

# Chimney

Issue No. 74 - Dec 2011

## JOURNAL



The official publication of

**The National Association  
of Chimney Sweeps**



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### NACS Member Allan Lyon

NACS Member Allan Lyon from Malton, North Yorkshire sadly passed away in September having only sold his business and retired in May. He had been suffering from cancer I was told, which I didn't know, it came as a great shock when I tried to ring him and got this news from the new owner of the business.

I probably only saw him once a year, but would speak on the telephone in between. He attended the NACS training course back in July 2000, went round with me probably two days, then I vetted him and he passed at the end of July 2001.

He was a very nice gentleman, who will be greatly missed by all his friends at the North East Regional Meetings, which he always attended. We all, I am sure at my meetings in October will always remember the shock we experienced this year hearing of his untimely death.

Anthony Gissing  
North East Regional Officer



The front cover picture is of a restored 19th century flour mill and its tall red brick chimney in Lower Slaughter in the Cotswolds, which was last used commercially in 1958.

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

It's been another busy but good year for the NACS with lots of positive changes and progression with the expansion of the NACS Chimney Training Centre, which will also become a HETAS Approved Training Centre. We hope this will provide more training courses and benefits for all NACS Members. We are fortunate to be able to take on an additional unit adjacent to the existing facilities. Due to the expansion of the NACS facilities and Membership numbers we have also taken on a new member of staff. Julie Griffiths will be starting with us on 5th December as our new Accounts Clerk.



I really hope all NACS Members have been experiencing a successful season so far. It is good to see the trend of real fires coming back into fashion, which in turn will provide even more work for Chimney Sweeps.

The next Trade Show, AGM & Gala Dinner have been arranged for 27th & 28th April 2012 at The Chesford Grange Hotel in Kenilworth, Warwickshire, more details can be found inside this Journal. A lot of hard work goes into arranging the Trade Show, so please do take the time to visit, take the opportunity to speak with the NACS Officials and others in the Chimney Trade, and also help spread the word as we want to encourage lots of new faces to the show.

Next year also sees the NACS celebrate its 30th Anniversary, so we hope to see as many of you as possible at the Trade Show and Anniversary Gala Dinner to participate in the celebrations of this important milestone.

Many of us Chimney Sweeps are broadening our skills to be able to specialise in other Chimney related work, i.e. smoke testing of flues, flue linings, and CCTV/Surveys etc. I have already mentioned the expansion of the Chimney Training Centre, so with the broad range of training courses scheduled for 2012, I urge all of you to consider attending these courses which will help you improve your business and keep you ahead of your competitors. It really does enhance your business to become qualified.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Regional Officers and the NACS Office I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year, and I look forward to meeting you at the Chimney Works Trade Show in 2012.

Best regards,

*M. P. Glynn*

Martin Glynn  
President & Director of Public Relations

## Celebrating 30 years - 1982-2012

The Official Publication of THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIMNEY SWEEPS  
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CONGRATULATIONS!  
MEMBERS RECENTLY OBSERVED AND PASSED



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11/757	CRAIG	HUNTER	ALLCHIMNEYS LIMITED	ROMFORD	ESSEX
11/769	DAVID	MCGRATH	DAVID MCGRATH CHIMNEY SWEEP	CHELMSFORD	ESSEX
11/740	PAUL	FEENEY	JOURNEYMAN CHIMNEY SERVICES	PARRACOMBE	CORNWALL
11/770	JOHN	TAYLOR	J A TAYLOR CHIMNEY SWEEP	CAMPEA ASHE	SUFFOLK
10/738	PAUL	CLEMENTS	CLEANER CHIMNEYS	WARSASH	SOUTHAMPTON
98/401	SALAH	DAGNALL	C/O TOAST	WINCHESTER	HAMPSHIRE
11/763	NICK	EATON	NEATON SOLUTIONS	WITNEY	OXON
10/702	CARL	LEWIS	ASHWOOD CHIMNEYS	OLNEY	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
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## NACS DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



### JANUARY 23

Regional Officers' Meeting

### JANUARY 25

Finance Committee, Management & Board of Directors' Meetings

### FEBRUARY 13/14

NACS Induction Training Course: Sweeping Techniques, Regs & Standards

### FEBRUARY 21

HETAS Introduction To Solid Fuel Course - 1 day (H001)

### FEBRUARY 21/22

HETAS Solid Fuel Regulations & Standards Course - 2 days (H002)

### FEBRUARY 21-23

HETAS Dry Appliance Installer Course - 3 days (H003)

