



De Zoeker oil mill (The Seeker)

De Zoeker's history goes back as far as April 1676 when this mill was registered.

The oil mill, built in Zaanwijk, fell out of favour with the emergence of steam-driven factories.

In 1891, the mill did not look good: the drive mechanism disappeared and the mill was converted into a paint mill.

In February 1925, the mill was damaged by a whirlwind. It was restored again through voluntary contributions.

In 1940, the mill fell out of use.

In 1950, De Zoeker ended up in the hands of the Zaanwijk local authority.

On 1 August 1968, the mill was relocated in spectacular fashion from Guisveld in Zaanwijk to its current location at Zaanse Schans.

During this operation, the body of the mill was lifted by a large crane across the overhead lines of a railway. The mill had to leave its familiar prominent position because of re-development plans.

After it was relocated, De Zoeker was handed over to the Zaan Windmill Society (Vereniging de Zaanse Molen).



DE ZAANSCH E MOLEN



Around 1920 there were only about 20 windmills left of the 1000 that had made the Zaan district the oldest industrial area of the world. On 17 March, 1925, windmill society De Zaanse Molen was founded to preserve the mills for future generations. This society now owns thirteen industrial windmills; it keeps them in excellent condition and operates them regularly. Moreover, in 1928 the society founded a unique and fascinating Windmill Museum, where you can find out everything about the operation and history of industrial windmills and where changing exhibitions are held. You can also visit our website: www.zaanschemolen.nl



For all information about our mills and mill museum, opening hours, group visits and entrance fees:

www.zaanschemolen.nl

De Zoeker oil mill

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DE ZOEKER

Oil mill
on the Kalverringdijk, Zaanse Schans,
Zaandam, The Netherlands

Anno 1672

Welcome to De Zoeker

You visit this mill at your own risk.

It will be particularly helpful to us if you do not smoke, climb over barriers or pull out any reeds.

Thank you for your cooperation!



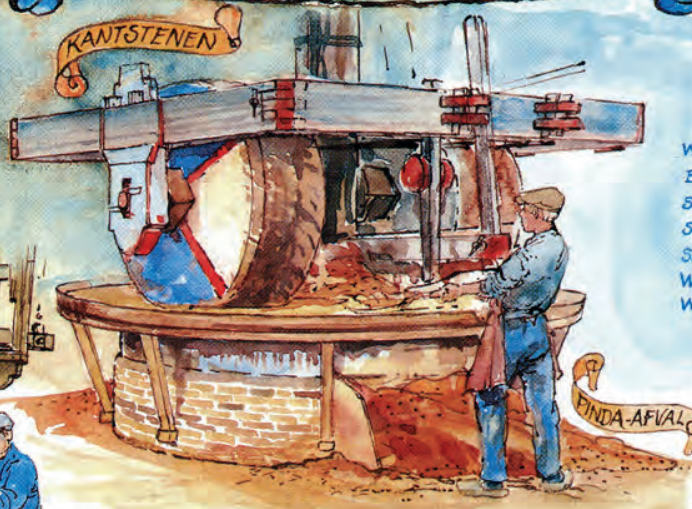
DE ZAANSCH E MOLEN



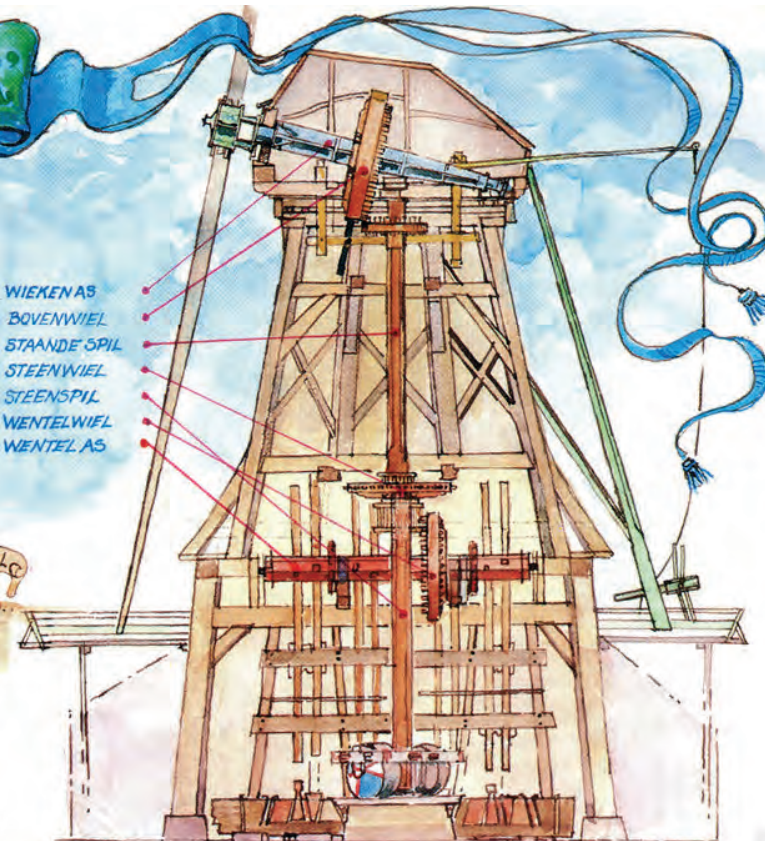
OLIEMOLEN 'DE ZOEKER'

