



Friends of  
Windmill  
Gardens

Keeping the wind in our

# sails

Members' newsletter • Brixton Windmill • Spring 2012

## Festivals, football, and fun with flour

Brixton Windmill's 2012 programme of public visits and events begins on Easter weekend. This year we hope to welcome hundreds more visitors to Windmill Gardens in SW2 to experience a bit of Lambeth's rural past.

Brixton Windmill, where the Ashby family produced flour on and off from 1817 until 1934, is inner London's last working tower mill. The beautiful refurbishment of this Grade II\* listed building, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Lambeth Council and the Friends of Windmill Gardens (FoWG), was completed in August 2011.

Since then, hundreds of local people have discovered what was once

described as "Brixton's best kept secret". The panel below shows our open days in 2012.

### Book for a guided tour

Last winter we trained many new volunteer guides to make your visit to Brixton Windmill as enjoyable as possible. Two types of visit are available – both are free and are led by our trained volunteers.

If you just turn up on the day you can visit up to the first floor, but you may have to queue.

If you want a full tour of all floors, you must book in advance. Places fill up fast, so you are advised to book soon at [booking@brixtonwindmill.org.uk](mailto:booking@brixtonwindmill.org.uk).

### Family fun

Throughout the summer we have arranged a great programme of activities in Windmill Gardens. These fun community events for local families start on Sunday 8 April, with a children's Easter egg hunt.

On bank holiday Monday 7 May, we hold our annual parade and festival (see page 3). This year's theme is recycling – we hope all of Brixton will take up the recycling challenge and join us.

Later in May we celebrate National Mills Weekend with special events about windmills and milling arranged by Lisa Rigg, our education officer. And our annual five-a-side football contest for local youth

teams takes place during early summer.

On Sunday 12 August everyone is invited to "get creative" at our Art in the Park event for children, their families and budding Brixton artists – an opportunity to enjoy craft workshops or just sit and draw the windmill.

We are open during London Open House weekend in September, when we will also celebrate harvest time in the park.

Our season ends in October, with our Big Draw event and Hallowe'en scares at Brixton Windmill. So don't miss out on the fun – we look forward to welcoming you to the windmill in 2012!

*Jean Kerrigan, Chair FoWG*

PHOTOGRAPH: PENNY STEELE



We've trained many new volunteer guides

## FoWG SUMMER EVENTS

- Saturday 7 April, 1-4pm
- Sunday 8 April, 1-4pm  
*Easter egg hunt, arts and crafts for children*
- Monday 7 May, 2-3pm and 4-5pm  
*Recycling parade and May Day festival*
- Saturday 12 May, 1-5pm  
*Special activities for National Mills Weekend*
- Sunday 13 May, 1-5pm  
*Special activities for National Mills Weekend*
- Saturday 9 June, 1-4pm
- Sunday 10 June, 1-4pm
- Saturday 7 July, 1-4pm
- Sunday 8 July, 1-4pm
- Saturday 11 Aug, 1-4pm
- Sunday 12 Aug, 1-4pm  
*Art in the Park, creative fun for adults and children*
- Sunday 26 Aug, 1-4pm
- Saturday 8 Sept, 1-4pm
- Sunday 9 Sept, 1-4pm
- Saturday 22 Sept, 1-5pm
- Sunday 23 Sept, 1-5pm
- Saturday 6 Oct, 1-4pm  
*Flour Power – draw with flour and model with bread*
- Saturday 13 Oct, 1-4pm
- Sunday 14 Oct, 1-4pm
- Sunday 28 Oct, 1-3pm  
*Hallowe'en special, with story telling and activities*

# Saying hello to “Mr Ashby”

**Development and Education Officer Lisa Rigg reports on the great progress of Brixton Windmill’s schools programme**

Since the beginning of this year, 220 children have come to the windmill as part of the pilot education programme. I have worked with them and their teachers to make flour, bread and even butter. In total we have baked 24 loaves and created 180 pictures of the windmill! The children get very excited about saying hello to “Mr Ashby” – a term of endearment for the mill.