### FEBRUARY 27

NVQ Existing Candidates Workshop & New Inductions

### FEBRUARY 28

NACS Fire Safety Training Course

### MARCH 5

Finance Committee, Joint Board of Directors' & Regional Officers' Meeting

### MARCH 19/20

NACS Induction Training Course: Sweeping Techniques, Regs & Standards

### APRIL 27/28

CHIMNEY WORKS TRADE SHOW & AGM – Chesford Grange, Warwickshire

### MAY 21/22

NACS Induction Training Course: Sweeping Techniques, Regs & Standards

### MAY 29

HETAS Introduction To Solid Fuel Course - 1 day (H001)

### MAY 29/30

HETAS Solid Fuel Regulations & Standards Course - 2 days (H002)

### MAY 29-31

HETAS Dry Appliance Installer Course - 3 days (H003)

### JUNE 11

NACS Working Safely at Heights Course (Rooftop & Ladder Safety)

### JUNE 12

NACS Advanced Training: Flue Linings Course

### JUNE 18/19

NACS Induction Training Course: Sweeping Techniques, Regs & Standards

### JULY 2

Finance Committee, Management & Board of Directors' Meetings

### JULY 3

NACS OFFICIAL OPEN DAY OF NEW PREMISES

### JULY 4

NVQ Existing Candidates Workshop, New Inductions & QA Visit

### JULY 5

NACS Fire Safety Training Course

### JULY 10

HETAS Introduction To Solid Fuel Course - 1 day (H001)

### JULY 10/11

HETAS Solid Fuel Regulations & Standards Course - 2 days (H002)

### JULY 10-12

HETAS Dry Appliance Installer Course - 3 days (H003)

### JULY 23/24

NACS Induction Training Course: Sweeping Techniques, Regs & Standards

### AUGUST 7

NACS Advanced Training Course: Chimney/Flue/SF Appl. Service/Repair

### AUGUST 8

NACS Advanced Training Course: CCTV Inspection & Survey

### AUGUST 20/21

NACS Induction Training Course: Sweeping Techniques, Regs & Standards

### SEPTEMBER 3

Regional Officers' Meeting

### SEPTEMBER 11

HETAS Introduction To Solid Fuel Course - 1 day (H001)

### SEPTEMBER 11/12

HETAS Solid Fuel Regulations & Standards Course - 2 days (H002)

### SEPTEMBER 11-13

HETAS Dry Appliance Installer Course - 3 days (H003)

### SEPTEMBER 17

NVQ Assessors & IV Team Meeting

### SEPTEMBER 24/25

NACS Induction Training Course: Sweeping Techniques, Regs & Standards

### OCTOBER 8

NACS Working Safely at Heights Course (Rooftop & Ladder Safety)

### OCTOBER 9

NACS Advanced Training Course: Flue Linings Course

### OCTOBER 10

NACS Fire Safety Training Course

### OCTOBER 11

NACS Advanced Training Course: Flue Smoke Testing Procedures

### OCTOBER 15

Finance Committee, Management & Board of Directors' Meetings

### OCTOBER 16/17

NACS Induction Training Course: Sweeping Techniques, Regs & Standards

### DECEMBER 21

Office closes for Christmas & New Year  
(Re-opens on 2nd January 2013)

#### KEY:-

Board of Directors' & Finance Committee Meetings

Regional Officer Meetings

Training Course Dates

NVQ

Chimney Works Trade Show / Special Events

Information

All of the above dates are held at the NACS CTC (Chimney Training Centre) unless otherwise stated

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# TECHNICAL ISSUES

## Suitable Flue Sizes

I am often asked by both installers and customers alike about minimum flue sizes for different types of appliance. Sometimes this occurs because it is impossible to fit the correct size of liner due to some restriction within the chimney, sometimes it is an attempt to save money. Perhaps it is worth me clarifying a few simple guidelines.

Appliance manufacturers determine the most appropriate size of connecting flue pipe for their unit to work safely and efficiently which is reflected in the size of spigot. No other size of flue pipe should be fitted. They shall be fitted with any connecting socket facing upwards.

The flue system should be no smaller than the size of the flue pipe, ideally one size larger, although some appliance manufacturers recommend a flue of the same size as the flue pipe.

However, Building Regulations ADJ Table 2 clearly states 125mm flues shall only be used with smokeless burning appliances or those exempted by DEFRA under the Clean Air Act, whilst 150mm flues are required for appliances burning other fuels – such as wood, peat and bituminous coal. It also states in para 2.6 'For multi-fuel appliances, the flue should be sized to accommodate burning the fuel that requires the largest flue'.

In practice therefore, if you are asked to line a flue

into which the largest liner possible is 125mm, the client must be told they should only burn smokeless fuel.

The reason for the size difference is simply the propensity for high volatile fuels to attach deposits to the inside of the flue, thereby in time reducing the cross-sectional area of the flue. Without regular cleaning the flue could become obstructed or blocked.

## Flexible Liner Corrosion

Vic Crompton rang me recently about the suitability of certain fuels when an appliance is connected to a stainless steel flexible flue liner.

