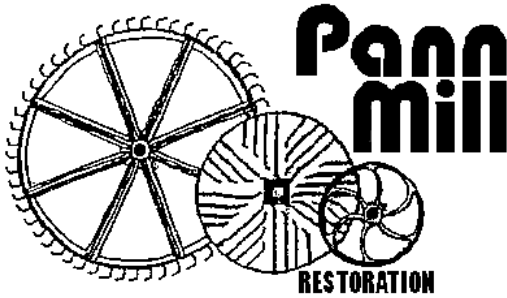


Pann Mill Times



SUMMER 2004

No.14

Pann Mill Times gives news of the restoration of corn milling on this site; a project of the High Wycombe Society. The mill is situated only three minutes walk from the High Street and is owned by Wycombe District Council.

TEAM LEADER'S BIT ...

From this edition, Pann Mill Times has a new Editor, Malcolm Connell. Malcolm joined the Restoration Team as an active member last year but has been associated with the project for many years as a steward at open days.

Peter Hazzard, the previous Editor, is still active in the Team but felt, after many years, that the time was right to pass on the mantle. Thank you, Peter, for all your efforts with the Pann Mill Times, they were much appreciated.

So what else has happened in the last few months?

After several attacks by vandals we have installed security lights on the mill. We are not sure how effective they are as vandalism has still occurred. It has been suggested that the lights just let the vandals see what they are doing, but we are assured that they are a deterrent.

A couple of cars have gone through the fence by the main road and been stopped by the trees. I still can't work out how they manage to go off the road at that point as the bend is in the wrong direction. Possibly they come out of the car park opposite and forget to turn the steering wheel. Anyway, those trees have certainly saved the mill from damage. The wheel tracks across the grass were not too bad. Many thanks to Wycombe Council for prompt repairs to the fence.

To improve the look of the mill we have replaced most of the ground floor windows with "Old fashioned" metal framed ones with small panes of security glass. These are much more in keeping with the style of the building and considerably improve the security. We had to replace some of the timber cladding but have not found any preservative to match the rest of the cladding yet. Does anyone remember what was used?

We had a very successful open day on May 9th, which is reported elsewhere. We now look forward to the next one on July 11th. See you there.

Robert Turner

Pann Mill Open Days - 2004

Sunday 11th July
Sunday 5th September

From 11am to 5pm - Milling, flour sales, stalls and refreshments

Editorial

Or How did I get into this?

I had known of the Mill for many years; back to the times when it was still working. I lived in West London then, and holiday coach trips to the West and Midlands came through High Wycombe. There was always a jam along the London Road (it's still there today, one heck of a jam to last 50 years!) and there was plenty of time to look at what we were passing. I wondered what the old white painted building was, and eventually found out that it was a mill. Many years later I moved to the town but the old building had gone and a heap of rubble and a new road were in its' place

However, it really all started about 7-8 years ago when Pann Mill was open during a Wycombe Show day. I had seen the heap of rubble turn into a smart new building that was clearly a water mill, and this day the wheel was turning. Nothing else was working, just the wheel, but I had always been fascinated by old engineering so called in to see what was happening.

The pit wheel, lay shaft and some other parts were in place and I could see how everything was intended to work. There were no team members around to explain things, so, having got into conversation with some other visitors I found myself explaining how mills worked and what was evidently intended in Pann Mill.

Then it happened, the hand on my shoulder and a charming lady suggesting that as I clearly knew something of the workings, and could talk to people, would I come to future open days and explain to the visitors what was happening. Being a sucker for a pretty face I could not refuse. I found out later that few people refused Myra, who was the project manager at that time. And so I have turned up at most of the open days since then to act as a steward and tell people about the Mill, its history and future.

Until a couple of years ago I was unable to get to the Sunday work mornings, but then a life change meant that I could get along and have been doing so ever since. Then, a few months ago, Peter, the previous Editor and a most important team member (he makes the mid-morning tea) suggested I might like to take over the production of the PM Times.

I must be getting old as I totally failed to step back fast enough or produce more than a couple of weak excuses for not taking the job. So here I am putting together my first edition. If you like it please feel free to say so. If you don't like it then you can say that as well, but be prepared for stiff questioning on why not and how we can improve things. If you would like to contribute then you would be very welcome to do so. I'll consider anything related to Pann Mill, any other watermill or milling in general.

Contact details are on back page.

For reports and other information
see the Pann Mill Internet (Web) site

WWW.PANNMILL.ORG.UK

DROPPING A BRICK AND PICKING UP A MONKEY

About 3 years ago the council, from the goodness of their hearts, gave me two bin liners full of daffodil bulbs and I planted them along the banks above the brick walls of the storm drain channel. They looked LOVELY; Wycombe Camera club used a particularly nice shot of them and the mill in an appeal for new members. But after heavy continuous rain in that autumn the water came a couple of feet or more over the brick walls and for several weeks roared through, tearing away the soil and all the bulbs, and leaving tree roots and chalk and rubble exposed.

