

SUFFOLK MILLS GROUP

Newsletter

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The five months since the last newsletter seem to have flown by, and with all the mild weather it's hard to believe I am now up against the deadline of our pre-Christmas social meeting! Looking back to the summer, we had our A.G.M. at Burgh mill (which I unfortunately had to miss), followed by visits to Drinkstone post mill in July and Ixworth watermill in August. At Ixworth we were made very welcome by David Drake and Nicola Gooch, who dispensed tea and cakes. We promised to return in the autumn to give the mill a much needed sweepout, and this we did in early November, shifting masses of debris which had built up over many years. Repairs to Drinkstone post mill are still in progress, but we said goodbye to Rosy and Alex Hayward, who left for Scotland at the end of July.

I would like to thank those of you who have kindly contributed material for this newsletter. It is all safely tucked away in my editorial folder which now looks much more healthy, and will be used in future issues. Please keep it coming; news items would be especially welcome if you come across something of interest.

Please note these dates in your diary. Further details of S.M.G. events appear as usual at the end of the newsletter.

S.M.G. social evening, East Bergholt	Saturday December 3rd
SPAB Mills Section Spring meeting	Saturday February 11th
S.M.G. public meeting, Ipswich	Saturday March 4th

Mark Barnard

A LIFE OF WINDMILL HUNTING Des Codd

My first memory of a windmill was back in the early 1940's. On a Sunday afternoon my father and I would take a bus to Haughley, walk up Station Road to the old post mill (the last miller, Sam Goode, was my father's cousin) and then walk back to Stowmarket. The mill was burnt down during the Second World War. The site is now a housing estate named Millfields.

My father had photographed Branstead post mill at Combs in the 1920's. My mother lived at Kimberley Hall in sight of the mill, which was demolished in the 1930's.

Moving on to 1960, I bought my first car and referring to Ordnance Survey maps started to photograph mills in East Anglia including Dalham, Debenham, Drinkstone, Framsdon, Freckenham (now demolished), Friston, Great Thurlow, Holton, Pakenham, Saxtead, Stanton, Syleham, Thelnetham, Woodbridge and Woolpit in Suffolk. Over the border into Norfolk my Sunday travels took me to

Billingsford, Burnham Overy, Caston, Denver, Wicklewood, Great Bircham, Garboldisham (before rebuilt), Old Buckenham, Sutton, West Winch, Weybourne and also Broads windpumps. South over the River Stour into Essex taking in Aythorpe Roding, Bocking, Finchingfield, Ingatestone, Mountnessing, Stansted, Stock, Thaxted and Ramsey (repaired by S.M.G. in the 1970's). I also photographed Ashdon, Great Bardfield, Terling and Tiptree. Venturing into Cambridgeshire the ancient Bourn post mill, Great Chishill, Madingley, Over, West Wrating, Wicken Fen, Willingham, Burwell, Great Gransden, Histon, Soham's two mills and Swaffham Prior.

In the late 1960's I ventured further afield, holidaying at Hastings. I was able to visit and photograph many mills in Kent including the fine smock mill at Cranbrook. Sussex is also good windmill hunting country with the Clayton pair, Jack and Jill. I remember being shown around the old post mill at Nutley by Frank Gregory, and the long walk from the road up to Halnaker tower mill, arriving back at our Hastings base very late.



Haughley post mill

Some years later on short break holidays I was able to visit mills in Derbyshire: Cat and Fiddle Mill at Dale Abbey and Heage's six sailed tower mill. Also mills in Lancashire, Leicestershire and many other midland and northern counties including the unusual mill at Chesterton.

On holiday at Bournemouth in 1981 I photographed Bembridge tower mill on the Isle of Wight (see Newsletter 23). Also travelling from Bournemouth I was able to see the thatched stone tower mill at High Ham in Somerset.

Day trips to Lincolnshire were very rewarding with the eight-sailed mill at Heckington, Sibsey's six sailer and several five-sailed mills.

In 1973 I joined the SPAB Wind and Watermill Section, now the Mills Section, and I am a founder member of S.M.G., serving on the committee now for several years. In 1993 I took on the job of treasurer. S.M.G. volunteers have restored several mills in East Anglia over the years, including Thelnetham, Drinkstone and Stanton in Suffolk and Ramsey in Essex.