The majority of liner manufacturers state their 316L and 904L grade stainless steel products are suitable for multi-fuel appliances. This means they are designed to be used with appliances burning solid smokeless fuels, bituminous coal, peat and lignite briquettes as well as logs and wood briquettes.

However, we all know of instances where flue liners have failed as a consequence of corrosion within only a few years of installation. Why is this? Solid mineral fuels contain many chemical elements which, when burned, discharge a cocktail of substances up the chimney. Burning any hydro-carbon will always create water vapour as part of the process. Typically, you would expect flue gasses to contain various compounds of sulphur,

hydrogen, nitrogen and water vapour passing up the chimney to atmosphere. With sufficient heat in the flue to provide buoyancy the gasses will successfully dissipate to atmosphere from the terminal without any risk. However, with a cold chimney and cool flue gasses a nightmare scenario presents itself.

The water vapour entrained in the flue gasses are likely to condense back into water droplets wherever the inner flue surface is cold enough to create dew-point.

Unfortunately, the condensate is acidic due to contact with the other chemical elements present, as a consequence the surface of the stainless steel suffers acid attack, usually near the top. In time, the stainless steel develops pin holes and eventually collapses under the weight of the liner.

Anthracite based fuels, such as manufactured ovoids, will remain alight for many hours in slumber mode without attention. At least 8 hours burn is the norm, whilst 12-14 hours is not uncommon for a single filling of fuel.

Alas, the downside is that slow burning of this magnitude results in very low flue gas temperatures which exacerbates the problem described above.

The solution is for customers to periodically burn the fire brightly in order to raise the flue gas temperatures and warm the flue surface which will help dry out the moisture present. There is no particular solid

fuel brand which causes more corrosion than any other, but alas the more popular products are sometimes singled out for criticism.

Of course, wood burning has its own set of problems. As many of you should already know, it is essential that logs have a moisture content of no more than 20 per cent, and preferably lower if possible. Burning high moisture content wood leads to serious condensation problems within the flue which forms a substance resembling creosote. This material is almost impossible to sweep, runs down the inner surface of the flue and leaks out of any fissure by capillary action. It is also volatile, hence the increase in numbers of chimney fires.

Unfortunately, few UK residents fully understand the technology involved in wood burning and the importance of maintaining a decent flue gas temperature at all times, unlike our European cousins. It's all about educating the customer.

## Carbon Monoxide Prosecution

A major social housing provider in the North East of England has recently been prosecuted by the Health & Safety Executive following the death of a tenant in 2008. The death occurred due to a blocked throat plate in a solid fuel heating appliance.

The landlords were fined £40,000 plus £25,000 costs for failing to provide adequate maintenance arrangements for their solid fuel appliances.

**Jim Lambeth**

NACS Technical Advisor  
advice@chimneyworks.co.uk

# No FLUE?

The popularity of flexible flue liners is having unexpected repercussions in the house building sector. Over the past few months I have had several discussions with both HETAS Registered Installers and customers asking whether it is OK to fit a stainless steel flexible liner into a newly built brick chimney.

Ordinarily this question elicits a standard response, but on these particular occasions it transpires the chimney has been recently constructed without any form of clay or concrete liner. In effect, the builder has provided a brick / blockwork duct into which a stainless steel liner has been fitted. This, of course, does not comply with Building Regulations ADJ paragraphs 1.27 to 1.28 relating to the construction of masonry

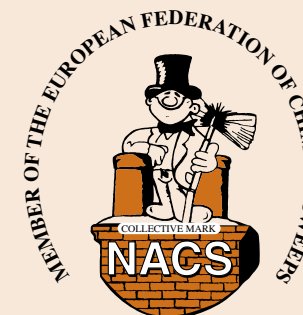
chimneys. My advice is to instruct the builder to either, demolish the chimney and rebuild in a correct manner or, if possible, open up the brickwork and retro-fit suitable liners, complete with required insulation.

Stainless steel flexible liners are intended to be used as a method of repairing a defective chimney only. They are not allowed as a 'primary' lining system.

Should you be asked to sweep a chimney which is relatively new and you discover it to be incorrectly lined in this fashion, be aware of the transgression and advise the customer accordingly.

**Jim Lambeth**

NACS Technical Advisor  
advice@chimneyworks.co.uk



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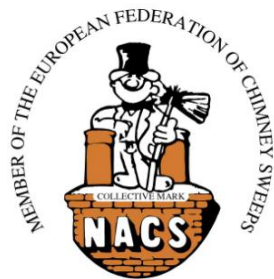
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“With a cold chimney and cool flue gasses a nightmare scenario presents itself.”



