

# SUFFOLK MILLS GROUP

## Newsletter

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Time passes ever more quickly and it's hard to believe we're already into the second half of the year, and that over five months have elapsed since I produced the last newsletter. Our events so far this year have for the most part met with success, especially the February public meeting when Jon Sass gave an excellent talk, and the recent A.G.M. which was well attended. Events at Herringfleet on National Mills Day conspired against us, which was one disappointment, of which more inside.

I've highlighted several times the pressing need for new faces on our committee. This has assumed a degree of urgency now that Peter Dolman has relinquished the post of secretary (see the A.G.M. report inside). I hope we can overcome this setback soon by filling all the vacant committee posts, maybe allocating the secretary's tasks among two or three people. Once this has been resolved I will publish details of the new committee in the newsletter. Meanwhile, forthcoming events are as follows. Please note them in your diary now and try to come along!

Stanton post mill work-in  
Stanton post mill work-in  
Visit to Peasenhall mills  
SPAB Mills Group tour

Sat August 1st - Sun August 9th  
Sat August 15th - Sun August 23rd  
Sunday September 6th  
Thurs Sept 10th - Sun Sept 13th

Mark Barnard

## SOME INDUSTRIAL WINDMILLS Bob Malster

It is well known that windmills were used in the Netherlands for many more purposes than grinding corn and pumping water, yet very little has been written about mills on this side of the North Sea that were adapted for other purposes.

'Industriemolen' they call them in Holland, those mills that were employed in sawing wood, crushing seed for the extraction of oil, grinding logwood for dyemaking and all the other operations to which the crafty Dutchmen harnessed the wind.

I still remember the excitement with which I beheld my first houtzaagmolen, *De Eenhoorn* (The Unicorn), during a visit to Haarlem soon after the Second World War. It was of the type labelled in Dutch 'paltrokmolen', from a supposed resemblance to the flaring coats, the Palts-rokken, worn by the Mennonites who had found refuge in Holland from the religious persecution they suffered elsewhere; there is a strong similarity to our own use of the term smock mill, from a supposed resemblance to a countryman's smock. The mill was not at work, and was indeed decorated for a wedding, with decorative hoops hung beneath the sails. Not such an elaborate display as one sees in photographs in Dutch windmill books, but decorated it was nonetheless. By one of those ironies

that sometimes occur a funeral was due on the other side of the Spaarne, and a glass-sided hearse drawn by a black-plumed black horse drew up outside a house and stood waiting. 'Verboden op de molen te opgang' said a notice on the tail of the mill. I was obedient to such notices in those days, and my rudimentary knowledge of Dutch was sufficient to tell me that I was not to clamber over the mill inspecting the machinery. But I have always regretted that I could not see the mill working, and perhaps get permission to look a little closer.

I have never seen a wind-driven sawmill in this country, though I do know of several that had existed in the 19th century, notably some on the then outskirts of Norwich. My maternal grandfather, who died before I was born, was a saw doctor and was reputed to have ground and set the circular saws of a tower mill that stood at the top of Gas Hill in Norwich; it was one of a pair of tower mills there, the other being a corn mill. The mills were both marked on the 1884 Ordnance Survey, but I have never seen any plans of the machinery of the sawmill nor have I discovered any information about its operations.

It was still remembered by one elderly man I met in the 1950's. Living in an old railway carriage in a wood at Mutford was Mr S.R. Kelf, who at the age of 87 told me what he recalled of his schooldays in Norwich in the 1870's: "The last that Gallant's Mill was used for was sawing wood. I remember tree trunks lying about in the yard. The machinery was worked by sails." At that time, he said, the other mill, which he called Kett's Mill, was disused.

Research in the old City Library in St Andrew's, and sometimes even in its basement, where the rate books were stored, revealed a little of the occupants of this sawmill, however. About 1860 it was occupied by George Gallant, and later by C.R. Gallant. One wonders if both those mills had been sawmills, for in the 1860's Samuel Jennings was also listed as a sawyer in the area, though by 1883 he has become a corn miller on Gas House Hill, or Gas Hill as we call it today.

