



October 2019

# Mill News



## Powering Orkney with water

Five times more frequent than Northern England, their waterwheels were rarely horizontal

## Rex Wailes comes home

Now we all must do something about his legacy!

## Millwright training opportunity

The Millwrighting Craft Fellowship the door is open for applications

# Contents

1. Editorial
2. Powering Orkney with water: a late-19th-century perspective
7. The Rex Wailes collection has arrived at the Mills Archive (33 years after he died)
12. News from the Mills Section: Folic Acid Consultation Update
12. Mills Section event calendar
13. Casework Report
16. Boost your support for Mills
17. Conference: Managing Health & Safety Risks in Traditional Mills
18. Mill Repair Fund Report
20. Course: Maintenance Matters
21. Millwright Training Opportunity
22. Letters to the Editor
24. TIMS Symposium 2019
28. Technical Information Project
30. Mills in the News
- 32: Jobs for the winter (maintenance matters)
33. Book Review: Mills of the Isles
34. Mill Group News and Newsletters Review
40. Obituary: Mrs Joan Day
40. Warton Peg Mill

---

## SPAB MILLS SECTION

37 Spital Square  
London E1 6DY

Switchboard 0207 377 1644

Direct line 0207 456 0909

Email: [millsinfo@spab.org.uk](mailto:millsinfo@spab.org.uk)

Website: [www.spabmills.org.uk](http://www.spabmills.org.uk)

Administrator – Sophie Martin

0207 456 0909

Office Hours: Tuesdays,

Wednesdays & Thursdays;

9.45 – 5.45.

Also on Twitter - [@ukmills](https://twitter.com/@ukmills)

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales  
Charity No. 111 3753  
Scottish Charity No. SC 039244

---

Deadline for contributions for the January 2020 issue of Mill News is 14 November 2019

Copy should be sent to the editor at the Office or at [mcstonenut@gmail.com](mailto:mcstonenut@gmail.com), and should if possible be typed, emailed, or on USB sticks. All photographs should be as high resolution as possible.

Photo prints should be clearly labelled on the back. We will make every effort to return items, but this is not always possible. The Editor's decision on any article is final.

Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without permission of the copyright holder. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Mills Section.

Editor – Mildred Cookson

Layout and design – Ian Scotter

---

## Mills Section Committee

Mildred Cookson – Chairman

Jim Bailey – Vice Chairman

Steve Temple, Paul Sellwood,

Charles Wagner, Robin Dukes

Co-opted members: Caroline Dix,

Russell Jones, Michelle Andrews,

Kristina Sodomkova.

Sophie Martin – Section Administrator

Matthew Slocombe – SPAB Director

*Advisors to the Section:* Luke Bonwick,

Stephen Bartlett, David Jones.

**Front Cover:** Lifting a new sail at Saxstead Mill.

Picture - Justin Minns.

**Back Cover:** The underground reversible waterwheel at Rammelsberg mine.

Picture -Graham Hackney.

# Editorial

**Symposium:** "An occasion at which people who have great knowledge of a particular subject meet in order to discuss a matter of interest" *Cambridge English Dictionary*

Section meetings in the spring and autumn have been part of my life for almost 50 years. I recall anxieties about finding venues big enough for audiences of 100+ and, on some occasions, sitting on the stairs in lecture theatres because all the seats were taken.

Over the past five or six years our two regular Section meetings each year have alternated between London and a venue elsewhere. In spite of some excellent meetings, this approach has been less successful than we had hoped in attracting participants. The planned meeting near Winchester had to be cancelled as the audience number was struggling to get above 20.

Even with the effort put in by Russell and Sophie, it was not going to pay for itself and was clearly not attracting many members from north of the Thames Valley. Simon, Dave and Martin had shown last year that a regional meeting could be a big success if a lot of effort went into attracting a local audience, not just Section members. Both experiences underline just how much effort is required to be successful in designing an interesting programme, publicising it and then organising the logistics.

The Section Committee had already decided that the resources involved in organising two meetings a year were excessive and we would

serve our membership better in future if we put all our efforts into running one main meeting each year and locate that in London or somewhere equally accessible to the largest number. Now that Sophie is sadly leaving (below), we will use this approach next year, assess the impact and any feedback and move on from there.

We have some ideas on how to respond to suggestions from various quarters and I would be very interested to hear what you think. For example, we will probably avoid themes for the day, unless they can be of general interest; we do not want to put people off with a too-specialised agenda. Similarly we will replace the business meeting approach (AGM and forum) with a report from the Section in the members' and groups' presentations – and encourage more groups to participate; giving adequate time for discussion.

Overall we want the meetings to be varied, enjoyable and stimulating, building on the Cambridge English Dictionary definition. If that does not work, we might have to consider the classical definition: a drinking party or convivial discussion, especially as held in ancient Greece after a banquet.

Mildred

## *Adieu Sophie*

Members will be sad to hear that Sophie left us at the beginning of October.

She had been with us for a number of years and was very well liked by members. She pulled out all stops to make the Section run smoothly, which included general inquiries, casework distribution and responses, our Mill Repair Fund applications, meetings, both committee and our events. Many extra hours were put in to see that the numerous tasks were completed on time. The website, still not completed, took up more than a considerable amount of her time as well. Her place will be difficult to fill but hopefully by the start of November we should have a new Administrator in the office.

On a personal note I would like to say a very big 'thank you' for running the office smoothly and keeping committee in check. I am sure all committee as well as the membership wish her all the best for the future.

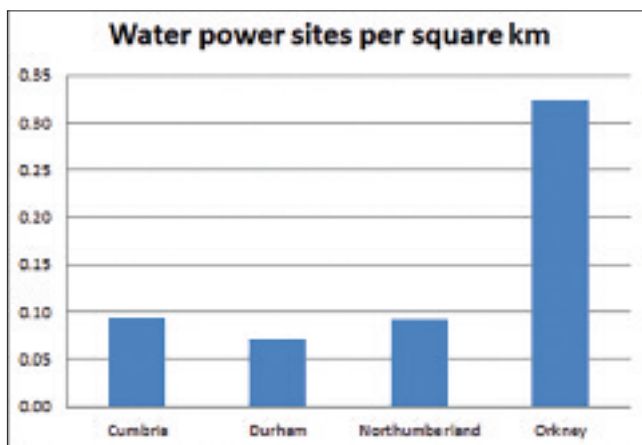
Mildred

# Powering Orkney with water: a late 19th-century perspective

Duncan Hutt

*In terms of water power Orkney is possibly best known for Click Mill<sup>1</sup>, a rather strange 1820s-built horizontal-wheeled watermill that is thought to have replaced a more conventional vertical-wheeled mill at a location only a few metres away. Why this was built in this way is not really explained in literature associated with the site. There is a history of other similar mills on the islands such as the excavated site at Orphir<sup>2</sup> but this type of mill is more prevalent in Shetland and Lewis and the emphasis on such mills rather undervalues the place that Orkney has in terms of water power use.*

A review of Ordnance Survey mapping of the islands from around 1880 and 1900 shows Orkney to be in the vanguard of water power. The number of water power sites is perhaps best demonstrated by comparing the frequency of sites with some northern counties of England (see Fig. 1).



*Fig. 1. Number of water power sites per square kilometre.*

Much of Orkney is good quality agricultural land with limited topography. The agricultural land extends into more heather-dominated upland and a comparison of the old maps and present day shows a steady improvement of ground for agriculture. A surprising amount of the land was suitable for growing grain; barley and bere meal, oats and wheat. The early



*Comparison of 1880 and 1900 maps of three farms on Mainland: in 1880 Green has a small mill to the north of the farmstead; by 1900 all three farms have water power.*



*Click Mill in 2003.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

corn mills were probably small though whether many were like Click Mill is doubtful. Many of these corn mills were remodelled in the mid-19th century to become larger ventures and, as in the rest of the UK, some of the smaller mills probably disappeared. This period of agricultural improvement, overseen by landowners who developed new model farms, also led to an increasing use of water power for farm use.

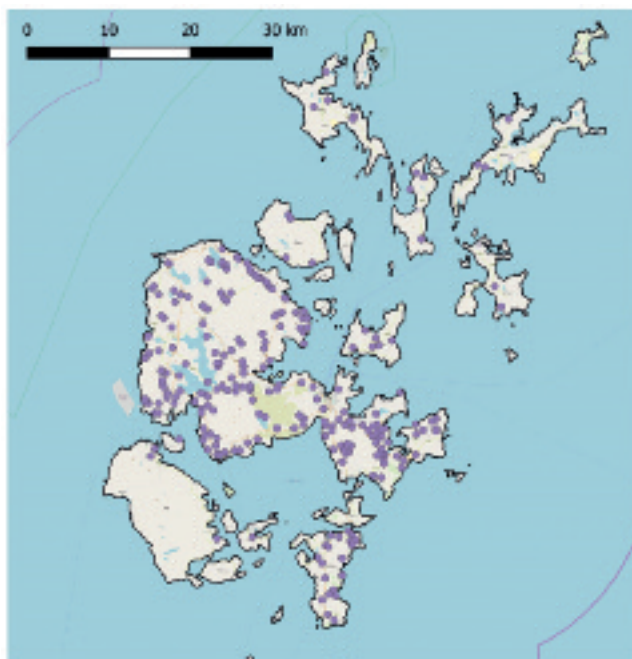
By farm use it is generally assumed to be for threshing machinery and indeed there are 'threshing' and 'thrash' mills marked. However this probably understates the range of uses these larger farm mills were put to – from small saw benches, to



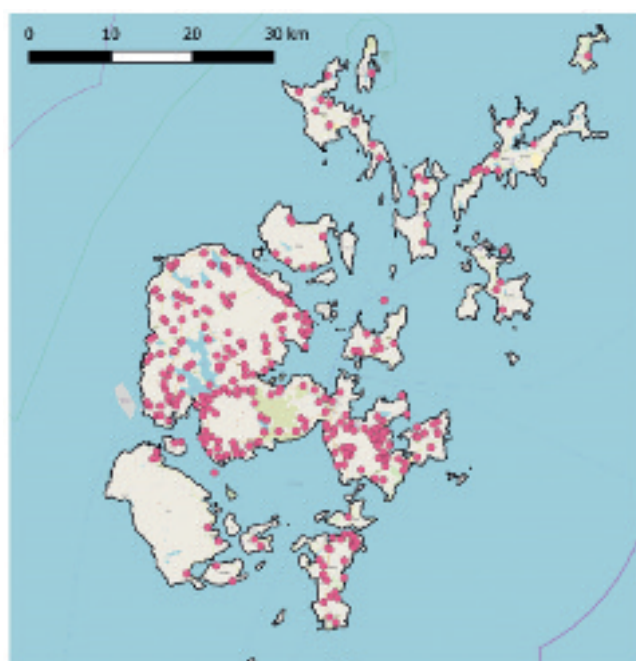
## *Powering Orkney with water – continued*



*Map. 1. Corn mills in Orkney.*



*Map. 2. Farm mills in Orkney.*



*Map. 3. All mills in Orkney.*

straw chopping and indeed to the addition of millstones for animal (and probably some human!) feed.

Most of the true corn mills, particularly the bigger ones, have large and sometimes complex systems of water supply, often fed from large lakes. There are examples on Stronsay, Shapinsay and around the mainland such as Boardhouse, Tankerness and Swannay. Other corn mills use large dams and a well-defined set of races, clearly visible on even the old one-inch mapping; Sebay and Risa Mill on Hoy are two examples.

Waulkmill Bay and Walkerhouse hint at mills used in fulling but by the 1880s there are very few 'industrial' sites named. This leaves a huge number of undefined water power sites. Some are



*Tormiston Mill in 1981.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*



*Finstown Mill in 2003.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

## *Powering Orkney with water – continued*

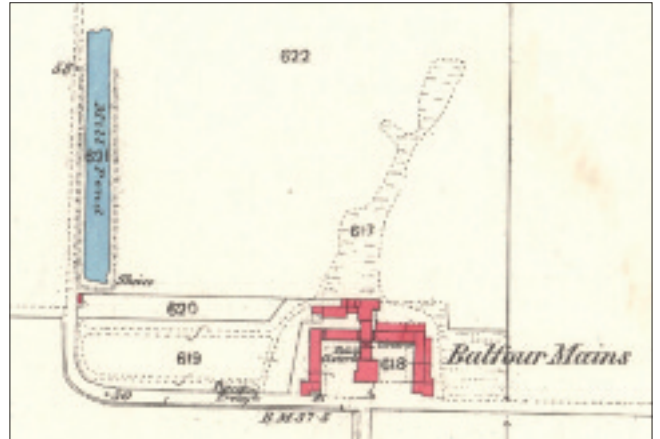


*Finstown mill waterwheel in 2003.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

simply unknown without trawling through local records (and possibly not even then). Most others, and this is most of the sites on the islands, can probably be accounted for as farm mills. Indeed the presence of a small mill dam and race leading to one of the buildings is almost certainly indicating a small mill for farm use. In the case of the model-type farms this is in one of the regimented lines of barns while on most Orkney farms it is a small addition to a range of buildings or, quite frequently, a building set aside from the farm. Clearly it isn't possible to be



*Shapinsay Mill in 2019.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*



*1880 extract of Balfour Mains, Shapinsay. A modern set of farm buildings.*



*Balfour Mains, Shapinsay in 2019 – the farm mill is the rightmost building.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

sure from map evidence alone that these are threshing mills but the evidence is added to in the ephemeral nature of many. Most of these sites are visible on the 1880 and 1900 maps, a few have gone out of use by 1900 but a remarkable number have also appeared in those 20 years, complete with millpond and races. The embracing of water power on the farm is matched in other areas of Scotland such as in Aberdeenshire and in England in North Northumberland but the sheer ubiquity of water power use on even some of the smaller farms in Orkney is surely unique. It is probably worth noting that there were also a number of simple windmills put up to power threshing machines on Orkney farms.



