

The MUNDLING STICK



the LION
Salt Works
TRUST

Newsletter of the Lion Salt Works Trust: **WINTER 1995**

VOLUME I No2.



Di Bown with the winning painting

Photograph courtesy Northwich Guardian

First Prize For Lion Salt Works Picture

“PICTURE THE PAST” was an art competition organised by the Northwich and District Heritage Society. Prize money was provided by Brunner-Mond & Co and supported by DAN (Development of the Arts for Northwich). The judging panel included Stuart Hogg, Chairman of the Heritage Society, Nick Hughes of DAN and Richard Kelsall, Arts Correspondent of the Northwich Guardian.

The winning picture chosen by the judges was a view of the works as seen from the present car park. It was painted by Di Bown a courier with a tour operator. All pictures were exhibited at Northwich Library during October.

Of fifty-two paintings entered in the art competition six were of the Lion Salt Works and five of the Anderton Lift showing that these two monuments are closely associated with the heritage of Northwich.

The picture will become part of our museum collection and will go on display at the Lion Inn in the New Year.

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

Second AGM held in September

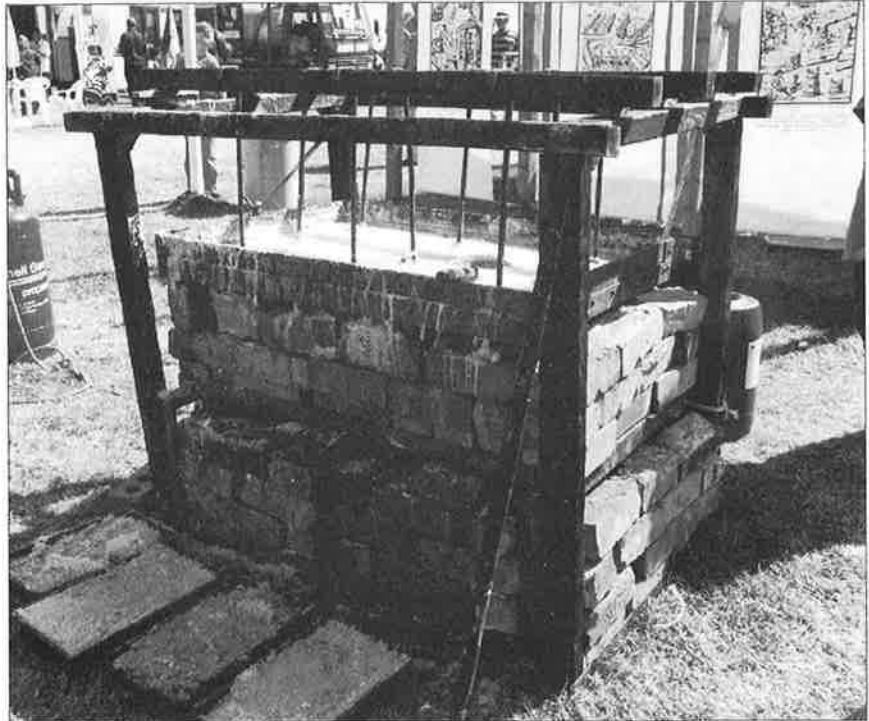
AT THE 2nd AGM of the Lion Salt Works Trust, held on Friday, 8th September, Trustees heard a presentation by Dr Crump of ICI about the on going investigations into adjacent brine streams and rock salt mines.

Trustees were encouraged by the report though conclusions were still some way off. The results of the work will enable the Trust to determine a way forward for preservation of the remaining pan houses.

Two founder trustees did not stand for re-election at the meeting. Mrs Wendy Bolton initially became a trustee nominated by Cheshire County Council and stayed on after retiring as a councillor. Fellow trustees were saddened to hear of her ill health and passed on their best wishes. Chairman, Richard Hamlett also thanked Cllr Arthur Neil for his support in getting the Trust on its feet. He is to be replaced by Cllr Tony Hooton.

It has been an important year with the Trust taking over the Lion Inn from the Groundwork Trust. Projects involving school and college students had gone well and need further funding to reach their full potential. New exhibition material is being prepared over the winter for display in the New Year.

Trustees thanked all the volunteers for their dedication and support over the year.



