

SALTFORD BRASS MILL PROJECT

Report for Annual General Meeting

27 June 2017, 7.30pm, Salford Brass Mill

This report covers the period from 01 July 2016 to 27 June 2017

Report from the Chair

Having taken over as Chair of the Salford Brass Mill Project from Brian Cooper in 2016, I would like to start by thanking Brian for his sterling work and for handing the project over in very good order.

We had a successful season in 2016 and 2017 has started well with visits from two overseas universities and our recent contribution to the 2017 Salford Festival. In February, the SBMP was also nominated for a 'Chairman's Community Award in recognition of Service to the Community in Bath & North-East Somerset'.

The key points of the 2016/17 season are:

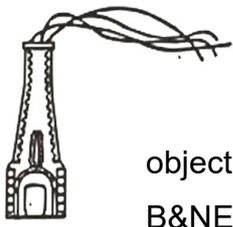
- Health and Safety
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
- Visits and Talks.
- Interpretation.
- Programme of Work.

Health and Safety

Following an incident in the mill in 2016 when a visitor had a suspected heart attack, a casualty mattress and thermal blanket has been procured to enable improved support to be provided should a similar situation arise whilst awaiting an ambulance.

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Following debate at two Special General Meetings, on 2nd June 2017 we submitted an application for the Salford Brass Mill Project to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Thanks go to Patrick Beazley and Richard Ross for the hard work in preparing the submission. Since its inception, the project has been an 'Unincorporated Organisation' which means that while we carried out the stated aims of the project the SBMP had no legal standing. We therefore ran the project on the goodwill of B&NES, who hold the maintaining lease for the mill, and Darren Calder, who owns the site. The



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objective of becoming a CIO is to enable us to enter into a more formal agreement with B&NES for the pursuance of the aims of the project, B&NES only being able to enter into an agreement with a legally recognised organisation.

Once recognised as a CIO, we plan to develop a formal Management Agreement with B&NES to agree how we will work together to maintain the mill, interpret the history of the brass industry and open the mill to the public.

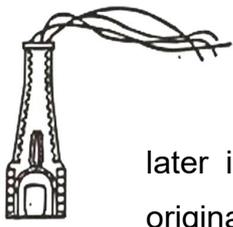
Visits and Talks

The Brass Mill was open to visitors through the 2016 season, starting with National Mills weekend on 14th May 2016 and concluding with B&NES Museums Week on 30th October. In 2016, in which time we welcomed over 600 visitors (555 adults and 57 children). The 2017 season commenced once again with the National Mills weekend on the 13th May 2017 and continues with a programme of routine open days on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month, group visits, the national museums weekend in September and the B&NES Museums Week in late October.

Of particular note, so far in 2017:

- In January, we have supported a joint visit by students from Bath Spa University and Huron University College, Ontario in Canada.
- In March, we supported a visit by Year 4 students from Saltford School.
- In June, we supported a visit by American students on the Fulbright Scholarship exchange hosted by Bristol University.
- Also in June, we opened for two weekends in support of the Saltford Festival. A team from the Roman Baths and Pump Rooms collaborated with the SBMP for the event providing a display, subject matter experts and a talk on metals in Archaeology.
- We have also worked with Richard White of Bath Spa University in support of his 'Sweet Waters' project, observing the legacy in the Avon valley of 18th century slave trade.

The programme of talks to local history groups on the 18th Century Copper and Brass Industry in the Avon Valley continued through 2016/17, the talks comprising four titles: the origins of the industry; later developments in the industry; the restoration of Saltford Brass Mill; and John Padmore: 18th Century engineer and polymath. Eleven talks were delivering in 2016; nine talks have been delivered so far in 2017, with more planned for



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later in the year. Unfortunately, my day job is currently taking more of my time than originally foreseen which means that I have had to reduce the number of talks I deliver; however, Richard Ross and Patrick Beazley are planning to step into the breach to take up the challenge of continuing the programme.

Interpretation

We have added to our collection of interpretive displays. In recent years, Mike Reed, with help from others, constructed a replica set of rolls and a replica battery hammer. We added to this collection in 2016 with the construction of replica of the annealing furnace turntable, built by Malcolm Pearce and Mike Rayner, and new for 2017 Mike Reed has constructed a series of small-scale working water-wheels to demonstrate the operation of undershot, breastshot, backshot and overshot wheels plus a water turbine.

An LED TV has been purchased to screen the brass mill video to replace the projector which was becoming unreliable. The TV also presents a more modern and professional means of screening the video.

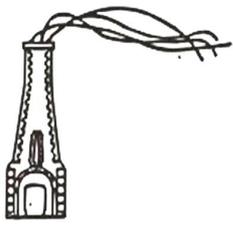
Programme of Work

In 2016 over 700 hours of volunteer effort was recorded, which is certainly an underestimate.

The mill gardens continue to provide an attractive entrance to the mill which can only be maintained by sustained hard work. Thanks, must go to the gardening stalwarts for maintaining this important facet of the mill: Stella Hurley; Rob Knapp, Dick Stabbins and Noel Dawson. Plant sales continue to attract visitors which Judy Reed keeps in good order.

On the fabric of the mill, specific effort has been expended on:

- **The Bridge:** the woodwork has been cleaned and new non-slip treads laid on the bridge deck.
- **The Waterwheel:** the programme of replacing the water-wheel starts continues, with those in the worst condition having been replaced to enable continued operation of the wheel in open season. 43 of the 72 starts have been replaced since 2012. The substantial, but 'temporary', repair to the working waterwheel sluice continues to perform well.



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- **The Roof:** A survey of the mill roof was conducted in 2016 using a drone and a condition report prepared. On the basis of that report, B&NES put in place a programme of work to replace damaged and slipped tiles and to repair lead in the roof valleys. The SBMP is most grateful for this support and the roof should now give good service for the foreseeable future.
- **Lighting:** Enhanced lighting has been installed around the waterwheel, annealing furnace and the roof-space above the rolls.

Funding

Grants were kindly provided by the Parish Council for the replacement oak starts and non-slip deck treads for the bridge.

B&NES have carried out the repairs to the roof as part of the maintenance programme.

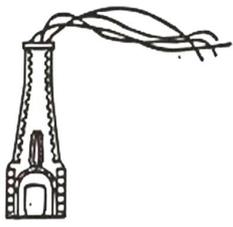
The SBMP has applied for “Watermark” sponsorship of wheel model through Wessex Water and the Conservation Foundation.

2017/18 Work Programme

The objective in 2017/18 will be to:

- Complete a periodic review of the mill’s Hazard Log.
- Negotiate a SBMP / B&NES management agreement.
- Continue essential refurbishment of the waterwheel, sluices and starts.
- Continue garden and grounds maintenance.
- Increase promotion of the Brass Mill.
- Recruit and train additional volunteers to facilitate increased opening hours.

The project will continue to monitor the condition of the working waterwheel and redundant waterwheel sluices. The working waterwheel has been fitted with a gate constructed of 36mm marine-ply (2 x 18mm); ideally the gate would be constructed of 45mm thick greenheart or oak. The condition of the redundant waterwheel sluice continues to deteriorate and at some point, both gates will require a full repair requiring damming of the head race close to Kelston weir.



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Tony Coverdale

Chair, Saltford Brass Mill Project

20 years of Conservation and Interpretation

Scheduled Ancient Monument (list entry number 1004607)

Grade II Listed Building (list entry number 1384676)*