*Red House Eday in 1973 – a wooden waterwheeled farm mill.  
Picture – Peter Burges.*

## *Powering Orkney with water – continued*

---



*Papa Westray corn mill in 2019.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

---

Farm mills occur on many of the smaller islands including Hoy, Shapinsay, Westray, Stronsay, Graemsay, Eday and Westray. Some of these have large areas of good agricultural land such as Shapinsay but others, such as Hoy, are distinctly less fertile. Of the currently inhabited islands only Papa Westray, North Ronaldsay, Eglisay and Wyre seem not to have had water-powered farm mills, and in the case of Wyre and Eglisay the 1880 and 1900 maps show no mills at all. North Ronaldsay, now an island of small to mid-sized wind turbines, had at least four farms using small windmills.

The widespread use of water power on Orkney farms is clear but the level of millwrighting was probably very variable. The farm mill at Backaskaill<sup>3</sup> on Sanday was an all-iron overshot wheel with a rim gear to take power to the machinery. The small farm mill at Red House on Eday had a four-armed all-wooden overshot wheel in a much more vernacular style. This may be the two ends of the spectrum but the Buckaskaill Farm was a 1863 century set of modern buildings while Red House is more indicative of the smaller farm mill additions that popped up in the late 19th century. Buckaskaill is marked as a corn mill on old maps, though was for farm use with some milling capacity, its waterwheel was constructed in Aberdeen. Red House 'mill' is not there on the 1880 map and only discernible from a small unmarked pond on the 1900 edition.



*North Ronaldsay watermill in 2019.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

---



*Papa Westray corn mill from the shore in 2019.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

---



*Inside Papa Westray's small corn mill in 2019.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

---

As a visitor to Orkney the corn mills are by far the most striking reminder of water power use, many operating until the 1960s and 1970s. The farm mills have often disappeared as quickly as they were built leaving few traces, lost under more modern farm developments or remain as an anonymous ruin in a corner of a field.

*continued overleaf*



*North Ronaldsay Mill wooden gearing with mill behind in 2019.  
Picture – Duncan Hutt.*

---

# Powering Orkney with water – continued

## References and acknowledgements

1. Harris, N S. 2019. Some Scottish Horizontal-wheeled Watermills. Mill News 158 p26-28.
2. Batey, C. 1993. A Norse Horizontal Mill in Orkney. Review of Scottish Culture 8 p20-28.
3. CANMORE – National Record of the Historic Environment – Part of Historic Scotland. [canmore.org.uk](http://canmore.org.uk)

Sections from old maps are reproduced under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY) licence with the permission of the National Library of Scotland <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

The photograph of Red House Mill on Eday is by Peter Burges who contributed to [www.orkneycommunities.co.uk](http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk)



We offer the following services throughout the country:

- Project Management
- Joinery and timber framing
- Blacksmithing using genuine wrought iron
- Casting repairs
- Millstone dressing
- Millstone manufacture
- Pattern making and casting
- Machining services
- Reconditioning water pumping systems
- Annual servicing
- Consultancy services
- Surveys

We employ all our staff directly enabling us to control quality, programme and budget.

For more information or to discuss a project please contact:

Email: [john@dorothearestorations.com](mailto:john@dorothearestorations.com)

Telephone: 0845 4780773

## Wind & Watermill Repair, Conservation & Maintenance. Traditional Millwrights.













# *The Rex Wailes collection has arrived at the Mills Archive (33 years after he died)*

*Liz Bartram and Nathanael Hodge*

*“It is given to few to have the breadth of knowledge and experience called for in the making of such a survey. Mr Wailes’s life-long study of mills and milling has made him pre-eminent in this particular field.” (SPAB)*

This 1963 endorsement supported Rex’s appointment as the lead consultant in the government survey to identify historical sites worthy of preservation under the Planning Acts. For this work he was later awarded OBE. However, our story starts 40 years earlier.

In 1923 the Newcomen Society asked 22-year-old Rex, apprenticed to a Lincolnshire engineering firm, to record the windmills in Lincolnshire. By 1929 he was technical adviser to the new SPAB Windmill Section. He became the leading British authority on mills and the driving force behind the windmill rescue and repair movement.

In a 1966 lecture to the Newcomen Society, he advocated a specialist archive for mill drawings and photographs, emphasising the need for proper indexing and storage in suitable conditions. Exactly half-a-century later the Mills Archive became a nationally accredited repository – Rex Wailes’s wish had come true.

It is therefore particularly pleasing that we can announce the transfer in July of his collection from the Science Museum to the Mills Archive; a move of which he would have approved.



*Mildred unloading the collection on arrival.*

We now need to ask all Section members to consider giving us some financial assistance so we can provide public access to these vital records on windmill repair.

*“When Mildred raised the idea of an archive for mills 20 years ago, I was convinced and motivated by a comment from Luke Bonwick, who was frustrated as a young researcher by the inability to access Rex’s collection locked away and inaccessible.*

*“Two decades later we care for more than 250 collections, all freely available for consultation and research. As the specialist accredited archive, we have been able to reclaim this vital piece of our milling heritage.*

*“Now we need to work at making the collection fit for public use, which is not a simple or cheap process.”*

**Ron Cookson, Mills Archive Trust Chairman**

## **Rex and his contribution**

100 years ago, English windmills were rapidly falling into disuse and being demolished. By the late 1920s it was felt that some attempt should be made to record this vanishing aspect of the English countryside. Rex drove this movement and transformed it, building on and enhancing public concerns to preserve and protect our windmill heritage.

As SPAB technical adviser he visited numerous mills and gained entry to many with his camera, obtaining vital interior images at a time when little was recorded. He was also offered valuable material from mill owners. As a result his collection contains a great deal of unique, historical information.

His influence was considerable. In *The English Windmill* (1954), he identified Saxtead Green, Sibsey and Berney Arms mills as three of the most important of their type in the land. Of Saxtead Green he wrote “Repairs to be carried out will put the mill in first-class order as a landmark and... we have now preserved for the nation one of the finest post mills in the world”. Similarly in Lincolnshire “of all the six-sailed mills, Trader Mill, Sibsey was the finest” and again in the Suffolk Broads “The finest drainage mill of all in this area is High Mill, Berney Arms.”

*continued overleaf*

## *The Rex Wailes collection has arrived at the Mills Archive – continued*

---

A modest fraction of his work has been published in several books and more than 30 Newcomen Society papers. Much more remains to be discovered in the thousands of documents, drawings and images we have just received.



*Nathanael performing an initial inspection.*

Now we are at last in a position to celebrate Rex's legacy, we need your help. He died in 1986 and we do not want to wait another 33 years for his work and invaluable records to become available!

### **The importance of the Collection**

Shortly after Rex's death in 1986, Alan Stoyel rescued the collection, stored in a garden shed, from near destruction by damp and mould. He painstakingly dried it out and lodged it, as Rex desired, with the Science Museum. Since then very little has been done with it.

Rex's wide interests covered all types of mill. He published in-depth surveys of windmills in different English counties and detailed papers on mill machinery such as sack hoists and brake wheels. He reported on mills overseas, notably in the United States, Finland, Barbados and Sweden. His voluminous diary of a 1929 transatlantic voyage is being featured as a weekly blog on our website and contains many personal views, not just about mills:

*"They have a vile H.M.V. electric reproducer with remote loud speaker for dance music, and it's going as I write."*

The collection is large, detailed and authoritative, containing much unique material; it occupied several cubic metres at the Science Museum and will require a lot more space as we work through it.



*Part of the collection.*

For more than 30 years it has been inaccessible, a source of frustration to mill researchers and more pertinently those wishing to repair windmills or to understand specific details of their structure and condition in the period 1930-75.

The SPAB chose the right technical adviser; not only a good photographer, he ventured into many mills that were in a parlous state, recording them and suggesting priorities for attention. As a result his collection is a time capsule of photographs, glass plates, large technical drawings, notes and correspondence. It immortalises these fascinating

*"23rd July 2019 was a momentous day for the Mills Archive. The Science Museum had released, after long negotiations, probably the most important mill collection of the 20th century.*

*"The mills world should be pleased and excited by this development, although archivist Nathanael now has his work cut out to organise and list the contents of more than 40 boxes, together with all the many large drawings.*

*"Personally, having met Rex and talked about the mills on Anglesey, I was quite moved to see all his research notes, photographs, drawings etc arrive."*

**Mildred Cookson, SPAB Trustee, Mills Archive Trustee**

## *The Rex Wailes collection has arrived at the Mills Archive – continued*

---

structures, the development of the windmill protection and repair movement, the people involved and the landscape that they shaped.

This collection represents the life's work of the pioneer of mill repair. Rex took photos wherever he went, and documented mills and other monuments in meticulous detail in notebooks, correspondence and drawings. It will take a lot of work to sort, order, list and catalogue the many boxes of material, but the treasures brought to light in the process will make it all worthwhile.



*A typical jumble of mill pictures.*

---

One favourite so far is a large photograph of Went's Mill in Peldon, Essex. It is annotated on the rear: 'The Mill House after the Earthquake (Colchester Earthquake 1884). Given to Rex Wailes 12-3-56 by Mrs E Went.'. Her husband was the schoolboy with the black armband. His father had died shortly before and his eldest brother, next to him, was running the business.



*Went's Mill, Peldon.*

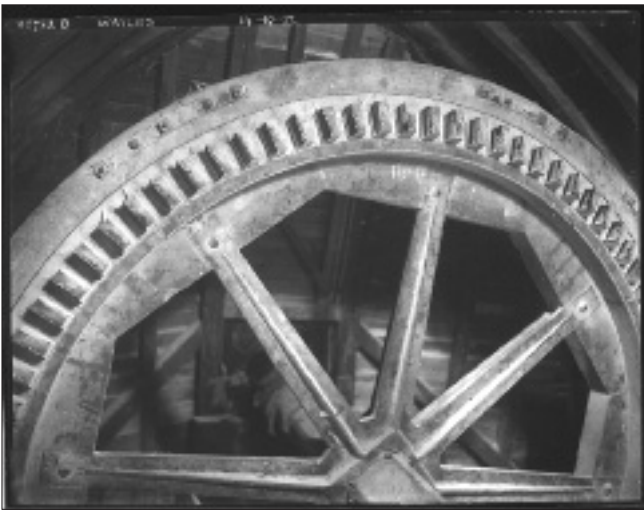
---

We are now in the early stages of preparing the work on this large, disorganised and very vulnerable collection. Once the records are organised and stabilised, we will start making available technical and photographic information of direct relevance to the restoration and interpretation work of windmills.

We hope members might wish to become associated with this project by making a financial contribution to the cost of conservation, cataloguing and making accessible the contents of Rex's collection.

### **The size and state of the collection**

Part of the collection is housed in more than 100 boxes with the larger drawings stored in bundles. Of more than 1,000 drawings, we have already identified over 200 that need conservation. We are applying to the National Manuscript Conservation Trust to fund professional conservation to rescue and repair the most egregious faults. Once the items are stable they will be digitised and catalogued.



*Brake wheel, Union Mill, Cranbrook 1927 glass plate negative.*

---



*Some of the many glass plate negatives.*

---

## *The Rex Wailes collection has arrived at the Mills Archive – continued*

---



*Mouldy waterwheels.*

The bulk of the collection will be properly organised and repackaged in archival packaging and box lists will be created to outline their content. Although access to the collection is not possible for some months during the initial processing, we will invite interested parties to come to the Archive in Reading to talk about the collection, see some examples and discuss views on priorities for more detailed treatment. We aim to process the collection and make much publicly available by January 2021. We think 35 years after Rex's death is long enough!



*A face mask can be useful when items are particularly encrusted in dirt and mould.*

*“The overall condition of the selected items is poor with extensive stability issues requiring conservation intervention to allow the material to be used. There are several overall recurring condition themes:*

*Mould residue, often severe, and softening to the substrate;*

*Extensive surface dirt and staining;*

*Storage folds, tears, losses and crumpling/crushing, particularly of paper substrates;*

*Loss of colour and surface characteristics on drafting cloth items in particular through water damage;*

*Media degradation and offsetting;*

*Pressure-sensitive tape and tape residue causing localised staining and embrittlement;*

*Metallic residues and substrate browning through contact with degradative components”.*

**Victoria Stephens, Conservator**

### **The need for support**

As we have no institutional support, our priorities and the speed at which we can work are influenced by the extent of grant support and donations from individuals. To do justice to Rex's material we need to raise about £25,000. For the first time this invaluable material on the structure and repair of windmills is in the hands of a nationally recognised repository that understands and values this information. More importantly it will mean we can work



*A few of the many rolled drawings, some in great need of conservation.*

## *The Rex Wailes collection has arrived at the Mills Archive – continued*

---



*Bourn Windmill on very fragile paper.*

---



*Large Lancaster Burne drawings in a poor state.*

---

to provide public access to vital details essential to enable proper understanding of specific mills.

