

Conservation Conversation

A Year To Remember

It has been possibly the busiest and most interesting year in Owlsworths' history. It has seen us undertake some of the most technically demanding high profile projects ever, yet still delivering excellent conservation work for the everyday historic building owner.

Perhaps most exciting was the merger with Miles & co, whose entire workforce and facilities have been absorbed and Dr Dan Miles has taken up a Directorship within the expanded business. Dan's vast experience and knowledge has already proved invaluable in assisting on current projects and allowing us to secure new contracts.

Significant contracts in this period include Winchester Cathedral, Stanton Harcourt Manor, Hall Barn at Lewknor, Kew Pagoda, Marwell Hall and Fullwell windmill. All of which have provided unique and exacting challenges for both our craftsmen and management alike.

The increase in project work and expansion of our capabilities has been in conjunction with a significant recruitment drive and resulted in numerous additions to our specialist trade teams and highly experienced project managers. An increase in enquiries and a close relationship with some of the most respected custodians of significant listed buildings including, Historic Royal Palaces, National Trust and Historic England means that a degree of continued expansion is expected.

Awards... Awards.... Awards.....

Our very own Emma Dawson won the English Heritage Angel Award for Best Craftsmanship on a Heritage Rescue, resulting in a number of features within the Sunday Telegraph. Owlsworth also took the runner up position, providing a clean sweep in this category.

The Harmondsworth Barn repair project, a vast project to one of the largest surviving medieval barns in the country also won a commendation at the wood awards.

Perhaps the most satisfying was the special presentation made to our entire team over the works undertaken over the previous 5 years at a Lutyens Chalk manor in Stockbridge. This project to nationally significant building is something we are extremely proud to have been associated with.



Inside this issue

Kew Gardens.....	2
Hampton Court.....	2
Winchester Cathedral	3
Mills Round Up	3
What's An Owl Worth?.....	4
Marwell Hall	4
Stanton Harcourt Manor.....	4

Trades

- Carpentry
- Stonemasonry
- Plastering
- Blacksmithing
- Flintwork
- Brickwork
- Joinery

Spotlight on - Historic Royal Palaces



Owlsorth IJP have been fortunate enough to enjoy completing a number of projects for HRP over recent years. These vary in size and prominence, here we concentrate on some of the more recent works.

Significant in these include the construction and installation of the new external stair to the White Tower.

This project in fact provided the catalyst for the merger between Owlsorth IJP and Miles & Co. The works took the best part of 12 months and involved the hand hewing of around 40

carefully chosen oak trees, sourced from estates around Oxfordshire. The final design used principals of Norman carpentry combined with some clever hidden structural elements, designed by Hockley and Dawson. The hand rails on the staircase were also forged by our blacksmiths.

The staircase is now the Main Visitors Entrance to the Tower and we truly feel that it is certainly a worthy addition to this historic setting.

"The White Tower in all its glory, the new external stair fitting perfectly"

Kew Pagoda

The Great Pagoda was designed by Sir William Chambers and completed in 1762 as a gift for Princess Augusta, the founder of the botanic gardens at Kew. It is a ten-storey octagon tower, standing at almost 50m and each level is 30cm narrower than the one below.

Owlsorth IJP are proud to be part of the extensive restoration project which is underway to restore the Great Pagoda to its original 18th century splendour. Owlsorth are undertaking the entire historic brickworking, paving, masonry cleaning and plastering package.

The nature of the structure provides organisational challenges, in terms of spaces scheduling of work and others working in the same area.

Hampton Court Railings

The combination of our blacksmithing and stonemasonry team have completed this smaller but very exacting and visual project. Project foreman John Lister and his team oversaw removal of the railings and the existing plinth stones. These were all recorded in their existing locations and given unique numbers prior to removal.

John, a stonemason by trade, personally oversaw the stone repairs which largely involved indenting sections of new stone to match the existing, fixing the with stainless steel pins in epoxy resin. After assessment by the team irreparable stones were replaced to match existing, profiles and radii templates being taken from the existing masonry and approved samples.

The existing sections of historic railings were also recorded, dismantled, and transported to our forge for cleaning, repair and decoration. The modern section of railings was removed entirely and replaced by a new section of railings and plinth fabricated to match the original exactly.





