

The MUNDLING STICK



the LION
Salt Works
TRUST

Newsletter of the Lion Salt Works Trust

WINTER 2008

VOLUME 14 No.2,3&4



I SAW THREE SHIPS

Well in this case, one ship – but a special one which has been used for our Christmas card this year. It is a photograph of a model ship encrusted with salt crystals which is now accessioned into our museum collection.

These models were made by salt workers who constructed a wooden framework of a ship and rigged the model with string or twine before dipping it in hot brine and leaving the model to dry out in the hot house, where the brine would evaporate and form salt crystals over it. At Christmas bare branches cut from trees were treated in the same way and sparkling, salt encrusted 'trees' were taken home on Christmas Eve.

'The ship model we now own was offered to us through a contact made during the BBC series Restoration.'

ENDORSEMENT FROM CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER CONTRACTS SIGNED WITH HLF & NWDA

Good news came to the project on 15 September following a meeting of the Shadow unitary authority which will take over from Vale Royal Borough Council on 1 April, 2009. This enabled contracts to be exchanged by Vale Royal Borough Council in November with the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Northwest Development Agency.

The CW&C press release stated that 'Restoration plans remain on track to restore the Lion Salt Works after Cheshire West and Chester Shadow Authority gave its backing for plans to contract with the Heritage Lottery Fund and other funders to continue the scheme.'

Current owners, Vale Royal Borough Council, has already committed £750,000 to the project, but full restoration is expected to cost in the region of £7million with £6 million coming from external sources such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and other sources.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has already agreed to invest £4.96 million in the scheme leaving the project to raise the rest of the money through other means. By giving its backing Cheshire West and Chester's shadow executive is safeguarding the public's interest by maintaining a rigorous oversight of the scheme.

Portfolio Holder for Culture and Recreation, Councillor Richard Short, said: "This is a real opportunity to restore this important site, the last open pan salt works in the country, which will contribute to the visitor attraction in Cheshire West and Chester while preserving part of our local heritage."

However, to move ahead with enabling works greater comfort and understanding is still needed regarding business plan issues given the present economic climate.

For information about the transition to a unitary authority in West Cheshire go to:
www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

mundling stick *n.* ~tool used to pack salt crystals into the wooden tubs when making lump salt. This newsletter will likewise try to cram in all the latest information about the conservation and restoration of the Lion Salt Works.

CANAL DISPLAY MAKES LINK WITH THE ANDERTON LIFT



With a grant offer in hand from the Heritage Lottery Fund and support offered from the Northwest Development Agency the Trust has moved forward with strengthening links

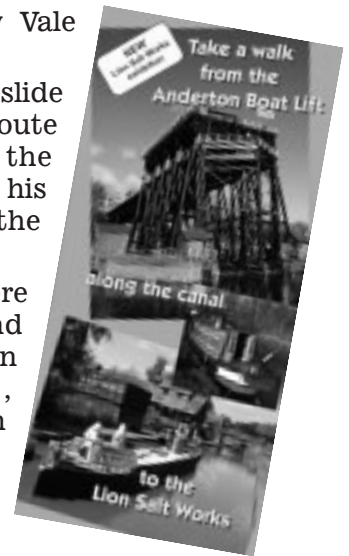
An accompanying walking leaflet is being designed to provide information to local walkers. The routes incorporate the canal tow path and footpaths through Northwich Community Woodlands. These are all accessible from the Lion Salt Works and the Lift. Part of the walk takes you through Ashton's and Newman's Flash which incorporates infilled, collapsed rock salt mines, between the Trent and Mersey Canal, the Salt Works, Northwich town centre and the Anderton Lift.

Making the links between the Woodlands, the Trent and Mersey Canal and the Anderton Lift will be an important part of the bid we are making to Europe for funding from the Interreg programme.

between Lion Salt Works and the Anderton Lift. The temporary exhibition has been created by local waterways researcher Colin Edmondson and funded by Vale Royal Borough Council.

Colin has prepared a short slide show to show visitors the route along the towpath to the Anderton Lift, which feature his extensive photographs of the area.

Present at the opening were Trustees John Hulme and David Roberts, Colin Edmondson (centre rear), Andrew Fielding and John Tackley of the Trent and Mersey Canal Society.



Short information booklets written by Colin Edmondson are available at £3.99 each.

- Take a Walk through Time - Anderton Boat lift to Lion Salt Works.
- Take a Walk Through Time - Lion Salt Works to Anderton Boat Lift.
 - A Pocket History of the River Weaver Navigation
 - The Mersey Salt & Brine Company Limited

SMALL SUMS HELP MAKE HUGE IMPROVEMENTS

Support arrived from different sources this summer to help us improve our office accommodation and grounds. Our local B&Q store supplied us with £150 of paint and materials to decorate the temporary exhibition space which now houses the canal exhibition panels. The funding application was processed by Mandy Mottershaw under *B&Q's One Planet Living Grant*.