We would be very grateful if you feel able to make a financial contribution. For details on how to contribute online go to [millsarchive.org/appeals/rex](https://millsarchive.org/appeals/rex).

Alternatively please send us a cheque payable to:

**The Mills Archive Trust** at:  
Watlington House,  
44 Watlington St,  
Reading RG1 4RJ

### **Just a few examples of how you can help**

**£2,400** would allow us to train and employ a young intern for a short period to accelerate public availability of less damaged items

**£1,600** would finance the preparation of vital appeal literature to spread the word about the importance of the collection and encourage more people to support the work

**£175** would fund permanent storage in archival conditions of a large container holding 20 files (the collection will require approximately 100 such containers)

**£50** could fund careful digitisation of three very large and vulnerable drawings ensuring that the information they contain is never lost (we need to do this for about 400 such items)

**£25** could provide an archival box for 15 large drawings (we need 200 of these)



## Folic Acid Consultation Update

I write this update just after completing the Traditional Cornmillers Guild submission to the government's Folic Acid Consultation which closed on the 9th September 2019. Jim Bailey has completed a submission on behalf of the Mills Section. I am pleased to say the joint campaign by the Mills Section and Traditional Cornmillers Guild has done a great deal to raise awareness of the potential issues associated with mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid.

Through our campaign and the work of millers, bakers and members of the public, we managed to get almost 4,000 signatures to our petition, many submissions to the consultation were completed and a significant number of MPs were contacted. The responses from MPs have been supportive and one MP has offered to facilitate a meeting for the Mills Section and Guild with Nadine Dorries MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. We have been in contact with the DEFRA team who are leading the consultation and hope to be arranging meetings with them in October to share further evidence with them, building on that submitted to the Consultation.

Clearly the current political turmoil will be impacting the progress of the consultation and any decisions which follow.

We will keep the Section website updated with new information as it arises and provide a further update in the next edition of Mill News.

Jonathan Cook

## Mills Section Event Calendar

### 2020

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Tues 28th January | <b>Conference: <i>Managing Health &amp; Safety Risks in Traditional Mills</i></b><br>Heckington Windmill, Lincolnshire<br>(see page 17 for further details) |
| Sat 14th March    | <b>Event: <i>Mills Section Spring Meeting</i></b><br>The Gallery, Cowcross Street, London E1<br>(save the date! Details in the January edition)             |
| Thur 24th April   | <b>One-day course: <i>Maintenance Matters</i></b><br>Upminster Windmill, Upminster RM14<br>(see page 20 for further details)                                |

For further details and online booking, please visit [www.spabmills.org.uk](http://www.spabmills.org.uk) and click on 'Courses and events'.

To contact us, please email [millsinfo@spab.org.uk](mailto:millsinfo@spab.org.uk) or telephone 020 7456 0909 (Tuesday to Thursday).

# Casework Report

*Sophie Martin*

Casework – reviewing and responding to planning applications – is a particularly important part of the work of the SPAB Mills Section and is fundamentally linked to the Section’s aims to preserve the nation’s milling heritage.

As one of the six National Amenity Societies that must be notified by local planning authorities of applications that involve any demolition of a listed building, the SPAB has the opportunity to comment on relevant proposals; planning cases that affect listed windmills and watermills are directed to the Mills Section of the SPAB.

Dealing with planning applications is usually very time consuming as large numbers of detailed reports, plans, photographs and historical information must first be reviewed; further enquiries may need to be made and possibly a site visit undertaken before a conclusion can be reached on the probable type and level of impact that the proposals will have on the mill. They may potentially have a very detrimental impact on a mill – for example by impeding its ability to function, either now or in the future; by damaging the fabric or integrity of the building; or by substantially altering the setting of the mill. Alternatively, the likely effect of the plans may be slight or even positive, such as when insensitive former alterations are reversed or a mill is rescued from dereliction.

Responding effectively to casework therefore requires also familiarity with current planning policy or guidance so that arguments are framed in relation to specific points of law, as well as considerable technical knowledge. The Section has been very fortunate over the years to have been able to tap into the acquired wisdom of our expert casework volunteers across the country who specialise in a range of subjects from water rights to wind loss analysis, and from planning law to the conservation of historic buildings. As a result of submissions from the Mills Section, countless harmful planning proposals have been refused, revised or withdrawn.

With the drive for much-needed new housing and the relaxation of some planning laws, however, pressures on our historic mills and the land around them continues to increase. We can’t always be sure of hearing about applications that would affect a listed mill, so we’d like to thank those of you who have kindly drawn some of them to our attention.

## **Bere Mill**

Members may be aware that the watermill, mill house and west barn of Bere Mill in Whitchurch, Hampshire were very badly damaged as the result of a devastating fire in early 2018.

The property was over 300 years old, its construction commemorated in a panel that read ‘this House and Mill Built by Jane the Widow of The Deane Esq in 1710’.

During its working life, Bere Mill was first a paper mill (it is the site where Henri Portal, a Huguenot refugee, first made water-marked paper in 1710; the mill subsequently supplied paper for Bank of England banknotes) and later a corn mill, both powered by waterwheels. In about 1905 the waterwheels and associated machinery were removed and replaced by an electric turbine, and the watercourse under the mill, fed by the River Test, was adapted to power the new machinery.



*View of Bere Mill from an old photograph.  
Picture – Mildred Cookson collection.*

The mill, attached to the mill house, was built largely of weatherboard and also brick with flint panels; in 1966 the property was listed Grade II. Some features and fittings connected with both papermaking and corn-milling survived until recently, including the corn bins on the top floor of the mill building and the hoppers, leather funnels, hoists and pulleys which formed the system for delivering the corn to the mill wheels, while the west barn still preserved elements of the drying system which formed part of the paper-making process. With the exception of a 1904 12KW Gilkes turbine and a cast-iron wheel that is now cracked in four places, the fittings and features, together with most of the structure of the mill building itself, were all lost in the fire.



*Remains of the machinery at Bere Mill.  
Picture – © Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.*

## Casework Report – continued

A careful rebuild of the mill house has been under way over the last year, and an application in relation to the mill and barn was made this spring. We liaised with the conservation officer at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council about the items of machinery that were to be removed as “damaged beyond repair and with little heritage significance” and requested that the machinery should be recorded prior to any works to the mill begin. We were pleased to learn that the owner is liaising with Hampshire Mills Group, and that the application was granted on condition that “All surviving mill machinery present on site shall be recorded...As a minimum, the record shall include detailed labelled photographs of the machinery, brief descriptions, and annotated plans/elevations to show the locations of the machinery within the building, so far as is possible. This shall apply to all machinery, both retained and that to be removed.”

### Fernicombe Windmill

In Devon, plans were submitted for the proposed redevelopment of now-derelict Fernicombe Windmill in Paignton, a landmark feature and one of few surviving mill towers remaining in Devon. The application proposed conversion and change of use of the former windmill to a single residential unit, construction of a new roof structure and the addition of a linked two-storey extension. This was a re-submission, slightly revised, of an application approved in 2015.

The four-storey windmill is thought to date from the late 18th century and was built largely of local red sandstone. An illustration of 1833 shows the mill complete, however less than 30 years later it had fallen into disrepair and was shown as disused on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map. During the Second World War it served as an observation post. In 1951 the mill was listed Grade II, and described as “disused and partly ruinous... Roofless. Floors missing.”

The Mills Section wrote to Torbay Council acknowledging that, while we always prefer to see these historic towers preserved without damaging alteration, we accept that in



*Fernicombe Windmill in 2007.  
Picture – David Luther Thomas.*

some cases conversion to a dwelling is possibly a viable alternative to ensure their long-term preservation.

In this instance, however, the proposed two-storey extension to the building was considered to be unnecessarily large, and we also opposed the proposed 360-degree viewing roof which would give the tower an appearance of a lighthouse rather than a windmill. We suggested that a roof based on the traditional form of windmill cap (swept gable) found in the West Country would be preferable, giving an authentic appearance which would not compromise the accommodation space within the mill, and provided an alternative, simpler conversion in the region as an example.

We also touched on other points of planning policy relating to the setting of the designated heritage asset, contribution to the local character (particularly in relation to the cap) and the issue of public benefit.

Recognising that the Council might be minded to grant consent to this application (having already approved the principle of conversion in 2015), we recommended that the mill should be fully recorded prior to redevelopment. At the time of writing, revised plans had just been submitted by the applicant.

### Waterloo Mill

A local resident alerted the Mills Section to the proposed conversion of Grade II listed Waterloo Mill and its associated buildings near Leominster in Herefordshire, to six units for holiday accommodation.

The site was listed in 2013 as an important watermill with much of its working machinery in place, even though it has not worked as a cornmill since the early 20th century when it was converted into a cider mill. It is described in its Listing as:

*“A disused, water-powered corn mill, built in 1861, replacing an earlier mill which stood to the south-west, and a second mill building, possibly a storehouse, and wheelhouse dating from between 1861 and 1877.”*

It was designated on the grounds of:

*“Historic interest (as a good example of a rural, water-powered, corn mill which retains a significant proportion of historic fabric); Intactness (it retains a significant proportion of mill machinery including a waterwheel, layshaft gearing system, Hurst frame and three sets of millstones which aid understanding of the operation of a water-powered corn mill); and Functional interest (the function of the mill remains evident in the surviving historic fabric of the building and the intact machinery).”*

The application proposes retaining some of the mill machinery behind glass screens and removing other



## Casework Report – continued

features in a way that is irreversible, rendering it near-impossible to ever see the mill brought back into use.



*Waterloo Mill, Herefordshire.  
Picture – Mildred Cookson.*

We wrote to the Council to express our strong objection to the application which does not protect and conserve the historic building and is not justified on the grounds of public benefit. The mill was explicitly listed on the grounds of the rare survival of almost all its machinery, and we therefore suggested that a preferable approach would be to allow conversion of the rest of the complex to holiday accommodation and use the income generated to conserve the mill (which could be opened as a static display); this would allow for it potentially to be returned to a functioning mill by a future owner. A decision is due in the autumn.

### Wakes Colne Mill

Another submission by the Mills Section was recently made regarding Grade II listed Wakes Colne Mill on the River Colne, near Colchester in Essex, where plans were submitted to convert the coach house into a residential dwelling, and to replace former industrial buildings with three new homes.

Although itself now converted to residential accommodation, the mill retains some of its original workings. The entry for the mill in the Historic Environment Record for Colchester states that:

*“The mill dates from c.1850 (the earliest date for the Colchester pattern tie plates) and exemplifies the ingenuity which flowered as part of the Great Exhibition of 1851. Christopher Farrow worked both a corn and oil mill at Wakes Colne in 1848. By 1853 he was succeeded by George Clark Baker and in 1878 by J. Green (who also managed Ford Street mill). In about 1891 Robert Brooks took over as manager of the mill for E.M. Johnson. William Ashby bought the mill from Brooks, followed by his sons Arthur and Harry Ashby, who ran the mill, producing flour by waterpower up until about 1945. After the war they reverted to electric grinders due to*

*the decreasing flour trade but latterly concentrated on the coal merchant side of the family business.*

*Following a visit by Benham during the early 1970s Wakes Colne Mill is described as a three-storey brick and slated corn mill flanked on one side by a disused oil mill and the other by the mill house. The oil mill retains the pit wheel wallower and instead of a spur wheel and stone nuts the vertical shaft drove a single overhead shaft. As the oil trade had almost certainly finished by 1894-1900, the edge runner stones and kettle were removed and latterly (c.1960) so was the iron waterwheel. The corn mill latterly grinding by electricity, retains an iron waterwheel (20 x 10 ft) with toothed rim engaging a 3ft pinion wheel. This set up was not uncommon generally in the mid C19 but was unusual in rural Essex. Its repair using a pattern held by Hunts (Atlas Works) of Earls Colne suggests they may have originally engineered the wheel. The pinion drove horizontal shafting carrying 5 pit wheels, each engaging overhead pinions and working one pair of stones, in a layout known as a ‘counterdrive’. Two pairs of the five stones with pit wheels, have been removed but three examples with iron gears, wood cogging remain. There is a centrifugal governor beside each pit wheel but only two tenter the three remaining stones, the third working a speed indicator. The stones were fed by a system known*



*Wakes Colne watermill.  
Picture – Mills Archive Trust, Arthur Lowe collection.*

## Casework Report – continued

as Fairburns ‘silent feed’ which was common in larger mills but not so in smaller country mills. This also incorporated a conveyor along the line of stones which took the meal to an elevator and up to a bolter (Benham, 1976).

Few equivalent examples of a purpose-built highly innovative and industrialised watermill were built or survive in Essex and as such Wakes Colne Mill survives as one of the most important C19 watermills in the county.”

Although no demolition works to the mill itself are proposed and the scheme has the benefit of bringing the

coach house back into use and removing some modern additions that detract from it, the Mills Section was disappointed that no requirement to repair the two-storey brick office or the house on the north-east corner of the mill was included in the proposals. We also had concerns that the housing development would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the listed Mill and asked that further consideration be given to this element of the proposal.

The planning application was approved, with some conditions imposed to protect the special character and architectural interest and integrity of the building.

If you have relevant expertise to offer, and would be willing and able to help with casework, please don't hesitate to contact the Mills Section – we'd love to hear from you.

### Boost your support for Mills

We are very grateful to all our dedicated and enthusiastic supporters whose membership subscriptions and donations help us so much in our work. We would not have achieved so much over the years without you! If you're interested in ways to boost your support to the Section without it necessarily costing you a penny more, here are a few suggestions.

