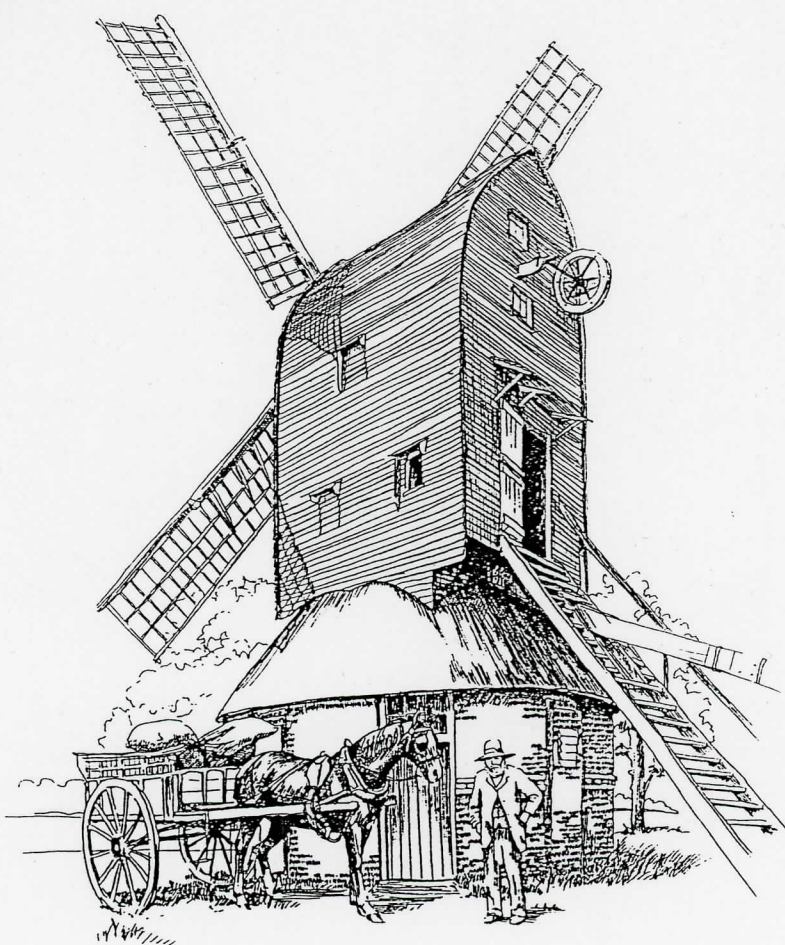




# *Friends of Lowfield Heath Windmill*



NEWSLETTER No 7.

February 1992

Dear Friends,

The above drawing of Lowfield Heath Windmill by Sarah Worthington is the cover of a calendar entitled 'Mills in Surrey'. The lower part is from a photo at least 100 years old showing the last miller, John Ansell, with his horse and cart in front of the roundhouse, on top of which Sarah has reconstructed the old mill by using what we see today plus sails and skirt. Congratulations, Sarah and thank you for letting us use it.

In addition the West Surrey artist, John Baker, drew our windmill last year, and we have the copyright, and can supply copies, A3 size.

Its our fifth birthday. It was in February 1987 that the decision was made to go ahead to save Lowfield Heath Windmill, and when I look back I am really amazed at what I see - continuous smooth progression with an extra spurt of hard activity in the winter of 1990, and never a cross word spoken or a bitter feeling. One almost feels afraid to say so! Committee meetings and work at the mill are serious matters, yet always enjoyable and with plenty of humour around. Thank you all.



We use this newsletter as a diary of happenings, year by year, - so here goes. This year has been mainly work for carpenters, (Sunday carpenters), and you will see what a good job they have made of the roundhouse roof. The straight oak trees that fell in Charlwood in October 1987, were sliced up in summer 1990, producing splendid wood. They were used for the circular wall plate and the upper ring beam which are the two supports for the long tapered, tongue and grooved larch boards that form the roof. The bottom line of the roof is irregular at present because we are waiting for shrinkage or whatever to occur; only alternate boards are fixed at present, the others are tapped up at intervals, the time of fixing and trimming them has yet to be decided. The door frames are now in place - more of our own oak - do have a good look at it. We have the larch to make the doors, and they should be in place by Easter.