Salt Boiling Success

THE replica sixteenth century salt pan was demonstrated three times over the summer months. The first boiling took place at the Cheshire Show in June. The photograph shows the display backed by banners depicting Agricola's engravings showing how a salt pan should be made. Brunner-Mond apprentices [Mark Lithgow, John Hudson, Daniel Shirley, Adam Sweeney, Stuart Mossford, Stephen Adern, Jonathon Hoyle], who manufactured the pan, also helped transport it to the Show ground and promoted it to visitors.

In July the pan was taken to the VRBC Open Day at Wyvern House, Winsford.

The third boiling took place in September as part of Heritage Open Days when the Lion Works linked with Northwich Parish Church to promote the heritage of the town.

The pan will be used for further special events in 1996 but will also be put to more experimental uses testing historic recipes for clarifying brine. Such concoctions used blood and egg white to form a scum which was skimmed from the surface of the brine.

Radio Waves

THE Project Officer has give two radio interviews about the Lion Salt Works. In October BBC Radio Merseyside produced a short series about rivers in the Mersey basin. Local journalist Ron Freethy visited the site to describe his impression of the Weaver Valley.

In November BBC R4's "Food Programme" visited as part of a general programme on salt.

Christmas Extravaganza!

THE TRUST will have a presence at a seasonal event being organised by Vale Royal Borough Council at Northwich Memorial Hall on Saturday, 9th December.

We have promised to produce some decorations made from salt. Come and see if we manage to make them! Lion salt Works cards and tea-towels will be on sale.

More Work on Buildings

WORK TO restore the site manager's office and the boiler house have been carried out over the summer. The managers office was suffering from rising damp through the chimney stacks and from the displacement of brick panels from between the timber framing.

Robert West and Partners of Sandbach drew up a schedule of work and selected contractors to complete the worst sections of the east and south elevations. Bernard Shepherd and Sons of Whalley Bridge removed 9 brick panels and repointed all the remaining panels. The building had been repointed in the past with a cement mortar which had a sandy colour. Our choice of a dark mortar however replicates the mortar type used in the original construction. Where wooden framing had rotted new pitch pine timbers were reinstated. On the south elevation a window was in very poor condition and almost fell out before it could be taken out. A new one was made to the same design as the one being

removed. All the exposed timbers were treated with a fungicide and insecticide to help protect the building for another hundred years.

Building Restoration Services installed the damp proof course. To prevent disfiguring the listed building by using a chemical damp proofing which would have required drilling holes into the brick work an electrical osmotic system was chosen. A loop of wire held in the mortar course just below the timber sill, inside the building, is used to pass a small electrical current through the brickwork repelling moisture downwards.

In September Modern Hygiene removed asbestos cladding from the boiler house. This will enable survey work to be completed within the boiler house and repair work to this building and the remaining elevations of the manager's office will follow shortly.



SCIENCE BASH '96

Saturday, 16th March

THE TRUST has been invited to attend a 'Science Bash' to be organised as part of 1996 National Science Week.

The event will be held at the Crewe and Alsager Campus of Manchester Metropolitan University with a programme designed to let children of all ages investigate scientific topics. More information in our Spring newsletter

NVQ in Warder and Visitor Services

ONE of the Trust's longest serving volunteers will begin a training scheme at the Lion Salt Works in the New Year.

Nick Davies has been helping at the site one afternoon a week for the last four years. He is a keen Rambler and helped produce the "Victorian Trail" walking guide.

Nick will study for an NVQ in Warder and Visitor Services. He will be registered with the Museum Training Institute and gain work experience at Marston. He will also attend courses given by the North West Museum Service and receive training at the Grosvenor Museum, Chester once a week.

The Trust is grateful to the Grosvenor Museum, Chester who are qualified as an assessment centre for the NVQ. Charles Quinn the Visitor Services Officer will be Nick's training assessor. The NVQ is designed to give a formal qualification to those who have been employed in museum work but have not necessarily received any direct qualifications.

Nick's training should help the Trust provide a better service for visitors and at the same time improve his own job opportunities.

