

Friends of Lowfield Heath Windmill

Newsletter No 20

Summer 2005

News from the committee:

What's new?

Bolter: progress has been a little slow on this since the last newsletter, however we have completed and fitted the front and side doors. These are both of loose-tongued construction and the front door is angled one end to fit in with the angle of the bolter drum. Currently we are working on the inner bulkhead door, which gives access to fitting the bolting cloth. The next stage is to start on the actual bolter drum itself.

Roundhouse: after many, many years we have at last got around to making the eight airbricks; these cover the existing vent holes through the roundhouse wall to vent beneath the floor. The new 'airbricks' are steel fabrications of the old cast iron ones, which mostly were beyond repair. The intricate pattern on the face was reproduced using a combination of a computer aided drawing program and a laser-cutting machine. The finished article is hard to distinguish from the original.

Kissing gate: the ground immediately below the kissing gate was getting very worn and increasingly muddy so we needed to surface it in some way. We wanted something in keeping with the mill and someone had the bright idea of using bricks - frog side down. These have been laid on a concrete base and look very good indeed - in fact they appear to have been there for years!

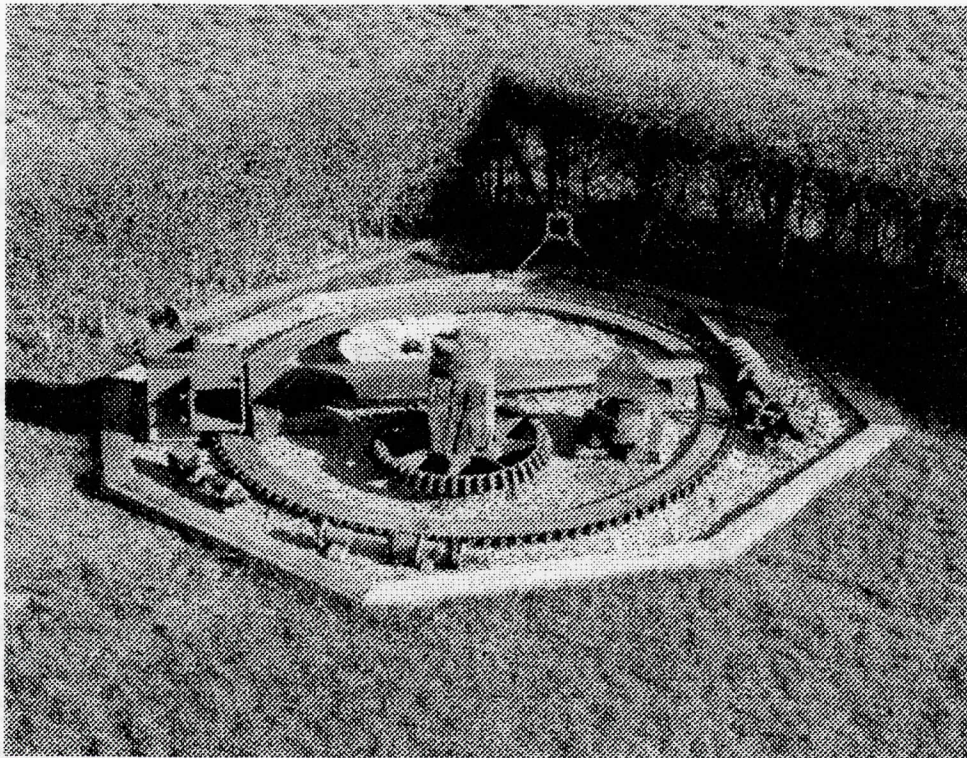
Access drive: the potholes in the drive adjacent to the road have been filled in and the drive re-surfaced from the road up to the head of our track.

Jolesfield Machinery (see also separate article for further information): On 30th September 2004, P J Brown Ltd of Ifieldwood kindly transported the rescued machinery from its resting place at the nearby Gatwick Manor Inn and deposited it in the field at the head of our track. We then had further help, this time from Chris Lory of Charlwood Place Farm, who used his JCB Loadall to move the machinery to the mill plat; the windshaft being placed on specially prepared stands. Over the following weeks we prepared the ground with anti weed matting edged with sleepers. The 8 rack segments were then reassembled around the windshaft and the worm gear positioned accordingly.