#### Use EasyFundraising.org

Help to raise funds for the Mills Section with every purchase you make online, at no extra cost to you. By signing up to the Easyfundraising scheme and nominating the Mills Section as your charity, every time you make a purchase through the scheme a small percentage of the total amount spent is donated to us. For more information visit <https://new.easyfundraising.org.uk>

#### Sign up to Gift Aid

Signing up to Gift Aid makes your donations go further, and is enormously valuable to us. If you're a UK taxpayer, Gift Aid increases the value of your subscription and any other donations to us by 25%, because we can reclaim the basic rate of tax on your gift – at no extra cost to you. Contact us to find out more. There is no need to make an annual declaration, you need sign up only once.

#### Leave a Legacy

Remembering the Section in your Will can be a way of providing a far greater level of support to the protection of our milling heritage than you may be able to do during your lifetime. For a small but influential organisation like ours, legacies and bequests make a real difference. Leaving us a legacy can also be an easy and effective way of reducing the inheritance tax due on your estate. Whatever the size of your gift, we promise to put it to good use. If you would like to know more, please contact Kate Streeter (tel: 020 7377 1644, email [development@spab.org.uk](mailto:development@spab.org.uk)) or visit [www.spab.org.uk/get-involved/support-mills/mills-legacies](http://www.spab.org.uk/get-involved/support-mills/mills-legacies).

#### Pay by Direct Debit

Your subscription is important to us, and a good way to help it stretch further is to set up payment by Direct Debit. This avoids the administrative costs to us of printing and mailing letters, and of processing your payment by hand if you pay by cheque or card. You may cancel the arrangement at any time. For more information please contact [membership@spab.org.uk](mailto:membership@spab.org.uk)

#### Make a Donation

We value each and every donation towards our work, whether it's a one-off gesture or a monthly standing order, and we always appreciate being able to use a donation wherever we feel the need is greatest. If making a bank transfer, please let us know so that we can ensure it reaches us safely.

If you would like to know more about any of the above, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us ([millsinfo@spab.org.uk](mailto:millsinfo@spab.org.uk) or 020 7456 0909). We look forward to hearing from you.



## Managing Health & Safety Risks in Traditional Mills

Heckington Windmill, Lincolnshire

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020

9.30am Registration for 10.00am Start

Cost: £50.00 per participant including lunch and refreshments

**This conference is designed for millwrights, mill owners, mill managers and those responsible for managing health, safety and risk at mills. It will help you better understand your obligations from a health and safety perspective and how to better manage those risks while enabling the repair, maintenance, operation and opening of your mill to the public.**

Looked at from the perspective of Health and Safety legislation and practice, traditional mills are complex, challenging pieces of industrial machinery fraught with potential risk. Many of the major areas of risks are present – working in confined spaces, working at height, moving machinery (which is often difficult to guard), ladders, slips/trips and falls and, to add to the mix – the management of visitors and customers.

Over the last few years a number of significant incidents have taken place in mills in both in Europe and the UK. At the same time mill owners, in particular public bodies, are having to review their procedures and processes around managing risk at their mills, in some cases taking decisions that potentially compromise their ability to fully maintain their mills; making the work of millwrights even more challenging.

Our speakers (to be announced) both from the UK and Europe will share their experiences of assessing and managing risk in their mills to help you develop policy and practice at your own mills. There will also be the opportunity through a Q&A session to discuss your specific issues and gain feedback from fellow participants, many of whom will be tackling similar issues to your own.

To register your interest, please contact [mills\\_info@spab.org.uk](mailto:mills_info@spab.org.uk), telephone 020 7456 0909. Speakers will be announced shortly through the Mills Section website.

For more information, please contact Luke Bonwick or Jonathan Cook via [info@fostersmill.co.uk](mailto:info@fostersmill.co.uk) or [luke@bonwick.co.uk](mailto:luke@bonwick.co.uk)

We are grateful to the Heckington Windmill Trust for hosting and supporting the conference.

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. Company No. 5743962. Charity No. 111 3753. Scottish Charity No. SC 039244.

# Mill Repair Fund

*Sophie Martin*

One of the ways that the Mills Section helps to protect and preserve mills is through the giving of grants from our Mill Repair Fund, which was established years ago and is augmented by contributions from Mills Section members.

The grants offered each year vary and are influenced by the level of donations we receive from our supporters and also the number of applications we receive; sadly, there is never enough to go around. This year our budget has unfortunately not been able to stretch to meet all the applications that we have received, however serious a mill's need for help.

We very much hope to avoid this situation again next year. Please consider giving to the Fund if you are able, whether as a one-off contribution or a monthly donation – even relatively modest amounts can make a difference in helping to preserve our fragile milling heritage.

## Wrickton Watermill

One application that we were able to support was submitted in respect of Wrickton Watermill in Shropshire. The present mill building dates from the 18th century and has 19th-century additions and machinery. It has an external overshot waterwheel driving three pairs of millstones which have been restored to working order over a number of years. The wheelshaft now needs to be replaced and we were approached for help with purchasing the timber for the new oak shaft, which will be over 3m/11ft long. It is hoped that the new shaft will be in place and turning by next May.



*The waterwheel at Wrickton Mill.  
Picture – Mildred Cookson.*

## Eskdale Watermill

We were delighted to hear of the formal reopening in July of 18th-century Eskdale Watermill, Cumbria following a substantial programme of restoration that included works to the waterwheels, launder and internal machinery. The mill, to which we able to offer a grant a couple of years ago, is listed Grade II\* and is the last remaining water-powered corn mill working in the Lake District National Park.



*The machinery at Eskdale Mill.  
Picture – Stuart Hobbs.*



*The lower waterwheel at Eskdale Mill.  
Picture – Stuart Hobbs.*

## Marlston Mill

An application was also received in relation to Marlston Mill, a watermill on the River Pang in Berkshire. The mill was built in 1885 with an undershot wheel in cast iron; the

## Mill Repair Fund - continued

waterwheel and machinery are now in need of restoration. We have been able to offer a grant towards replacement parts.

### Wicken Windmill

Last year we offered a grant to Grade II\* listed Wicken Windmill, Cambridgeshire which was preparing to undergo a programme of repairs and repainting; as a condition of our offer, we requested feedback on the performance of the paint used for the cap and sails. These works have now been completed and we plan to share the findings of the paint report from Wicken as part of a larger article to be published in the next issue of Mill News.



*Wicken Windmill photographed from a hydraulic lifting platform in June 2019 while painting and other maintenance work was being carried out on the sails, cap and fantail.*

*Picture – Dave Pearce.*

### Billingsford Windmill

In Norfolk, works to Billingsford Windmill have been progressing well over the summer and we are pleased to see that the temporary cap has now been replaced with a superb new cap. It is planned to reinstate the fantail next, followed by the stocks and sails.

As ever, our sincere thanks go out to those of you who have so generously given to the Fund; each individual contribution has helped to secure the future – or at least keep at bay the ravages of the past – of the mills featured in these pages over the past year.



*Marlston Mill.*

*Picture – Mills Archive Trust, Lowe Collection.*



*Placing the temporary cap on Billingsford Windmill and the mill with the cap back in place.*

*Picture – Norfolk County Council.*



To find out more about giving to the Fund or applying for a grant, visit our webpage

[www.spab.org.uk/mills/mill-repair-fund](http://www.spab.org.uk/mills/mill-repair-fund)

or get in touch by email ([millsinfo@spab.org.uk](mailto:millsinfo@spab.org.uk)),  
telephone (020 7456 0909, Tuesday to Thursday) or  
post (SPAB Mills Section, 37 Spital Square, London E1 6DY).

We look forward to hearing from you.



# Maintenance Matters

Friday 24th April 2020

## Upminster Windmill

A one-day course for those responsible for caring for traditional windmills and watermills

Keeping a mill in good order will, in the long run, save money on repairs. Our popular short course offers the chance to spend a valuable day in the company of some of the UK's leading mill experts, gaining insight into how to maintain your mill using the correct methods and materials. All the speakers have many years of experience in either repairing, recording or milling in a mill, and delegates will be encouraged to discuss issues relating to their own mill, with speakers offering tailored advice.

The course will be held at Upminster Windmill, which is undergoing an extensive programme of repairs and is not currently open to the public. This fascinating venue will provide the opportunity to see many parts and aspects of a mill that are not usually visible.

You will learn about:

- Maintaining your mill in line with the Mill Section's philosophy of repair
- Recording work before and after a repair
- How to plan a project and where grants can be obtained
- Problems and solutions from an owner's perspective
- Maintenance techniques for working and non-working mills

**Price:** £130 pp including lunch and refreshments  
(£110 pp if booked by 28th February)

**When:** Friday 24th April 2020  
9.45am to 4.45pm

**Location:** Upminster Windmill, The Mill Field, St. Marys Lane, Upminster RM14 2QL

**Book online:** at [www.spab.org.uk/whats-on/courses/maintenance-matters](http://www.spab.org.uk/whats-on/courses/maintenance-matters) or visit [www.spabmills.org.uk](http://www.spabmills.org.uk) and click on Courses and events.

For enquiries please email [millsinfo@spab.org.uk](mailto:millsinfo@spab.org.uk) or call 020 7456 0909.



The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. Company No. 5743962. Charity No. 111 3753. Scottish Charity No. SC 039244.

# Millwright Training Opportunity

Millwrighting has been identified by the Heritage Crafts Association as a “critically endangered skill” (HCA Radcliffe Red List 2019), and Mills Section members can be in no doubt about the urgent need both to train new millwrights and to encourage and equip experienced craftspeople to work on mills.



In a joint initiative with the SPAB, the Mills Section is inviting applications to the William Morris Craft Fellowship scheme from a craftsman or craftswoman in any relevant trade who has an interest in mills and in using and extending their skills to repair and maintain them.

The SPAB's William Morris Craft Fellowship was founded in 1987 and is a unique annual scheme designed to broaden the skills and experience of craftspeople from any trade who work in the repair of historic buildings. The programme gives Fellows the chance to travel countrywide together and learn on site from specialist craftspeople, architects and contractors working in building conservation.

The programme is full time and intensive and involves visits to working sites, guided by experts – there are no formal lectures or submissions. Fellows experience traditional materials, skills and repair techniques in workshops and on site through arranged visits to structures of every age, size and style. The millwrighting Fellow will also undertake additional arranged periods of work with millwrights and associated trades at a range of different windmills and watermills in order to understand the variety of mill designs and the challenges associated with each individual mill.



This is not a complete millwright training programme or apprenticeship, but a way for an experienced craftsperson to acquire additional knowledge and specific skills, enabling them to work on mills with confidence.

The selected Fellow will follow the Fellowship programme and will be expected to spend the latter part exploring millwrighting and related skills in more depth. Additionally, they will also be offered mill-based work placements in between blocks, providing a nine-month full-time programme of learning. A bursary for this Fellowship place will be available that reflects this additional commitment. There is no course fee.

To find out more, see the notes for candidates in ‘How to apply for the Fellowship’ at [www.spab.org.uk/learning/fellowship](http://www.spab.org.uk/learning/fellowship).

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your application, please get in touch with Pip Soodeen ([philippa.soodeen@spab.org.uk](mailto:philippa.soodeen@spab.org.uk)).



**The closing date for applications is  
1st December 2019.**

# Letters to the Editor

---

Dear Mildred,

## Water-powered grain mills in the Scottish Highlands and Islands

The statement that in about 1600 the 50 or so mills in Orkney were 'probably of the vertical-wheeled type' (Mill News 160, p 7) has to be questioned.

Firstly, the archaeological footprint for this type of mill is missing. They would have been substantial 2-storey stone buildings with extensive waterworks and a deep wheelpit. If there was evidence for them John Hume would have found it in his comprehensive IA survey of 1973-76: 'The Industrial Archaeology of Scotland' vol 2 The Highlands and Islands 1977.

Secondly, the rural economy in these regions was essentially subsistence-based in 1600, and was to remain so until the late 18th century. The vertical-wheeled mill can be linked with cereal-based and market-orientated economies. Such conditions did not exist in the Highlands and Islands, and the low cost, easy to maintain horizontal-wheeled mill would have been adequate in the circumstances.

The first archaeological and archival evidence for the construction of vertical-wheeled mills on any scale can be associated with the beginning of an Agricultural Revolution in the the Highlands and Islands in the early years of the 19th century (Mill news 159, p 29). Orkney was at the forefront of this. However, the old technology may not have been replaced as rapidly as expected as the restored horizontal-wheeled mill at Dounby, Mainland Orkney, was built new in about 1823.

I hope that the above is helpful.

Kind regards, Gavin Bowie

---

Dear Mildred

I thought your readers might like to see this windmill in France. It is in a village in the south called Grimaud, near St. Tropez.

The only information I could gather was on the enclosed description panel. The mill can be found next to a castle ruin, which is open to visit for free and includes some good views. The mill having been a ruin for some time looks of very ancient construction. I have not been able to find the other sites yet but I know one of the watermills is very heavily house converted.

Regards, Colin A Smith



**Saint-Roch windmill**  
This windmill dates back to the 16th century. It is one of the town's 4 windmills. But there were many other mills which also produced flour - watermills. There were 9 in the area. In the 1950s, the rest, the blades and the mechanics were restored.  
In front of the edifice there is a fleecing area. In this area, farmers beat on sheafs of wheat. Sometimes, for increased efficiency, they dugged a ricks in floor. Once the dust and straw had been cleared away, the grains were taken to the mill to be crushed by two rollers. The miller put rolls on the blades of the mill.  
These mills stopped operating at the beginning of the 20th century.