The National Association of Chimney Sweeps

# Chimney Works Trade Show

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Venue: *The Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth  
Warwickshire, CV8 2LD*

Exhibition Times:-

Friday: 9:00am - 5:30pm

Saturday: 9:00am - 3:00pm

**FREE ENTRANCE!!!**

- Trade Show for all in the Chimney trade & the public
  - Over 35 companies represented
  - Lectures / Seminars
- For more details please visit [www.nacs.org.uk](http://www.nacs.org.uk)

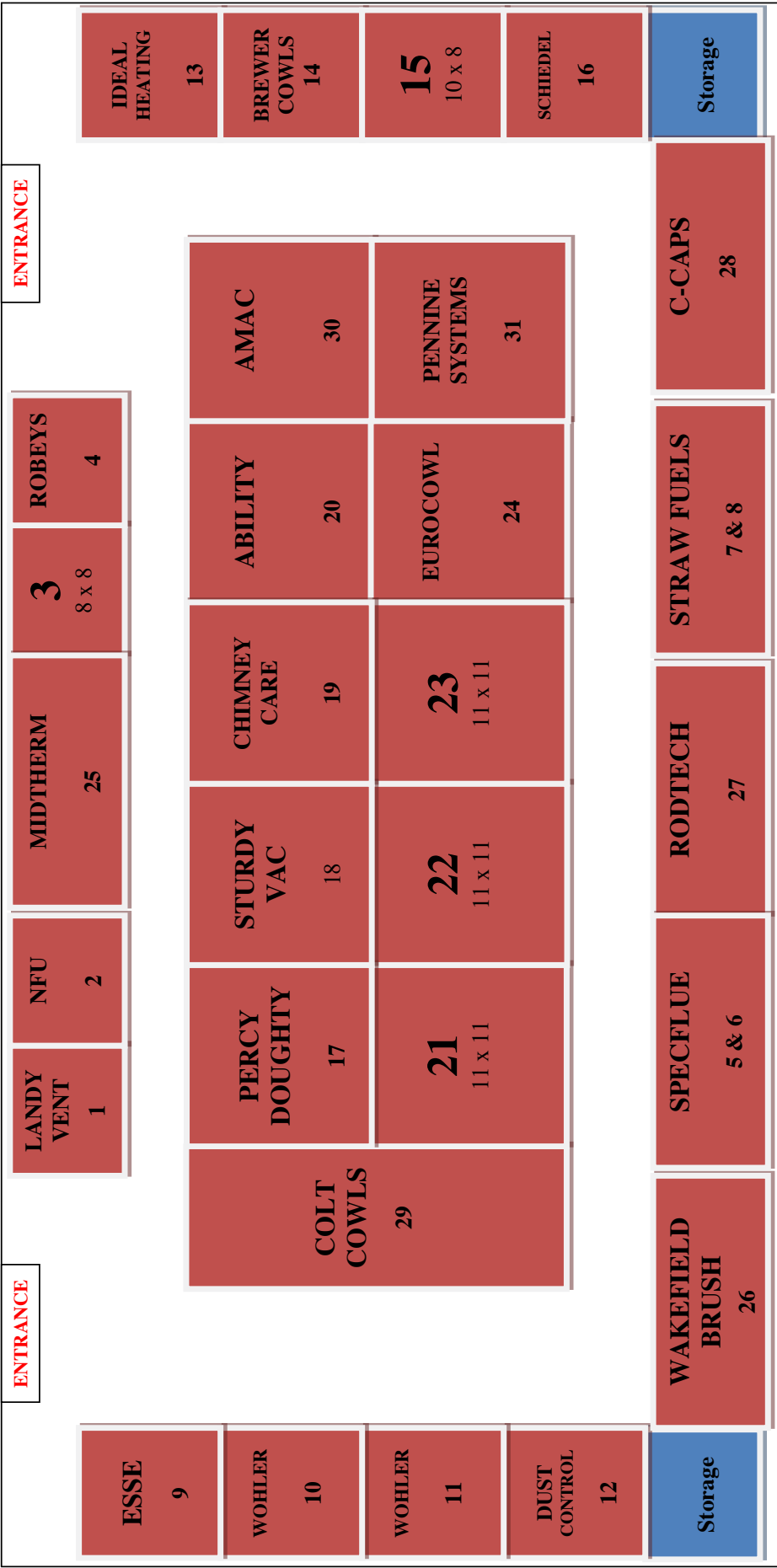
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**CHIMNEY WORKS TRADE SHOW 2012**  
The Chesford Grange, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LD  
**27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> April 2012**  
**FLOORPLAN**

Trade Stand Number	1-8	9-16	17-24	25-28	29-30
Price (excluding VAT)	£750	£800	£875	£975	£1350

A 5% discount will apply to the above prices for NACS Members  
Costs are for display area only (exhibitors to provide their own portable displays). Measurements are approximate but exhibitors must ensure that their displays do not exceed the designated area. The NACS reserves the right to amend the layout if necessary. Tables/chairs will be made available for each stand. 13amp sockets are available at extra charge (please see booking form).







