

Fernhurst Furnace Preservation Group

www.fernhurstfurnace.co.uk

Issue 18

Newsletter

October 2019



Open Weekend 2019

September 14th and 15th what a fabulous weekend. Over 1300 people came to learn more about the Furnace Repair Project and the iron industry in general and have an enjoyable visit. We were part of the national Heritage Open Days event.

Sir Marmaduke Rawdon's Regiment of Foote re-enacted a skirmish. On Sunday the wonderful Hawking About had flying demonstrations. Next year Kevin will bring his Falcons now that the power lines across the field have been removed. There were many other interesting attractions as well as refreshments etc.

Donations were considerably increased but our profit (£1,550) was not as good as it could have been as we now receive no outside financial help for the event.

Open Weekend in 2020 will be on September 12th & 13th.

Engineers' Report

Historic England (HE), asked for an up-to-date Engineer's Report with costings of our Repair Project. This was carried out by SFK Consulting of Southampton and accepted by Historic England.

Since then Historic England has offered a Procurement Grant of 80% of the cost so we have appointed a company – Jane Jones-Warner Associates of Chichester - to provide Project Manager/Architectural Services etc and all final surveys before tendering for builders to carry out the main Repair Project next year.

Repair Project Stage 1

Much desk-top work has been done in the 'Procurement' stage of the project. In May there was the final ground investigation works which involved taking core samples of the concrete wall constructed in 1941. Tests to discover the compaction of the dam constructs as well as investigation of what was under the culvert apron etc. To do the latter George Anelay, West Sussex Archaeology, was in charge of the excavations which got down to the natural clay. All this time three or four volunteers cleaned up the rest of the archaeology. One of these volunteers was Ken Mordle who had been employed by Chichester District Archaeology Unit during the main excavations in 1989 upon which the Fernhurst Furnace book is based.



May 2019

Having cleaned out the pool of all hard core etc the engineers were able to see what or if there were any foundations for the concrete wall. 'Not a lot' was the answer so at the beginning of October slag from the new course of the Southern Spillway was tipped into the pool and compacted to give support to the wall.

Repair Project Stage 2

This section is called delivery – the actual repairs and conservation. All very exciting so long as funding can be found. Historic England is hoping to make a significant contribution and Mark Rose from SDNP Trust is assisting in finding suitable charitable trusts.



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FFPG Contributions

So far FFPG has contributed £7,000 towards the project. Your committee has pledged £10k but whether this will be sufficient for Stage 2 of the project will be awaited with trepidation.

England's Mountains Green

You may have seen this programme on BBC4 about the South Downs. Peter Owen-Jones presented this different view of our delightful local attribute. It has already been repeated a few times so has been excellent in raising awareness of our site.

Antiques Road Trip

In early September there was a most timely first showing Antiques Road Trip who had paid us a visit in March this year. We were able to ask Jeremy Hodgkinson to talk to Catherine Southon about the Iron Industry. Following this section of the programme Catherine was instructed how to make a piece of wrought iron by our blacksmiths Robert and Carol Smith – you will have seen them at Open Weekend.

AGM 2019: The Thirteenth **FFPG AGM** will be held in the **Fernhurst Centre, Crossfields Shops, Vann Road, Fernhurst**, on **Friday November 29th at 7.30pm**. Following the business there will be a talk by **George Anelay** of **West Sussex Archaeology** entitled **“Excavations at the Furnace”**. Don't miss it, it will bring you right up-to-date with the archaeology.