There was another sawmill in Philadelphia Lane, on the northern outskirts of the city, owned by a succession of Canns. In 1852 William Cann had a sawmill there, followed in 1856 by Samuel and John Cann; in 1859 and 1860 Samuel was on his own, and in 1864 there was again a partnership of J. & S. Cann. A terrace of houses known as Sawmill Buildings, built by W. Cann in 1851, still stood in Philadelphia Lane in my boyhood, and might stand there still. Alfred Walker owned another sawmill in Philadelphia Lane about 1883, and 20 years earlier Bailey Bird was listed as having one there. Other trades were also operated by wind power in 19th century Norwich. One of the Sprowston mills, that owned by the Brock family, was used for grinding rice for the baking powder trade, and a mill between Magdalen Gates and Point House was used by a man named Bagshaw for crushing animal bones for fertiliser. However, there is no evidence that the snuff mill in the Black Tower, one of the city wall towers standing above the Wensum on Carrow Hill, was ever a windmill; more likely it was a horse mill, in spite of what one so often sees written about it.

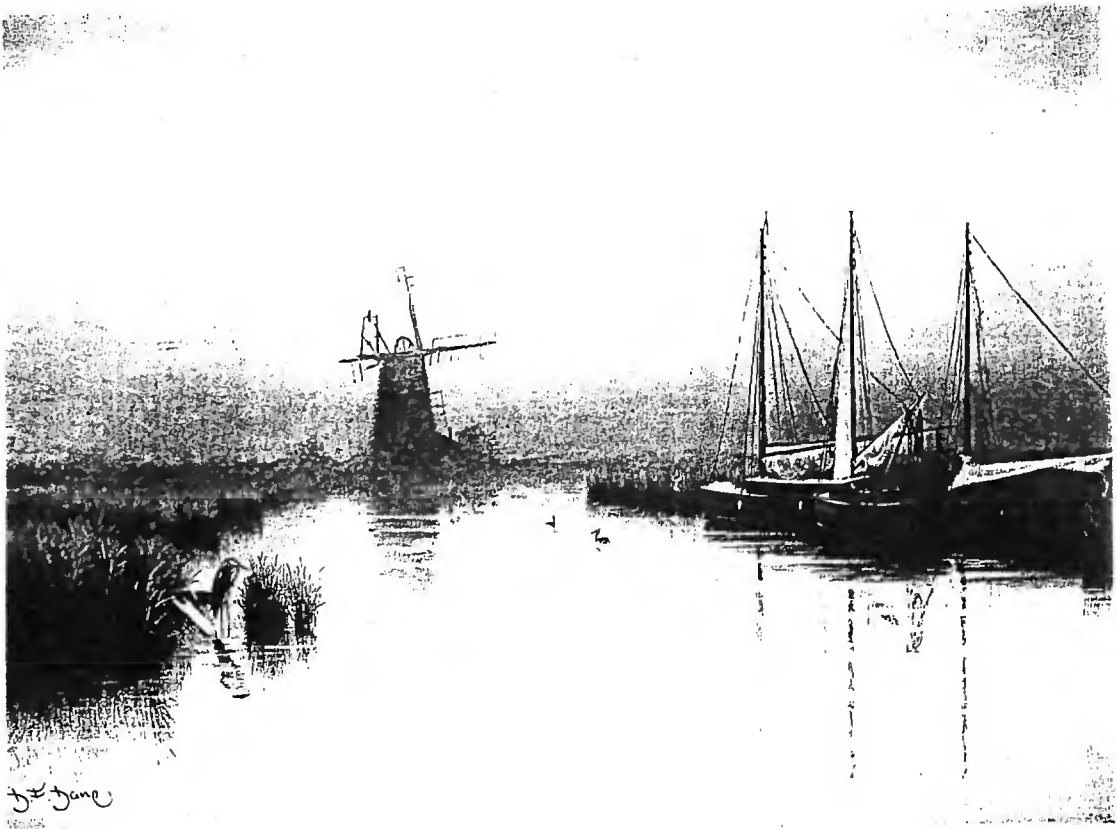
Over at King's Lynn there was a smock windmill used for the manufacture of oil which appears in a 19th century print. The

stamps used to crush the seed so that the oil could later be pressed from the pulp must have resounded all over the town when it was at work, but history does not record the reaction of the inhabitants; it was only when a whaling ship returned from Greenland waters and the operation of trying down the blubber began that they made for the nearby countryside, to avoid the stench.

