



SPRING NEWSLETTER



A competition winning image - courtesy of & thanks to Jeanette Jackson

Hello and a very warm welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. This edition marks a new streamlined version, with a focus on facts and action, which we hope will keep you informed

As we launch into Spring and the sunshine returns, I'm going to suggest that we follow in the footsteps of **Jeanette Jackson** (see below) and invite our readers to send in your favourite Mill sunrises/sets. No prizes, just the glory of a feature in our next newsletter...so get snapping. And the creative theme continues thanks to **Deborah Calladine-Jones** (see below). If the Mills are taking a while to be redeveloped.....then why not make your own. Well done Deborah.

Behind the scenes, please be assured we're all working creatively to find a solution to the issue which is the future of the Mills. Nothing more to report as yet....but watch this space for developments as they happen. In the meantime, enjoy the read....and the sunshine.

Roger

Roger Moors, Chair - OBM



LATEST UPDATE!!

We're encouraged by the positive news that First Investments (the owners of the Belper Mills Site) met during April with Jonathan Davies MP and that progress is being made which may lead to a planning determination on the Belper Mills this Autumn. OBM have been supporting Jonathan and his team with regard to the importance of community engagement which First Investments now acknowledge. We've also been exploring alternative financing solutions which may be more appropriate to the redevelopment of the Mills. We look forward to hearing about further progress in the coming months and as soon as we do...you'll all be the first to know.

CURRENT STATUS

Planning permission remains undetermined, with no firm decision date in place. View the application at:

<https://www.ambervalley.gov.uk/planning/development-management/view-a-planning-application/AVA/2018/0818>

OBM is recognised as the means of representing the public voice. We will continue to keep you updated.

Headline Photo

Thanks to Jeanette Jackson for taking our wonderful headline photograph and for permission to feature it!

This lovely image won a competition during September 2024 when Derbyshire Boom invited people to send photos of their favourite view. As Jeanette told OBM: "Looking at our historical mill from Chesterfield Road at sunset was my choice. Nestled in our beautiful town with the golden sky behind it was a tribute to the golden era of this wonderful historical building."

We certainly agree with her!



A Model Mill

The mill has long been an inspiration to the creative community and there are some awesomely talented folk about! The iconic image can be seen on buses, cards, calendars,

jigsaws and is often featured in publications as the main landmark in Belper. OBM is extremely fortunate to have been generously gifted an incredibly detailed miniature model of the mill, created by a wonderful artist, **Deborah Calladine-Jones**.

Deborah creates miniatures of historical landmark buildings, shops, pubs and cafes across Derbyshire.

She creates pieces from recycled off cuts and uses paint to create colour and texture in a realistic manner, bringing an old piece of wood to life.

Deborah studied Textile Design at Huddersfield University and taught Art & Design in schools. She has always been interested and inspired by different types of architecture through history and loves to see historical buildings restored to their former glory.

Facebook: Deborah Calladine- Jones Art Instagram: deborahcalladinejones

Email calladinejonesart@outlook.com



The miniature mill was presented to us by OBM supporter and Belper resident, Jacqui Davis, to whom we are extremely grateful.

Jacqui does a huge amount for the community. Along with raising funds for many local charitable causes, running a range of activity, movement and development classes for the under- fives, plus an inter-generational initiative too, Jacqui is a very talented poet, avid photographer and is involved in various community arts events.

In Jacqui's words: "I open my curtains every morning to Belper Mills and feel so sad at the dilapidated state the owners have allowed them to deteriorate to. When I saw Deborah's artwork, I thought what a lovely thing it would be to have such a model on display to show the people of Belper and Derbyshire what a gem they could have on their doorstep. I'm so grateful to OBM for setting up a display to bring attention to the plight of this beautiful building and pray for the day it will be brought back to some semblance of its former glory."

Twistin Tots & Twistin Tinies Adventures - engaging musical fun for you and your under 5s. Classes currently in Belper, Darley Abbey and Matlock. Visit www.twistintots.co.uk for information.