# Chimney Works Trade Show



27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2012

Venue: The Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LD

## TRADE STAND BOOKING FORM

Company Name.....

Address.....

Post Code.....Tel.....

Contact Name.....Email.....

Names of ALL persons on stand (for name badges) .....

.....

.....

Please reserve Trade Stand Number: ..... (1<sup>st</sup> choice) ..... (2<sup>nd</sup> choice) ..... (3<sup>rd</sup> Choice)  
(Floor space only – Exhibitors will need to provide their own portable display units etc)

(Please tick which applies to you) NACS Associate Membership Price ☐  
Trade Price (Non-members) ☐

### We also require use of the following:-

- 13amp power sockets (number required – please note there is a £5 charge per socket) .....
- Table(s) 4' or 6' (number and size required) .....
- Chairs (number required) .....

### Payment

I/We enclose our cheque for the payment of £..... plus VAT = £.....  
(Please make cheques made payable to The National Association of Chimney Sweeps)

OR

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- ❖ Please provide either 500 copies of your company leaflet, or if you prefer “goody items” for the visitor packs by **2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012**. “Goody Items” can include your company promotional items such as a pen, coaster, business card, compliment slip etc. Those not received by this date will not be included in the visitor packs.
- ❖ A copy of your advert or company logo for the Exhibitors Brochure will need to be emailed to [nacs@chimneyworks.co.uk](mailto:nacs@chimneyworks.co.uk) by **24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2012**

Whilst every effort will be made to ensure accuracy, etc of display area details, NACS reserves the right to amend or make adjustments where necessary. Companies taking space should also ensure that they have the appropriate insurance cover for their staff and products during the course of this event. Cancellation costs will be at the sole discretion of the NACS Board of Directors.

Signed.....Date.....

Please return this booking form along with your payment as soon as possible to the Office Manager:-  
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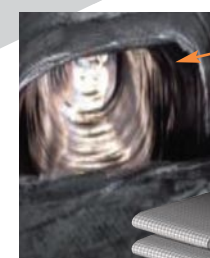
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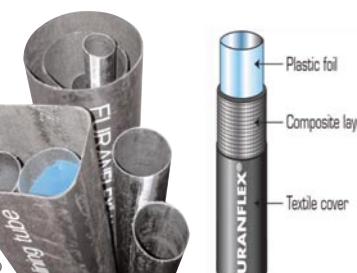


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## REGIONAL MEETING AND GET TOGETHER

We held the North East Regional Meeting/Get Together in The White House, Whitby, on the afternoon of Saturday 15 October. We were able to have a area to ourselves again, it is a nice atmosphere with a sea view and overlooking the Golf Course. We all had bar meals, as the afternoons chatting went on.

Sixteen people attended including wives and friends, we still can't make twenty. Members were - Tony Gissing (Regional Officer), Jeff Duffy (Otterburn), Michael Rudd (Market Weighton), Simon Parkin (Masham), Glenn Sear (Sheffield), NACS Chairman and Training Director, Bob Leonard, Steven Howard, Vice Chairman and Training Director, Ken Paterson (Regional Officer), Matt Ramsden (Regional Officer) and it was nice to welcome Michael Sanderson from Scarborough who is awaiting observation.

There were apologies from John Gallant, David Barrott, Richard Barker, David Norton, and Vic Crompton. It was a shame Rod and Marian Lewis couldn't make it at the last minute, as they have never missed our meeting even since retiring, it's always nice to see them again.

It was a great shock to us to learn of the untimely death in September, of a lovely gentleman Allan Lyon from



Malton, who never missed our meetings, he had been sweeping 10 years and retired in May. It was rather a sad start to the afternoon having to inform everyone there, most having had long chats with him in previous years. We observed a minutes silence and drank a toast in his memory.

It was, apart from that news, again a very enjoyable weekend. It was a good turnout, and was nice to have Kenny and Charlotte Paterson here once more, as it is a very long drive down for them, as some of us are finding out for ourselves when we go up to Kenny's meeting, and they make that long journey down for meetings several times in a year. The Staff at The White House don't forget us, they had plenty of Fish this year! We had no fixed Agenda, but lots of chimney chat for a couple hours, plenty of opportunity for members to discuss any problems etc. also listen to some funny stories. If any

Regional Members have any concerns they would like bringing up at the next Regional Officers Meeting in Stone, January 2012, do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

As usual some members with further to travel stayed one, two or even three nights and made a weekend of it, including ourselves, starting Friday.

Ourselves, Bob, Sarah, Kenny, Charlotte and Glenn had a nice meal out together on Friday night at the Indian, Matt and Karen came in later. We then went to the Resolution for a drink where we stayed for the rest of the evening.

