



The History of the James Watt Dinner

In 1880 the Association of Foremen Engineers held an annual dinner on the anniversary of James Watt's birthday in the McCulloch Tavern off Argyle Street in Glasgow.

The Institution held its first Annual Dinner in 1882 in the Grand Hotel in Glasgow.

In 1887 by mutual agreement; the Association of Foreman Engineers, the Philosophical Society of Glasgow and the Institution held their first joint James Watt Dinner in Glasgow. After 1887 the Association of Foreman Engineers is no longer mentioned in reports of the dinner, after 1892 the Philosophical Society of Glasgow are no longer mentioned in the accounts of the event.

The event was typically held in January until 1921 when the date was moved to later in the year, initially November and latterly October.

The James Watt Dinner, with few exceptions in the past 132 years, including 2020 & 2021 which were cancelled due to the Covid pandemic, has been an important event in the social calendar for engineering in Scotland.