Tracey Abbott of local fish food manufacturers *Skretting* made contact to offer some unwanted furniture. Tracey had visited earlier as part of a staff visit when she brought delegates from their worldwide offices to see a bit of Northwich's local history. The offices of Skretting and Trouw Nutrition can be seen from Lion Salt Works, to the east of us along the canal. Tables and chairs from their canteen were surplus to requirements and are now in use in our upstairs meeting room. We have had to move our office meeting table to the large original meeting room to accommodate all the design team working up the repair works.

Lee Gannon (*top right*) was able to help complete the refurbishment work through a 20 week training for work placement at the Lion Salt Work.



TACKLING THE HERB GARDEN

Volunteers from Butterfly Conservation provided more labour to dig out contaminated soil from our existing herb garden and replace it with fresh topsoil. The soil was made possible through a grant from the Cheshire Year of Gardens 2008 promotion. Plans are being prepared to manage and maintain the plot and design a butterfly garden for an adjoining area. Cynthia Harcourt was also able to provide a simple planting scheme to our grass area beside our entrance.



REFRESHING OUR ENTRANCE

Richard Harcourt gave up some of his time during his summer holidays to repaint our front gates. We hope this will be a temporary arrangement as the enabling works package will include large iron gates to make the site secure from vandalism during the restoration works and to protect the site once work is complete. We also anticipate protecting the frontage through the provision of bollards between our front door and the pavement.



EXHIBITIONS ATTENDED 2008

Salt Conference, Laesoe, Demark

12-16 September, 2008

Trustee, Martin Boyett attended this international conference and gave a talk about the restoration of the Lion Salt works to individuals and organisations restoring heritage sites across Europe. Attended a similar conference we held at the Lion Salt Works in 2003.

Food Fairs

Nantwich Food Fair

26-27-28 September 2008

We made salt and gave a talk on salt making in Cheshire within the children's tent at the Nantwich Food Fair with food writer Amanda Grant.

Vale Royal Food Fair

The Hollies Farm Shop, Cotebrook, Cheshire

18-19 October 2008

The Lion Salt Works demonstrated the art of salt making and talked to people about the salt they buy and how they use it. It will help us to take forward our ideas to once again make a traditional Cheshire crystal salt for general sale.



Manchester Historic Vehicle Club visited the site in July. The Mayor of Northwich attended and made a presentation to the car that he would most like to take home with him. Unfortunately for him, he wasn't allowed to actually take it away with him. 25 cars made the visit and looked fantastic filling up our parking area.

THERESA MAY MP VISITS SALT WORKS



Theresa May MP visited us in August during a tour of Cheshire together with the Conservative candidate for the next-door constituency of Weaver Vale, Cllr Graham Evans. They are photographed here with Trustees John Hulme and David Roberts.

UNIQUE SALT GLAZED POTS



We are developing our own range of small salt glazed pots made in partnership with Anvil Pottery. Each is stamped with the Trust logo and an anvil.

WHO HAS BEEN MAKING SALT THIS YEAR?

We have been making salt throughout the year both on site and at food fairs. Gareth Wilkes (bottom left), student at The Grange School, Northwich, spent two weeks during his work experience placement experimenting with a demonstration salt pan heated by propane gas. He also spent a day evaporating brine over a wood fire. Gareth also helped with our salt making demonstrations at the Nantwich Food Fair where Trustee, Will Charlton showed Edward Timpson, MP for Nantwich how open pan salt is made.

Whilst making salt at Lion we were visited by Sir Neil Cossons (left), former head of the Science Museum, who was delighted at being able to harvest his own salt crystals. Neil is currently looking at industrial monuments for English Heritage and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. He was very pleased with the imminent start of restoration works at Lion Salt Works.



Catching Up With Former Workers

Roy Ashbrook, a former worker at Thompson, Lion Salt Works got in touch as soon as he heard that we had secured an HLF grant. He has many stories about his working life making salt by the open pan process that he was invited to take part in a video initiative being put together by Nigel Froud to interpret the heritage of the North West through on-line video programmes. More information in 2009.

Making Contacts at Amlwch

Trustees David Roberts and Will Charlton accompanied Project Director Andrew Fielding on a study day to visit the Slate Museum, Llanberris and finished at The Sail Loft, Amlwch Heritage Trust where we were met Neil Johnstone, Bryn Hope and David Jenkins (front row right). Parys Mountain at Amlwch featured in the first series of BBC 'Restoration' and both sites are on the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & DESIGN TEAM

The package of work is divided into two contracts. The first programme of works is called the 'enabling' package and will start in January. The detailed repair works will be thoroughly evaluated during this time and a schedule of works put out to tender in 2009.



Turner and Townsend

Turner & Townsend is a global consultancy business focused on providing high-quality construction consultancy, programme and project management, cost management and management consultancy services across six continents from a network of 56 offices. Their consultancy and management expertise will assist delivering our project with the certainty of time and cost.

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Emma Birkett (above), is the Senior Project Manager at Turner and Townsend and is in control of the programme of works. She is also currently working on a project of restoration and new build at Clitheroe Castle.

Ricardo Griffiths and Vince Cosgrove (above right) are part of the T&T team together with Peter Robinson who looks after the cost planning aspects of the project and Kevin Thompson who guides us all through the Health and Safety implications of this complex work programme.

