

The MUNDLING STICK



the LION
Salt Works
TRUST

Newsletter of the Lion Salt Works Trust: **SPRING 2003**

VOLUME 9 No.1

English Heritage Grant Aids Building Survey

Spring 2003 is seeing a major step forward in our plans for restoration of the Lion Salt Works. A number of grant applications have been successful and work will begin shortly to complete our business plan.

The first good news came with the announcement of a grant from English Heritage to carry out a survey of the pan houses and stove houses. Matching funding was provided through an award from British Salt through the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme administered by ENTRUST.

A press release was circulated by English Heritage, which resulted in wide circulation in the local press. Richard Hamlett, Chairman of Trustees and Andrew Davison, Inspector of Ancient Monuments for English Heritage NW, were both interviewed on local GMR radio.

The grant provides funding towards The cost of a revolutionary new 3d laser scanning survey, which will enable an informed repair specification to be written, and will be the first step towards ensuring the future of the buildings and facilitating public access.

Andrew Davison said 'As the last surviving open pan salt works in the country, we feel that the Lion Salt Works is of vital importance, and this is reflected by the fact that last year it was upgraded from a Grade II listed building to a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The scanning technique being used is the very latest technology. It is ideal for this kind of work, and we hope it will produce a very comprehensive specification from which to assess the repairs needed.'

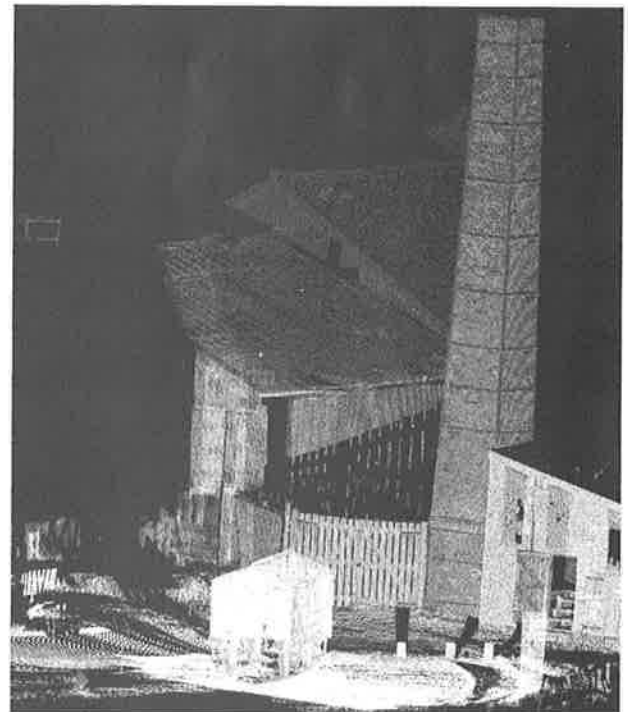
The contract to carry out the survey has been awarded to Aedas AHR Land Surveying of Huddersfield with laser scanning being provided by APR Services of Southgate, London.

Lee McDougal and his team begin the survey work on April 14th and preliminary results will be included at our Salt '03, Salt Making Day on Saturday, 28th September.

During the press day, Tony Rogers, Managing Director of APR Services was able to scan the external area around our salt van.



A three-dimensional picture was built up in 3 hours showing the salt van in its setting between the pump house and the exhibition building. All points are capable of being given dimensions. Four ground positions enabled the artificial aerial view to be created by the computer.



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.

MARKETING STUDY GRANT AIDED BY DEFRA

By creating a working museum the Lion Salt Works will once again be the only producer of traditional block salt made from unrefined brine.

The sale of the salt will be a major revenue source for the Trust, enabling the long-term maintenance of the scheduled ancient monument, the reintroduction of one of Cheshire's oldest craft products and underpinning the revenue funding of a unique museum and visitor attraction.

The study is being conducted by John and Olwen Cox, of Cox and Speller who are also engaged in assisting with the design of the new salt pans. The project will identify the new markets for this most traditional of salt products, but one which has not been available for over twenty years. It is being funded by DEFRA, the Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs, through the Rural Enterprise Scheme.

With home pickling, cooking and baking on the decline we need to carry out our own research into how a modern day market would buy and use block salt and additive free coarse and fine crystal salt.

The study will look at ways in which our salt could be packaged and distributed and what its retail price will be.

Many of our older visitors enjoyed using Thompson's block salt and younger ones have more adventurous tastes, experimenting with the UK and European sea salts that are on the market today.

There are also potential customers on smallholdings, and with specialist butchers, who are seeking ingredients for traditional ham and bacon curing recipes.

So if you are interested in becoming a user of block salt, give us a call or write and let us know. As a potential customer you can play your part in preserving this important process and unique ancient monument.

Contact: Andrew Fielding on 01606 41823 at the Lion Salt Works or John Cox on 01495 774995.



Saltworks coppice - update



The small coppice strip along the southern border of the site was cut in the winter. Using a short rotation regime a third of each of the species (poplar, willow, hazel, ash and sweet chestnut) was cut back to ground level.

WOODFUEL SUPPLY CHAIN STUDY GRANT AIDED BY CHESHIRE RURAL RECOVERY FUND

Proposals for the use of renewable energy crops to provide the heat source for brine evaporation have been well received. However, a locally available supply of wood chip is to be preferred if long distance transport is to be avoided. This study will identify potential sources of renewable energy crops in Cheshire, not only for the Lion Salt Works but also for others interested in using woodfuels for other business or heating applications.