I have been collecting books on windmills for years, having over forty hardbacks and many booklets on individual mills. I have many happy memories of the mills I have visited over the years up and down the country but now spend more time in the armchair reading my windmill books!

REMINISCENCES OF A COUNTRY MILLER (5)

Harold Hitchcock

We continue the account of country milling written in 1946 by Harold Hitchcock, proprietor of the roller mill at Rattlesden.

I believe there was only one occasion when I was really scared while attending to Sally (Rattlesden tower mill) or working upon her: this was when, with the foolhardiness of youth, I decided to 'take the neck up' one evening, being completely alone. To elucidate this rather cryptic phrase, I must explain that the 'neck' refers to the main bearing of a windmill, and is where the windshaft rests and revolves.

As this shaft is inclined at approximately 1 in 12 and carries stocks and sails, there is a weight of five tons or more upon this bearing in a decent sized mill. Unless this is in good trim and well lubricated, there is a good deal of power absorbed in merely turning the sails and shaft and so efficiency can be very much impaired. I suppose the greater number of mills work upon a bronze bearing but a few are fitted with a very hard wood bearing and, during my recollection anyhow, Sally possessed this type of neck bearing. The wood chosen is fitted endways to the grain in a special cast iron chair and, in course of time, becomes exceedingly polished and impregnated with oil and grease. The only drawback seemed to be the necessity of removing and trimming this at intervals to compensate for wear in the very centre of the wood. If not attended to, Sally, by weird and

heard-rending groans, would call attention to her need every time she started or stopped.

It was this job I tackled with the confidence of youth and which nearly ended in disaster. To remove the bearing, which is set upon massive blocks of wood, it is of course necessary to jack up the windshaft. Because of the inclination of the shaft, this is the more tricky as the jack itself must not be exactly vertical but must be packed from its foot until it is exactly at right angles to the shaft. An experienced millwright would have used a stout baulk of wood under the shaft, raising it with a jack at each end, so that the weight would be divided between the two jacks, and the shaft when raised would lie steady and secure.

In my folly I actually raised the windshaft upon one jack, after much hard work in the confined space of Sally's small cap. So far so good, I was able to remove the chair containing the wood bearing and was thinking of starting to level this off at correct angle when the breeze which had hardly been noticeable now started to puff with increased strength. To my horror, I saw the windshaft begin to sway from side to side upon its one jack, as the wind began to play upon the sails. One little lurch too far and the whole affair, windshaft, sails and all, would have crashed down on the weather beam and no doubt the cast iron windshaft, although fairly massive, would have snapped off like a carrot. What ever could I do? I was getting a bit frantic when I found that by firmly holding the gripe (brake) arm I could at least keep her steady and vertical upon the jack for the time. Unable to risk leaving her a moment, I think most of my youthful confidence departed and I shouted long and heartily to our carter in his cottage about 200 yards away. Fortunately he was at home and heard my distress signals. Soon I heard his massive tread upon the ladders as he brought his bulk of 16 stones through the small opening to the top floor to enquire "What was up?". "Come and hold this gripe, man" said I, "while I get this neck block back or we shall have the sails off". Heaving desperately, the whole affair was soon in place and, with the utmost relief, I began to lower her down into the proper place. When safely back and jack removed, I felt secure again but a real resolve was made then that never again would I take up the neck single handed and single jacked!

There was one other occasion when I learnt to respect the force of nature when unleashed. From William I had heard often of the great gale of January 1881 and its effect upon his old master. At that time in the large windmill, steam and wind were coupled together (rather an uneconomic plan I fear) and, owing to the strength of the gale, the mill could not be brought to a stop to uncouple the steam engine. William told of how he had maintained a small head of steam to keep his engine turning while the sails drove furiously around, turning two or more pairs of stones and lugging his engine around as well.