We are most grateful to Mitchells of Horley for freely loaning and erecting scaffolding, and to Rawplug for providing all the special screws, bolts and plugs needed.

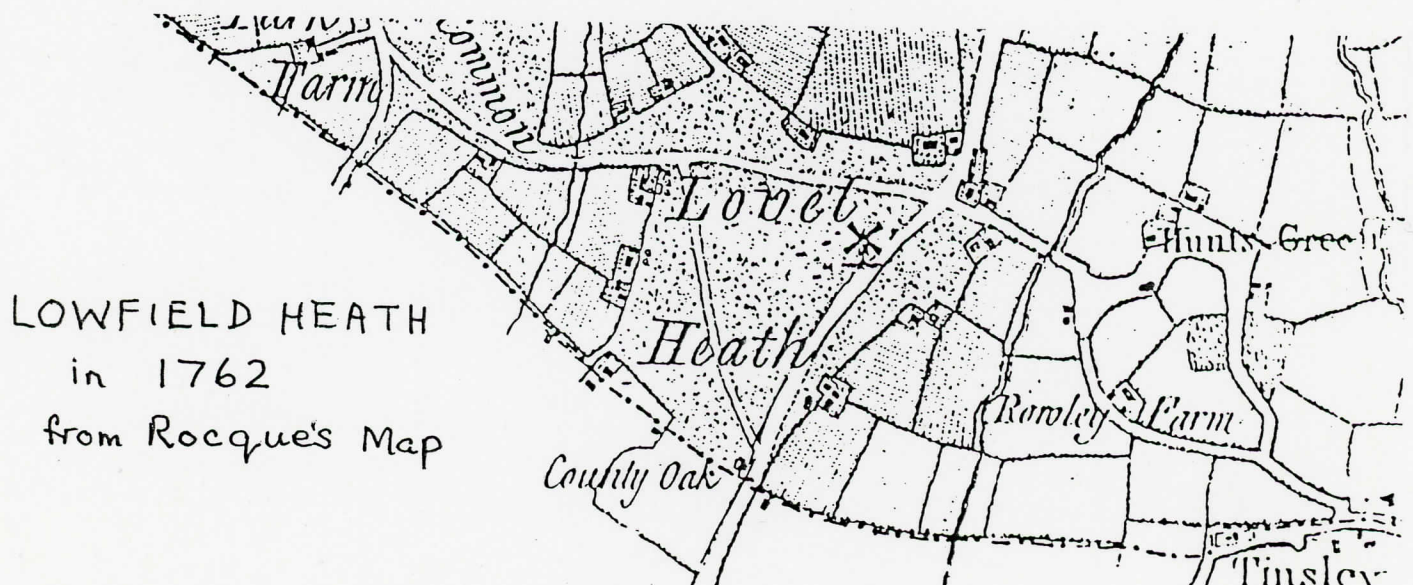
Peter Darby, the millwright, lengthened the tailpole to the correct measurement. The ground will need further leveling in the circle round which the tailpole will turn.

The next big task is to construct and fit the brakewheel. We have an acceptable estimate from the millwright for this, but we have very little money. If the worst comes to the worst the volunteers could make it but it would take a very long time.

Financially this year we kept our head above water. We obtained a small generator which has greatly assisted work, (and got a 40% grant back).

This last year a trustee and a committee member, Ron Martin and Frank Gregory respectively, retired from the committee, (they live at Brighton and at Hove). At the beginning they played a very important part indeed as they had the right skills and knowledge. Both are very willing to be called back if we need them; in fact Frank who has retired is often to be seen at the mill. We are very pleased that Jane Hoyle from Charlwood has joined us as a trustee.

PLEASE NOTE, our ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held at the Windmill on Sunday, April 12th at 11.30am, please put it in your diary NOW!



LOWFIELD HEATH  
in 1762  
from Rocque's Map

An important matter is **SUMMER OPENINGS** on Sunday afternoons, commencing at Easter. We do need more people to help to man the Mill. **PLEASE CAN YOU HELP.** The afternoon is divided into two shifts, 2 to 4pm, and 4 to 6pm. It needs two people at a time, one to go up into the mill, and the other to stay below, the latter can sit much of the time. If you can do duty once a month that would be excellent - but if it is only occasionally we are still very pleased to have you. You don't need to volunteer in twos, we'll find the other half! And we do not tie you down to certain afternoons weeks beforehand! We provide information about the mill, and a few instructions. Please help if you can, ring me on 862646. Please also think whether you know anyone who might like to be asked to help us in this way. The donations recieved at these openings are important to our finances; and we should show our mill to those who want to see it. Visit for schools or other parties to the mill can be made at other times by contacting me, Jean Shelley, as above.