The study will identify plant and equipment suitable for use at the Lion Salt Works. John Cox and Peter Speller of Cox and Speller will develop the strands outlined to the Trust in their previous study looking at the design of a new salt pan. Also advising will be Rob Gwilim from the Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth, who has practical experience of wood chip burners and gasifiers for electrical generation. Local connections are being investigated by Jane O'Brien of Eplus, an environmental and energy advisory group established for Cheshire. (jane@eplus.org)

Jane would like to hear from anyone who has an interest in the use of wood as a fuel. Your interest might be because you have a woodland in need of management or land on which you might consider planting a new coppice. Other sources of waste wood might come from tree surgeons or grounds maintenance contractors, or operators currently paying tax on the waste products they dump in landfill sites who might want to find alternative, environmentally friendly methods of disposal.

OWN A REPLICA KITSON SALT KIT SALT 2003 RAFFLE PRIZE

Over the summer of 2003 raffle tickets will be sold enabling you to win a special salt kit. This unique example has been made for the Trust by John Hudson. The original is held in a private collection. A photograph is reproduced in Peter CD Brears' book 'The Collectors' Book of English Country Pottery (1974) David & Charles. Illust. p.107.

Peter Brears makes special reference to this salt kit (p.152) 'before the mid-eighteenth century most households had used

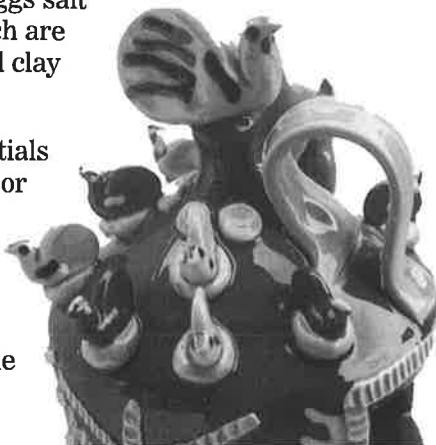
'kits' to hold their salt, these being circular cooper-made tubs, but as these went out of use the title of salt kits was transferred to their earthenware successors.' (p.153-4) 'The Kitsons of Ainley Top and Woodman House potteries to the south of Halifax also made redware salt kits, but instead of maintaining the tall bulging bodies and hooded hand-holes found elsewhere, they preferred to follow the lines of the locally made salt-glazed stonware bottles.' 'Work of this quality is particularly rare, the exuberance evident in its modelling and

composition confirming that this pottery was surely responsible for some of the most exciting pieces of English country pottery ever made.'

The original has applied decorations contrasting with the more normal Weatheriggs salt kits produced near Penrith which are slip-trailed. The rolls of applied clay have v-notched impressions.

Within the cartouche are the initials 'D & E 1847'. On the top a dog, or is it a fox, approaches a chicken with other smaller chickens scattered around, sitting on nests.

A 'tree of life' motif decorates the rear of the salt kit.



John Hudson, holding a replica of a Weatheriggs salt kit.



Raffle tickets are £1 each.
Draw to be made on Sunday,
28th September 2003.

Dates for Your Diary

20-23rd May 2003

Chelsea Flower Show

The Trust is making specially made blocks of white salt for garden designer Christopher Bradley Hole to use at the Chelsea Flower Show. The 'Garden from the Desert' is a show garden sponsored by Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan.

Historic Salt Making Week-end: Saturday - Sunday 27-28th September 2003

A two day programme focusing on historic salt making. Supported by Vale Royal Borough Council.

Saturday 27th September Conference

Northwich Memorial Hall £15 including refreshments and buffet lunch, numbers limited. Booking forms now available.

Talks by:

- * Jackie Powell, Colorado Salt Works, USA
- * John Luzader, Lewis and Clark Saltworks (1805 - 1806) at the Seaside Historic Museum, Oregon, USA
- * Salinas de Imon and La Olmeda, Spain
- * Figueira da Foz, Portugal
- * Katie Hueso, Salinas de Anana, Spain
- * Phlip Mairot, Salins Les Bains, France
- * Poul Christensen, Laeso Salt Works, Denmark
- * Tom Lane, Heritage Lincolnshire, UK



Sunday 28th September Demonstration Day

Lion Salt Works. Free event. Parking restrictions on site. Park and Ride facilities.

Practical demonstrations of salt making over wood fires. Working reconstructions of a Roman lead salt pan and a sixteenth century iron pan.

Also replica ceramic salt pans excavated from Essex should also be in use.

Associated display, marquees etc.

The closing ceremony will include the drawing of raffle prizes from tickets sold over the summer.



Mugs & Dollies

Allan Hughes of Anvil Pottery, Denbigh has added to our range of ceramics which have slip trail decorations. There are a number of traditional salt dollies in a terracotta brown glaze that have either an image of the queen, flowers or a crowned lion.

Traditional style slip ware mugs have also been designed with a yellow slip over a dark brown glaze. A stylised lion decorates the mugs.



OPENING TIMES

The Lion Salt Works is open each afternoon 1.30pm to 4.30pm. May be closed Friday and Saturday. Donations welcomed : £1 per adult, 50p per child. 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.

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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