



The Combe Dard

Newsletter of the Combe Mill Society



September 2023

Models & Collections themed event

The marquees arrived on Saturday 19 August. There were two to erect, along with a small one for the Kencot Ukulele Players in the picnic area. The Mill's marquee had been erected on the Wednesday before.

Once the marquees were erected and the tables all spaced around, we were ready for arrivals.

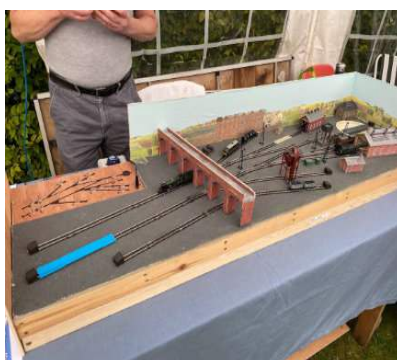


<<<<< Some of the model exhibitors >>>>>

Ukulele Group performing



Refreshments on the veranda



A detailed N-gauge layout



Visiting vehicles

On Sunday 20 August exhibitors and stallholders started to arrive resulting in a buzzing atmosphere and plenty happening. Five gazebos had to be put up, two for the remote operated radio controlled lorries in the picnic area; one to create a 'walk through' to the car park (which worked well); two for the exhibitors in the car park, where there was John Bagwell with his miniature steam engine.

Witney Model & Collectors Club along with Lechlade Collectors Club brought 22 exhibitors, a big thank you to them all for bringing their beautiful models for the public to enjoy. The arrival of a couple of unusual motor cars also added to the interest.

A big thank you also to all the volunteers in the Mill, including the tea room, BBQ, blacksmiths and every one that came along to make the event a tremendous success. The Tombola and Gift shops were very busy too.

Visitors were quite slow in the morning (football was on) but picked up in the afternoon.

The day was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone - exhibitors are asking about next year.

Ann Winfield, Event Organiser

Combe Mill article in Cotswold Link

I promote in the Cotswold Link every issue, throughout the year. For the September/October issue the editor has very kindly given Combe Mill a half page article.

Should a issue come through your door don't just scan the advertising, turn to the back page where you will find the article.

I have written a thank you to the Editor as all the promoting with Cotswold Link is entirely free - a big thank you to the editor Christine.

Margaret



Combe Mill Christmas Fayre 3 December

We are starting to plan our 2023 Christmas Fayre, perhaps a bit early to ask but here goes. We are looking for Christmas Raffle Prizes, goodies to make up a food hamper, items to make a festive tombola, (the tombola is quite short of prizes at the moment especially adults' and children's things) and items to sell, or for the donation table, all helping to raise money for Combe Mill.

Last year our Christmas market was a great success, being well supported before the event and on the day. For 2023 we will need lots of help with preparing and assisting on the day so let's make the 2023 event an even greater success raising lots of money to keep Combe Mill afloat. Any help will be most appreciated.

Margaret - Christmas Fayre Organiser

Blacksmith experiences reach new record

Bob Kitchener reports that whilst last year the blacksmiths ran 32 experience sessions, they have already booked 31 for this year and are sure to exceed the 2022 record by the end of the year. This is an amazing achievement and we all owe the blacksmiths our thanks for doing this money raising work.

Tony Simmons

Welcome new volunteers

We welcome David Matthews from Chipping Norton as a new volunteer and also Les Allen from Begbroke. Richard Stone from Wolvercote has signed up as a member.

You are all welcome - thanks for supporting us.

Keeping up to date

For those of you who like to keep up to date with what is happening have a go at exploring the members' website.

Here you will find back copies of newsletters, agendas for board meetings and also the minutes of board meeting.

All is readily accessible with a few clicks.

Website www.combemill.info

Tony Simmons

August Wild Wednesdays

Wendy Foster and Rowan Wynne-Jones arranged five Wednesdays events during August. The activities included supervised pond dipping, block printing and clay modelling. This was backed up with a bug trail alongside the usual Millie trail.

For the price of £5 per adult with children free, the month was a tremendous success and we welcomed at least 125 parents and 135 children - it was hard to count them all!

Many thanks to everyone for making it possible.