# Letters to the Editor

---

I was a member of the SPAB Mills Section for many years and wonder if you might throw some light on the following.

I wonder if you might be able to identify the supposedly Suffolk windmill that provided the inspiration for this model?

A colleague of mine who was a very talented model maker had an exceptional eye for accuracy and detail. Many years ago this represented his first 'test/apprentice' piece to assess his talent.

Unfortunately he recently died and the windmill has now passed into my care. Unfortunately I never learnt its name and/or location.

The challenge thrown down to my colleague at the time as a young man was in the form of a short length of garden cane from which he could create anything of his own choice. He chose to cut it as follows in order to make the scale model windmill!

**Made entirely from a 6" x 3/4" length of garden bamboo cane! It comprises 985 pieces.**

Any leads would be much appreciated.

Kind regards & thanks, John Sanders, Somerset



[I think that this is probably a model of Holton. Any other suggestions? [Mildred](#)]

# TIMS Symposium 2019

Mildred

*This year the 15th TIMS symposium took place in Berlin with many varied papers being presented on the theme “Mills in history and archaeology”.*

*Almost 100 people attended with 34 countries being represented. It was a good time to catch up with the many friends we had all made over the years.*

I cannot possibly do the Symposium justice in this short write-up, but I have tried to give you a flavour of the type of mills seen and encourage you to join TIMS. There will be a fuller write-up in the TIMS Journal, *International Molinology*, which TIMS members will get.

On the first day we had an ‘open’ meeting held in a large complex, Urania, where the day was open for the general public. There were also several papers read. It did seem to attract a new audience. There were also bookstalls and small exhibitions.

The rest of the conference week was held at the Park Hotel. As usual, during the week visits were arranged to some mills, including the huge mill at Postdam, and also a tour of Berlin, stopping at various interesting points along the route. Our meal vouchers were in the form of old German currency called Notgeld, printed after the end of the first World War in 1922 as emergency money.



*Above and below – inside the mine at Rammelsberg.*



*Meal voucher in the form of a Notgeld note.*

There were also the usual pre- and post-symposium tours arranged, which consisted of a smaller group of around 30 members. These are some of the mills visited on the post tour of Niedersachsen/Braunschweig. In all we visited 18 mills sites.

The tour included some wonderful unusual mills. One incredible visit was to an underground mine with a huge waterwheel which could turn in either direction. The mine at Rammelsberg is a UNESCO World Heritage site. It closed in 1988 after 1,000 years of continuous use and was a critical part of the expansion of Germany and the war efforts.



At first, it was kings and emperors in the 10th century who extracted silver to create symbols of their wealth. In the early part of the millennium, it was things like lead, zinc and copper that were used to help build an empire. It also mined lead as well as gold, silver and copper.



*Millwrighting complex at Bad Lauterberg (exterior and the roller floor showing the dangerous state of the wooden floor).*

---

Another visit was to a millwrighting complex at Bad Lauterberg in Harz, but sadly looking likely not to survive much longer. Funding has been put into the complex by the owner, but much more money is needed and does not seem to be forthcoming. There were millwright workshops, a forge, where their own roller mills were manufactured. The large mill on the site was in a bad way, the floors were particularly dangerous, with some roller mills having fallen through to the floor below. It was a treasure trove of machines of every kind, just lying around on the various floors. The forge and pattern workshops were vast and nearly all the local people worked there. It will be a great loss to the milling heritage of Germany if this site is lost.

All the post mills we visited had double quarter bars, many of these were shingle-covered to help keep out the weather. Usually they had two common sails and two patent sails. Most were open trestle although we did see two with roundhouses.



*Dudensen mill showing shingle-covered quarterbars.*

---



*Bockwindmühle, Marzahn.*

---



*Post mill with roundhouse at Abbenrode.*

---



*Forge for making spades.*

We also visited water-powered forges that were working for us, with one of these for making spades. The whole place was very atmospheric as the images show.

Many mills had roller-mill plants in them, with some interesting old types. Many MIAG roller mills which were bought out by Buhler in 1982.

The tour would not be complete without a 'mill cat', this one watched over the tower mill at Wichtringhausen, built in 1826, with one pair of stones and three roller mills. The tower mill at Wendhausen was allegedly built by British millwrights from Leeds and looking at the mill it did look very much like a copy of Smeaton's Oil Mill in Leeds, having five sails, similar cap and tower.



*Mill cat at Wichtringhausen.*



An open-air museum we visited at Gifhorn had full-size mills from around the world, Greece, Spain, France, a boat mill, Tyrolean water mills with horizontal wheels and many more. On the site was also a large exhibition hall with over 50 accurate (some working) models from around the world.



*The tower mill at Wichtringhausen (top) and roller floor.*

## *TIMS Symposium 2019 – continued*

---



*Gearing inside the boat mill at the open-air museum.*

As usual all of the mill owners made us very welcome and the weather was perfect, except for one afternoon when we had a thunderstorm on our return walk to the coach from lunch.

Our last dinner in Berlin was in a traditional German inn, with singing and lots of beer being drunk.

A good time was had by all and many thanks must go to the organisers of these symposiums, which is no easy task.

Gerald Bost, who organised this Symposium, had everything under control for the whole of the three weeks. He did magnificently with everything running smoothly.

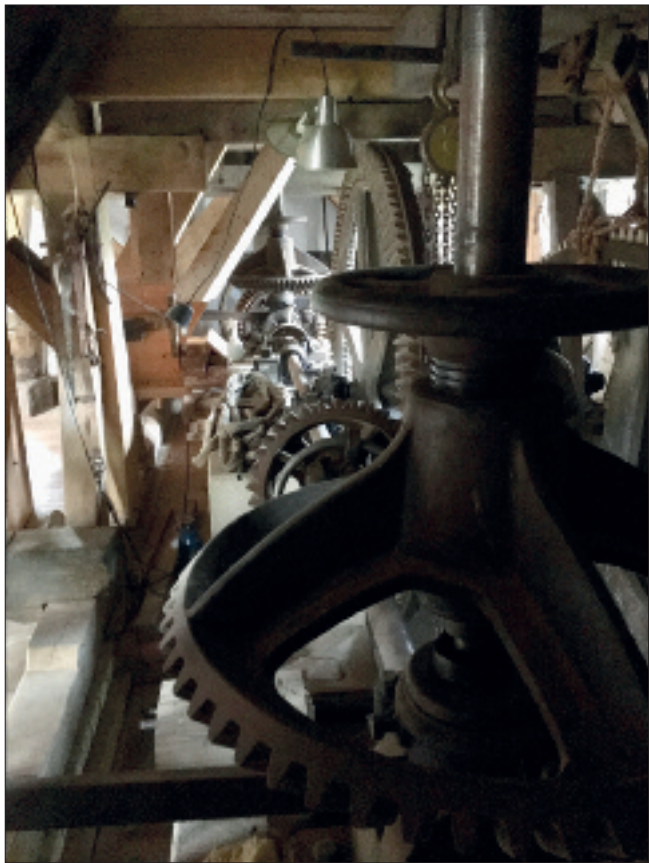
The next Symposium will be in Poland in four years' time, something not to be missed.



*Nearly all the millstones seen were sickle dressed.*



*Vesbeck Watermill (above) and lay shaft gearing (below).*



# Technical Information Project

Guy Blythman

*The next stage of the Technical Information Project has been uploaded to the Mills Archive's online catalogue. The project aims to create in one place a complete technical record of wind- and watermills past and present in the British Isles (where information is known). It can be viewed under "Features and Articles".*

*It consists of a series of technical descriptions of mills (so far entirely windmills), some from already published sources and some from surveys carried out by myself and other molinologists over the past few decades. It is gradually being added to with some mills not yet included. The amount of detail varies depending on the information available. The descriptions complement the photographs which have already been uploaded to the catalogue – two examples are below.*

*Comments are invited and people should feel free to point out any errors/omissions.*

## Stickford

Tower mill, standing today

TF346589

One of the smaller type of Lincolnshire tower mill, this specimen provides a useful contrast to the giants at Alford, Boston, Heckington, Waltham and Sibsey. The tarred red brick tower has three storeys, the bin and dust floors and the ground and spout floors being combined. There is a datestone on the outside of the tower with the inscription "R Kyme 1820", now partly illegible. The usual Lincolnshire ogee cap, here rather bulbous with a tall finial, was fitted. Along with four single-sided patent sails, canvas-shuttered, and an eight-bladed fantail, the drive to the curb from which passed through the storm door in the rear of the cap. The mill worked until 1952, latterly in a very bad state of repair and only operable when the wind was blowing from a certain direction because the fantail was out of action. The latter's gearing along with other assorted items is currently stored on the ground floor.

Unfortunately in the late 1960s the cap roof was dismantled and the windshaft removed and taken to Morcott windmill in Rutland, which was being restored as a house conversion. It got broken in transit and its current whereabouts are unknown. Stickford Mill then stood derelict until a few years ago when work was carried out to conserve it, new doors and windows being installed and a conical aluminium roof constructed over the original cap frame. Much debris remains inside and the floors are unsafe in places, making a full exploration of the interior difficult, but although plenty of work is still to be done the small size and compactness of the mill makes it a good candidate for restoration.

Nearby, identified by the chimney from its oven, stands the small bakery which was associated with the mill. An engine worked machinery within a separate building<sup>1</sup> and also apparently that of the windmill when required, an old photograph showing the drive pulley on the wall of the tower<sup>2</sup>.

The brakewheel was a wood clasp-arm with iron cog ring bolted on and a wooden brake.

Five truck wheels can be made out, one on a projecting timber at the head, two near the front ends of the sheers and two further back where the sprattle beam meets them. At least one of the wheels is solid. It appears that as elsewhere in this part of Lincolnshire the wheels are interconnected by lateral and longitudinal iron rods. The curb is dead.

## Dust/Bin Floor

During the mill's life this was only a part floor, according to Ronald Hawksley. There are windows on the east and west sides. The floor is timber-lined to about half-height and above that its partly plastered; some remains of this plastering may still be seen. The bins have gone. The upright shaft is tapered and for about half its height on this floor is encased within a conical wooden sheath.

The wallower remains but is coming adrift from its mounting on the upright shaft. It is an iron mortice affair with eight arms radiating from a square central boss and a segmented wood friction ring bolted on to drive the sack hoist. The latter is now missing, though it is possibly among the heap of bric-a-brac on the ground floor; a wooden framework which may have acted as support for it indicates its former position.



*External view of the mill as conserved, with temporary cap.*

# Technical Information Project – continued

## Stone Floor

Shelves were provided here for storing sacks on, according to Rex Wailes. There are two windows to the north-east and south-west.

Two pairs of stones, one French and one grey, are overdriven from an eight-armed all-iron great spur wheel through iron mortice stone nuts on long quants. The south-eastern pair retains its tun and other furniture, the western does not. On the north-east side a third iron mortice nut, its cogs now missing, drove a dresser on the ground floor via an iron secondary upright shaft. The latter is in two sections and the main one with the nut lies on this floor having been removed at the coupling.



*The great spur wheel.*

## Ground/Spout Floor

There are doors on the north-west and south-east sides and a single window on the west. A wooden column supported the bridge tree of the upright shaft with the spout from the south-eastern stones abutting against it.

The bridgetrees are of iron and the usual Lincolnshire dog-leg type. The single governor, located on the west side of the floor, is driven by a belt, still in place, from a large four-armed pulley on the foot of the upright shaft. Usual practice was for the belt to be from a small flange on the shaft, with the governor in close proximity to it or mounted on its own auxiliary upright shaft further away.



*The machine drive.*

The main steelyard goes to the post supporting the bridge tree, in which it pivoted on a small circular hinge, with a link near the governor end from where the subsidiary steelyards ran in straight lines to links on the north-western and south-eastern bridge trees. Rods and screws for hand tentering are provided.

On the eastern side the auxiliary upright shaft terminates in a four-armed iron mortice bevel gear from which a dresser, now missing, was driven<sup>3</sup>. Above it on the shaft is a smaller diameter, all-iron bevel gear driving an unidentified apparatus suspended from the ceiling to the right. Looking down on it from the stone floor, this appears to have beaters like a mixer or stirring device. A metal spout from it on the ground floor is badly rusted. The dresser was probably also ceiling-mounted. The final drives to these machines are no longer in situ but may be among the assortment of miscellaneous items stored on the ground floor. The auxiliary upright shaft is footed in an iron girder off the eastern of the two main beams in the ceiling and supported at the other end by a hanger depending from a joist.

Based on survey carried out on 13th May 2017. Many thanks to mill owner Ray Wenden for allowing access.

## References

1. R. Wenden, 13th May 2017
2. James Waterfield, *Windmill Hoppers* website, May 2017
3. Ditto

## Stickney

Tower mill. Standing today, tower only

TF345569

The tarred tower had five floors and bore a tablet with the inscription "WB 1842". There were four single-sided patent sails.<sup>1</sup> The fanstage was of curious design for Lincolnshire, with the uprights supporting the diagonals at mid-point of the latter. The brakewheel was wooden with an iron brake and cog ring. The wallower (including the friction ring for the sack hoist), sack hoist spindle, upright shaft and great spur wheel were all iron.