The gale and blizzard that stays in my memory occurred in March 1917, the exact date I cannot recall, but the memory of that evening is as fresh in my mind as if it were only yesterday. The wind that day had been blowing fitfully from the north; Sally's worst quarter for wind. In that direction, the wind blew

over a valley and then our dwelling house being in that direction seemed to disturb the air currents. Anyhow, when wind was north, one minute the old mill would race along, the next minute she would only drag along, in a weary, half-hearted way. John and I had taken the opportunity that day to shoot our largest bin full of various kinds of grain to grind down for pig meal as and when required and I often was thankful afterwards that we had done so for to ascend to the top floor of Sally that night and hoist corn to satisfy her ravenous appetite was indeed a test of nerves and courage.

Around 6pm the wind had really failed and we decided to 'pack up'. The mill was 'struck up' - that is, the vanes were fully opened and the brake lowered and all was peace within. But only for a very short time. In less than half an hour

a terrific gust of wind suddenly struck us, Sally began at once to draw under the brake and I immediately ran to lift this and let her go. Into the mill and settle the stones and, to my astonishment, she soon began to gain speed until she was up to usual running speed. Remember please the vanes of the sails were wide open, quite unclothed as we used to say, like a sailing vessel under bare poles and yet under these conditions, she was soon turning and racing away like something bewitched. To try and check her mad racing, I gave her all the weight of the runner stone and adjusted the feed of the corn to suit and still she crashed round at full speed. Never before had I known her in such a mood, never had I seen her drive a pair of stones at full pressure with sail vanes wide open. There was only one course before me, to keep her grinding and remove the sacks of meal as they were filled. How I blessed the foresight (?) which had caused us to shoot up 40 sacks of corn over her that day.

Once I did creep up to the upper storeys, the wind was shrieking and howling outside her sturdy little tower like a pack of demons, the tower swayed and vibrated under the pressure of the gusts and, as I glanced up to the inside of the cap, I could see her straining and lurching first to one way then to another as the wind veered slightly. The stout oak head-wheel groaned and protested loudly and all the timbers gave forth their protests in



Sally, probably in the 1920's

unison. I decided it was no place to be that night, before long I thought, all her cap will be torn off and the lower down I am when that happens the better it will be.

Round about 10pm, the pace of the mill began to slacken off and I decided it was time to make a bolt for the house and get some supper. No sooner had I forced the door open than invisible hands clutched and tore at me with tremendous power. Only with real difficulty was I able to get back again into the shelter of the mill. As this happened after the worst of the blizzard was over, I have often tried to imagine just what it was like outside during the height of it.

In another half hour the speed had fallen off very much and I decided to try to pull her up, jack out the stone pinion and let her swing free during the rest of the night. When I reached the chains controlling vanes and brake at the tail of the mill, I found they handled like a solid bar of ice. Snow had driven into every link and had frozen hard. Still I could not bring her to a standstill: just as she was being drawn up by application of the brake another severe gust would set her careering off again until, in disgust, I shut off the corn from the bin and, so soon as the stone hopper was empty, I raised, or more properly, 'lightened' up the stones so they were well clear of one another and let her run for the night while I went off to what I felt was my well deserved rest.

Speaking to a neighbouring windmillier afterwards about the same evening's blizzard, he told me he had run his post mill that evening with a four stone weight on. (Meaning he had had his sails clothed as usual and had four stones hung on the chain of his striking gear, the arrangement for opening and closing of vanes.) I nearly fell flat! Our old Sally had been like a mad thing with no cloth at all and he had been driving a post mill, a rickety affair set up and turning upon an oak post, using $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt for pressure to keep his sails clothed!

LAST OF THE GREAT DERELICTS (2) Bob Paterson

UPPER DEAN TOWER MILL, BEDFORDSHIRE

My next 'romantic ruin' is the small tower windmill situated on Oakley Hill, overlooking the small village of Upper Dean in the northern part of Bedfordshire.

I first saw it in April 1983, with my trusted windmill-visiting companion - Mrs Fiona Paterson. I can see her now, doing three-point turns in the road as she missed a narrow turning to a mill. On this occasion it was easy to find, as the top sail pointed rather forlornly from the ruin into the sky at the top of a hill, visible for miles around.