Overall, 642 children from six local primary schools – Holy Trinity, Hill Mead, Corpus Christi, Stockwell, Streatham Wells and Herbert Morrison – have taken part in 22 workshops.

■ On a couple of occasions I have dressed up as Hannah Ashby, and Hill Mead Primary School interviewed me about my life as a miller.

■ Younger children have learnt rhymes, stories and poems about windmills, and made hand puppets and collages.

■ I have also visited each school in their classroom and gone on special trips

to the Dulwich Picture Gallery to look at John Constable’s painting of a windmill.

■ In March, children from Streatham Wells were the first group to visit the inside of the mill since

its restoration. They produced flour using the hand millstones made by Hans Titulaer in the Netherlands and designed packaging for it. They were enchanted by the electric-powered

mill on the first floor and particularly intrigued by the cracks in the floorboards!

■ Sally Howe, teacher of the Panther Class from Herbert Morrison School, said, “I have really enjoyed it – the children got a lot out of this visit.” Bilal, one of the children who went right up to the top floor, said that the best thing was “seeing the cap, all dark, and the rope glowed against the dark. I loved the trap doors.”



Children from Herbert Morrison School were one of the first school parties to visit inside the mill since restoration

By the end of the Easter term I will have tried out several workshops, adapted for different ages and abilities, and exceeded the Heritage Lottery Fund targets for the number delivered. The response from schools has been very positive – even slightly overwhelming at times!

I would like to thank all the teachers, parents, Lambeth Council staff and Friends of Windmill Gardens who have helped to make these workshops such a success.

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## Windmill history talk at Waterloo

**In February, Vice Chair of FoWG Richard Santhiri gave a talk about the restoration of Brixton Windmill to the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society in Waterloo**

The talk on the mill’s history and restoration went very well. About 20 people attended, and there were a lot of old faces and friends from the past who had supported the windmill project – they were all very happy with our success in getting a grant from the Heritage

Lottery Fund.

The talk focused on how the mill looked before and after the restoration, and there was also a question and answer session, which was very informative.

Many people had beautiful and touching memories of the mill from visiting it as children. There was also

one lady who had researched the Ashby family.

I feel that these talks to local societies are a good thing to do, as more people get to know about the work of the Friends.

I would also like to thank Owen Llewellyn, who stayed up late at night

choosing photos for the presentation.

We have created a project with a glorious future for new generations to come, and every one of us should be very proud of what we have achieved with the help and support of so many people in the community.

# Roll up to our recycling parade and festival

**Magdalen Rubalcava of FoWG's Festival group invites you to take part in our May Day parade**

Our Recycling May Day Parade, organised in collaboration with Veolia, will leave from Brixton Tate Library on bank holiday Monday 7 May at 1pm and proceed up Brixton Hill to Windmill Gardens.

From 2pm to 6pm there will be a free festival in the gardens, with world music, a puppet show in Brixton Windmill, and guided tours of the mill. You can also enjoy food stalls, workshops and lots of children's activities.

We want as many people as possible to get involved – so come along with your family and friends and take part! The theme of the parade is dragonflies and bugs.

■ Can you design a poster or play a musical instrument?

■ Can you decorate a float or design an outfit for our fashion show using recycled materials?

■ Could you plant vegetables in one of our wheelbarrows or make a dragonfly or bug to decorate the railings of the park?

■ Would you like to have a stall at the festival or even run your own workshop?

If so, get in touch for more information at [festival@brixtonwindmill.org](mailto:festival@brixtonwindmill.org).

We look forward to seeing you on 7 May!



Veolia are providing floats for the parade

PHOTOGRAPH: OWEN LLEWELLYN

## Surprise gingerbread brunch for Blenheim Gardens estate



**Nancy Platts reports on a sweet way of saying thank you to residents of the neighbouring estate for supporting Brixton Windmill over the years**

The Friends of Windmill Gardens delivered a surprise gingerbread brunch to residents living on the estate next to Brixton Windmill on Saturday 17 March.

