

Newsletter April 2011

Something to celebrate!

25 years ago, on the 24th April 1986, the Cobham Mill Preservation Trust was incorporated, becoming a registered charity. The directors of the Trust thought that this occasion should be marked by gathering together as many members of the CMPT as possible and holding a garden party at the Mill on Sunday June 19th. An invitation is enclosed with this newsletter. We hope that as many of you as possible will drop by between 3.30pm and 5.30pm for some refreshments, and take the opportunity of seeing other members, meeting the directors and volunteers and perhaps re-acquainting yourselves with the Mill. We intend to be running the Mill and grinding grain as usual. There will also be a chance to view the delightful video documentary, produced last year by Michael Rodd, that tells the story of the Mill.

You may like to bring non-member guests with you to the party, and you are most welcome to do so. Initially please limit the number to two, but let us know if you would like to bring more. It would help with the catering and organisation if you would reply as soon as possible, but definitely no later than Tuesday, May 31st, either by post using the enclosed tear-off reply slip or by e-mail.

Those local residents who set up the Cobham Conservation Group in the 1970s were taking a leap of faith when they decided that a separate organisation needed to be established to tackle the project of saving the Mill. It had by then become largely derelict, the building in danger of toppling into the river and its gears, mill stones and much else lying about on the river bank or piled up alongside the road. It was a huge task, which had to be accompanied by fund-raising. This is where you, "The Cobham Millers", came in. It was felt that the people of Cobham needed to be involved and an organisation carrying a small subscription would be a good way of achieving this. The organisation would also be a source of volunteers once the work of reconstruction was finished and the Mill ready to open to the public. This occurred in May 1993 and since then, thanks to our loyal band of helpers, the

Mill has been opened to visitors once a month, from April to October, and on other occasions. The work of maintaining and conserving the mill machinery and keeping the building and the land around it in good order has gone on unabated ever since. Last year, for instance, CCTV cameras were installed to deter vandalism which has often been a problem during the summer. Much thought has also been given over the years to making visits enjoyable and informative. The Mill video enables us to take the 'mill experience' to a wider audience.

The Board is most anxious to secure the future of the Mill and wants to take the opportunity of this anniversary to appeal both for more members and for more volunteers. Many of those who helped to launch the CMPT are now ready to bow out or to do less, and quite rightly so, as many are in or approaching their ninth decade! So bringing in new blood is now a matter of urgency. Please do consider joining the team of volunteers, even if you can only spare a few hours during the year.

As the present Chairman of the Trust, I would like to thank all those who have given so generously of their time over the years. Gordon Mills was one of those local residents who set up the first Cobham Conservation Group in the 1970s, at a time when the destruction of old Cobham was beginning to be all too evident. He was a founder member of the CMPT. He is stepping down from active duties this year: we owe him a considerable debt. I am also grateful to the current members of Board who take on many and varied tasks to ensure that the Mill is well looked after and our open days run smoothly.

I hope to see as many of you as possible on the 19th June, and trust that it will be a great celebration of a community project of which Cobham should be proud.

Richard Ward,

Chairman, Cobham Mill Preservation Trust

A few administrative matters.

The subscription renewal form is enclosed: please note that the minimum subscription is £2 per person per year. If you are able to set up a standing order, that would certainly make life easier for our Treasurer. A current e-mail address would also be handy for our administration team.

Board members: Richard Ward, Chairman; Michael Measures, Deputy Chairman; Patricia Ward (Hon Secretary); Harold Addicott (Hon Treasurer and from April 1st, Membership Secretary); John Ball (technical advisor); Keith Simm (open day organisation); Mark Quinn (security); Paul Bryant, Ken Green.

Tel: 01932 867387

website: www.cobhammill.org.uk

e-mail info@cobhammill.org.uk

Cobham Mill, Mill Road, Cobham KT11 3AL