The three-storied red brick tower mill was built in 1856. It ceased work in 1906. By 1931 it had lost two sails, thereafter it gradually got more and more derelict. The only early photo I have seen of the mill shows it with two patent sails (already in a dilapidated state) and a dome cap with a ruinous fanstage with the remnants of fan blades. This photo was taken in the early

1940's. First went the cap, and then the fanstage - which was hanging on to dear life as late as the 1960's. The brakewheel was still in place in 1967, according to Hugh Howe's 1983 book on Bedfordshire windmills. Items like governors and hoppers and chutes had already been removed.

On my first visit, the windmill was accessible via a footpath into the field in which it still stands. The two remaining sails were still in situ, but merely the whips and some of the bars. Several years later I read an article in the *Daily Mail* about two old ladies, Madge and Charlotte Dalton, who lived in the village, and had left a legacy worth about £68,000 to be used for the benefit of the community. What followed were major disagreements amongst the 165 villagers as to what to do with it. One of the suggestions was to restore the old windmill. A fine suggestion as it was - and still is - one of the few remaining windmills in this part of the country with machinery that is ruinous.

When I visited the mill in 1994, the machinery had all collapsed inside the tower. The windshaft was obviously still in position. The wooden clasp-arm brakewheel had deteriorated to nothing by this stage and the wallower and iron upright shaft



Upper Dean tower mill: August 1994 (left) & March 2005 (right)

were resting on a floor beam ready to fall away from the tower. Both pairs of millstones (underdriven French burr) were still inside the tower - but either on the ground or soon to reach there. It was in a horrible state of repair. The grain cleaner (looking in quite good condition) and stone nuts were among the wreckage.

Last year the current owner re-roofed the mill - in an authentic dome shaped cap - and repaired the brickwork. He said that the windmill was in serious danger of collapsing due to some pretty major cracks extending down several parts of the tower. He reckoned it would not have lasted more than five years! He also said that he had to clamp the windshaft down as it had been known for the two remaining sails to turn in high winds, even in their most ruinous state. The old boys never rest, hey? This probably resulted in the fast decay of the brakewheel!

The wreckage remains inside the tower with new doors and windows making it inaccessible, but still visible. The owner says he has no plans for the windmill, other than to have it as an ornament in the corner of what is now his huge lawn. The two sails remain, with the cross of the striking rod still in place. It is obvious where the tower has been patched up and we should be at least glad that this work has been done and that the machinery still remains, albeit in a ruinous state, inside the tower. Maybe that £68,000 could've been spent on reinstating the machinery....

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Peter Cole of Norwich writes:

My father Cecil Cole and his brother Raymond were owners of the post windmill at Barley Green, Stradbroke, from October 1936 until their retirement in the 1960's. It was thus on their watch that the mill was dismantled in 1940 leaving just the roundhouse standing. As far as I am aware it was at this point that the carriage was sold to Mr Clover and incorporated in the Drinkstone post windmill which had previously been winded by hefting the tailpole round. The carriage though was cranked by hand and not driven by a fantail. The blades of the fantail at Barley Green were made into a rather fancy garden fence which I understand also went to Drinkstone when my father and his brother retired. It is therefore interesting to read that the intention is to return Drinkstone to tailpole winding and that the carriage, steps and fantail have already been removed. I would have very much enjoyed the opportunity to visit, to see and to talk as would my elder brother who lives in Manchester.

Our grandfather Walter James, who bought the Barley Green mill in 1894, was the nephew of the John Wesley Cole who was the founder of the Peasenhall Cole milling 'dynasty' which, of course, still carries on and other members of the family were also involved in milling in Suffolk. A history is in compilation with the ultimate intention of this being passed on to parties such as the Suffolk Record Office and SMG/SPAB but this lies a bit in the future.

It was good to read of your complimentary views on the mill at Stanton. I was a member of a couple of Peter Dolman's annual week long working parties, plus various other times, and Stanton contains a lot of my sweat and a bit of my blood; I have fond memories of those times even if I could not reach Peter's exacting and meticulous standards.

A bit of a brickbat here though. I do feel that if a mill owner, or any other industrial artefact owner wishes to keep his or her possessions/property private then this privacy should be respected. I do not go along with Mr Paterson's views on this subject re his visit to the Baker Street mill.

