



Friends of Lowfield Heath Windmill

NEWSLETTER No. 12

SPRING 1997

Spring is upon us again and time to report on 'goings on a' mill'. There is still plenty happening and the future looks as bright as ever. Jean has handed the reins over to me this time, so without more ado, read on.

Peter James

Restoration Progress :

Since the last issue of the newsletter, the volunteers have been as busy as ever. The stone floor (the second floor in the mill proper) has been finished. The laying of this floor, which was made with oak from our local woods, donated by Mrs. Girling, has included cutting apertures for both pairs of stones and making a sack trap in the rear. A slightly cryptic verse has been fixed to the floor to record the timber donation.

The last few months has been spent making the roundhouse floor, again out of donated oak. This floor was laid on oak joists and wall plates, which in turn were laid on one course of brickwork, thus maintaining space for air circulation via the air vents around the outside of the roundhouse. It was interesting to note that when making parallel boards out of our planked oak trees, up to 50% of the original wood was wasted by way of offcuts, especially when making certain not to include sapwood. This is even more surprising as we had made boards of various widths to maximize timber usage.

The next project that the volunteers will be tackling is the manufacture of a new set of steps for the rear of the mill. These will be a faithful reproduction of the original and as such will be at a much shallower angle to the ground, enabling a safer climb. They will be made offsite, where we have a covered working area.

Restoration work to be funded by our lottery grant :

The last year has been spent drawing up the specifications and doing many detailed drawings. This has involved many hours researching old photographs and visits to other mills. Tenders have now been sent to three millwrighting firms for quote. This part of the restoration work includes the second set of sails, internal sackhoist, bolter (to grade the flour after grinding), installation of the brakewheel, setting up the millstones and manufacture of the stone furniture (this covers the stones and provides the grain feed system). A reduced copy of the latter is shown overleaf.

Historical snippets :

Mrs. J. Smith, a descendent of the Constables', previous owners of the mill in the eighteenth and nineteenth century's, has sent me the following, from the journal of Susanna Constable Grece.

Saturday 21st May 1870

Wind does not seem to have moved from the south west for several days. This day has been much warmer, lightning at night, but faint as if at a great distance, heard no thunder. The middling (stock) of the windmill sails have been broken by a sudden blast and made a sad wreck of the sails; such disasters I suppose must happen but I do not like them any the better for that.

Wednesday 25th May 1870

Morley, the millwright (from Crawley) had some tea here. Morley came about timbers for repairing the disaster at Lofield (as spelt) Heath mill.

Mill Opening :

This year the mill will be open from 3 to 5.30pm on the last Sunday of each month and on National Mills Day, Sunday May 11th from 11am to 5.30pm.

We still need more help with stewarding on open days. This need not be a chore, an hour or two would be more than welcome.

If you can help, please ring either Jean Shelley on 01293 862646 or myself on 01293 409845.

TOP BOARDING SECURED TO SIDES BY SCREWING IN 1 1/2" SQUARE BLOCKS ALL ROUND. ALL SCREWS TO BE INSERTED FROM INSIDE.

HAZEL SPRING TENSIONER SECURE WITH FORGED STEEL STAPLES

LEATHER STRIP FOR BELL ALARM SECURE WITH SHOOT TACKS

TUN TO BE ABLE TO COME APART, TO BE REMOVED FOR STONE DRESSING

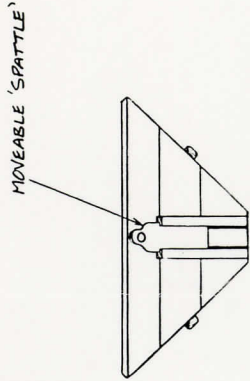
THIS BOARD 1 SIDE ONLY TO BE REMOVABLE FOR INSPECTION PURPOSES

NAIL BLOCKS, IN FOUR PLACES TO POSITION TUN ON SKIRT

SKIRT SEGMENTS TO BE NAILED TO FLOOR

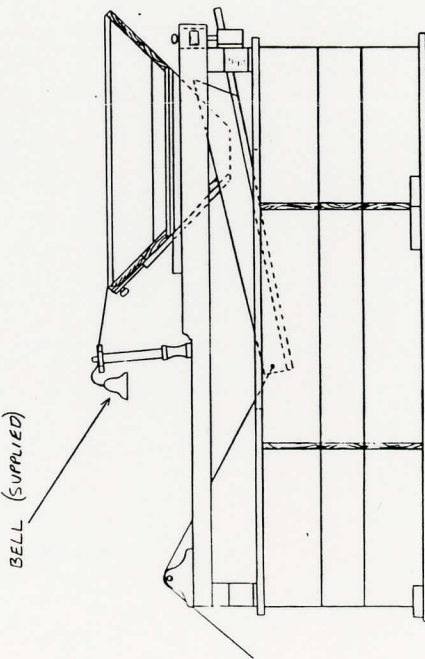
SPLIT LINE

OAK CLAPPER BLOCK (QUANT SHOWN IN X-SECTION)



VIEW OF HOPPER FROM CENTRE OF TUN

MOVEABLE 'SPATTLE'



BELL (SUPPLIED)

ALL BOARDING FITTED WITH LOOSE TONGUES

HOOKS (OPPOSITE SIDES) TO SECURE TUN HALVES

HORSE SUPPORTS TO BE DOWELLED TO TUN, FOR EASY REMOVAL USE 1/2" DIA DOWELS INTO ELM CORNER PIECES ALSO HORSE TO HAZEL SUPPORTS

SECURE BOARDING TO CORNER UPRIGHTS WITH FORGED NAILS

MATERIALS:

- OCTAGONAL CASE: CLEAR COLUMBIAN PINE 3/4" THK.
- INTERNAL CORNER PIECES (8 OFF) ELM
- TOP COVERS: CLEAR COLUMBIAN PINE 3/4" THK
- HORSE, HORSE SUPPORTS, SHOE AND HOPPER: ELM
- TURNED ITEMS: BEECH
- SKIRT: ELM / BELL CLAPPER AND SHOE CLAPPER: OAK

CONSTRUCTION:

- ALL JOINTS TO BE GLUED USING WATERPROOF PVA AND NAILED USING ROSEHEAD FINEPOINT NAILS
- FINISH: SHOE INSIDE OF HOPPER, SPATTLE AND INSIDE OF TUN; 4 COATS OF SHELLAC VARNISH

NOTE:

- LOFF AS DRAWN FOR 52" BURRS
- PLUS:
- LOFF TO SUIT 54" PEAKS: - INCREASE SIZE OF TUN AND LENGTH OF HORSE.

STONE FURNITURE - 2 OFF (SEE NOTE ON LE FOR LOWFIELD HEATH WINDMILL

P. J. JAMES 23-4-96 SCALE 1:10 3RD AN