Thirteen of us had a very enjoyable evening in the Conservative Club on Saturday evening, where some first of all joined in the Bingo, we did have one big winner and a couple of raffle prizes in our corner! The evening soon passes when you are having fun,

after midnight before you know it, Carl Robinson was back doing the musical entertaining this year, (we will get him to the Gala Dinner yet!) We had our usual private entertainment in between, Jeff and Ian or should we say the Otterburn Duo's jokes and stories. We also had some refreshments to help keep us going. Finally several of them came up to our house for coffee's and tea's on Sunday morning, before setting off on their long trecks home.

It makes a refreshing break at this busy time of year, it is a shame more of the local Members didn't make it, but we look forward to getting together again next year and thank all who attended this time and hope you enjoyed the afternoon and weekend as much as we did. We hope we can make it to at least twenty next year, that would be excellent!

As we always say, we would hope to meet a lot of you before that at The NACS Chimney Works Trade Show and AGM next April which is always a brilliant weekend. As we say every year, a tremendous amount of work goes into the planning, to make the weekend happen, so lets all show our support by attending and our thanks go to the organisers.

**Anthony Gissing**  
(with a little help from Enid)  
Regional Officer  
Whitby, North Yorkshire

### Scottish Chimney Sweeps Meeting

On August 20th I held the 3rd Regional meeting up here in North East Scotland. Up until the week before we had quite a few Scottish sweeps coming from Nairn in the North to the Borders in the south but unfortunately,

for completely unrelated reasons, we had at least 4 cancellations in the week running up to the meeting! Some others had let us know when the invites went out that they wouldn't manage. However, we had a good meeting with ourselves and our employees along

with Tony and Enid, Bob and Sarah, Steven Howard and Sandra & Glen Sear in the Local Golf Range where there was plenty of sweeps chat going on!

In the evening we all met up for dinner in a local Italian restaurant and everyone seemed to have

a good time. We hope next year to have more Scottish sweeps attending so keep round about the 3rd Saturday in August free again!!

**Kenny Paterson**  
Regional Officer  
North East Scotland

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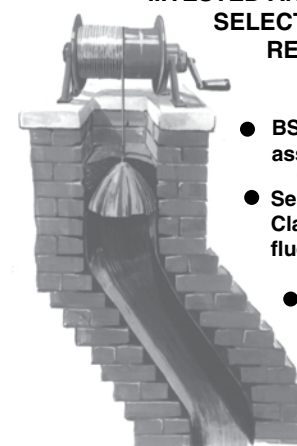
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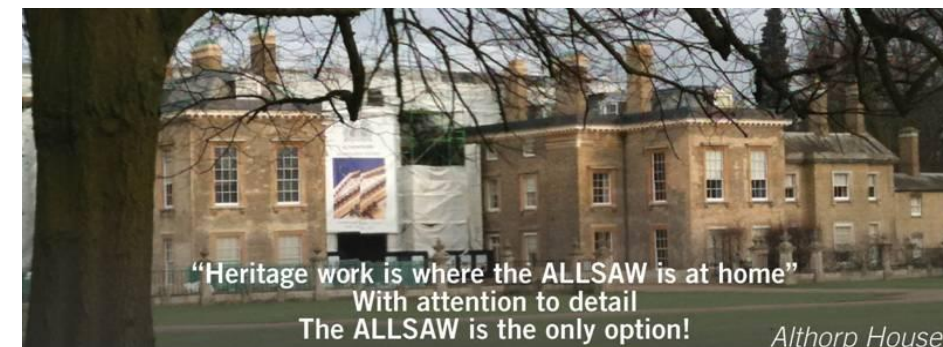
Recession has led to many companies having to diversify to keep the work flowing in. In numerous cases the Allsaw has become the solution. Not only can you offer repair to the chimney linings you can repair the brickwork and flashings with the same tool. It has given companies the ability to take on extra work in a new field and even offer their clients a superior job to the local builder ...with very little extra training required. Having the right equipment for the job means you are halfway there.

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**"I personally use the Allsaw on a weekly basis. I would recommend the Allsaw to anyone involved in opening up brickwork as it considerably reduces job timescales and cuts so cleanly"**

Steven Howard NACS Vice Chairman & Director, Training Committee

Repair work is well underway on the 22 chimneys at Althorp House, Northamptonshire. Home to the Earl of Spencer and late Lady Diana, Althorp House is undergoing a make-over. Several phases of repair are in the pipeline involving exterior and interior works. Boden & Ward, are main contractors for the project. Boden & Ward's Site Forman Mark Huckle reports:  
**'We've got 2 Allsaws on the job of raking out the pointing on 22 chimneys – the blades will go to 5 inch depth if a whole brick needs removing. It's also cut down the dust by 85% compared to using a grinder. The Allsaw's have been really, really good.'**



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## NACS MEMBERS THANKED FOR MAKING CHIMNEY FIRE SAFETY WEEK A GREAT SUCCESS