Owlsworth IJP Adding a lasting legacy to Winchester Cathedral

Winchester Cathedral

Kings and Scribes—The Birth of a Nation at Winchester Cathedral, is an ambitious project which has three main objectives: -

- To enable more people, to learn about the Cathedral and its history through a broader range of learning opportunities plus updating and expanding the Cathedral's educational facilities, including building a new Learning Centre.
- To extend the ministry and mission of the Cathedral to many more people and transform the experience of visitors through creating new exhibitions which unlock the Cathedral's hidden treasures. The stunning 12th Century illuminated Winchester Bible – which is in urgent need of conservation and better display – and the story of the contents of the Cathedral's six mortuary chests, believed to contain the remains of pre-Conquest monarchs, will be at the centre of new exhibitions in the South
- To preserve the Cathedral for generations to come by tackling the mounting need for conservation, maintenance and repair of the building's fabric.

The project has a unique format in which the Cathedral themselves have an extremely active role within the project team. The team also includes Nick Cox Architects and SFK consulting.

The inspirational project is spread throughout the enormous south transept, in different rooms and areas. Works include bespoke timber and handforged staircases elements, joinery, plastering, stonemasonry, structural steel work, and paving. The centre piece and indeed the most challenging aspect of the works is the construction of a unique mezzanine floor which sails over the calefactory, suspended on bespoke hand forged raising pieces.

Dan Winch, Owlsworths' project manager had to work not only with client team, in providing samples and shop drawings for design approval, but also the numerous other contractors to achieve objectives.

Mills Round Up

Our Mills department have been busy of late completing a number of large scale repair projects, these include windmills at Fullwell, Wimbledon, Drapers and Saxstead. In addition to this watermill projects have also been ongoing including works at Mapledurham watermill replacing the main wheel start support tressel.

Mills manager Paul Sellwood has been busy developing mill specific maintenance plans for a number of clients and mills alike. The costs associated with large scale repairs can be significant as often there is a large scaffolding, craneage and transport charges to consider. These can often be avoided by sensible maintenance and forethought.

Paul is keen to stress that "Monitoring and regular maintenance is the key to keeping a mill working continuously and ensuring repairs costs are not incurred unnecessarily. Indeed whilst mills have many common elements, individual parts vary significantly in design and mills have a multitude of differing configurations. Furthermore the level of support available to run and maintain individual mills on an ongoing basis is completely unique. As such we tailor each

What's an Owl Worth?

Established in 1991, Owlsworth IJP's philosophy of providing a sympathetic exceptional construction service for period properties and structures remains unchanged.

The management team have importantly remained hands on and the company's understanding and appreciation of traditional properties, building techniques and materials has continued to evolve and grow.

Employing our own stonemasons, carpenters, lime plasterers, blacksmiths, brick and flint workers we are able to ensure that the quality of your project meets our own self imposed high standards.

Marwell Hall

Marwell Hall, at the heart of Marwell Zoological park, is a Grade I listed building originally built in 1320 and largely rebuilt in 1816 by William Long. In the 1500s, the Hall belonged to the Seymour family, and there is a local tradition that Henry VIII married Jane Seymour there.

The external façade had previously been decoratively rendered using Roman cement, which whilst having been expertly applied, was compromised to the point that emergency repairs were needed. Radley House Architects in conjunction with Owlsworth developed a specification and repair schedule. Mic Poynter managed the works which were extensive and complicated by time constraints as completion had to be between the Easter and Summer School

Mic and his team worked on three elevations simultaneously, and despite the time of year, faced significant challenges from the weather. When it wasn't raining, the sun was so hot that great care in application and tending was required. Many of the numerous complex embellishments and partial rebuilds, had to be undertaken in these challenging conditions and the unique approach for each carefully considered with the aid of Jeremy Poll from Radley House.



Stanton Harcourt Manor Farm House

Owlsworth IJP were awarded the extensive conservation and renovation project of Stanton Harcourt Manor Farmhouse. The beautiful grade 2 star property had suffered significant water damage, which had remained undiscovered for an extended period, leaving the property completely uninhabitable.

Owlsworth project manager Mark Geleta, having previously spent the best part of 2 years, running a large project in Stockbridge on a grade 1 listed property, which involved every aspect of conservation and indeed new build was selected to take on the challenge.

Mark and his team quickly completed a stabilisation and clearing phase allowing Robert Franklin Architects, in conjunction with the owners, to establish a scope to bring back the property to its former glory and provide a home for a member of the family.

The works at Stanton Harcourt encompasses everything from rebuild, to services and finishes something which Owlsworth IJP and Mark in particular enjoy as it is the opportunity to see a part of history being saved and also a finished project providing a home to be lived in.



Owlsworth IJP

Unit 2,
Paddock Road Industrial
Estate,
Caversham,
Reading,
Berkshire RG4 5BY

Phone: 0118 969 169
E-mail:
info@owlsworthijp.co.uk
Web: www.owlsworthijp.co.uk