On the stone floor were three pairs of stones, two peaks and one burr, with iron bridgetrees and brayers. The governors were belt-driven from the base of the upright shaft. There was a flour machine on the ground floor, along with an extra pair of stones driven by oil engine, and an auxiliary upright shaft drove a mixer on the stone floor. The brakewheel had 110 teeth, the wallower 52, the great spur wheel 121 and the stone nuts 16 each.<sup>2</sup>

## References

1. Simmons Collection
2. H Ronald Hawksley in Simmons Collection

*Mill Owners please let the Section know of any change of opening time and contact details for your mill, so we can keep our web site updated.*

# Mills in the News

## Saxtead Green Post Mill

*“Suffolk windmill repair by English Heritage: £250,000 English Heritage conservation secures historic Suffolk landmark”*

New sails with a span of 18.2 meters were put in place in August on Saxtead Green post mill by millwright Tim Whiting. The reinstallation of the mill's sails represents the culmination of a £250,000, year-long conservation project in collaboration with one of Suffolk's last remaining specialist millwrights.

The project is the first part of a major investment in historic windmills by the conservation charity English Heritage, with Sibsey Trader Windmill in Lincolnshire and Berney Arms Windmill in Norfolk both scheduled for works over the next few years.

Earlier this year, traditional millwrighting – a skill that has been practised in the UK for more than 700 years – was added to the Heritage Crafts Association's Red List of critically endangered heritage crafts for the first time, with only a small number of people still practising nationwide. English Heritage hopes that these important conservation works will help keep millwrighting alive.

Originally constructed around 1796, it has been rebuilt three times, with cast iron machinery added in 1854. It was in use until 1947 and is maintained in working order and regularly open to visitors.

Alongside the new set of sails and stocks, a replacement staircase has been made and repairs have been undertaken to the timber Buck house as well as the fantail at the rear of the windmill.

The conservation project is scheduled to be completed by the end of September 2019 and Saxtead Green Post Mill is due to reopen to the public for a special weekend on 21st to 22nd September, before it permanently reopens in 2020.

For further media information, contact the English Heritage Press Office on 020 7973 3390 or at:

[press@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:press@english-heritage.org.uk)



*Attaching a sail to the stock at Saxted Mill.  
Picture – Cbris Ridley, English Heritage.*



*Steadying a sail as it is lifted at Saxstead Mill.  
Picture – Justin Minns.*

*Mill News will no longer be listing mills for sale that are converted. Only mills that have significant machinery will be advertised. All mills for sale, however, will be put on our web site for members to view.*



# Mills in the News

## Heage Windmill

Congratulations to all concerned!

Heage volunteers have reached a milestone in their history by buiding a pair of new sails for the windmill. Not only that but they stripped down the old ones ready for recycling. Weather and wind played a part in the sails being replaced are now sitting in place ready to work.

The images show the sealant being applied to the bare wood, the fitting on of one of the sail arms into its mortise in the stock, a pair of sails complete with shutters and David Land checking the shutter mechanism.



*Applying sealant to the 'as received' bare wood.*



*Fitting one of the sail arms into its mortise in the stock.*



*David Land checking the shutter operating mechanism.*

This is a great achievement by the volunteers and just shows what can be done working together as a team.



*A pair of sails, complete with shutters.*



*Heage windmill earlier this year.*

# Jobs for the winter (maintenance matters)

Mildred

At this time of the year, many mills that are open for visitors will be closing their doors for the winter period. This is a good time for routine maintenance which is essential for all mills working or not working.

Many times maintenance can save time and money for the owner, spotting problems before they become serious. Before the mill closes for the season, walk round the mill while it is working – you can usually tell or hear if something is not running well.

At all times do not try to tackle a problem if the mill is working. Wait till the end of the day when the mill is shut down.

If volunteers at the mill are happy to come in during the closed season, so much the better. The jobs of cleaning out the stones, flour chutes and dressing machines if you have one, are best tackled with a small team.

This also involves the volunteers and helps them understand the working of the stones and dresser etc., all the more essential for passing on information to visitors.

All grain and flour should be cleared out of the mill during winter if you are not going to mill again until the spring. A thorough cleaning with a Hoover of each floor helps to keep the vermin at bay as well.

Stones: strip down the stones and raise the runner, Hoover and check the spindle, and repack the bed stone neck bearing if it looks dry. It may be that one of the stones needs re-dressing.



*Bedstone spindle being repacked.*

Once the flour chutes have been thoroughly brushed leave the chute open. This will help with ventilation.

Dresser: this takes time to do, taking it apart and cleaning the brushes and reel, also the chute where the flour comes down into the dressing reel, also the separate compartments for the flour, semolina and bran.

This is a very vulnerable machine for mill moth to appear as there are so many nooks and crannies, so extra time



*Dressing machine stripped down for cleaning.*

spent on cleaning will keep the moths at bay. At some mills an annual fumigation is done by a professional company.

Exterior: depending on whether you have a wind or watermill the maintenance will vary.

Windmills need the sails checked thoroughly for anything that may have come loose, rot pockets should be inspected to see how far the rot has gone. Packing of the sails stock to the canister, this is where sail clamps help tremendously if the stock should fail at the point where they go through the canister. Check the fan if there is one, or other winding gear. Make sure it is well oiled for the winter.

Check all window frames and doors for signs of rot and if a window can be covered in mesh, it is a good idea to leave it open for ventilation.

Make sure all gutters are cleared of leaves etc.

The waterwheel needs inspecting especially before the winter to make sure all is secure, particularly if it has wooden wedges – make sure these are tight.

Make sure the trash gate is kept clear of debris during the winter months when flooding can cause debris to collect.

It is a good idea to turn the sails or run the wheel once a month if possible during the closed season to make sure they do not run dry.

I am sure many mills already do these and other tasks, but some of them may get overlooked and perhaps having a monthly maintenance routine will help. An annual millwright inspection can also prove useful.

Why not come on our Maintenance Matters course next April at Upminster Mill, it will also be a good opportunity to look round the newly repaired mill? Details on page 16 and on our web site.

# Book Review

## *Mills of the Isles*

*Windmills of the Offshore Islands of the UK*

Peter Hill and Nick Kelly

Softback 210mm x 296mm, 48 pages

Maps and mainly colour photographs

Published by The Mills Archive

Price: £10.00 plus postage & packing

One of the deficiencies of many lists and books of windmills in Britain is that they omit any mention of all or most of the windmills on the offshore islands. This deficiency has at last been remedied by Peter Hill and Nick Kelly, with their very comprehensive gazetteer of the windmills of the Channel Islands and the isles of Scilly, Wight and Man.

The book, which is in A4 format and comprises some 45 pages, is lavishly illustrated with colour and black and white pictures, all of a high standard. The authors have clearly gone to considerable trouble to include all available details and, where possible, pictures of many of the mills which have been lost.

A number of the windmills of Guernsey and Jersey were affected by the German occupation of the islands during the Second World War, being either blown up or modified as observation posts. Several of these have been left in their modified condition.

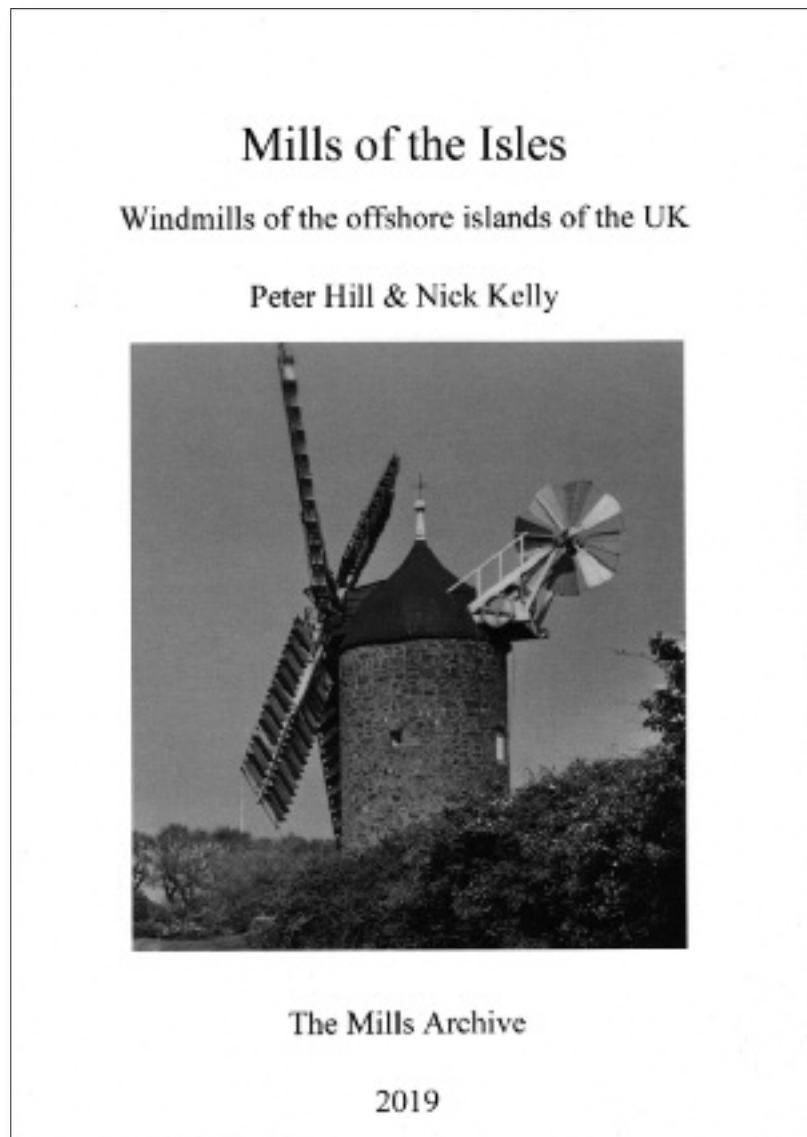
Sadly few of the mills have any remaining machinery, most having been gutted or converted to accommodation or for other purposes.

The one exception is the Bembridge windmill on the Isle of Wight, which, although much restored, contains a complete set of machinery and is cared for by the National Trust.

Altogether, this is an excellent publication. I look forward to its companion publication, the *Watermills of the Offshore Islands*, which is an equally important omission from contemporary mill literature, and a task which may well prove numerically considerably greater.

Jim Woodward-Nutt

*Mills of the Isles* is available from the Mills Archive at <https://new.millsarchive.org/product/mills-of-the-isles/>



# Mill Group News and Newsletters Review

Tom Derbyshire

*This report is produced by Tom Derbyshire. Will all groups please send copies of publications to Tom at [derbyshire.tom@gmail.com](mailto:derbyshire.tom@gmail.com), or by post to him at 15 Kinderscout, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP3 8HW.*

*The next copy date is 14th November 2019.*



## Hampshire Mills Group Newsletter No.126, Autumn 2019

Alison Stott reported on the June meeting at Whitchurch Silk Mill. The mill is now driven by electricity because the variable speed of the waterwheel makes the finished product uneven, although the waterwheel can still be viewed. The guide Deborah gave the group a guided tour and a talk on the history of the mill.

The AGM will be held at Warnford Village hall on 13th September 2019.

Ruth Andrews described HMG's recent study tour to Lincolnshire windmills – well organised by Andy Fish. Mills visited were Moulton Mill a nine-storey mill with four double-sided patent sails – much of the machinery has not survived. Heckington Windmill with its eight sails is now owned by Lincolnshire county council. Dobson Windmill, Burgh-le-Marsh a grade I listed five storey mill with five single-sided patent sails rotating clockwise, driving two pairs of French Burrs – it is the only mill of the four visited which did not have a reefing stage. Finally, Maud Foster Windmill, Boston, the only commercially operating mill visited. All the mills visited had overdrift stones. Instead of using a damsel, grain was scattered into the eye of the stone by a small piece of wood, mounted on the shoe, which rubbed against the quant as it rotated.

Eleanor Yates wrote about the drainage engines of Spalding – the article being accompanied by photographs by Ruth Andrews. Places visited were the Pinchbeck Engine – a restored beam engine – a reminder of when we relied on steam to drain the land. It has an impressive 18ft 6in fly wheel. It drives a scoop wheel with 40 paddles, which could lift a maximum of 7,500 gallons of water per minute through an 8ft lift.

Pode Hole Pumping station powered by two beam engines – one of 60hp and one of 80hp driving scoop wheels. There was also a third steam engine on the north bank. The beam engines were scrapped in 1952 and replaced by Ruston Diesel engines driving (via David Brown gearboxes) Foster Gwynnes pumps. The second station alongside uses electric pumps.

The 2020 study tour will cover Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire on Thursday 14th to Sunday 17th May.

The HMG website [www.hampshirerolls.org](http://www.hampshirerolls.org) now has an expanded mills book page.

Bembridge Windmill – Isle of Wight – had to have its sails removed which need replacing. A group of people have got together to make articles from the wood of the sails to sell and raise funds towards replacement sails.

Ruth Andrews described her 10 days mill hunting in Montenegro with Keith. Some research was done before

they set off. In Poseljani they found some dilapidated Norse-style mills. They walked round the Black Lake (Crno Jezero). They found some mills and remains on their walk on Mlinski Potok (Mill Stream) Nameley Jaksica, Ostacl Uskockoc and Zekov Mills. The buildings they found were locked but they managed to photograph inside Zekov, they saw what they thought was a vertical wheel but it turned out to be a metal tirl (a horizontal wheel – a clear picture of one appears on the front page of this issue) stored against the interior wall. Next they found a restaurant at Ljuta with two large vertical wheels, a hopper and a horizontal wheel. At Konstanjica – Cotowice mills they found a vertical wheel with paddles rather than spoons – possibly a small undershot wheel. Across the valley they found a building containing a crushing stone assembly – possibly used for olives and a press. They also found some well worn remains of horizontal wheels. The interesting article was well illustrated with photographs of their various finds.