## **PUTTING MILLS IN THE PICTURE (8) Peter Steggall**

### PAINTED AT LEISURE, SHOWN IN HASTE

In September 1997 I went to see 'Watermills and Windmills of East Anglia - a collection of paintings capturing the charm and interest of these historic landmarks'. The catalogue listed 45 pictures - oil paintings, watercolours and pen and ink drawings, and there were also three large oil paintings of Broadland scenes by David Dane. Seven different watermills appeared in 18 pictures, including five of Woodbridge tide mill, four of Flatford Mill and three of Pakenham. 20 different windmills were in 30 pictures; of those 20, 13 were drainage mills (windpumps) on the Broads, which I think is explained more by the attractive watery settings than by the interest of the mills as such. Some were unnamed, some were derelict. Horsey mill in Norfolk was the subject of three pictures.



'At Daybreak' by David Dane

At this exhibition, as at many others over the years, I thought that very few artists have a specific interest in mills for what they are. They include them in their pictures because they are striking features which enhance the beauty of a landscape or 'waterscape' and provide a focal point. Some readers may dispute that opinion, but I think it was borne out by David Dane himself on television in December 1997, when he was talking about the Norfolk Broads and showing some of his pictures. He said he was fascinated by windmills, but thought them even more romantic when derelict, as so many already were when he started painting there. A good example is seen in the picture reproduced above (in black and white); the location is not named.

'Painted at Leisure, Shown in Haste'? The exhibition was, of course, at the Haste Gallery in Ipswich.

### PICTURES OUT OF THE MILL

In January 1996, in Newsletter No.64, I related how, after the death of the owner Ernest Onians a year earlier, it was revealed that Baylham watermill, the house and outbuildings had contained a huge hoard of antiques. They included about 500 pictures which were sold in London in October 1995 for nearly £1,000,000, of which £150,000 was paid for 'The Sack of Carthage' attributed to Pietro Testa. But in December it was reported that the buyers of that picture thought it was 'The Sack of Jerusalem', a 'lost' painting by the 17th century French artist, Nicolas Poussin, and that it could be worth up to £8,000,000!

I heard no more until January 1998, when a report in the *East Anglian Daily Times* revealed that the picture had been restored, and that British and French experts had confirmed that it was 'The Sack of Jerusalem' by Poussin, with a value now estimated at £12,000,000! It was believed that Mr Onians paid just £12 for it in the 1940's! No more news has yet reached me, but it seems that the saga of what came out of Baylham watermill is not yet finished.

## **A.G.M. REPORT**

The 1998 Annual General Meeting was held at Drinkstone Mills on Sunday 28th June. 25 members and friends were present. In the absence of Mark Barnard, Melanie Dolman took the minutes.

Chairman Chris Hullcoop welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed thanks to Rosie and Alex Hawyard for permission to hold the meeting at the mills. Apologies for absence were received from June Baker, Niall Roberts, Cliff Lovett, Desmond Drea, Don Porter, Bob Starling, Malvern Tipping, Mark Barnard and John Snowdon. Belated apologies were received from Sylvia Foreman and David Barton. Copies of the minutes of the 1997 A.G.M. were distributed and these were accepted as a true record (proposed Peter Dolman, seconded Roy Berry). The treasurer, Des Codd, distributed copies of the accounts. In general, the accounts look quite healthy. Peter Dolman felt we were only just covering our running costs. Compared to last year, the main cost increases were in printing, stationery and postage, but we are covering them. The need to