During more than three centuries the oil mills of the Zaan area produced oil from different kind of seed. Through the years the equipment of these mills was improved to a true summit of perfection in the use of wind power. In early days *linseed* and *canolaseed* were used as raw materials to produce oil. But the development of the steam engine caused the decline of most oil mills. The few survivors were obliged to make use of the waste products of the oil factories, like husks of cocoa, peanuts-skins and -germs. In this last producing oil mill, *De Zoeker*, peanuts-waste is used as material.

The working process starts under the big stones (weight 2,400 kg each) *kantstenen* where the material is flattened and broken. The obtained "flour" is then heated over a peat fire in a brick range, the *vuister*, to stimulate the separation of the oil.



WIEKENAS
BOVENWIEL
STAANDE SPIL
STEENWIEL
STEENSPIL
WENTELWIEL
WENTELAS



DOORSNEDE - OLIEMOLEN -
cross section of an oil mill

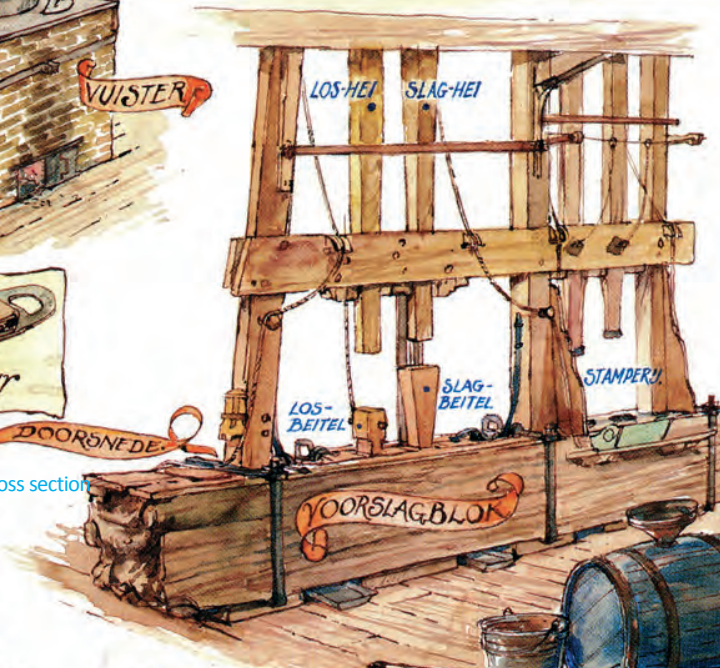
Be patient! Take care of your hands by not touching moving parts of the mill.

When this process is finished the material slides off the fire into a pair of woollen bags which are hanging ready. These woollen bags, the *Bulen*, are then put into leather coverings lined with a kind of filter, made of sisal. In former days these filters were made of horse-hair (hence the Dutch name *Haar*).

These 'books' are placed to the left and right side between thick iron plates in the press room of the oil press (The *Blok*)



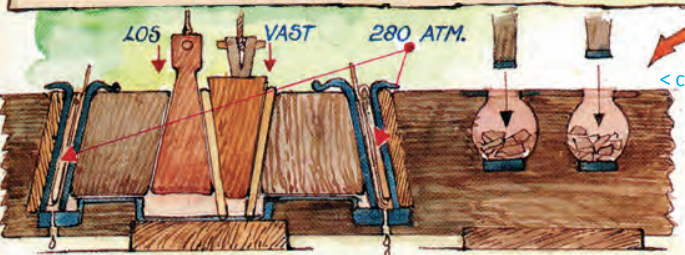
VUISTER



The hard and dry cake that remains, is stripped off the bag on the cakehutch (*Kaak*) and can be sold for cattlefeed. The oil is refined by the oil factories and is used in mayonnaise, as salad oil and so on.



Linseed-oil was needed in paint and varnish and as material in 'linoleum'. *Rape-oil* was used for cooking, in the soap industry and, in days gone by, for fuel in lamps.



< cross section

Now the miller puts the pressing machine into operation. A heavy wooden pole, weight some 200 kg, is lifted by the coxes in the shaft on the next floor and falls down like a hammer on a wooden wedge in the middle of the pressing block. By driving in this wedge, the blocks are pressed sideways and on to the bags. After eighty strokes the wedge develops a pressure of 280 atmosphere. The oil runs down and is caught in flat pans. Then the counterwedge is driven down in order to release the first wedge.

In former days, when the oil was obtained out of linseed and canolaseed, the whole process of pressing was repeated once more. The cakes were placed in the pitcher block (*Stamperij*) and stamped into meal. This was heated and pressed with even more pressure: 300 atmosphere.

