

The MUNDLING STICK



the LION
Salt Works
TRUST

Newsletter of the Lion Salt Works Trust: **SUMMER 2000**

VOLUME 6 No. 2

OPENING OF NEW DISPLAY LAUNCH OF NEW GUIDE BOOK



Site Stewards, Jim McCleary and Jim Foote with The Mayor of Vale Royal, Cllr Gough and Project Director, Andrew Fielding.



Patrick Green is introduced to a mundling stick.

The new look exhibition panels in the former Red Lion Inn were formally opened on Tuesday, June 6th, 2000. The ceremony was held in the presence of the Mayor of Vale Royal, Cllr Gough and the key note speech was given by Patrick Greene.

Patrick gave three reasons for being pleased at being invited to launch the new initiatives at the Lion Salt Works. Apart from supporting the development of museums and industrial sites through his job as Director of the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester and as President of the Museums Association, Patrick is also a resident of Vale Royal Borough and was delighted at the active support the council was providing to support the restoration of the site as a working industrial museum.

Cllr Gough had recently learned what a mundling stick was and welcomed the opportunity to use one during the practical demonstration given

on the day by Jim Foote and Jim McCleary. Cllr Lloyd, a Trustee of the Lion Salt Works and recently created Deputy Leader of the Council drew attention to the industrial heritage projects now being developed in the area using the River Weaver and Trent and Mersey Canal as a focus for tourism around the Lion Salt Works, Anderton Boat Lift and The Salt Museum at Northwich. Chairman of Trustees, Richard Hamlett spoke of the frustrating delays as geological appraisals were carried out and the decay to the buildings which had occurred over the 14 years the works had been closed, but that the Trust looked forward to raising the funds to carry out a full restoration.

In his closing remarks Patrick Greene spoke of the importance of the preservation of whole sites in their historic locations and of the specific challenges facing the restoration of the Lion Works in keeping the air of simplicity and the day-to-day working patina which was so memorable about the site. He felt strongly that it would be all too easy to over restore the site and give a false impression of the ephemeral nature of the structures and the processes involved. He recognised that the Trust understood the challenge and he felt sure that it would strive to achieve the right conservation approach.

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.

DEMOLITION

After eight years at the Lion Salt Works our mobile classroom was declared an eyesore and as improvements were made to the surrounding environment it was quietly removed.

The mobile had been acquired from Marple High School in 1992. At that time office space was limited on site with the Lion Inn being used as an Environmental Discovery Centre by the Groundwork Trust.

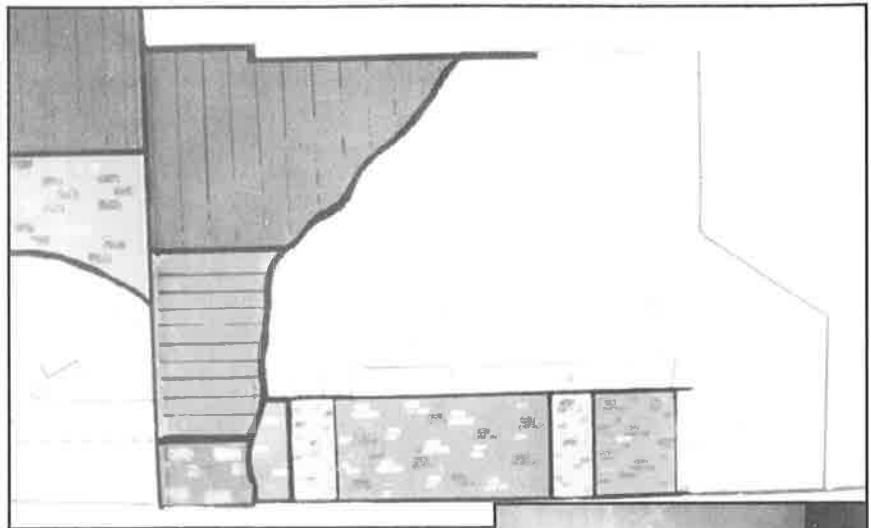
It served as an office for the Project Officer, an exhibition room for displays and also held events. It was used for the opening ceremony following repairs to the horizontal steam engine and the donation of an air compressor by Atlas Copco and became the operations centre for the three summers of work by schools in Vale Royal who carried out an archaeological excavation evaluating the remains of the Alliance Salt Works.

When the Lion Salt Works Trust took over the lease on the Lion Inn the mobile classroom became a meeting place for larger group visits and was used as a workshop. A mural on one of the inside walls depicted the activities of salt making within a pan house where all the work was carried out by lions.

The Trust's first display cabinets were all built there by our team of volunteers. More recently it was used as the construction site for the pergola and trellis around the herb garden.



Demolition of classroom.



Mural of salt making process. Sadly this was lost with the demolition of the classroom.