modestly increase the subscription was considered, but it was decided to leave it at £6 for another year. When the conservation work at Great Whelnetham mill is finished, we shall get some money back from St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Mr Farrow, the owner. Chris Hullcoop considered that there is a healthy capital balance, funding reasonable grants to mills under repair such as Drinkstone and Stanton, and minor jobs such as the work at Saxmundham and Thorndon roundhouses. Any deficit is the result of the use of funds to fulfil our aims by helping at various mills. Saxmundham is now in good hands and there is a proper restoration in place. The accounts were accepted as a true record (proposed Brian Flint, seconded Bob Sharpe and Ivor Partridge).

In the absence of the editor, Mark Barnard, a written report was read out. Two issues of the newsletter had appeared, in November and February. The November issue was the largest to date, with 22 pages. The format remained unchanged. Mark is extremely grateful to all who have provided him with material, especially the regular contributors. Another newsletter will be issued in July but more material is urgently required. Mark is prepared to continue as editor although he is conscious of having been in the position for nearly 21 years and, should he wish to retire in the next year or two, he would like to think somebody might take over. Chris Hullcoop said he felt Mark did a good job and expressed his thanks to him. The editor's report was accepted as a true record (proposed Brian Flint, seconded Penny Berry).

Secretary Peter Dolman reported the sad news that one of our long standing members, Frank Gregory, had died at the age of 80. His funeral had already taken place. Membership continues to grow; there are currently 179 full members, some of which are couples, each paying a subscription. There are six Junior members, making a total of 185 paying members. 87 members live in Suffolk, some a little over the border in Norfolk or Essex, and 45 members lease or own their own mill or mill remains. We send newsletters to 11 other Mills Groups, a recent addition being the North East Mills Group. We send three complimentary newsletters, to the Suffolk Record Office (Ipswich), the S.P.A.B. Mills Group and to St. Edmundsbury Borough Council, who have many of the county's best mills in their area and who support them fairly well. Peter still gets historical enquiries from people and can often help with them. Peter would like to retire from his position of secretary because of family commitments and other pressures. Chris thanked Peter for all his excellent work for S.M.G. and agreed efforts should be made to replace him. If a successor is found, a lot will still have to be referred to Peter. It was felt the mail should continue to go to Peter as so much material which has been distributed has his address on it and he is not likely to move. The secretary's report was accepted as a true record (proposed Ivor Partridge, seconded Des Codd and Chris Wilson).

Chris Hullcoop, Mark Barnard and Des Codd are willing to continue in their present posts and Brian Flint, John Snowdon, Peter Dolman and Penny and Roy Berry were prepared to stay on the committee for the forthcoming year. They were re-elected en bloc (proposed Chris Wilson, seconded Ivor Partridge and Bob Sharpe). Stephen Bloomfield offered to join the committee and he was duly elected (proposed Peter Dolman, seconded Brian Flint). Luke

Bonwick had also indicated to Chris Wilson that he would be interested in joining the committee (although he was unfortunately not present). He is a keen young member who ought to be encouraged although as he lives in Hertfordshire attendance at meetings may be difficult. The secretary's job could be done at a distance. Luke was not present so his view could not be considered. It was decided that Luke could be invited onto the committee without a specific position so that he can give it up if it becomes too much (proposed Chris Armour, seconded Penny Berry). Other local members were suggested as likely committee members but as these were not present an approach would be made at a later date. If other people will help, Peter Dolman will continue for a transitional period but over the coming year he would like members to think about whether they could fill the position. Chris Hullcoop felt the secretary's job could perhaps be split into two or three sections - label printer, membership secretary, etc.. Fresh blood is urgently needed.

Under Any Other Business Peter Dolman said his children would be starring in a Teletubbies episode filmed at TheInetham mill which would be shown on BBC2 in early July.