Alison Stott described an HMG visit to the Mapledurham estate, where they were given a talk on the history of the church and the mill. The mill has one waterwheel and regularly produces flour. It also has an Archimedes screw which feeds electricity into the national grid.

Ivor New reported on his visit with his brother to the islands and highlands of Scotland. He described the Norse Mill at Siabost – hundreds of grain mills like this were scattered throughout Lewis by the 1840s to mill corn or barley. The building at Siabost and its drying kiln are oval drystone double-skinned walls with well-constructed traditional thatched roofs. Grain is fed from the hopper to a spout attached to it, which is vibrated by the clapper peg, which runs on the uneven surface of the runner stone and so feeds grain into the throat of the upper stone. The meal appears at the periphery of the bed stone and falls into a channel from which it is swept into a waiting bag or basket. Fast flowing water from the loch is channelled under the mill to a vertical shaft with tirl, which drives the runner stone. Included in the article were photographs and diagrams illustrating the construction of the mill and the drying kiln.

What? – the regular feature of a photograph of an article put up for identification. The triangular objects from the last edition were identified by Peter Hill as adjustable fulcrums, used when raising the millstones for dressing.

Alan Cullen described two mills (with photographs) he recently visited. The first was Quanton, a 65ft brick tower mill which has machinery for three pairs of stones and produces flour. The second was Angle Windmill in Pembrokeshire, which are the remains of an

## *Mill Group News and Newsletters Review - continued*

18th to 19th century windmill used as a defence post in the Second World War.

A brief article congratulated the Mills Archive on receiving the Queens award for voluntary service.

### **Midlands Wind & Water Mills Group Newsletter 124, August 2019**



There was an excellent report by Neil Riddle on a talk by Steve Howick on Clencher's Mill Eastnor. The present mill seems to date back to the 18th century and the waterwheel is cast marked 1820, making it the earliest recorded example of this type in the county – measuring almost 5 metres in diameter. Flour production ceased prior to or during the First World War. By about 1940 the mill only produced animal feed. At that time it had been powered by a tractor via an external shaft. The mill was disconnected when a disagreement over control of the brook occurred with an upstream resident at Goldhill Farm.

A 500-metre section of the leat has been cleared, as has the millpond, and a bypass sluice has been renewed. The sole boards and floats have been replaced and new bronze bearings have been put on the waterwheel. Other work includes wedging of the wheel to its shaft, and repositioning of the pit wheel and wallower. A wood stove has been installed to replace the original open fireplace. The bolter was missing but with the help of Alan Stoyel a dilapidated one from Wormbridge Mill has been reconstructed to fit exactly in the position of the original.

An Armfield grain cleaner has been obtained from Brewhurst Mill in West Sussex and the process of getting the speed right for it to be run has begun. A source of yew has been found from which to manufacture replacement cogs. The next job is further work on the pond and to reintroduce a second set of stones. Steve is currently looking at bringing a Ruston Hornsby single-cylinder engine (circa 1934) into service.

Tim Booth reported on the MMG Tour of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire mills in June 2019.

The first mill was Faldbury, where there was probably a mill on this site since 1086. Milling continued until the 1920s and cider making was added in the 1890s. One of the wheels was used to generate electricity as early as 1899. A wheel was replaced by two Armfield turbines. Milling ceased in 1927 and the machinery scrapped in the 1940s. Jack Crabtree has rescued the mill and installed a new wheel and a Gilkes turbine. Next was Dumbleton Mill, south of Evesham – another ancient site, the current building being erected in about 1830. Much of the waterwheel is missing, waiting for the owner to decide if he wants to rebuild it. The all-iron machinery remains intact except for the drive to one of the three pairs of stones. Most of the ancillary machinery has been removed apart from the sack hoist and part of the elevator. The mill was last used in the 1950s to produce animal feed but it could still be restored to working order.

The next mill was Stanway Mill, which has been a corn mill, a fulling mill and at one stage a sawmill. In 2002 Lord

Wemyss, the owner of Stanway House, had the mill restored to a corn mill, which was completed in 2009. It has a 24ft-diameter waterwheel and a complete new set of machinery and produces flour on a regular basis. Two pairs of millstones are driven via a layshaft, which also drives a wire machine.

The last call was Wickhamford Mill, east of Evesham. John Poulter the owner is slowly restoring the mill – again there has been a mill on this site for many centuries. It has been modified to take later machinery and has two pairs of stones. The waterwheel was turning well but the pit wheel needs a new set of cogs before the upright shaft can be set in motion, then the newly installed sack hoist can be properly tested. A great trip enjoyed by all and organised by Mike Lovatt.

Heage Windmill found rot in two of the six sails. The group have decided to replace them themselves and have already placed an order for the main timber – laminated Siberian larch. The two damaged sails will be removed for repair but the mill will continue to be operated with four sails – a clear advantage of a six-sailed mill.

Splashy Mill – Kate Bonson reported on progress at the mill. In its day the mill served the pottery industry – the grinding pan is still in situ although covered in lumber. A start has been made on getting the waterwheel going again. Several gallons of silt were removed from the waterwheel buckets, which were accessible. Kate asked the question: is a seven-armed waterwheel common? Splashy has eight arms.

Wrickton Mill, near Neenton, Shropshire, has been experiencing problems with the wheel shaft and has now asked David Empringham if he can find a suitable piece of oak 17in square and a little over 11 feet long to make a new shaft. It is hoped that MMG members will be available to help fit the replacement.

There is now a link from the MMG website to part of the TIMS website to view a great series of photographs taken on the TIMS Mills of the Midlands tour organised by Tony Bonson.

#### *Letters to the editor*

A letter from Mildred Cookson referring to Barry's visit to the Orkney Mill at Birsay. Mildred explained that the grain referred to is "bere" not "beer" and she followed with a description of how this variety of barley is milled.

Dymock's Mill at Oldcastle is for sale again.

Charles Milne Atkinson offers a sack hoist for sale. For more details call +44 7971 883083.

John Bedington gave a eulogy on Tom Mitchell, a former MMG member, an active volunteer at Danzey Green Windmill and a great help at Charlecote Mill.

Barry Job reported on a visit by the Channel Five reality series "Celebrity Five Go Barging" on their visit to Etruria Industrial Museum and Middleport Pottery.

Three book reviews were included in the last pages:

1. *Corn Watermills of the National Trust in England* by Nigel S. Harris;
2. *Windmills on Cape Cod and the Islands* by Frederika A. Burrows, 1978;
3. *Windmills of New England – Their Genius, Madness, History and Future* by Daniel Lombardo, 2003.



### Suffolk Mills Group Newsletter No. 123, June 2019

Mark Barnard (Editor) appealed for new members to help rejuvenate the group.

Bob Patterson continued his memories of visits to Suffolk Mills. Mills discussed in this article were:

- Bardwell, visited in 1991, 1994 and 1997 after suffering hurricane damage;
- Bedingfield Postmill and Otley Postmill (April 1993) – both then completely gone; Victoria Mill in Eye – all that was left being a roundhouse in the middle of a new housing estate; Other mills on this trip were Swiland and Wetheringsett, Framsdan and Debenham;
- in 1993 (June) he visited Walberswick, a drainage mill on Reydon marshes and Crowfield smockmill;
- in 1994 he visited Thelnetham, Stanton, Bardwell and Pakenham;
- in 1995 he visited Drinkstone, Saxstead Green, Thorpness, Aldeburgh and Friston;
- in 1997 he visited Pakenham, Bardwell (now with new windshaft), Huntingfield and remains at Metfield, Laxfield Gorams Mill, St James South Elmham and Ubbeston. Sites at All Saints and St Nicholas, South Elmham St Michael and Fressingfield had been cleared; Holton Postmill was being repaired. The second day of this visit he took in Woodbridge, Burgh, Framsdan, Little Stonham, Buxhall, Drinkstone and Great Welnetham;
- in 2000 visits were made to Wetheringset (now spruced up), Debenham and Framsdan;
- in 2001 he revisited some of his favorites: Crowfield Smockmill, Framsdan, Saxstead Green, Drinkstone and Pakenham. At the same time he saw the remains of the roundhouse at Badingham and took a close look at Peasenhall and the tower-mill stump at Theberton. Final visits were to Buxhall Towermill and Rattlesden Sally Mill.

His article was accompanied by photographs of Bardwell in 1991, Crowfield in 1993 and remains of Metfield Postmill in 1997.

The next section of this edition was devoted to a historical story in four parts by Chris Seago, David Pearce, Mark Barnard and Chris Hullcoop relating the restoration of Thelnetham Mill.

Chris Seago, after initial thoughts of purchasing the mill himself, sanity prevailed and he joined up with Peter Dolman, Charlie Dolman, Dave Pearce and Mark Barnard to jointly complete the purchase. He described the successful six hard years of restoration work masterminded by Peter Dolman. The team had not thought much about the future – they were concentrating on saving and restoring the mill – but fortunately in 2013 the Suffolk Building Preservation Trust took over and became the catalyst for enhancements to improve the site and secure it for the future.

Dave Pearce described how he joined the group of restorers along with John Snowdon. He described the desperately poor condition of the mill at the start (last worked in 1920). The brakewheel iron-tooth sections were badly damaged and at one stage the bin floor

collapsed but fortunately did not bring down the stone floor. It became clear that the cap and sails would have to come off and the curb ring would need a great deal of work done on it. He included photographs of work on the sail whips, which included Nigel Bacon and Chris Wilson, and also a shot of the team involved in building the new cap.

Mark Barnard mentioned that prior to this restoration effort volunteer mill repair projects in Suffolk had not been able to contemplate a full restoration to working order, but this was possible at Thelnetham because the mill was complete internally.

Summer work-ins were planned and saw the derelict mill turn into one grinding by wind in less than six years from the start despite very basic facilities available on site – phone calls had to be made in the next village, a chemical toilet had to be arranged and electricity was borrowed via an extension lead from neighbour Brian Davey. Two Dutch friends joined in (Annemiche and John Hoogenboom) and on some occasions people could be observed working on every level of the mill at the same time. There were many layers of work, planning work-ins, designing new or missing components, recruiting volunteers, getting specialist work done, organising off-site volunteer work and organising fundraising and publicity – much done by Peter Dolman.

Now the mill and site are beautifully maintained and a pleasure to visit.

Chris Hullcoop described his main task, which was replacing the brickwork at the top of the tower, done with very strong engineering bricks and made level – on the day of replacing the cap all was found to fit perfectly. His next task was making patterns for and fitting the new cast-iron cog ring to the new brakewheel – much done on his living-room floor at home. Chris commented that with today's health and safety rules, huge insurance costs and difficulties in raising finance it would probably not be possible now: "Was it all a dream?"

Stewart Phillips wrote an extensive article on the history of Church Mill Lowestoft, which seems to have been built in 1819. The article has much detail because descriptions of its sale at various times have been discovered. The first sale advertised in the Ipswich Journal of July 1849 gives a good description of the mill house and land. The Miller of 1881, where it is again for sale, gives another detailed description of the property. It did not sell but was then leased. In 1899 again it was up for sale and in the Lowestoft Journal of May 1899 a list of the effects of the business were offered for auction. After demolition in 1900 the Lowestoft Journal announced the sale of the milling plant and materials. Photographs of the mill and clear maps of its location accompany the article.

The tower mill had a peppercorn cap, a six-bladed fantail and four patent sails. It had two pairs of French burr stones and other machinery. The tower was 35ft high with a base of 26ft. At some stage before its demise the cap was changed to a boat-shaped cap, but the reason for this is unknown. A mid-20th century house now occupies the site of the mill. Although enveloped by suburbs both the mill house and mill cottage still stand.

## *Mill Group News and Newsletters Review - continued*

Rosetta Clover told us about a book of poems entitled "Buxhall Mill and other Poems", in which the Buxhall Mill poem was published accompanied by a drawing by Stanley Freese. Anders Mossesson, the owner of Buxhall, died in May at the age of 74. The mill had not worked since 1929 but Anders had paid for a strong and temporary roof and repairs to the top floors, so the tower is watertight.

### *Mill news*

Thelnetham – Ruston diesel engine is now easier to start and stop, the eventual aim being to get it to drive the hurst-mounted stones.

A new sail clamp and missing shutters to be fitted.

New granary was used as a polling station.

Afternoon teas – a new venture proving to be popular.

On July 14 they celebrated the mill's bicentenary and SMG have granted £1,000 towards future work on the mill.

Drinkstone – the 1864 Great Eastern Railway carriage has been relocated on the site.



### **Sussex Mills Group Newsletter No. 183, July 2019**

Under forthcoming events an announcement of the autumn meeting at West Blatchington on Sunday, 13 October.

Peter Hicks (Chairman) reported on the AGM where two presentations took place, one by Peter James on the renovation of Upminster Mill and a second by Peter Hill on Mills of the Channel Islands. Later on in this edition was a comprehensive report on a visit made to Upminster Windmill and the extensive work in progress there. The consulting millwright being Luke Bonwick and main work being done by the very experienced Dutch millwright Willem Dijkstra. The new visitor centre is most impressive. The boarding being used is Accoya, which apparently is virtually rot resistant and guaranteed for 50 years. Accoya is a modified timber in which a process called acetylation, a cutting-edge patented technology, enables it to resist rot. A grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Veolia Thames Trust is helping to fully restore her to working order.

