quite convinced we would not be able to survive for any length of time. I therefore welcome this opportunity to publicly acknowledge the support that we receive from all of them."

A buffet lunch followed, laid on by Sharon Mushtaq, assisted by Emma Tennant. The Mayor of Carrickfergus, Alderman Billy Ashe, then planted a silver birch tree kindly donated by the Council's Parks Division. The hand-crafted spade used for the occasion was lent to us by our friends at Patterson's Spade Mill, Templepatrick.



Sharon Mushtaq and Brian McKee cut our anniversary cake

The Committee of the Carrickfergus Gasworks Preservation Society Ltd would like to wish all our members, supporters and friends a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.



Mayor Billy Ashe plants our commemorative tree, assisted by Colin Dawson (right) and Tom Mahon (left) from the Spade Mill.



Brian McKee welcomes CGPS members Denis and Anne Mayne to the anniversary luncheon.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM took place on 2nd Oct in the Gasworks. Our Chairman Brian McKee greeted everyone and reports were presented by him and also by the Secretary (Helen Rankin) and Treasurer (Fred Hamond).

Brian acknowledged the dedication of Sharon Mushtaq, our Development Officer, who runs the Gasworks on a daily basis. He also paid tribute to John Jenkins, a good friend and neighbour of the Gasworks, who died earlier this year. He also thanked Flame's dedicated band of volunteers who carry out routine maintenance tasks and help out with tour guiding.

Helen reported that, thanks to Derek Coles, we now have a new publicity leaflet (see right). Two splendid glass cabinets were generously donated by Ballymena Museum and now display some of our smaller items in the Dry Coal Store. Here we have also mounted large period photographs kindly procured for us some time ago by Dave Goodall. Our fire and intruder alarms have also been upgraded to wireless transmission. The Traditional Museum Group continues to meet regularly in the Gasworks – see Martin Murray's report on page 3 of this newsletter.

A collection of gas boilers and fires was donated by Paul Clarke of East Coast Gas (Rathdrum, Co Wicklow). Although these items are relatively modern, they nevertheless illustrate the continuing development of gas appliances. A decorative Edwardian gas light was also given to us by a local resident. George Rutherford, one of our founder members, also donated several books on gas, a photocopy of an Edmunston catalogue of 1889 entitled *Lighting Big houses - Town & Country Mansions* which he found whilst researching in the Public Record Office, and his well-researched report on the Victorian gasworks at the National Trust's property at Castleward, Co Down.

Fred reported that our income for the financial year ending 31 March 2012 was £23,498 and our expenditure £22,150, giving a surplus of £1348 (compared with a loss of £2691 for 2010-11). Almost 90% of our income (£20,500) comes from Carrickfergus Borough Council and Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). Without them, we would simply not exist! Unfortunately, the possibility of raising funds through car boot sales proved unviable as it was found that the extra premium on our insurance would be more than the income generated.

The 2012-13 Committee is: Brian McKee (*Chairman*), Helen Rankin (*Secretary*), Fred Hamond (*Treasurer*), Derek Coles and Ivan Tennant. Aubrey Campbell & Co, Chartered Accountants (Belfast) were reappointed as our auditors.

After the conclusion of our formal proceedings, **Brian Williams** of NIEA gave us an informative talk entitled 'The Economic Value of Northern Ireland's Historic Environment'. He began by noting that the annual value of the 'heritage industry' to NI's economy is a staggering £532 million and that every £ of public funding unlocks up to £4 from the private sector. Moreover, every £ of Listed Building grant aid triggers an additional £7.50 in private funding. Despite these encouraging figures, he noted that we were under-performing when compared with Scotland and the Irish Republic.

Joined-up government and community participation were the keys to unlocking the economic and social value of our heritage.

To this end, Brian noted the formation of the Historic Environment Strategic Forum in 2007 to bring together government departments and statutory agencies to formulate a co-ordinated strategy for developing our heritage assets. He presented various case studies, such as the ongoing Ebrington Barracks regeneration project in London/Derry as to what could be achieved.