Jack Clover presented Chris Hullcoop with two specially commissioned watercolours of Drinkstone Mills by Penny Berry in appreciation of all the work Chris had done at Drinkstone over past years on behalf of the Clover family. Jack expressed his gratitude and said the mills had been in his family for 220 years. Chris was delighted with the pictures and thanked Jack profusely. He said he had many happy memories of working at Drinkstone and that the Clover family had always been very helpful. It had been a long and happy association during which he had met a great variety of people, not least the Dad's Army Appreciation Society!

The meeting closed with a variety of slides illustrating the Group's activities, with commentary provided by Chris, until 1pm. After the meeting members were able to explore the two mills.

## **VANISHED MILLS Peter Dolman**

### **CHIPPENHALL GREEN, FRESSINGFIELD**

This post mill stood on one of the most picturesque sites in the county, isolated in the middle of a huge green in the flat 'High Suffolk' plain, which with its sparse population and wealth of ancient houses is one of my favourite parts of Suffolk. The mill site (TM288759) is still discernible as a slight mound with a circular ditch and gives every indication of being an ancient one. A mill is recorded here on Hodskinson's map (1778-82) and in 1784 Thomas Meen was recorded in the village as miller. The last mill was said to have been built in 1792 and had this date with the name R. Bottright carved into the post. It is also said to have been variously moved from Bungay or the Saints; if so then it replaced an earlier mill. The meal bin had carvings of open trestle post mills and a smock mill on it and dates 1712, 1792 and 1847. Perhaps it was indeed moved in 1792 and given a new post? It stood with an open trestle for much of its life and in the late 19th century gained its distinctive octagonal boarded roundhouse.



In 1838 it was offered for sale, occupied by Mr Meen, as part of the estate of James Clutton senr., deceased. In the tithe apportionment of 1841 the owner is given as James Stanton and the occupier as Samuel Meen, who owned Worlingworth mill at this time. Robert Meen is listed in 1853 but James Stanton is listed as miller in 1858 until 1874. In 1883 John Laurence is listed and in 1888 George Cook. By 1892 he was using steam power as well as wind. The mill was sold in 1903 but Cook continues to be listed until the 1908 directory. In 1912 George Smith had taken over and he worked it until 1932. In June 1934 it was auctioned by his wife and was bought for £100 by a Laxfield builder. The mill was pulled down in February 1936 by pulling to and fro with ropes until it fell over. The main timbers were salvaged and no doubt used for construction work.

It was a large post mill with the cross-trees at first floor level. The roundhouse was 19ft across and contained a pair of French stones driven by a 10 h.p. Blackstone oil engine in an adjacent corrugated iron shed. The mill was driven by four double-shuttered patent sails although a pair of cloth sails was in use until quite late. It was winded by a fantail above the steps and drove two pairs of French stones in the head, underdrift. All the machinery apart from the brakewheel was of iron and the windshaft had a separate tail section bolted on. At the end of its life it had become quite headsick.

## NEWS

### FRANK GREGORY

With the loss of Frank Gregory another link with the days before World War Two, when so many mills were still at work, has gone. He was amongst the pioneers of the study and preservation of old mills and like Rex Wailes his dedication when few others were interested meant that a lot of mills owe their existence to him.

I first met him nearly 40 years ago at S.P.A.B. meetings when he reported on Sussex mills. I particularly recall a pre-war photo of his showing a scrapyard heap of old cast iron. Everything there would be a museum piece today and included a windshaft with three

poll-ends from the six-sailed post mill on Kingston Down. His greatest involvement was with Sussex mills as his work was in that county and he was an extremely worthy recipient of the S.P.A.B. Windmill Certificate. After he retired he travelled widely to photograph and study mills all over Britain and in many overseas countries. A couple of years ago he called at Drinkstone when I was working there. He had a new car and was on a camping holiday looking at mills and other historical sites. He was nearly 80 then.

We will greatly miss 'Ole Frank', his knowledge and experience and his contributions to S.P.A.B. meetings delivered in that unmistakable voice. (C.H.)

