

# CAUDWELL'S MILL TRUST LIMITED

## THE SAVING OF CAUDWELL'S MILL, ROWSLEY

This recounts how this unique corn mill was saved for posterity when the commercial miller, E. A. Caudwell (Rowsley) Ltd., ceased production. It then continues with the story to the present day.

### **Listed Building Application**

In December 1977, learning of the intended closure of the mill, the Department of the Environment (DoE) "listed" its machinery as being of special architectural or historical interest. As a result the miller's landlord, the Duke of Rutland (Haddon Estate), had to submit listed building applications when he wished to remove machinery and outbuildings to make way for new uses. A spate of objections came from societies and individuals interested in industrial archaeology and history. The DoE "called in" the applications for decision by the Secretary of State for the Environment, rather than the local planning authority (the then Peak Park Joint Planning Board - PPJPB). A public enquiry would have been held had the applications not been withdrawn in 1978.

### **First Steps to Preserve the Mill**

In March 1978, the PPJPB expressed support for the idea of a trust to preserve the mill. While discussions started, it took a short-term lease of the mill, which had just been vacated by E. A. Caudwell (Rowsley) Ltd. A part-time caretaker was employed, Arthur Fox, who had been employed at the mill for most of his working life. A job creation team, funded by the Manpower Services Commission, was set up under Mr. Fox to start cleaning and repairing the premises. Cleaning the machinery and ducting to remove stock which had become damp, mouldy and infested with flour moth, proved to be a lengthy job. In April 1978, discussions started among a nucleus of people interested in preserving the mill and interpreting it to the public. Advice was given by the Dartington Amenity Research Trust, a body with much experience in the field. Negotiations started with the landlord and the ex-miller to acquire a lease and the machinery; and with the Charity Commissioners, to set up a charitable trust. A land agent and a solicitor gave much time to the complex negotiations. In these early days, one of the biggest hurdles appeared to be the Millers Mutual Association. E. A. Caudwell (Rowsley) Ltd. was a member and, like other members, was required to destroy redundant machinery in return for the financial benefits of membership. This requirement is imposed to prevent other people starting up milling and contributing to overproduction. When the conservation proposals were explained to the Association, it agreed to waive the requirement providing the landlord imposed a covenant on future tenants restricting flour production to 100 tonnes per annum for 20 years. The landlord agreed to this and the machinery was saved. One of the landlord's chief concerns was the protection of the valuable trout fishery on the River Wye. The lease which was eventually agreed limits the taking of water to drive the mill machinery when the river level falls below a certain point.

### **Friends of Caudwell's Mill**

A meeting was arranged on 10 December 1978 to set up a body to carry forward the negotiations on a more formal level. Some local people would have preferred an alternative development of the site, thinking there would be more chance of replacing the jobs lost on closure (16 were employed in 1974). Most people at the meeting were enthusiastic. The Friends took a hand in running the job creation team and set up

working parties to raise funds, to consider interpretation and commercial activities and to solve the technical problems raised in running a flour mill. Negotiations continued but a corporate body was required to take a lease of the mill premises and receive grants and loans.

### **Caudwell's Mill Trust Limited**

Further negotiations took longer than expected, partly because industrial action by civil servants affected the work of the Charity Commissioners. A Trust was eventually formed and held its first meeting on 22 February 1980. Its prime object is the "conservation, maintenance and use of Caudwell's Mill ... for the benefit of the public". A 51 year lease was acquired with a capital sum and machinery and sprinkler system was bought from the ex-miller. Funds came from a number of bodies for various purposes:-

- \* An engineering firm gave a £10,000 interest free loan,
- \* Some local businesses gave grants,
- \* The Architectural Heritage Fund loaned funds for acquisition,
- \* Carnegie (UK) Trust gave £10,000 for an exhibition,
- \* The National Heritage Memorial Fund gave a grant,
- \* The Countryside Commission grant-aided facilities for visitor outside the mill,
- \* The Peak Park Joint Planning Board helped fund the purchase of the lease and the machinery.
- \* The Science Museum grant-aided the purchase of the machinery.