After many years Maureen Hicks has stepped down as secretary and minutes secretary – Philip thanked her for her service and reminded members that the posts were still vacant.

Justin Price reported on his move to Northamptonshire and a visit to Chesterton Windmill.

Robert and Brian Pike related some historical facts about Beacon Postmill at Crowborough (which burnt down during the Second World War) and included a newspaper article on the mill from 1936.

### *News from the Mills*

Argos Hill Windmill – Shutters have been repainted and plans are afoot to build new fantail wheels.

Ashcombe Windmill – Steel ropes are being installed between the stocks to reduce the potential for fatigue, aligning of the neck bearing is being progressed, the

lightening-conductor earthing has been tested and certified and the top bearing of the post has been greased.

Chailey Windmill – The cap roof needs some repair and repainting of the mill is planned for next year.

Jack Windmill – The fan blades were tied as the cap skirt had dislodged some of the tower's metal sheets, estimates are being sought. A spacer is also required in the gear train.

Jill Windmill – The bottom step of the rear steps is to be replaced. Jill features on the front cover with the cast of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. It is also featured with a photo showing the mill's involvement with the England's Clean Planet campaign.

Nutley Windmill – Her head sickness is being treated. During removing the sweeps to help in this process decay was noted and treated.

Stone Cross Windmill – To be repainted in the autumn using a grant from the Shepham Community Benefit Fund. Leafleting the local residents has helped membership and prompted new visitors.

Lowfield Heath Windmill – Much work being done on the roundhouse including board replacement, which is now virtually complete.

Park Watermill Batemans – The ongoing rebuild of the millpond is progressing steadily.

Oldland Windmill – One pair of sweeps is being repaired and repainted.

Polegate Windmill – The big successful event which will be repeated next year was the Polegate Fun Dog Show. Organised with the help of local dog owners, it brought in extra visitors and extra cash.

West Blatchington Windmill – Father's Day and Sussex Day at the mill – a new way to celebrate the occasion – with ploughman's lunch and Sussex quiz. Peter has completed an article on the mill for inclusion in the Sussex Industrial History Journal.

David Jones wrote about a large quantity of paintings, postcards and photographs of mills given to the group and industrial society by Mrs Vera Kemp, which were in the care of Reg Kemp her husband now in the late stages of Alzheimer's. A very interesting collection because many of the mills no longer exist – there was a two-page spread showing nine examples.

Viviane Doussy described a weekend celebrating Storrington's bygone mills. The museum had put up a two-month exhibition on Storrington's past industrial heritage. There was a guided tour around the village visit the locations of Kithurst Windmill, Storrington's central watermill, the windmill on Byne Common and Chantry Watermill. Also Hurston Mill site welcomed visitors to their picturesque corner on the River Stor and a great time was had by all.

### *Correspondence*

Roger White in the course of researching his family history has discovered a connection to a few Sussex mills, the names of his ancestors being Jon Saunders and Stephen Saunders,

They had connections in Warbleton, Heathfield (John's wife being a Pankhurst), Winchelsea, Rye, Herstmonceux,

## Mill Group News and Newsletters Review - continued

Hellingly, Northian, Mayfield, Burwash, Boodle Street and Hooe. John died in 1844 at 75 and Stephen in 1882 at 75.

Roger wrote saying he would like to see if he could find out more about them. Editor Justin did some research and came up with the names in connection with the following mills: Offham-Hamsey Postmill, Oving Postmill, Waldron-Tilsmore Corner (aka Montpelier Postmill), Waldron Millcroft Postmill, Warbleton and Summerhill Postmill, then finally Cox's Mill at Burwash.

Peter Hill reported on the discovery of a photograph of Bridge Mill Rustington. He was given a faded sepia photo, which he subsequently converted into a clear image of the mill and surrounding buildings. The mill must be dated from around the mid 1880s and ceased work in 1894 it was a large tarred postmill with roundhouse and fantail mounted on the steps. There were four sweeps powering one pair of peaks and one pair of burrs. No evidence of the site exists today, however the pub on the opposite side of the road is still known as the Windmill Inn.

Subsequently the editor reported that the owner of the Bridge Mill house had unearthed a bottle-shaped dry brick-lined hole about 15-20 feet deep while renovating his property. A grain store? He filled it in to save it caving, so it may well still be there.

There was a brief reference to Nigel S. Harris's new book "Corn Mills of the National Trust in England".

Finally, on the back cover, was a letter from Miles Wynn Cato who had sent in a picture of a painting with a postmill in the distance and asked if anyone in the society could identify it. The editor replied that for various reasons he could not be sure and that the only contender could be Argos Hill Mill, but that was not built at the time the painting was completed.



### Welsh Mills Society Newsletter No. 136, July 2018

In the editorial it was reported that The Historic Environment Group in Wales (HEG) have drafted a Historic Environment and Climate Change: Sector Adaptation Plan trying to identify the risks to the historic environment of Wales and what can be done to meet them. They are taking steps to adapt to changes that are already happening – one of these is the perceived risk of increasing river flooding with its effect on streamside structures such as watermills. The society has expressed its willingness to assist in monitoring and managing risk in this area. Cadw's current public consultation is on Easy Access to Listed Buildings in Wales – which is mainly about disabled access to such. Do we as a society know which buildings are listed and why (they are tabulated on the website)? And do we know if listing is a barrier to development or an asset? The preservation of mills is one of the society's objectives, so the answers to these questions should be exercising us all.

The new newsletter editor will be Dafydd Williams, who is the Principal Curator of Historic Buildings at St. Fagans National Museum of History.

The cover of this issue has a brilliant picture of Pitstone Postmill (Buckinghamshire) by John Crompton.

This claims to be the oldest surviving postmill in Britain, with the date of 1627 carved on some internal timbers. It belongs to the National Trust, has two pairs of underdriven stones and a Watt-type governor. More can be discovered about this mill at:

<https://catalogue.millsarchive.org/post-mill-pitstone-green>

The point of the article is to highlight the question: were there any postmills in Wales?

Possible evidence is very thin: Cadw has no records and Coflein has just a few possibilities. A windmill stump is on the first edition of the OS map west of Redwick, a 1707 record of one at Nash. A 1622 manorial roll lists "windmill fields" at Aberthaw and Rhoose, which may have been postmills, and early maritime charts record mills as navigation markers, which may also have been postmills: One is known near Beaumaris, Anglesey. The author asks if anyone can add to the record or provide better evidence for the existence of this type of mill having existed in Wales?

Dates for your diary include Saturday, October 19, 2019: WMS Autumn Meeting and AGM in Ceredigion.

The 2019/20 subscription rate will be £25 from November 2019 or £20 if paid by BACS or standing order.

Two obituaries: one for Owen Ward, a long-time researcher on millstones by Jane Roberts; and one for Margaret Bide, a committed traditional wool-manufacturing expert with other restoration interests, by Adrian and Kay Griffiths.

Next a report on the 2019 spring meeting held at Mathern Mill in Monmouthshire. Chairman Gerallt Nash gave some interesting details of local Mathern history and congratulated Alan Stoyel on his well-deserved MBE.

Dr. Ivor Cavill gave a fascinating talk on papermaking in this part of Wales. There were nine active mills in 1833, which declined in 1875 as a result of steam mills coming into their own.

David Bowen gave a talk on the history of Mathern Mill. First mention of a mill on this site was in 1571, but there certainly was a presence in 1729, when parish records mention "ye Mill". It worked until 1968 and was Grade II\* listed in 1974.

The last speaker, Jan Bowen, identified the major and significant role of female occupants down the centuries.

In the afternoon there were two visits: Linnet Mill, initially a papermill but later a carpet and rug factory; and Mathern Mill, which is laid out on four floors with the upper floor having the grain loft and associated hoists with grain bins below, the first floor has four pairs of French stones. The ground floor gave access to the metal gearing. The ground floor has now been set out for public visits with a range of useful information and interactive displays.

Andrew Findon reported that 20 mills were open for National Mills Weekend (Llanyrafon Mill, Cwmbran, having the company of the Cwmbran and District Amateur Radio Society to attract visitors).

Melin Llynnon, Anglesey, has had great reviews on Tripadvisor since being taken over by the Holts in April this year.



Mills for sale in this edition include Melin-y-Gof, Trearddur Bay, Anglesey – the last windmill to work commercially on the island, now a dwelling.

Cwmwyfran Forge, Bronwydd Arms near Carmarthen – originally a fulling mill.

New Mill, Drefelin, Drefach Felindre – a watermill on a 12-acre site.

Another mystery solved. Andrew Findon in the last issue asked if a diamond millstone dresser had ever been employed in Wales. He found that Llanyrafon Mill appeared to have had its stoned dressed in this way and asks if anyone else can identify stones having had the same treatment. The article was illustrated showing the very regular pattern on the lands of a stone.

Andrew then showed a postcard of a rejuvenating mill and queried the type of waterwheel in use – not clear from the picture whether it was pitchback or high breastshot

Gareth Beech of St. Fagans National Museum of History had been asked if he could identify the use of an item found on a farm at Graianrhyd – from the

photograph provided it was difficult to detect whether it was a scoop or a jug. Gareth did much research and included photographs of the items he had checked out, concluding with a picture of the closest match, which he thinks is a scoop for grain or flour. He says he would be interested to know if there are other examples in England or Wales to try and establish whether it was made locally or elsewhere, and if so where and for what purpose.

*Twenty-five years ago* (Newsletter No. 37 1994)

A communication from Cadw clarifying the debate about the eligibility of listed mills for grant aid.

A report on the spring meeting and Brian Taylor's talk on Llanrhidian parish, later published in his *Watermills of the Lordship of Gower*.

Adverts from the Hereford Journal extracted by Geoff Ridyard from suppliers of machinery for woollen mills.

An article on wind power and renewable energy, and a report from Melin Llynnon preparing to produce flour on a commercial scale. The back cover had colour pictures of Glanffrwd Woollen Mill by Julian Wormald and the gear train at Mathern Mill by Brian Malaws.










**Specialist conservation contractors with a dedicated and highly experienced Millwrighting team, Experts in both wind and watermills. We offer mill owners the following services:**

- All aspects of mill repair, construction and maintenance**
- Traditional Ironmongery**
- Stone dressing**
- Pattern making**
- Complete project management**
- Timber framing**

**Directly employing a large carpentry team, blacksmiths, stonemasons, lime plasterers, brickworkers And with our own lime mortar production facilities, Owlsworth IJP are ideally positioned to provide a wide range of conservation and mill related services**

**01189 469169    [www.owlsworthijp.co.uk](http://www.owlsworthijp.co.uk)**

# Obituary

## Mrs Joan Day 1928-2019

Her legacy will undoubtedly be the (almost single-handed) rescue and subsequent conservation of Salford Brass Mill, between Bath and Bristol. With no qualifications she became an internationally known expert on the brass and other metalliferous industries, becoming an FSA following publication of her book on the local brass industry and was instrumental in recording many other local mills.

Roger Wilkes

(Although not very well known in the traditional mill world, some members will recall we met Mrs Day on a Section visit to the Brass Mill some years back. Mildred)

### Warton Peg Mill, Lancs

Historic England has informed us that they are de-listing Warton Peg Mill as it no longer exists.

The mill was originally sited at Rufford and moved in 1717 to its site at Warton.

Alexander Eccles was last to run the mill, taking on the lease in 1895. The mill gradually fell into disrepair once he had stopped milling soon after 1900. By the time I knew it in the 1960s there were just the post and quarter bars left with a solitary old millstone leaning against it looking

totally out of place and sad in the middle of an old car graveyard (see photograph opposite).

A full survey was done of the site and the turning circle revealed. Sadly the post and quarter bars collapsed and were taken away by the council. Here the story gets blurred as the council have no recollection of the parts or know where they went. So a sad end to the story. All that remains now is the millstone leaning against a wall at the site. Perhaps a plaque could be put up to remember the mill.

Mildred

## Sidbury Mill, Sidbury, Sidmouth, Devon

*A rare opportunity to acquire a historic working watermill with very attractive four bedroom house.*

*Separate art gallery and coffee shop*



*Private setting within short walk of village*

*Garage and workshop, two modern open floor barns, river walk, paddocks, productive arable land. In all 17.94 acres. All in excellent order. Details from Stags of Honiton.*





*The remains of Warton Peg Mill as described opposite.*

### Advertise in Mill News

Does your business offer products or services of interest to those who own or maintain a windmill or watermill?

Mill News is published and circulated quarterly to mill owners and enthusiasts across the country and beyond.

Contact the Mills Section office  
[millsinfo@spab.org.uk](mailto:millsinfo@spab.org.uk)  
 Tel: 020 7456 0909




Full page in colour	£320 + VAT
Half page in colour	£185 + VAT
Quarter page in colour	£110 + VAT

(10% discount for consecutive bookings)

# KREIDEZEIT

Stand Oil Paint  
 Lime Paint  
 Clay Paint  
*and so much more...*



10% discount for all Kreidezeit products  
for SPAB Mills Section members

**beautiful natural finishes**

## MIKE WYE

— & ASSOCIATES —

01409 281644  
[www.mikewye.co.uk](http://www.mikewye.co.uk)