It has not been worth replacing the soil until the brick wall has been raised higher or it could happen again. So I was VERY grateful when Lesley Stonor suggested I went to Court Gardens, Marlow, to learn how to make a small claim from the Bucks Foundation. I heartily recommend anyone to try as they are very helpful and concerned. So, on

Sunday, 30th May, Mr Les Sheldon, the Foundation's Outreach Officer, came to the Mill to present the cheque for £500 (that's a monkey - Ed.) and we hope that as soon as it's convenient work will start on the project.

It's a pity that the day was spoiled by evidence of a night's carousal behind the shed; empty vodka bottles, beer cans, disgusting mess and an area of garden totally flattened with shrubs and tall iris ruined. That part of the garden is sheltered from sight and a haven for such behaviour. Any ideas (preferably legal) how to stop it would be gratefully received.

The Buckinghamshire Foundation is a charity set up to identify social needs within the County and helps small community groups who are working to improve the quality of life within their area.

Margaret Simmons

Open Day – Sunday, 9th May, 2004 (Extract. For full version see Pann Mill Web Site)

Wycombe District Council had done a good job with advertising the Open Day and there was a fair on the Rye so we expected a good crowd. Remembering the last open day we had taken the precaution of dropping the sluices in the river Wye and the bypass race, and raising the water level in the leat, the week previous. We had also briefly run the mill to make sure everything worked after the winter; it did, hooray! We should have known better ...

Ok, the sun is getting warmer, the flour selling tent is up, the floating debris has been raked off the surface of the leat and people are arriving, so let's open the control sluice and wake up the mill. Well, the waterwheel is turning and so is the pit wheel and layshaft but the stone drive is not turning because the drive belt is slipping; probably needs a little extra tension. With a loud bang the drive belt comes apart and is clearly not going to drive anything. It transpires that the alligator clip that holds the two ends of the belt together has pulled out of the belt. Not too disastrous as we have a spare, and deft application of a big hammer (the most useful tool in the mill) soon puts everything back together. This little diversion did give us the chance to talk to visitors and explain what should be happening soon. It was also an excuse for a cuppa now that the tea tent was up and brewing.

After we had repaired the belt a second time the mill got the message that we were in earnest and ran smoothly. One of the team members was kept busy filling the hopper with wheat and explaining about the stones, what a damsel does, and the history of the mill to a steady stream of visitors. Meanwhile the miller was trying to keep pace with the demand for flour without pushing the mill too much; we did not trust the belt joint completely. However, everything held together and the demand for flour was generally met despite several orders for 5kg. The sun was out and the crowds turned up and everyone was in good spirits. It was a good day and thanks are due to everyone who helped or just came to look.

PANN MILL IN HISTORY

The Dissolution of the Monasteries 1536-40

The Knights Templars and Hospitallers were landlords of Pann Mill for over 300 years until King Henry VIII confiscated it between 1536 and 1540. He didn't exactly target it - *"You have been sending poor quality flour to Hampton Court Palace for my pie crusts, so I'll take over the mill and replace your miller"*. No, he took over Temple Wycombe Manor, and Pann Mill happened to be one of the properties within that manor. Dying in 1547, Henry didn't have it for long; it was transferred to Robert Raunce in 1553.

Who were these Knights? Their official title was *Knights of the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem*. They consisted of the Knights Templars, the military arm, and the Knights Hospitallers, who were mainly a nursing brotherhood. They were formed in the 11th century to fight in crusades against Moslems in the Middle East. In the 12th and 13th centuries donations of land and properties were showered upon them, as were privileges by the Pope. Locally, Temple Wycombe Manor was given to them by Robert Vipont in 1227.

Within the order the Knights Templars was the dominant class, the other two being chaplains and serving brothers. In England the order was administered by a priory and 36 commanderies (estates or manors). In 1307 the order of the Templars was suppressed and Temple

Wycombe Manor, as with most of their possessions, passed to the Knights Hospitallers.

The refusal of the grand prior and knights to acknowledge King Henry VIII as head of the church led to the confiscation, but not suppression, of their estates, and so Pann Mill changed hands.

Pann Mill was attached to the adjacent Hospital of St. John which was also suppressed. Some of the hospital ruins may be seen today. Both properties were recorded in about 1550 as being held by the Hospitallers in King Henry VIII's reign. The original handwritten entries may be seen in the Public Record Office at Kew, the reference being *Ld. Rev. Misc. Bks. clxxxviii, Fol. 129-135*. The Pann Mill entry was shown in Pann Mill Times No. 11 which showed a rent of 35 shillings p.a. was paid. The Hospital entry on the manuscript folio is positioned two before Pann Mill with a yearly rent of 1 penny. In between these two is an intriguing entry:

"John Shrympton holds freely one close called Snigges there with its appurtenances ..."

Can any reader place this property for which 12 pence was paid per annum?

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