I'll hand over to Peter James for his future plans.

As mentioned above, the doors are currently being made for the roundhouse, and also the window frames for above the doors. Hopefully all will be fitted by Easter, then we shall see the last of the water in the roundhouse? This years work is then planned as follows :-

1. Plank the last oak tree from Mrs Girling's wood into floor boarding for the roundhouse, this will have to season for use later, and after the sleeper walls and joists have been laid.
2. Mitchells will re-erect the scaffolding outside the roundhouse in order to make a platform for working on the skirt, This is a continuation of the weatherboarding on both sides and the front, which will be projected down to the profile of the roof.
3. Both the skirt and the roundhouse roof will need to be painted, followed by tarring the roundhouse brickwork again.
4. The tailpole metalwork and supporting tie will be finished as well as painting the tailpole.
5. The oak for the step stringers has been ordered and if time allows we will start making the new steps by the end of the year.
6. There is also work to be done inside the mill, i.e. finishing the stone floor, putting in the millstones and associated machinery.

Frank Gregory has offered to have a special open evening at Nutley Mill for the Friends of Lowfield Mill to show us, among other things, how the canvas on the sails are unfurled etc, and perhaps there will be enough wind to turn the sails. I will put the date in Charlwood Parish Magazine, but if anyone outside Charlwood wants to come give me a ring and I will send you the date.

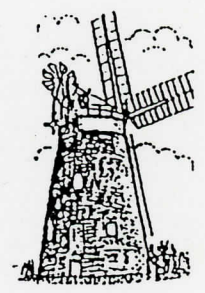
Membership of the Friends of the Windmill costs £3 per annum, if your sub is due I'll include a form with this. You may have some friends who would like to join. Payment can be made for one, two or three years, or for four years at £10.



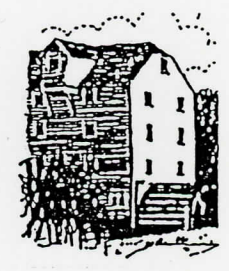
Back to Peter James:- On a different note, I recently came across the following report in the London Illustrated News of September 28th 1844. This illustrates a not so uncommon occurrence during the heyday of windmills. 'FATAL ACCIDENT FROM THE SHAFTS OF A WINDMILL. On Tuesday Mr George Sidingham, an extensive miller, residing at Datchet near Windsor, met his death from the stroke of the shafts (sails) of his windmill. The mill had been stopped, and while Mr Sidingham had been standing at the door, giving some change to a customer, a sudden gust of wind sprung up, which sent round the sails of the mill with great velocity. The shaft struck the unfortunate deceased on the temple, hurling him to a considerable distance, and when picked up life was extinct.'



# NATIONAL MILLS DAY



SUNDAY MAY 10



Lastly NATIONAL MILL DAY on May 10th when one can have a super day going from one mill to the next, the nearest to here are.

- |                          |             |   |               |
|--------------------------|-------------|---|---------------|
| IFIELD WATERMILL,        | TQ 245 364. | Near junction of Rusper Rd & Hyde Drive.<br>Restoration progressing well.                   | 2.30 - 5pm    |
| OUTWOOD WINDMILL,        | TQ 328 456  | A fine old working windmill.  | Afternoon     |
| NUTLEY WINDMILL          | TQ 451 291  | Restored to working order.  | 2.30 - 5pm    |
| SHIPLEY WINDMILL         | TQ 144 219  | Restored to working order.  | Afternoon     |
| JILL WINDMILL            | TQ 303 134  | On top of South Downs<br>Restored and grinding again.                                       | 12 noon - 4pm |
| WEST BLATCHINGTON, HOVE. | TQ 279 068  | Restored, does not grind now.   | 2.30 - 5pm    |
| REIGATE HEATH WINDMILL,  |             | Key is at the nearby golf club building, and one can see inside the roundhouse at any time. |               |