### BIRD TROUBLE AT HERRINGFLEET

Our plans to run Herringfleet windpump on National Mills Day this year were frustrated by a pair of kestrels who chose to nest on top of the wallower! The nest, with three eggs, was discovered by millwright Richard Seago when working at the mill a few days earlier. Unfortunately it was too late to 'pull' the advert in the local paper, or the many posters which had been distributed, so we had to go along and explain the situation to visitors. We allowed people into the mill on the ground floor only, the steady breeze for most of the day only adding to our disappointment. But no-one seemed to mind.

Birds can enter the mill through the gap in the boarding above where the brake lever protrudes from the rear of the cap. This gap is of course necessary to allow the lever to move to operate the brake, but a removable cover can be designed to keep out our feathered friends. We will run the mill later in the summer once sufficient time has elapsed for the chicks to fledge and for the millwrighting work in the cap to be completed. (M.B.)

### THE ROUNDHOUSE AT ROUGHAM

After two cancellations due to this year's very unreliable summer weather, Brian Flint and I finally managed to survey the roundhouse at Rougham one Friday afternoon. We met there Mike Carmody, the estate gamekeeper, who was most interested in the series of photographs of the mill that Brian had brought along.

We were pleased to see that the post was still upright, with just a slight lean. Apart from a burnt area on one side caused by an out of control straw burning fire, the post is in good condition as are the quarter bars. The cross-trees though have suffered and one end of each has rotted so badly it could be kicked away. The only way to repair them is in the traditional way, fitting timber slabs on either side of cross-tree and quarter bar ends. In order to secure the cross-trees safely these slabs would have to extend along the cross-trees nearly to the post. With such extensive rot it might be considered better to replace but this would lose original components which we seek to preserve and would be far more difficult and many times more expensive. They only have to hold up a post weighing about a ton and not support a 15-ton buck swaying in a gale.

Three of the piers are in good condition but the fourth has



been forced apart by a sycamore tree, one of several growing in and around the mill. It looks as if the piers pre-date the roundhouse walls so the mill could have started life as open trestle. On top of the piers are the usual slabs on which the cross-trees rest. What is unusual is that there are two horizontal bolts passing through the slabs and through the outer flint wall where they terminate in large load-spreading ties holding the walls to the piers.

The decay of the cross-trees is so advanced it will need a roundhouse roof if they are to last through the next century. Much of the original roundhouse wall has collapsed and the roof timbers and wallplate have long gone. Incidentally, the roof was thatched (see photograph in Newsletter 63, p.9). It would be very expensive to rebuild the walls to a high standard and provide a new wallplate. It would be possible to build a relatively cheap and simple roof based on say 20 rafters whose outer ends are located on posts set just inside the walls. The rafters could project a good way beyond the walls giving the walls and the trestle complete protection. Of course it would be better to rebuild and replace to the original pattern but if funds don't allow this then a compromise has to be made.

The Rougham Estate covers some 3000 acres but sadly the big house is no more. Mike Carmody told us how in the early years of World War Two the butler ordered all staff into the cellar if German aircraft were about. One day he was away and a German plane attacked, mistaking the house for the home of a member of the Rothschild family. On this occasion the staff did not go to the cellar but a large bomb did not explode until it had gone through all the floors and hit ground in the cellar. The staff were shielded from the worst and survived. Had they been in the cellar they would have perished.

The Estate includes a forest products yard and employs a forester. There could be grants available towards conservation work to the mill remains and we will provide owner John Agnew with drawings and notes on various repairs that could be made. (C.H.)

#### SAXMUNDHAM ROUNDHOUSE SOLD

The post mill roundhouse at Saxmundham, which together with the mill bungalow and several outbuildings had been on the market for about two years, has been sold. The new owner is Nick Bence-Jones, who initially plans to repair it rather than implement the consent for house-conversion. Following advice from S.M.G., a listed building application was recently submitted to Suffolk Coastal District Council for a replacement boarded roof, to be covered with felt. Repairs to the upper floor are also proposed.