Although the day was cold and grey, the intrepid Friends were not deterred. After kidnapping two unsuspecting locals for a

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**Anna Sweet (top right) and Pansy Aung (bottom right)**, volunteers with Friends of Windmill Gardens, surprise local people **Annick Alet (top left) and Penny Steele (bottom left)** with freshly baked loaves

quick photo for the *Streatham Guardian*, they delivered 250 free gingerbread windmills to highlight the forthcoming programme of events.

This included a special open day on Sunday 1 April just for residents living on the Blenheim Gardens estate that surrounds the mill.

Jean Kerrigan, Chair of the Friends of Windmill Gardens, said: "The local community are an important part of the Brixton Windmill story and we could not have achieved so much without them.

"This is our way of saying thank you to them and making sure that they have a chance to see inside the windmill on their special day.

"We also want to say a huge thank you to the Old Post Office Bakery in Clapham for donating the gingerbread windmills."

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS PATTON

# Mill memories

**Bill Pearson, who now lives in Eastbourne, contacted us when he saw some of the publicity about Brixton Windmill reopening after restoration last year**

I'm very pleased to see that the windmill has been restored. I was born in 1922 at 65 Brandon Road, later changed to Barkley Road [now Glanville Road]. I went to Lyham Road School.

Our house received a direct hit during the Blitz in 1940. Fortunately we were not in it; we were in a neighbour's shelter. My father was a well-known racing pigeon fancier and our garden was mostly filled by their shed: they were all killed. After that my family moved away from Brixton.

As a boy aged 13-15 I worked evenings and weekends for the greengrocer

and coal merchant Mr Springall in Cornwall Road. He kept three horses for his rounds at the windmill stables, including Billy and Ginger. They were magnificent animals. It was my job to clear out the stables, bed the horses down and clean out the stone horse trough outside. We were always able to go into the windmill, although it was not open to the public, and I remember the wonderful and overpowering smell of the grain.

I think the windmill stopped working in 1934. At the time it was powered by a steam engine, which was outside.

*You can see more memories of Brixton Windmill on our website at [brixtonwindmill.org/millmemories](http://brixtonwindmill.org/millmemories).*

*If you have any memories you would like to share, please email [info@brixtonwindmill.org.uk](mailto:info@brixtonwindmill.org.uk).*



ARTWORK: JAMAL DAVES

## Support Friends of Windmill Gardens

As a registered charity, we rely on membership fees and donations to carry out our campaigning work and organise our events.

You can support our work

by becoming a member, making a donation or volunteering to help at our events. More details at <http://brixtonwindmill.org/friends>.

You can also buy some great T-shirts, postcards and other merchandise at our open days – all proceeds go towards supporting our campaigns, and you'll have some lovely souvenirs of your visit!

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS PATTON

## WINDMILL WORD SEARCH

▶ See how many of the following words you can find. The words are all connected with windmills and can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

V H J V E S P E E W S O T X V  
 X U O Y K R R A H B W H E A T  
 B H S T G E W Q K C S X D L K  
 P R H O S A C K F L O O R R M  
 R S U W U Z D A O R Q N Y H U  
 O B A E N O T S R E N N U R L  
 V R A R B Z G R E F B N I I J  
 E A S E R P A W P E H R A C O  
 N K H Y I A K Y D Y T S F I H  
 D E B P X H B S K M N R P V N  
 E W Y R T S T Y V O I X A Z A  
 R H P Z O O O V M E K D E H S  
 C E S A N O K M N J W N H D H  
 I E Y E C A O D E M V Z H I B  
 L L H P L C S L I A S R H F Y

- BEDSTONE
- BRAKEWHEEL
- BRIXTON
- CAP
- COMMONSAIL
- FRIENDS
- JOHNASHBY
- JOSHUAASHBY
- PROVENDER
- RUNNERSTONE
- SACKFLOOR
- SAILS
- SWEEPS
- TOWER
- WHEAT



WORD SEARCH: OWEN LLEWELLYN

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