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The wallower has been sited just to the side of the windshaft so that we could insert the remains of the upright shaft complete with cross tailed gudgeon bearing, although I have to say that this is actually the lower end of the upright shaft inverted to look like the upper end. The area within the sleepers was then filled with woodchip. The one remaining French burrstone has been re-assembled on top of the woodchip, which acted as packing to level the burrs, and banded. Stone spindles and other parts have been laid around. Altogether this forms a very interesting exhibit and is a chance to examine otherwise inaccessible machinery close up. A display board has been produced, which gives a history of this windmill.



Opening times 2005:

The remaining Open Days for this year are **31st July, 28th August and 11th September** and we would really welcome **any help** in stewarding of these events. Unless you wanted to get really involved, it would only be a matter you of welcoming people and pointing them in the direction of our very 'professional' tour guides. Please think about joining us - if seven of you were able to spare one and a half hours a year it would a great help to the Trust.

Committee contacts:

Peter James (Chairman & Volunteer Leader) 01403 272664

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Jennifer Smith (Treasurer) 01892 783713

Jean Shelley (Committee Member) 01293 862646

Many thanks to all those who responded to our monetary appeal last year and we apologize for not acknowledging you all personally, but we thought (and hoped!) that you would rather that the monies were directed towards the Windmill.

Long Service Presentation!

At our Trust meeting on 9th March, I had the pleasure of presenting a large framed print of the mill taken in 2004 to Brendon Sewell. This was to mark Brendon's retirement from the Trust, the majority of which time he served as Chairman. Brendon has been a prime mover since the early days and his untiring effort in applying for grants was pivotal to the success of the project. On behalf of the Trustees and Friends I would like to wish Brendon well for the future. Peter James (Chairman).

From our Treasurer

The good news is that our income has increased this year to just under £1300, due to the generosity of donors and subscribers. However, our expenses have also risen, to just under £1500, so there is still a shortfall of £200.

We were able to purchase new sails due to a generous grant from Sita. Also Terry Thorpe has helped with the expense of new gates

Every pound helps so please remember us.

You could help us save money!

If you have e-mail, you could receive the next Newsletter on the Internet. This would cut our printing, packaging and postage costs. If you would like to hear about the mill's activities in this way please send an e-mail saying as much, to mhrowgarth@aol.com (Mike Harrison - Secretary)



JOLESFIELD WINDMILL.

There is now a new display at Lowfield Heath Windmill. Peter James has successfully negotiated with the Gatwick Manor Hotel to take custody of the remaining machinery from Jolesfield Windmill which, for nearly 40 years, has been rotting away in the hotel grounds. The remaining items, mainly of cast iron, were moved during the winter and are now on display in our mill grounds at Charlwood.

Jolesfield Windmill stood in the village of Littleworth, near Partridge Green, W. Sussex, for over 150 years before it was bought by Mr Nevvar Hickmet, the owner of Gatwick Manor Hotel, in 1959 for £250. He intended to dismantle the mill methodically and move it to his hotel at County Oak where it was to be rebuilt as an electricity generator and an added attraction at the hotel. He estimated this would cost £5,000-10,000. The building work was completed in about 1965 but the external appearance of the new building bore little resemblance to the original Jolesfield Mill or indeed to a windmill at all. The machinery was not re-installed but was put on display near the hotel car park where the wooden upright shaft and great spur wheel gradually rotted away.

Jolesfield Windmill was an eight-sided tarred smock mill with an unusually shaped cap (dome with pent house). It was last worked by George Knight in 1928. In its later working life, it had double shuttered patent sweeps of about 65ft diameter. It had a wooden brake wheel, upright shaft and great spur wheel, the remainder of its main gearing being cast iron. The sweeps drove four pairs of stones, two peak and two burr.

Among the items now on display are the segmented cap curb ring, the iron windshaft and the iron wallower with part of the wooden upright shaft. A display board gives a more detailed history of the Jolesfield Mill as well as a description of its method of construction and machinery. It also has photographs tracing its history over the last 75-100 years.