The model will have an initial home in Archway House within the mill complex – the North Mill Trust operational base and starting point for the many tours, walks and talks operated. It will then be on display at various events attended or hosted by OBM. We look forward to sharing it with you!



Belper North Mill Trust and Volunteers Association



Belper North Mill Volunteers

Belper North Mill Trust's long-term aim is to return a Heritage Centre to Belper.

In the short to medium term The Trust continues to support the Volunteers Association, to tell Belper's story through its programme of Mill Site tours, heritage walks, talks, educational services and other events. Thanks to all the hard work from our volunteers, our customer support has been amazing. This has been reflected in the receipt of the Trip Advisor Travellers Choice Award for 2023 and 2024.

Our Priorities for this year are –

1. Returning key elements of the Belper Museum collection for display in Belper Library.
2. Working with OBM on the Joining Up Heritage Project.
3. Developing existing partnerships and setting up new ones, for example with Amber Valley Public Health to reach out to families who would benefit from experiencing Belper's rich heritage.
4. Expanding our heritage offer to more people, community groups and coach tour companies.
5. Preparing for the 250th anniversary of Belper Mills in 2026.

And, fingers crossed, having our volunteer's hard work acknowledged. Our Volunteers

Association is the final three for the Visit Peak District and Derbyshire Tourism award, Best Team category

STOP PRESS!!!!!! – THEY WON!!!!

If you want to join a winning team, why not think about becoming a volunteer with us?
All information about our tours, walks and volunteering is on our website.

www.belpernorthmill.org.uk



by Jim Bell

Ashley Franklin Needs Your Help!

THE BELPER PHOTO BOOK PROJECT

Ashley writes:

There has been a lot of water under the Belper Bridge since I gave the presentation about my Derwent Valley Mills photo book at the inaugural Our Belper Mills AGM at the end of 2023. If you purchased the book, I am asking you to show your taste and wisdom again by supporting my new project: the first photo book of Belper (and surrounding area, in case you live in Milford, Ambergate, Heage and other villages!)

The Strutts anniversaries next year played a part in this decision, but the main reason is that I felt Belper merited a wider showcase than I managed to include in the book. As well as the town's heritage and landscape, there is industry, culture, leisure, sport, religion and, more specifically, aspects such as Belper in Bloom, Open Gardens, the Passion Play, Pride, The Ritz, the Food & Drink Festival... and even more.

I'm already engaging photographers, notably the great Jim Bell, but I could do with some help... with obtaining sponsorship, for example. I also want to identify the community initiatives that will benefit from the proceeds.

Time scale? The Milford Mill Development needs to be finished so we can celebrate it.

Launch date? Probably 2027. By then, maybe our Belper mills will be in a better place?

If you want to help Ashley, get in touch: info@ashleyfranklin.co.uk



Swan on the Derwent by Ashley Franklin

OBM Milling About

Belper 250 : Strutts anniversaries – OBM continues to be involved in talks regarding 2026 Strutts anniversary celebrations plans. Some great events are being discussed involving many organisations and members of the community to ensure some memorable celebrations make history themselves!

OBM On Air: Our Chair Roger Moors appeared on the 'Have Your Say' spot with Ian Skye on Radio Derby, during a programme aired live in September 2024. Roger was able to talk about the role of OBM and reflect upon the mill complex and the UNESCO world heritage status.

Upcoming events:

Joined Up Belper Heritage hosted workshop – Tuesday 29th April (6.30pm – 8.15 location still tba)

Belper Summer Food Festival – Sunday June 1st

Belper Historical Society History Fair – Saturday June 28th (10am – 3pm) – Strutts Community Centre

Belper Winter Festival – Sunday November 16th

For other talks, tours & treats visit:



www.belpernorthmill.org.uk

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belperhistoricalsociety.co.uk

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www.derwentvalleymills.org

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Thanks for reading!

Newsletter comments or contributions are all welcome at ourbelpermills@gmail.com

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www.ourbelpermills.co.uk

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