A full-time manager (Mike Tilley) was appointed in November 1980. He continued the work of preparing for milling, again with the help of new job creation trainees. A good relationship was formed with Nelstrop's (millers in Stockport) who allowed Mike to spend some time there getting used to milling and the possible problems. The milling machinery manufacturer Henry Simon Ltd. investigated the flow diagrams of the mill and the state of the machinery and produced a revised flow sheet to enable the mill to produce wholemeal flour. The deterioration was worse than expected and milling (of wholemeal flour) was not resumed until November 1982. In the meantime some much-needed income was earned by milling for a local animal feedstuff merchant using the provender machinery at the south end of the mill, which was not subject to the "Millers Mutual covenant". Among other jobs which had to be tackled was the installation of two fire protected stairs designed by a local architect. Such protection would have been required even if the mill had remained a commercial enterprise. Listed Building approval was obtained for these major changes to the mill interior. Three committees continued the work of the Friends working parties:-

Technical - solving the many problems posed by the old machinery and being responsible for the mill and milling;

Business - dealing with the commercial aspects of the enterprise;

Interpretive - organising the exhibition, publications and open days (which started in 1981)

Eventually the last two committees were amalgamated as some of their functions overlapped. A Forward Finance Committee was formed to look for long term financial support. The Trust, with considerable help from the Friends, steadily built up sales of wholemeal flour to local bakers, health food shops and individuals. Parties were shown round and up to 20 open days were held each year to enable visitors to see the mill, sample refreshments made from its product and buy the flour and sale goods. A few special events were held such as teachers' days and a Derbyshire loaf competition among schools. A former miller and millstone "dresser", Sid Hipkiss, recut the grooves in a millstone found under the mill yard. The millstone may have been discarded when replaced by rollers in 1884 or it may have been scrapped from the provender mill when it was worn out.

## **Financial Problems**

In spite of these successes, it became obvious in 1983 that the income generated was not enough to repay the Architectural Heritage Fund loan, to keep the Trust healthy and to allow further repairs and developments to take place. Appeals for funding from companies had generally disappointing results. The Trust asked the local authorities for money to tide it over while searching for a solution to its problems. In 1984, loans totalling £18,000 were agreed by Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council and the Peak Park Joint Planning Board. By 1995 almost all the loans had been repaid.

## **Development Plans**

Late in 1984, a local entrepreneur with experience in setting up tourist-related enterprises approached the Trust with a suggestion that he should lease outbuildings for use as a craft centre. This suggestion eventually resulted in a lease to another couple (as he had dropped out). The advantages to the Trust of this lease are:-

- a) the craft centre draws people to the site. The tenants are obliged to advertise the mill;
- b) the tenants provide services including selling tickets to the mill, flour and refreshments, allowing the Trust to concentrate on the mill;
- c) the tenants pay rent.

A development plan was drawn up which involved:-

- 1) the tenants being responsible for their building work;
  - i) conversion of the stable to craft workshops and the garage to an exhibition gallery;
  - ii) building a new cafe where there was a hay store;
- 2) the Trust being responsible for building new toilets and developing a car park behind the mill with access from Woodhouse Lane. This was essential as the mill yard could accommodate only 20 cars (with careful marshalling) and in any case, planning permission would not be given for regular access by visitors' cars from the A6 trunk road.

Landmarks in pursuing this plan were:-

- a) the submission of a planning application for the car park and changes to the mill premises in June 1986. It was eventually approved in January 1987;
- b) the agreement of the landlord to the changes and to lease the site of the car park. This was agreed only after a public meeting in September 1986, when the Duke's agent considered local objections. The fact that the Trust had proposed that the car park could be used by visitors to the village hall and general tourists influenced the meeting in favour of the plan. Only later did this undertaking result in problems. So many ramblers park in the car park all day that space is often limited for visitors to the mill;
- c) The assembly of finance. Capital works were estimated to total £125,000, including £56,500 for the car park and the bridge, and £20,000 for repairs to the mill and millstream. £14,000 was sought for extra revenue costs while the development was taking place.

The tenants stood the costs of their developments while the Trust received a total of £70,000 from the Development Commission, Countryside Commission and the three local authorities. The English Tourist Board (ETB) encouraged the plan but eventually refused grant because of a new rule imposed on it by the government preventing it giving grant when the total money from public funds would exceed 50%. Many representations were made to relax this rule in view of the ETB's commitment to the project, but to no avail. As a result of this shortfall, repairs to the mill and millstream had to be deferred. The grant approvals enabled the development of the car park and toilets to take place in 1987, and by the end of the year there were the equivalent of 13 full-time jobs at the mill, mostly in the craft business. 20,000 visitors came to the

premises, 8,265 of them paying to enter the mill. By 1995 these figures had risen to around 150,000 visiting the site and 18,000 paying to enter the mill.

