

Cobham Mill Preservation Trust Newsletter - March 2007

Looking back; looking forward

It was business as usual for the Mill and its volunteers during 2006. When an informal audit of the seven open days was made, it transpired that at least 100 people visited the Mill on each occasion.

In July, the Maypole Dancers from St Andrew's School gave a stunning display on the landscape area. The Dancers have delighted visitors to the Mill for many years, but this was their last appearance as the teachers responsible for training them have retired. The Dancers will be missed! The Mill was also open and working on Saturday September 9th in support of the Cobham Conservation and Heritage Trust Open Day. This was mainly to help the CCHT run the Duck Race which started from the Mill weir, but the event attracted a lot of visitors to the Mill itself. Donations and sales were especially good: the income derived from holding Open Days makes a vital contribution to the cost of keeping the Mill running.

In addition to the Open Days, various groups were welcomed to the Mill at other times. We are always especially pleased to run the Mill for school parties and other groups of young people. In 2006, Notre Dame Preparatory School, Parkside School and Oxshott Rainbow group organised successful visits. We would really like to see more adult and school organisations making use of the Mill in this way. Visits help to 'spread the word' about the importance of the Mill to Cobham and, in the case of school parties, inform youngsters about their local heritage. So if you are associated with any group that may be interested in a visit, please encourage organisers to get in touch. A message can be left on the Mill phone (01932- 867387) to which a volunteer will respond.

Preparations for the new season, which kicks off with the first Open day on Sunday 8th April are now under way. The winter months have been put to good use. Tasks that are, or were, necessary have ranged from re-installing the stones and the tun to cleaning up both inside and outside the Mill. Many of the mill wheel paddles and their supports were found to be at or close to the end of their safe working life and since the Autumn there has been a rolling programme of replacement. Engineering improvements are continually made to the Mill by a small but skilled group of members. However, we are well aware that sometime in the not-too-distant future more extensive (and expensive!) engineering work will have to be undertaken as parts of the Mill machinery are now nearly 200 years old and showing their age!

The Future of Skilton's Yard - the need for action

By the time you read this newsletter you should have received our letter regarding the disturbing news about a recent planning application to demolish the Skilton's Yard buildings (opposite the Mill) and to build 7 flats there. Skilton's Yard, together with the Mill and the houses adjacent to the Yard, are at the very heart of Cobham's history and heritage and in the middle of our most important Conservation Area. The Yard building is unfortunately not a nationally listed building but is in on Elmbridge Council's list of 'Local Buildings of Special Interest' published in 2000. It is therefore considered to be a Locally Listed Building. It's an appalling thought that this timber clad building could be replaced by 7 flats.

If you agree, please don't forget to write to the Elmbridge Borough Council now. It is vitally important to maximise the number of letters. Cobham Conservation & Heritage Trust hope at least 500 letters will be sent, and we support them. Remember, March 20th is the deadline for your comments on Planning Applications 2007/0416 and 2007/0417 being received by the Council Planning Dept.

Cash in the Attic

During the summer we were asked by the producers of the Cash in the Attic TV programme whether they could do a short sequence of filming at the Mill for one of the episodes. This was agreed and a time arranged. In the end it turned into something of a marathon of about 3 hours work for two members of the Board, which resulted in a broadcast time of about one minute. For all this, the princely sum of £100 was donated to the Trust. Ah well, but think of the publicity we received! By the way, did anybody see the programme?

A few reminders; a few requests.

Subscriptions 2007-8

The Annual Subscriptions for 2007/8, which still remains at £1 per person, become due on 1st April. As always however, any further donation you may care to make will help considerably toward the ongoing cost of maintaining the Mill, and would be very much appreciated.

It might be more convenient for you to place a **Standing Order with your bank**. Such a method is also much more convenient for the Trust, and saves unnecessary expenditure. Enclosed with this Newsletter are forms that can be used for Direct Cash or Standing Order payments. Receipts will only be issued if specifically requested.

If you are a taxpayer, another way you can assist the Mill financially is to sign a **Gift Aid Declaration Form**. For every pound subscribed during the past four financial years and in the future, a further 28p can be reclaimed from the Government. A **Gift Aid Declaration Form** is enclosed just in case you have not completed and returned one in the past.

The Trust very much hopes that you will continue to be a Cobham Miller, supporting the Mill which has become such a well known feature of Cobham. Also, if you would like to volunteer your services in any way, just send a note to the Membership Secretary at 23 Oak Road, Cobham, KT11 3BA or simply leave a message with your contact details on the Mill phone and a volunteer will respond. The number is 01932 867387.

Multiple subscription payments by some Millers

We have noticed that a number of Millers who pay their annual subscriptions by bank standing order have made more than one payment during the last year. If this was the intention, then we thank them very much. For anyone who did not intend this please check with your bank and amend the standing order instructions appropriately.

Do you use e-mail?

If you do and would be willing in future to receive subscription reminders and newsletters in this way, could you let us have your e-mail address? A quick e-mail to cmpt@littlehaughton.freeserve.co.uk is probably the easiest way to ensure that your e-mail address can be added to your membership details.

Open Days in 2007

These will take place as usual : the second Sunday in the months April to October, from 2.0pm - 5.0pm. Short introductory talks will be given at 2.30 and 3.30. Our Open Day in May coincides with the Elmbridge Get out and About Cultural Festival and National Mills Weekend when Mills all over the country will be opened to visitors.

And last of all.....

The Chairman and the Board of Directors would like to thank all the Millers for continuing to support with their subscriptions and generous donations toward the work of preserving the Mill. The Board is particularly grateful to those members who volunteer for various duties that enable Open Days to go ahead so smoothly, month after month. A warm welcome is extended to any Miller who would like to become a volunteer. The commitment need not be great - just a few hours per year - but can be very rewarding. Please be in contact by 'phone, letter or e-mail.