The tender process to select the enabling works contractors will be complete by Christmas and we will describe the next phase in the first newsletter of 2009.

Turner and Townsend

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www.turnerandtowntsend.com

Donald Insall Associates

The Chester office of DIA under Tony Barton has been involved with the Lion Salt Works for eight years, producing our first Action Plan document submitted to the HLF. Photographed above are, left to right John Simons, Tony Barton, Simon Mallam, Jennifer Chambers.

DIA has over 40 years' experience in all aspects of care for historic buildings and towns and design of new buildings in historic areas. The practice has now received over 120 awards for excellence in design, conservation and craftsmanship. Locally they have worked on Liverpool Town Hall, Ince Manor, Staircase House in Stockport, the Chester Rows and Chatterly Whitfield Colliery, Staffordshire. They are also currently involved in work at Amlwch on Anglesey one of our partner anchor points in the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

Donald Insall Associates Ltd

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The Moreton Partnership

Rik Fox is our structural engineer who works for The Morton Partnership, a nationally renowned company of Consulting Structural Engineers recognized for their innovative low intervention and cost effective solutions related to all types structure used in construction. They design solutions from the careful repair necessary to small historic buildings and extensions to undertaking full design and project management for some of the most prestigious buildings in the country such as Canterbury Cathedral, St George's Hall, Liverpool and the Mansion House, London.

The Moreton Partnership

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Bob Costello Associates

Established in 1994 Bob Costello Associates (BCA) is a firm of mechanical and electrical consulting engineers with a pedigree for innovative engineering design, dynamic project management and aggressive quality control. Maintaining the integrity of some of the finest historic buildings, whilst implementing state of the art mechanical and electrical services solutions, is a specialism for BCA which places the firm at the forefront of this demanding sector.

Croxteth Hall and garden, Staircase House, Stockport, Kensington Palace Chapel, London.

Bob Costello and Brian Thompson (right) photographed above.

Bob Costello Associates

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L&R Consulting

L&R Leisure are acting as a 'critical friend', funded by Northwest Development Agency to help and advise with the next stage of our business plan. One of his earliest pieces of work was in 1986 advising VRBC and CCC on opportunities for restoring Lion Salt Works and the Anderton Lift. It will be interesting to see how heritage has perceived to have changed in the intervening years. As an Expert Adviser for the Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England and BIG Lottery Fund he has undertaken business and performance reviews for leading heritage, science centre and cultural projects.

L&R Consulting

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FLAT STANLEY VISITS SALT WORKS

Flat Stanley arrived at the Lion Salt Works on Tuesday 9 September 2008. He was sent to us by Phoebe, a pupil from St Marys RC School in Swanage, Dorset to send back information about the Lion Salt Works. Phoebe passed on lots of details about what he had seen and where he had been. Flat Stanley was met by our mascot, Lionel and was shown around the salt works before sending a diary back to Phoebe explaining how salt used to be made at the Lion Salt Works. Flat Stanley's visit was described on the events page of our web site.

BATS

IN OUR ATTIC

An emergence bat survey was conducted on site by Paul Keeling of Evolution Ecology for our architects to fulfil planning conditions. The survey took place on 1st September from 7pm just before dusk.

During the detector survey three common pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) were seen foraging around the old pub (now the on site offices) and inside the other buildings on site. However the direction in which the bats had appeared could not be ascertained. The old pub (office) building did have a number of possible egress points so did have potential as a roost site. Bats forage over a wide area, and the building being used as a roost site will not be disturbed during the refurbishment, so minimum disturbance should be experienced with regards to the bat roost site.

Since the initial site survey it as also been discovered that brown long eared bats (*Plecotus auritus*) are also roosting with the office building loft space.

SALT CITY

Radio 4 Wednesday 5th November

A half hour programme on BBC Radio 4 was Broadcast on Wednesday, 5 November, 2008. Thought it concentrated on rock salt mining, Presenter Allan Beswick Visited the Lion Salt Works and Ashton's Flash to uncover information about early mines and open pan salt making.



Six long eared brown bats photographed in our loft. We hope to arrange a bat walk on site in August 2009 so you can see and hear our own bats flying around the grounds.

THE MUNDLING STICK *by post*

If you would like to have a regular copy of The Mundling Stick sent to you by post please send your name and address to The Lion Salt Works Trust, Ollershaw Lane, Marston, Northwich CW9 6ES or telephone/fax 01606 - 41823. Newsletters are currently sent free of charge. Cheques for donations should be made out to THE LION SALT WORKS TRUST. If you would like to provide long term support for the Trust please ask for a Gift Aid form.

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OPENING TIMES

The Lion Salt Works is open each afternoon 1.30pm to 4.30pm. May be closed Friday and Saturday. Donations welcomed. Booked parties by arrangement. For further information call 01606-41823.

Web site address: <http://lionsaltworkstrust.co.uk>

Help interpret your local heritage to others. The Trust still requires additional volunteers to assist with maintenance and to open the exhibition centre especially on Saturday afternoons.