

deMolen – A Traditional Dutch Windmill and Shining Example of Timber Design

Ken McIntosh, President

Governor-General Dame Silvia Cartwright will officially open De Molen (Dutch for windmill) and Dutch Ambassador An De Bijll Nachenius will also officiate at the celebrations.

Foxton Windmill Trust's publicity officer Phil Saunders says that when it is operating the mill sounds "like a subway train or rumbling earthquake".

First proposed in 1990, De Molen was completed and officially opened on 13th April 2003. Built to plans and specifications obtained from the Netherlands, it is an exact replica of a traditional 17th Century Dutch flourmill and has received a completion certificate from the architect, who designed the mill Mr J A Hedra from Barneveld in the Netherlands. The million-dollar project began when a Dutchman, Dirk van Til, bought a property in Foxton, with the intention of growing tulip bulbs in partnership with John Langen. The land reminded Mr van Til so strongly of The Netherlands that he also decided to build a genuine Dutch mill. The tulip venture failed, due to a virus and unsuitable climate, and Mr van Til went to Australia. But Mr Langen stayed in Foxton, determined to carry the dream through. Now, 15 years later, and thanks to many Foxton people, people of Dutch descent, foundation members, companies that have contributed products and services at special rates and to a grant from Eastern and Central Community Trust, he has achieved his goal.

Apart from the running gear, millstones and sailstocks which were made and installed by Vaags Molenwerkn in Aalten, the Netherlands, the mill has been built using NZ-grown timber, by mainly voluntary labour, under the direction of Mr Cor Slobbe of Foxton Beach

The function of De Molen is to mill flour with millstones in the traditional manner. Wholemeal wheat flour can be bought at the mill, alongside a wide range of souvenirs.

De Molen is a marvellous example of traditional Dutch, 17th century craftsmanship. Visitors able to climb the stairs will be conducted through the mill to see it in action. Those unable to mount the stairs can watch the proceedings from the ground floor by means of an in house video system. A visit to De Molen is a totally unique experience. The daily opening hours are from 10.00 am till 4.00pm. Group visits are welcomed by prior arrangement.

The following pages include some photographic highlights showing the timber design features of this impressive structure. We have also included some diagrams of the main structural frames which are at the heart of the windmill building, which have been kindly supplied by McIntosh Laminates.

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***INSERT WINDMILL PICTURES WITH CAPTIONS & TIMBER FRAME DIAGRAMS FROM CD SUPPLIED
(NOTE – THIS WILL RESULT IN THE NEED TO REVISE PAGE NUMBERING IN JOURNAL INDEX)***