Relaxing by the river after pond dipping



Printing onto cotton bags

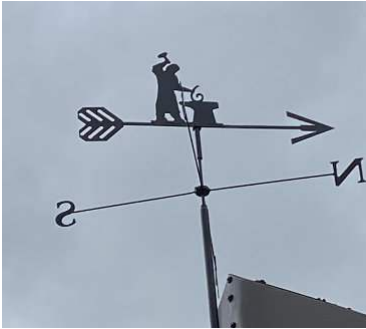


Fun sticking clay faces and creatures onto tree bark



We have a weathervane

To me the Tea Room has always looked as if it needed a weathervane on its apex. Either that or a surveillance camera!



We reported in the June newsletter that Keith Johnson has given us a weathervane he had made and he recently mounted it on the Tea Room where it looks at home.

Thanks very much Keith.

Tony Simmons



Hand operated boiler wash out pump restored

New member Mark Richmond recently overhauled the vintage boiler wash out pump that for years languished near the Cornish Boiler or forge area.

It has cleaned up very well and new leather seals ensured it also delivers a pretty good jet of water when pumped.



Martin demonstrated it recently and was helped by a young visitor to test its range. All that is needed now is a brass lance to complete the item.

Tony Simmons

Waterwheel running again

During August we have enjoyed seeing the waterwheel turning again after many months of inactivity.

This was possible because the river level had dropped enough to allow water to exit the tail race.



Made by Ivan Maycock

Ivan was a highly skilled scratch builder of models and he regularly exhibited at the Mill. Ivan passed away last year.

Of particular interest was always his model of our Beam Engine. It can be run on compressed air or rechargeable battery power.



Ivan displaying some of his models



Nigel Evans and Peter Trowles sorting out the object entry form paperwork with Ivan's family

Maintenance Plan being prepared

Our building's structure, and fabric together with its equipment and displays are constantly deteriorating and gathering dirt. This happens so gradually in most cases that it's only when it is pointed out to us or something fails that we are forced to take action.

We need to change this reactive approach and several of us are working to put together a Maintenance Plan.

The Plan will contain schedules for each identified area that list the work needed and how often it needs to be done. The 'work' maybe an inspection of condition, the replacement of a blocked filter, a lubrication session and so on. The frequency may range from weekly to bi-annually.

It might be argued that if a task needs doing weekly it should form part of a Method Statement to operate the item concerned.

The schedules will record when work is due, who has performed the work and when it was done.

I have assigned 'owners' to various areas covered by the study - these owners are not necessarily the Heads of Technical Areas but are those felt to have a good understanding of the areas.

You do not have to wait until the closing date of 23 September before letting me have your input.

Thank you to those who have already given me their input

Tony Simmons

Ticket Office Roster

Date	Ticket Office Clerk	School Hol	Date	Ticket Office Clerk	School Hol
September			October		
Wed 06 Sept	Cliff Manion		Wed 04 Oct	Pat Bowker	
Wed 13 Sept	Peter Trowles		Wed 11 Oct	Tony Simmons	
Wed 20 Sept	Keith Johnson		Wed 18 Oct	Pat Bowker	
Wed 27 Sept			Wed 25 Oct	Mike Stockbridge	

Forthcoming events

Monday 04 September - 7pm ZOOM Board Meeting

Thursday 07 September - 10.30am - Witney Probus Club

Wednesday 13 September - 10am Urgent Volunteer Briefing

Sunday 17 September - Crafts and Skills - Steaming Event

Tuesday 23 September - 7pm - Volunteer Information Session

Monday 02 October - 9am Abingdon Prep School visit

Friday 13 October - 6.30pm Bat Evening

Sunday 15 October - Wood Crafts - Steaming Events

Thursday 19 October - **Possible booking** - Towcester U3A

Wednesday 25 October - Final non-steaming Open Day

Wednesday 01 November - 10am Volunteers' End of Season Briefing

Monday 06 November - 7pm ZOOM Board Meeting

Sunday 03 December - Christmas Fayre - not in steam

Bat watch evening

Combe Mill and Cotswold National Landscape are working in partnership to organise a Bat Evening on Friday 13 October.

The event is open to members and their families and will include a short talk about bats by Angela Mills, bat watching/detecting using ultrasonic bat detectors and refreshments.

The tea room will open for hot drinks and cookies and there will be marshmallow roasting in our fire pit.

The event will run from 6.30pm to 8pm and will be limited in numbers so please email **rowan.wynne-jones@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk** to secure your place.

There is no charge for the event but we are asking for a donation per family hopefully to raise enough money to buy a bat detector for Combe Mill.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Wendy, Rowan and Angela