### **Roof Repairs**

When the Trust leased the mill, the architect's survey revealed that the roof was in a poor condition, with a large hole on the East side. Estimates to repair this were sought and these were in the region of £85,000. At the time this was far beyond the Trust's resources, even after allowing for the possibility of receiving grant aid towards the cost. Various temporary repairs were undertaken but gradually the problem became more serious. A ventilation cupola in the centre of the mill roof had started to lose slates in high winds, guttering had fallen and slates were also being lost from the main roof. A report was received from the architect in 1988 that repairs were now required and estimates were sought along with sources of grant being investigated. The mill was listed as Grade II and grants fell a long way short of covering the cost. Reluctantly the Trust decided to patch the roof again. By 1992 the problem was serious. On at least one occasion, the mill yard had to be closed to visitors because of the danger of falling slates in a high wind. The Trust decided to press ahead with the roof repair. In the interim the listing of the mill had been revised to Grade II\*, thus allowing a higher percentage grant to be offered. The recession had worked in the Trust's favour, as the estimates for the repair were very much less than previous, even with the additional work that was now required. The final costs were £53,000 with 70% grant from English Heritage and 10 % from the Peak Park Joint Planning Board, leaving the Trust with £6,900 to find. The work to be done included repointing large areas of the mill walls and replacing timber, both roof beams and part of the walls of some "dirty" wheat bins which had been damaged by water coming into the mill. In June 1993 the repairs were completed, new guttering had been fitted, broken windows repaired and the metal & woodwork forming part of the exterior of the mill repainted. H. & W. Sellars of Bakewell, who repaired the roof, were the firm who had performed a major roof repair in 1914.

On the 16 July 1993 His Grace, the Duke of Rutland visited the mill and presented a plaque mounted on one of the original slates to commemorate the repair.

### **External Repairs**

Over the years, the stone sets forming the stable yard had gradually become uneven, making walking difficult and holding pools of water following rain. Amber Valley Groundwork Trust were asked to re-lay the setts to produce a more even surface. This was completed and they then relaid the setts from the bridge along the West side of the mill. The car park drains were improved and the main path through the car park was resurfaced before the 1995 visitor season. Towards the end of 1995, CDT from Derby provided a team who rebuilt the bypass weir.

### **Machinery**

A visit in 1990 by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings Wind & Watermill Section resulted in Mr. Tom Hay writing about a "Little Giant" turbine outside the Castle Mill at York. Inquiries were made of the Assistant Keeper, Mr. Arthur Benson, and eventually a trip was made to York to collect the small "Little Giant" which had no real home in the York Museums. This now stands on the bridge outside the mill awaiting stripping, cleaning and painting. During 1994 the Trust were pleased to have the help of a volunteer, Nigel Peplar, who spent a considerable amount of time cleaning and painting various parts of the machinery. The bases of the "dirty" wheat bins were all rubbed down and painted, as were the measurers and worms fed from the bins. In the distant past the Caudwell family had started to collect milling

machinery for a museum but had disposed of it to Mr. West of Leeds. He returned to the mill and then donated an amount of equipment to the Trust, including a porcelain roller made by Beyer Freres of Paris and a vertical stone mill made by Hannay & Higgins of Stranraer which had been used by E. A. Caudwell to mill “sharps” to a fine powder for use in the provender mill. These have also been cleaned and painted. Amber Valley Groundwork Trust provided another team who have cleaned the sprinkler pipework and then painted it to British Standard colours.

### **Electricity Generation**

Following a request for a waterpower site to demonstrate an induction electricity generator by Nottingham Polytechnic (now Nottingham Trent University), the Trust asked that the Mill should be considered. Nigel Smith, the team leader, who was working with the Intermediate Technology Group developing this form of cheap generator for use in the Third World, came to the mill, thoroughly investigated the site and recommended that they could install a generator. This was placed where the provender electric motor had been, thus avoiding the need for alterations to the drive shafts and belting. By November 1990, the installation was complete and 12 kilowatts of electricity are available when there is sufficient water to drive both turbines. This has reduced the electricity bill by about 2/3 in normal conditions. The Intermediate Technology Group have monitored the installation for a number of years and are now providing similar systems in many parts of the world.

### **School Promotions**

When the Trust was formed one of the objectives was “to advance education by ... the use of Caudwell’s Mill”. The Trust have encouraged visits to the Mill by schools since the Mill was opened to the general public. In furtherance of this, a Manpower Services Team produced a Teacher’s Pack containing information covering the history of the Mill, the Caudwell family, water power and milling in general. Following the introduction of the National Curriculum for Schools, a teacher, Ian Jenkinson, offered to assist in revising our literature to fit the National Curriculum. This has resulted in the production of a series of “information sheets” currently having 6 on Technology, 2 on Science and 8 on History, together with copies of 3 Victorian documents, having an associated question sheet. When the roof had been repaired, it was possible to convert the top floor above the provender mill into a room for the use of school parties. This has been very much appreciated and is used both as a classroom and somewhere to eat sandwiches by schools visiting the Mill. Additionally, a series of open days for teachers in the surrounding area have been held, where the teachers can visit the Mill (with their families) and be shown the range of study available. This eventually led to “Inset” days (In-Service Training) where training on the Mill’s resources is provided and an amount of project work undertaken.

