



The Combe Yard

Newsletter of the Combe Mill Society



April 2024

Science at the Mill

Our first Steaming Day of the year started, as on most days this month, with rain. Fortunately the day got brighter, the market was in full swing and we had a good turn out of visitors including a noticeable number of children.

The focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and in particular 'time' included activities for children to use timers including stopwatches and sand timers.

The sun came out at last and we were able to make a sundial and notice the changing length and positions of the shadows.

There was a trail for children and families to spot wheels and cogs around the Mill and interesting talks about clocks by Clive Brimson.

The revamped tinkering area had many visitors who enjoyed the activities demonstrated by Cliff Manion. As always the barbeque and tearoom did a roaring trade making it a successful day all round.

Many thanks to all volunteers who made the day such a success.

Wendy



Good attendance of market stalls



Tinkering area set up for science activities



Youngster learning about steam engines



Blacksmiths busy in the forge



Hot air engines always attract interest

Boiler inspection

It is good to report that our steam raising boiler has again passed its annual inspection. We use the services of Dave Wothers and his son Matthew. Based near Evesham they have provided us with exceptional service over the last many years.

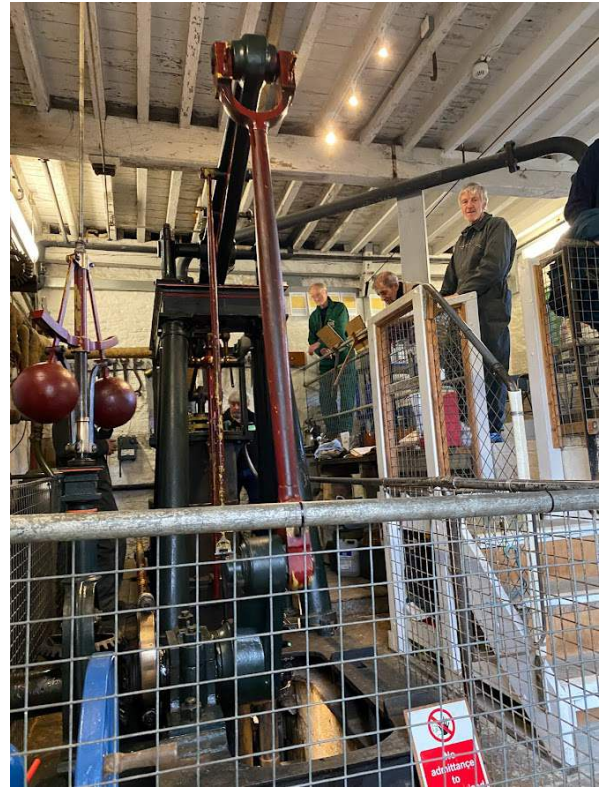
Well done to Richard Newman and his band of helpers who did all the work of dismantling and re-assembling the boiler for its checks.

Beam engine operations

Intensive training work has been done over the last few months to get members to the point when they can operate the beam engine safely. Currently the engine can only be run if Sam Jones, who is certified as proficient, is present and at least one of the acting Heads of Technology is present - Nigel Evans or Philip Hawtin.

The Director Responsible for Safety (DRS) Philip has ruled that it is unlikely to be before July that one of the current trainees will reach the level at which they can be certified as proficient.

The recent event provided another opportunity for the new team to gain experience. In this photograph can be seen Keith Johnson, Richard Stone and George Farmer.



Ticket Office on Steaming Events

The planning for the recent steaming event was effective for machinery operations but in future needs to cover the Ticket Office. Last time Peter Trowles was 'stuck' the whole day when he needed to be gaining steam raising experience.

We have now trained several members in how to use the ticketing software and a pool of operators ought to be available for steaming event days.



Next Steaming Event

The next event will be held on 21 April and the subject is Military Vehicles. This was a great success last year and popular with exhibitors and visitors alike.



Special tool collection now protected

The green display cabinet which contains our collection of woodworking tools has been fitted with doors. The glazed doors have been made by Tony Thurlby and fitted with help from Richard Edwards.

We have long been concerned about possible damage to or pilfering from the contents of this cabinet.



Pewter casting

Marc Richmond has resurrected our pewter casting equipment and plans to make a production run of Millie badges for sale in the gift shop.

If timing is right, holiday visitors will be able to see the casting work in progress.



Electric furnace and silicon rubber Millie moulds

Membership

Thank you all who have renewed your membership this year.

We are sorry that Ray Pitts has decided to no longer be a member.

New volunteer

We welcome new volunteer David Taylor who fell in love with the Mill during his recent blacksmithing experience. He wants to be part of what we all do.

Forthcoming events - 2024

Thursday 11 April - 7.00pm ZOOM Board Meeting

Friday 26 April - 7pm Annual General Meeting in Foreman's Office

Wed 15 May - 10.30am - 1.00pm Visit from Dacorum U3A not in steam

Thursday 29 August - 10.30am - 3.30pm Visit from Aston Clinton U3A Science & Technology Group

| Date | Title | Organiser |
|----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 21 Apr | Military Vehicles and Spring Market | Margaret Gruber |
| 12 May * | National Mills Weekend | Colin Boyles (radio club) |
| 19 May | Mercedes-Benz Day | Richard Newman |
| 16 June | Environment Day | Peter Trowles/Alan Burch |
| 21 July | Wildlife on the Evenlode | Wendy Foster |
| 18 Aug | Models & Collections | Ann & Ron Winfield, Cliff Mannion |
| 15 Sep | Crafts & Skills | Margaret Gruber |
| 20 Oct | Woodcrafts and Autumn market | David Knight (tbc) |
| | | |
| 01 Dec | Christmas Fayre | Nigel Evans |
| | | |

- **Not in steam**

Note we are running an additional non-steaming Sunday in May for the SPAB Mills Weekend

Ticket Office Roster

| Date | Ticket Office Clerk | School Hol |
|--------------|----------------------|------------|
| April | | |
| Wed 03 April | Rose and Dave Ralphs | |
| Wed 10 April | Richard Stone | |
| Wed 17 April | Derek Goddard | |
| Wed 24 April | Richard Stone | |
| May | | |
| Wed 01 May | Rose and Dave Ralphs | |
| Wed 08 May | Alan Burch | |
| Wed 15 May | Peter Trowles | |
| Wed 22 May | Gordon Lord | |
| Wed 29 May | Marc Richmond | |
| June | | |
| Wed 05 June | Derek Goddard | |
| Wed 12 June | Gordon Lord | |
| Wed 19 June | Tony Simmons | |
| Wed 26 June | Peter Trowles | |