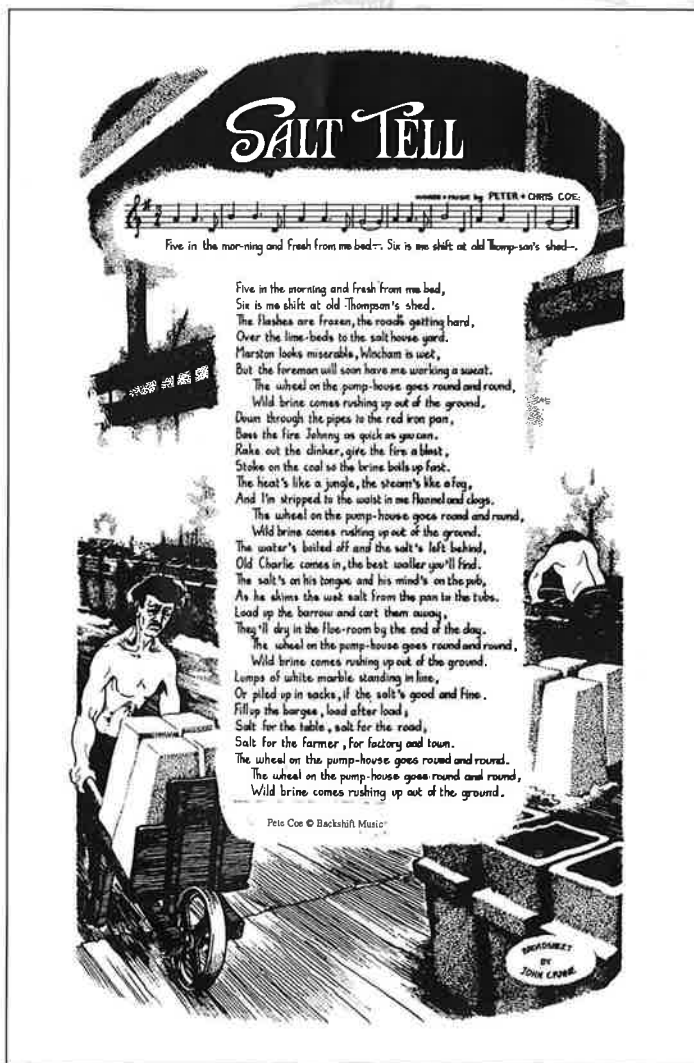


Tea Towel Design

A black and white poster of an illustrated verse about salt making at Thompson's Works has always been of interest to visitors. This summer the design has been used for a tea-towel which has been reproduced using a hand printed, silk-screen process by Norma Restall of Tri Thy Crafts, Coed Talon, Nr Mold, Clwyd.

The verse was composed by folk singer Peter Coe who used to live in Weaverham and illustrated by John Crane. The Trust is delighted that Peter has given his permission for the poster to be reproduced to help raise funds for the project. The song draws on his father's experiences at the salt works

Printed on 100% cotton fabric in terra-cotta, blue, green or black they can be hung on the wall or used as tea towels. Each one costs £2.75 and can be posted to you for an additional 40p to cover postage and packing.



Greetings Cards or Notes

To mark the success of our salt boiling events this summer a card has been printed to mark the first salt to be made at the works since 1986.



Ancient Salt Making

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| A DIPPER | B CART | C TUB | D MASTER | E VOLUNTEER |
| F MASTER'S WIFE | G SPADE | H BOARD | I BARRELS | |
| K HOSE | L RAKE | M STRAW | N BOWL | |
| O BUCKET OF BLOOD | P TANKARD OF BEER | Q APPRENTICE | | |
| R MASTER'S DOG | S FUEL | | | |

The design is based on Agricola's description of open pan evaporation but with some alterations to mark the construction and demonstration of the process by apprentices from Brunner-Mond & Co and volunteers at the Lion Salt Works.

It is currently available as a blank card for your own message or with a seasonal Christmas greeting. The cards are priced at 25p each or 5 for £1. Cards can be purchased by post for an additional sum of 40p to cover postage and packing.

THE MUNDLING STICK *by post*

This is the second newsletter of the Lion Salt Works Trust. If you would like to have a copy sent to you by post please send your name and address to Nick Davies, Project Assistant, Lion Salt Works Trust, Ollershaw Lane, Marston, Northwich CW9 6ES or telephone: 01606 41823. Newsletters will be sent free of charge.

Cheques for cards, tea towels or donations should be made out to THE LION SALT WORKS TRUST.