Hopefully, NIEA will take on board our efforts at Flame when it comes to our next funding application to them!

Besides the gasworks, FLAME also has an extensive collection of gas appliances and a library on the gas industry. Groups and schools are especially welcome.

FLAME is open all year round as follows:
Day to Day Inc: Daily (except Saturdays) 2.00 - 5.00 pm
September: Monday to Friday 2.00 - 5.00 pm
Last tour 4.00 pm
To visit at other times and for groups, please book in advance by telephone or email.

FLAME is managed by the Carrickfergus Gasworks Preservation Society Ltd., a registered charity. Why not become a member and support our efforts? Donations will also be gratefully received.

For further information contact:
FLAME, 44 Irish Quarter West, Carrickfergus, Co Antrim BT38 8AT
Tel: 0281 9334 9075
info@flamegasworks.co.uk
Web: www.flamegasworks.co.uk

FLAME is supported by Carrickfergus Borough Council, and Northern Ireland Environment Agency

www.flamegasworks.co.uk
E-mail: info@flamegasworks.co.uk

FREE ADMISSION

ALMOST UP IN FLAMES

Sam Gault

A new cooker was purchased by a local housewife in Carrickfergus without her telling her husband. In due course it was installed and the old one taken away to the Gasworks for disposal.

Early the next day, a very worried husband called to inquire where the cooker which was removed from his house had gone to.

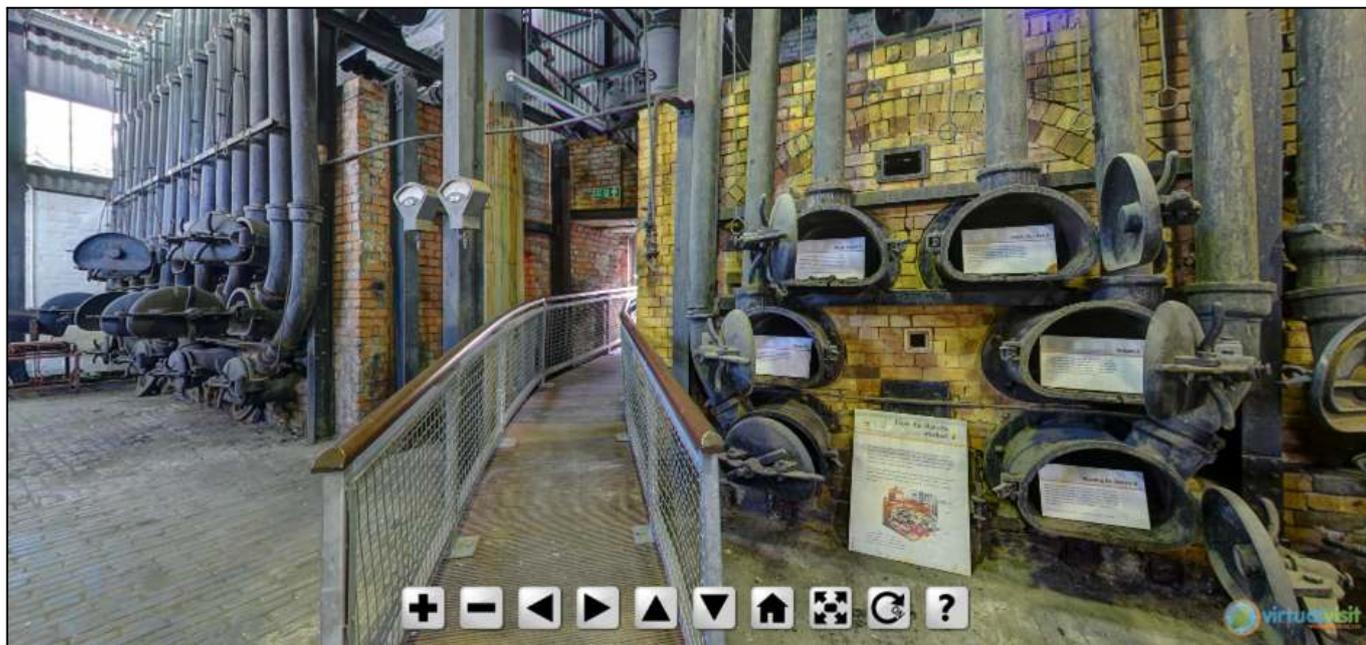
Luckily for him, I was able to inform him that it was still here in the Gasworks, waiting to be taken to the scrap yard. I showed him where it was.