### **Outside Activities**

The formation of Peak District Products in 1990, a commercial venture to project the image of high quality food and goods made in the Peak District allowed the Trust to join a group which provided a further exposure of flour produced at the mill (and of the Mill itself). This has resulted in the Trust twice having a stand at the Chatsworth Country Fair where bread baking demonstrations were given by Ian Jenkinson and Joyce Claridge. This helped to sell flour and also provide much information to the public about the Mill. The opportunity has also been taken to share a stand in the Women’s Institute tent at Bakewell show on occasion, again selling flour and providing information.

## **Baking**

Following the successful baking demonstrations outside the Mill, Ian and Joyce have demonstrated in the schoolroom at the top of the Mill. These have usually coincided with a milling day and demonstrations are offered at 1½ hour intervals. Most of these are to a capacity audience of around 30 people. Currently these have been discontinued due to Ian & Joyce being involved in other things.

## **Talks**

Graeme Walker has spent a number of evenings travelling in Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire prior to presenting a slide show and talk about the history & technology of the mill. He has taken the opportunity to sell flour to the captive audience following the talk.

## **People**

Over the 15 years of the Trust's existence, a considerable number of people have been involved with the Trust and the Mill, far too many to list. However, those who have borne the brunt of the work should be remembered and so a list of the officers, managers and staff, both past & present, is attached. Our apologies to anyone missed from the lists on the following page.

# PERSONS INVOLVED WITH PRESERVING CAUDWELL'S MILL, ROWSLEY

## Friends of Caudwell's Mill

*Chairman* Christopher Charlton, David Donnison, Ian Dalton, Graeme Walker

*Secretary* David Sorrell, Maggie Heath, Maureen Donnison

*Treasurer* Robin Bullock, Paul Gibbons, Ray Marjoram

*Friends* Pat Marjoram, Janet Challenger, Miranda Myers, Ian Jenkinson, David

Lewis

## Caudwell's Mill Trust Limited

*Chairman* Christopher Charlton, Graeme Walker

*Secretary* Maggie Heath, George Challenger, Kath Simpson,  
Max Blank, Tony Margree

*Treasurer* Robin Bullock, Ray Marjoram

*Nominated Directors* Chris Charlton, David Hool, J B Weatherill, George Challenger,  
Ian Smart, R Walsh, Ray Marjoram, Peggy Edwards, David Donnison,  
Mona Gillan, John Beadle, Ian Dalton. Margaret Dalton, A Denham,

David Sorrell, David White, W Watkins, DW Chapman, Ken Parker,  
Jim Radcliffe, Ron Cowell, David Crossley, Tony Margree, J A Bull,  
Mervyn Barnes, Rob Shorland-Ball, Christine Crowther, Alan Mutter,  
W G Blake, R I G Tyson, D A G Shields, Alan Gifford, Sheila Fearn,

Kath Simpson, R Paulson, S P Barber, John Hill, Debbie Read,  
Judith Twigg, Richard Eastwood.

*Ordinary Directors* Rob Shorland-Ball, Dudley Fowkes, Paul Gibbons, Maggie Heath,  
Ken Major, Ken Parsons, Pat Strange, Philip Whitehead, Graeme Walker  
Mona Gillan, Chris Charlton, Sid Collins, John Tarn, Andrew Usborne  
Peggy Edwards, Mark Alexander, David Hool, George Challenger,  
Frank O'Shea, Barbara Bowman, Ray Marjoram, Alan Mutter.

*Managers* Mike Tilley, Hillary Rollinson, Allan Bamber, Max Blank, David Wright,  
Tony Margree, Lesley Wyld

*Staff* Joyce Claridge, Arthur Fox, Peter Harrison, Nick Land, Lindsey Blank,  
Jackie Haggett, Mike Jackson, Maurice Kearsley, Frank O'Shea, John Rimmer,  
Rod Willis, David Wright, Nigel Peplar, Lance Oldham, Tony Beaumont,

Geoff Yates, Robert Marshall, Andrew Evans, Sanjay Brown, Tim Corby,  
Bill Brewitt, John Burlin

*Consultants* Dr. Pat Strange, Ken Major, Rob Shorland-Ball, Ken Parsons,  
Martin Lee, Tony Short

Together with much appreciated help from friends, relatives and “pressed men”.