In July, the National Association of Chimney Sweeps joined forces with the Fire Kills campaign to launch 'Chimney Fire Safety Week' – raising awareness of the importance of regular chimney maintenance. There were over 8,100 chimney fires across England in 2008-09 according to fire statistics, so the National Association of Chimney Sweeps has been working closely throughout the year with Fire Kills – the Government's national fire safety campaign. Fire Kills works with local Fire and Rescue Services to bring down the number of people killed or injured in fires in the home and encourage the public to practise fire safer behaviour.



bookings near the winter months. Fire and Rescue Services across the country used Chimney Fire Safety Week to advise homeowners on using their chimney safely, emphasising the importance of making sure that chimneys are clean and safe through regular sweeping. Throughout the Week, Fire and Rescue Services raised awareness through articles in local media – from websites to local newspapers – several including a quote from NACS President Martin P Glynn. Some Fire and Rescue Services continued their activity in September stretching the amount of local coverage and number of people seeing the chimney safety message even further. Many chimney sweeps across the country helped to spread the message, encouraging householders to be more fire safe savvy in their homes. And the NACS also kindly made their 'Heat Your Home Safely' leaflet available for Fire and Rescue Services to use in their local engagement and promotional activity.

**JOINING IN**  
Fire Kills' new national advertising campaign



launched in October, and we were delighted to see chimney sweeps across the country continuing to promote the importance of installing and testing smoke alarms and forwarding on our online video – <http://bit.ly/firekillsclock>.

The Fire Kills campaign is very grateful for the hard work undertaken by chimney sweeps and the NACS and we hope we can have another successful year together in 2012. If you want to find out what you can do to raise fire safety awareness in your area get in touch with your local Fire and Rescue Service, and keep an eye out on our facebook page – [www.facebook.com/firekills](http://www.facebook.com/firekills)

**James Webb - Fire Kills Campaign**

### NACS, WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S FIRE KILLS CAMPAIGN

#### Spazzacamini – Chimney Sweep Festival in Italy

*This is a unique experience for Chimney Sweeps and it is so unbelievable you have to really experience it to understand it.*

The whole festival evolved because of one man, Mayor Giacomo Mattei of the village of Santa Maria Maggiore, a little town in Italy only 15 kilometres from the Swiss Border. The first words he spoke after becoming Mayor were, "I was a Chimney Sweep". He, with some others from the town, bought a building, which is now a Chimney Sweeps museum. A few years later, unplanned, Sweeps started to gather together during the first week in September in this village. Word of this gathering spread throughout Italy and then Europe and then the world! The festival is really to commemorate the little chimney sweep boys who were "sold" to Chimney Sweeps and who went up the

big old chimneys to clean them. The festival starts off on Friday and this year there was music and dancing in the square with sweeps from all over Europe and America taking part and having a good time well into the evening.

On Saturday, there's a meeting of sweeps in the nearby village of Malesco where the statue of the little chimney sweep is. Here the chimney sweeps meet to exchange gifts, take photos, share experiences and enjoy being around other chimney sweeps. In the evening there was more music and dancing in Santa Maria Maggoire and, as it was the 30th Anniversary of the Festival, fireworks filled the sky at midnight.

The big parade was on Sunday where the village of Santa Maria takes on a different look. From a sleepy village of under a thousand folk, the village comes alive with, we've been told, up to 20,000 people lining the streets to watch the parade of Chimney Sweeps. This year, being the 30th Anniversary, saw nearly

1,200 take part in the parade. It took us as number 29th in the parade, nearly an hour to reach where the first ones started off from. We dressed in our national costume (the kilt) in the parade, which has the sweeps from many countries following a banner with their countries name on it. Each country is introduced to the crowd as they enter the village square before they walk round the rest of the village. The sweeps hand out various things to the children (& adults) in the crowd; little plastic figures, badges, boiled sweets etc. Some smudge the faces of the young and old, very common is the sound of shrieking young women with dirty faces, and boisterous laughter from the crowd and there is lots of music and colour!

This year I marched with my wife, son Ian with his family, Sheila, Ian J and Chloe, along with their friends, Julie and Steven Hunter and their children Bailey and Morgan and also our friend Les. In front of us were three American sweeps and their family, unfortunately no Irish, no Welsh

and no Canadians. Ken Bryant (who was married at the Festival a few years ago) marched for England along with a couple of Guild members.

We got back to our hotels where a long lunch with good food was waiting for us in La Scheggia's dining room. Everyone joins hands and sings the chimney sweep song, which is in Italian, but it really doesn't matter!

Everyone is made to feel very welcome and shouts of "Spazzacamini" ring out everywhere you walk. You see the same faces every year and, although you don't speak the same language as most of the folk, you get by enough to make friends! This is a truly amazing "chimney sweep" experience and although it is at the start of the busy season for a lot a sweeps, it really is worth taking a long weekend to go and take part in it.