It is pleasing to see a sympathetic owner here, justifying our eleventh-hour effort to weatherproof the interior (see Newsletter 64), work which is still doing its job 30 months later. (M.B.)

#### BUXHALL MILL

Anders Mossesson is thinking about repairs to his mill tower at Buxhall. Some four years ago we looked at the tower and recommended a domed cap roof shaped like the original and made

like the one we fitted to Bardwell mill in 1979. Although larger than Bardwell the work would in some ways be easier. After the mill ceased work by wind the sails, windshaft and cap roof were removed, leaving the cap frame in place. A concrete roof was constructed below this and today both cap frame and concrete roof remain. The concrete roof although leaking is safe to work from and provides a convenient platform.

Anders has in mind a local contractor for the job and its success would depend on our advice to him and good planning and preparation. As at Bardwell some 20 ribs running from finial to the edge of the petticoat could be workshop-made in winter. A new finial could be made or if possible the old one which still exists could be repaired and re-used. The finial would be set on a platform in its final position high up over the tower centre. Ribs would be fitted one at a time, locating their lower ends on horizontal timber supports set on the tower top. We found at Bardwell that it was quite impossible to make all the segments of exactly equal size, but a variation of an inch or two matters little. The important thing is that the aluminium covering is an exact fit and maximum utilisation of 8ft x 4ft sheets is obtained with little wastage.

The ribs before hoisting would have been marked every six inches. This will enable the orange segment shape to be drawn very accurately onto the sheets on the ground. I recall at Bardwell we had a special form to record the measurements. Each segment had over 30 lengths to measure, record and halve to enable the curved edges to be drawn from a centre line. This had to be done in metric as imagine the potential for mistakes in trying to halve hundreds of lengths like 1ft 7 ins.

To put a nicely shaped domed cap roof onto the mill would be a considerable achievement and it would survive as a tower with some machinery. To fit sails again would require rebuilding of the curb, a complete new cap, new windshaft as well as the sails themselves which were very large. The cost would be around £100,000 and would hardly be justified without a major Lottery win. Let's hope the simple but worthwhile aluminium-covered cap roof can be made. (C.H.)

#### NEWS OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S WINDMILLS

Buttrum's Mill at Woodbridge has a new warden for the 1998 season. Paul Joslin, a former teacher, has milling connections as both his father and grandfather worked at East Mills, Colchester. He joins the two volunteer guides Ivor Partridge and Peter Love, who do sterling year-round service.

Holton post mill was re-painted over the winter, all the old layers of paint being stripped off. Belzona membrane was applied to the boards at the top of the roof which are prone to leaks. Inside the mill, the first three boards of the five-board interpretive display have been put in place, describing the mill's complex and unusual history and showing the only known photograph of it in working order.

Thorpeness post mill has recently been re-painted and now looks very smart. It will soon be open to visitors again. (M.B.)

## NEW BOOKS

A couple of recent books caught my eye, although neither is about Suffolk mills. *The Mill House and Thereabouts* by Herbert C. Harrison (£5.95; The Larks Press, Guist Bottom, Dereham NR20 5PF) is a companion volume to the author's excellent *The Windmill* (Melbourne, Australia, 1947), which appeared in this country as *The Story of Sprowston Mill* (1949) and is an autobiographical account of life at the mill in his childhood in the years around the turn of the century. The mill is represented by several good photographs and by the diagrams used in the earlier book but is not mentioned much in the text. The book is more of interest in its depiction of a way of life long departed.

*The Norfolk Broads - A Landscape History* by Tom Williamson (£12.05; Manchester University Press) is exactly what it says. The author is lecturer in landscape history at the Centre for East Anglian Studies at UEA and is perhaps the best qualified person to write such a book. The book is well researched and readable but for mill enthusiasts the frequent historical references to mills are of interest and an entire chapter is given over to an in-depth analysis of the drainage mills, their typology and development. Despite the earlier work of people such as Rex Wailes and Arthur Smith this is the first book to present the full picture and as such deserves a place in mill enthusiasts' libraries. (P.D.)