Contract Services from Vale Royal Borough Council refitted the exhibition building in 10 days.

CREATION



Patrick Greene is shown around the new exhibition panels in the company of Cllr Gough, Mayor of Vale Royal, and Cllr Lloyd, Deputy Leader of Vale Royal Borough Council and Trustee of the Lion Salt Works Trust.



New entrance from canal.

Restocking the Herb Garden

One of the final tasks of the current environmental improvements was to replant our herb garden and to start tying in the climbing plants such as hop and honeysuckle to the pergola.

Also added to the garden planting were the earwig boxes and lacewing box. A special insect nesting block was also erected. This is suitable for solitary species such as wild bees and wood-boring and spider-hunting wasps.

We are also pleased to report that one of the bird boxes erected at the beginning of March has already been used and successfully reared a brood of blue tits.



Salt 2000 Brochure Now Available



A colour brochure and price list of our limited edition salt glazed pottery is now available. 144 pieces were fired, each glazed with salt made at the Lion Salt Works during our demonstration days.

Prices range from £25 to £750.

Each piece is individually numbered and is sold with a certificate signed by the potter, Steve Harrison and Richard Hamlett, Chairman of the Lion Salt Works Trust.

All enquiries to Andrew Fielding, 01606 41823.

76 Years Ago First Job at AJ Thompsons

Occasionally former workers call in at the site. At Easter we were pleased to meet Mr Harrison who called in one Sunday to find that we were demonstrating brine evaporation and salt making. His first job after leaving school at the age of fourteen had been at AJ Thompson's salt works in Wincham. This was in 1923. Mr Harrison became a joiner rather than a salt maker.



Living History in Derbyshire

Mrs Gouldstone was also able to visit the Easter salt making and had a go at raking salt which was later sent over to Derbyshire for her colleagues' Living History project.

The group used the specially made salt blocks to salt pork for the groups annual Whit Week demonstrations of farming and village life.

A second salt pork making will be held in September when we hope to visit and make a video record of this traditional process.

Radio 4

If you had been up at 6.10am on Saturday, June 2nd and were tuned to Radio 4 you may have heard the programme Open Country.

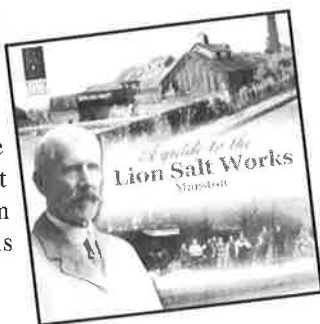
Richard Uridge hosts the magazine programme which travels around the country. This programme covered aspects of environmental stories from Cheshire. The Lion Salt Works was the first of the sections, introducing listeners to the salt heritage of the county.

Richard then visited the restoration work now started at the Anderton Boat Lift where he talked to John Tackley and Mike Cooksley. From there he spent time discovering the variety of wildlife and flora attracted to the lime waste lagoons in the company of Leslie Nell and Paul Hill of the Witton Area Conservation Group and the Mersey Forest Working Group. These in fill the many collapsed areas of rock salt mines between Anderton and The Lion Works.

GUIDE BOOK BY POST

The new guide book can be obtained by post from the Lion Salt Works Trust, Ollershaw Lane, Marston Northwich, Cheshire CW9 6ES.

Cost is £3.95 plus postage and packing of 80 pence. Please make cheques out to The Lion Salt Works Trust.



Salt Kits by Allan Hughes, Anvil Pottery

ANVIL POTTERY

A new variety of salt kits are now stocked in our shop. Produced by Allan Hughes at Anvil Pottery, Denbighshire they are a large and striking variety known in North Wales as Salt Dollies.



Alan uses a combination of iron oxide in blues and golden yellow glazes with scraffito decorations. He has produced a special variation for the Trust which incorporates a lion on the front and the name of the Trust on the side.

Cheshire Agricultural Society Brass Plaque 2000

The Cheshire Agricultural Society produce a special plaque for their members attending the Cheshire Show. This year a salt theme was used and the plaque depicts the nodding donkey pump at the Lion Salt Works. The Trust was delighted to receive a presentation plaque from the Society for its collection.



OPENING TIMES

The Lion Salt Works exhibition is opened each afternoon 1.30pm to 4.30pm. Donations : £1 per adult, 50p per child. Booked parties by arrangement. For further information call 01606-41823.

Web site address - <http://lion-saltworkstrust.co.uk>

We have been pleased to welcome four new volunteers to join the team who enable our exhibition building to open on a regular basis. If you have up to four hours to spare during opening times contact the Project Director, Andrew Fielding.

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 covenant form.

The Lion Salt Works Trust is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity No. 1020258. VAT registration No. 628998076. The Mundling Stick is written by the Lion Salt Works Project Director and is kindly designed and printed by Vale Royal Borough Council.