**Kenny Paterson**  
Regional Officer, North East Scotland

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## How did you get into the business?

I was a confectioner making cakes and pies. I started around 4am and worked until 5pm each day, and I went to night school three nights a week too. I saw an advert for canvassing for a Chimney Sweep two nights a week.

After two months of canvassing the Chimney Sweep announced he was retiring soon, so I asked another confectioner is he wanted to sweep chimneys. So we started in a white Cortina with red upholstery. This didn't last long when he said he wanted to give it up. So I brought a van for £40 taxed, we didn't need MOT then. I could go on for a long time with tales!

## What do you know now that you wish you knew when you started out?

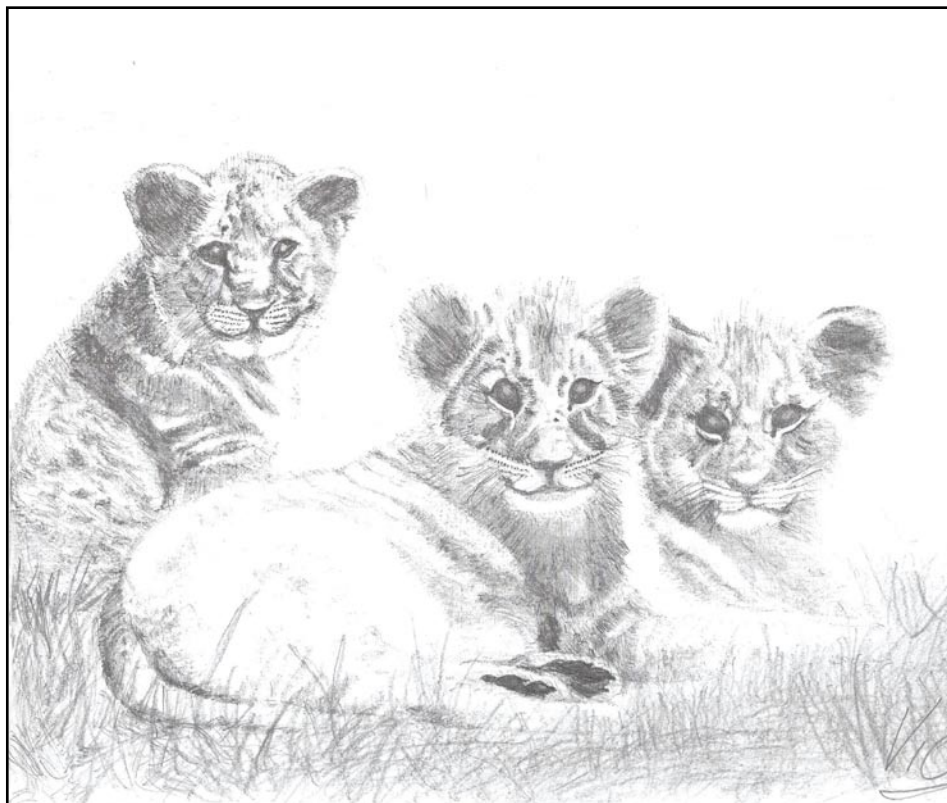
To charge more and put half away for later. I only charged 6 shillings and 8 shillings, when others were charging 10 shillings and 15 shillings. Also to have used knee protection, mask and most of all gloves.

## What do you like the most about the business?

Being self employed, meeting someone different every day, seeing how other people live, and listening to other peoples points of views.

## And the least?

Losing a contract for 5000 chimneys twice a year within 18 months in the early 70's because of smokeless zones and thinking "what do we do now?"



## What accomplishments are you most proud of?

Being a founder Member of NACS, a Regional Officer and eventually a Director. Also being strong enough to change, keeping what chimneys were left and diversifying into drains, having my own bake house, and then two cafes.

## Complete this sentence – "I still can't get the hang of..."

Growing old! and planning for retirement.

## Who or what is your major influence?

My wife Rita and my family. They have supported me in everything I've done, even when I lost everything, three times. They have supported me, and without Rita I would have nothing, no family, no joy.

## Do you have a 'tip of the trade' that you would like to share?

Be strong and diversify. I now put liners in, fireplaces and stoves. When you're in someone's house, talk to the people. They really do think you know what you're doing, and if you don't then ask me; we can then have a laugh together!

## How do you like to relax after a long day/week/month?

After 45 years I am still trying to find out! I've now started to draw and paint.

## Tell us something about yourself that we probably wouldn't know?

When I was about 6 ½ years old we went to live with my Mum's sister in the Cotswolds, they ran a fair which was very interesting. They had a show which included a one eared blue rabbit. One day it escaped and the lad who was cleaning it out said we should all help to get it back as soon as possible. When I asked why, he replied "it's going to rain soon and it won't stay blue for long!"



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