## CRANFIELD'S MILL IN CONSERVATION AREA

Ipswich Borough Council has recently extended the Wet Dock conservation area to include all the large-scale dockside buildings between College Street and Key Street, west of the Custom House. The extension includes Cranfield's roller mill, whose closure has already been announced (see Newsletter 60).

Most of the Cranfield buildings were designed by the distinguished local engineer Thomas Miller (1841-1928) in a succession of flour milling developments between 1891 and 1905. Their office building at the junction of College Street and Foundry Lane is of particular local interest with an imposing corner entrance, raised ground floor with large windows and high quality brick detailing. It was designed by the Ipswich architect H. Frank Brown (1859-1929) for B.H. Burton & Sons in 1887.

The whole group is of great townscape value and may have potential for conversion. The designation means that consent is required before any significant building can be demolished. (M.B.)

## FILMS ON SHOW IN TIDE MILL

As an additional attraction for visitors, Woodbridge tide mill is showing two videos. The first is an uncut version of the Shell film showing the mill at work c.1950, and the other a film of the derelict mill made in about 1970. (M.B.)

## SAXTEAD MILL CLOSURE

After a successful start to the year, Saxtead Green post mill has had to close owing to the unsafe condition of the main steps due to rot in the strings. Until repairs are possible visitors will be allowed into the roundhouse only, free of charge. (M.B.)

## EVENTS

### STANTON WINDMILL WORK-INS: SATURDAY AUGUST 1st - SUNDAY AUGUST 9th & SATURDAY AUGUST 15th - SUNDAY AUGUST 23rd.

A reminder to those of you who may like to come along to help that the two 'work-ins' loom near. English Heritage or local authority support is still noticeable by its absence; the mill continues to deteriorate meanwhile. I have decided to proceed without their assistance therefore, funding the work myself. I must say I find this situation hard to take, given the large sums of public money offered to both Pakenham and Bardwell windmills in recent months.

The main items of work are to take down the inside pair of sails (fitted in 1989) whose stock is rapidly decaying and to assess how much of them can be salvaged, if any. The outside pair of sails are in fairly good order and can remain for now, although the shutters require complete renewal. More positive work will take place on the ladder and fanstage, where at long last the rotten stays and missing diagonal braces will be attended to. The middle part of the ladder will be rebuilt and new handrails provided, all based on surviving evidence of the original (pre-1938) ladder backed up by analysis of old photographs. If numbers are sufficient, renewal of shutters will also take place and if the weather should be against us then many internal jobs remain to be completed, such as stone tuns, setting up machinery, stone dressing and brakewheel strengthening. Repair or replacement of the inside sails will follow on in due course.

Facilities for helpers are as in past years: the caravan roof has just been rebuilt so it should now be more watertight than for many years. Some accommodation in the house is available; the more adventurous could sleep in the mill or in tents. Sadly we shall be without the acerbic wit of Alan Wallis as he recently damaged a tendon in his leg and is in plaster for most of the summer. Hope you get better soon, Alan. If anyone is interested in helping, either for the whole or part of the week, then please contact Peter Dolman on 01359 250622 (evenings/weekends). (P.D.)

### VISIT TO PEASENHALL MILLS; SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6th, from 2.30pm

This is the most interesting Suffolk windmill site which S.M.G. has yet to visit, with the remains of both post and smock mills. The post mill stood until the mid 1950's, having ceased work in 1938. The single storey roundhouse survives together with the trestle and lower half of the post. Close by, linked by a complex of corrugated iron outbuildings, is the cut-down body of a smock mill. It was moved here from Cransford in about 1890 and set up as a 2-pair steam-driven mill. Later a diesel engine was used, and finally a modern electrically-driven feed mill which replaced the stones. Milling ceased over 20 years ago but little has changed and there is much of interest to see. Owner Geoff Cole, whose family used to run the business, hopes to conserve the buildings.

The mills are on the edge of the village at Grid Ref. 351694, on a minor road just off the Peasenhall to Heveningham road.

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