He opened the oven door and retrieved a package of £1 and £5 notes. I asked him to check that it was all there. Upon counting there was £500, which he confirmed was correct. He became a very happy man!

He had placed a bet on the horses, which his wife totally frowned upon. When his horse won, in order to get it out of sight quickly, he had hidden it in the oven.

What a lucky man!!

Would all CGPS members please advise Sharon of their latest email addresses so that our records can be updated and communications improved. Please email details to her at info@flamegasworks.co.uk.



VIRTUAL VISIT

A panoramic tour of Flame is now available on-line at www.discovernorthernireland.com/Flame-The-Gasworks-Museum-Of-Ireland-Carrickfergus-P2821. In the green box at the left-hand side of the page, click on 'virtual visit' to bring up a choice of three tours when you click on the drop-down box at the top right corner of the screen. Second only to a visit in person to hear it from our personable guides!

I WISH I WAS IN CARRICKFERGUS ...

Martin Murray

The Carrickfergus Gasworks Traditional Music Session began in 2006. It grew out of the East Antrim Traditional Music School which had been formed around that time. The aim of the school was to promote the rediscovery of traditional music as part of the common cultural heritage of both communities in Northern Ireland as something to be owned and enjoyed by all. Indeed the jigs, reels, polkas, mazurkas waltzes, etc that are typically played in a session are all forms of dance music that originated in many counties across Europe. In due course they arrived on these shores and were given an energetic flavour and identity that is now recognised and appreciated by people from every corner of the globe.

As the individuals attending the various classes run by the School progressed in their playing, they soon wanted to get the experience of playing with others. But for most, the step up to being able to play in established sessions proved too big a one, both in terms of the required repertoire of tunes and the tempo at which they were being played. So the solution was to set up their own session and to grow together at their own pace.

In the beginning, it was called a 'slow session' but with the passage of time that term has become less and less appropriate. While the pace of tunes might not yet be up with the best of long established sessions, it has come on with leaps and bounds. However, the group remembers its roots and of how hard it is for people to start playing with others, so it usually devotes its first

hour to faithfully playing an introductory set of tunes at a pace that newcomers can cope with. After that, the tempo and range of tunes gradually increases and by the end of the night, the music is in full flight. So the Gasworks session prides itself in being an experience that can be enjoyed by a wide range of musicians. This is reflected in those who attend on a regular basis as it attracts people not just locally but from Ballymena, Ards, Lisburn and everywhere in between.

The session runs fortnightly on a Friday, with doors opening at 7.30pm. Everyone is welcome and people come and go as their commitments allow. The session is not a class and it assumes a reasonable level of ability and some practice on a given repertoire of tunes between sessions. While the group doesn't consider itself to be into performance, occasionally at various times of the year, there are grand sessions in the big shed (which provides more room) and even the odd BBQ, both of which are open to the public, and these have proved to be very popular and enjoyable. Watch out for these events in 2013. You are also invited to our Christmas Session on Friday 14th Dec (see over).

For further information on EATMS, visit their website at <http://www.eatms.co.uk>. If you would also like to find out more about the Session in the big shed (aka dry coal store), please email martinmurray@live.co.uk.



CHRISTMAS CRAICERS INVITATION



Flame Gasworks

Invites you to an
Evening of Music on
Friday 14th December from 7.30pm

Music by the Gasworks
Traditional Music Session

RSVP

44 Irish Quarter West, Carrickfergus

Tel: 028 9336 9575

Email: info@flamegasworks.co.uk