VANISHED MILLS Brian Flint

BLAXHALL POST MILL

Little is known of this allegedly large, tall mill which stood at Grid Ref. 369572. Certainly no photograph of the mill is known to exist. On a visit to Jesse Wightman, the millwright, then living in Framlingham in 1963, he stated categorically that Blaxhall was the only post mill in Suffolk to carry four pairs of wind-driven stones - two in the head and two in the tail. The earliest record I have found occurs in the *Ipswich Journal* of 10th January 1807 which states: 'To be sold by Auction All that Windmill, lately erected and in full trade now standing on Blaxhall Common..... now holden and used by William Sawer, the occupier thereof. Mr. John Sawer of Tunstall will show the premises.'

The maps of Bryant (1826) and Greenwood (surveyed 1823-4) show the mill as does the one-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1837. A reference of May 1830 refers to an accident to Mr Wigg, a former Tunstall miller, who caught his coat in the machinery which drew his arm in, necessitating amputation.

Trades directories of the period are sparse in references to Blaxhall millers, Whites of 1844 and 1855 having no entry but from 1858-64 William Cockerell is listed. By 1874 Edward Dykes was miller and remained until the demise of the mill which occurred after teatime on Thursday 25th January 1883 when it caught fire and was destroyed. Subsequently the stairs, fly (fantail) and wind tackle were put onto Peasenhall mill where charred areas were to be seen on the step strings. The iron tramway was put down at Brandeston mill and later moved to Pettaugh (according to Jesse Wightman). It was said (according to Stanley Freese) that the iron tramway and wind tackle (gearing) were made by Collins of Melton at a cost of £70.

The mill stood on what is now the lawn of Mill House; this is not the original mill house but the old granary converted.

NEWS

ARTHUR DOLMAN

Arthur Dolman died on 27th October in Ipswich hospital. He was 80. Together with his brother Charlie he was an early influence and encourager to his nephew Peter Dolman.

Many will recall the article he wrote for our November 2004 newsletter. He described how his elder brother Fred in the RAF in the Second World War had found a German map of Suffolk. All the windmills were marked, doubtless to help the Luftwaffe find their way to and from targets in Britain. With this map and his scooter, Arthur visited these windmill sites and this started his interest in windmills.

Arthur was a metallurgist with the famous Ipswich firm of Cranes. Once on a visit to Holland we found a windmill where the windshaft had recently broken. We brought back a small sample of the cast iron for Arthur's analysis to see if it would help explain this catastrophic failure. He was a keen photographer and had built up an extensive collection of windmills both standing and long gone.

Another of his interests was model making and in his retirement he made a magnificent model of the Coronation coach. He had special permission from the Royal Mews to measure and photograph the coach in detail.

Arthur Dolman was a clever, interesting and jovial man who had been a member of S.M.G. from the start. We shall miss him.

WHITMORE & BINYON PUBLICATION

A short illustrated history of Suffolk millwrights Whitmore & Binyon has recently been published. It has been written by Phyllis Cockburn of the Wickham Market & District Local History Society, from material which was to form part of a definitive account of the firm by the late Peter Dolman. The emphasis is on local history rather than the technical aspects of millwrighting, with an excellent selection of photographs, including one of an elderly John Whitmore surrounded by his workforce, which probably dates from the 1860's. The 30-page A5 format book is excellent value at £4 and can be obtained from the SPAB Mills Section or from P.O. Box 240, Woodbridge IP13 0WX (cheques to be made payable to E.P. Cockburn). (M.B.)

NEWS FROM DRINKSTONE

Work on the repair of the post mill is progressing well, although almost inevitably it has fallen behind schedule. The windshaft and millstones were lifted out in mid June. After much discussion, a method of repairing the end of the wooden windshaft was agreed, to give a stronger attachment for the cast iron poll-end. This has been carried out with the head and tail wheels in place. The lateral spread in the buck frame has been corrected, and a new weatherbeam, and new overlays to the upper side rails and outer tail beam, have been fitted. It was decided to impart more strength to the buck by introducing a 50mm thick oak outer frame all round. While this has reduced the need for repairs to some of the original frame (thereby retaining more historic fabric), it will be noticeable internally when the mill is boarded. Just how much of an impact it will have remains to be seen. The new boards are 20mm thick, straight cut rather than featheredged, and decorated with the Holkham linseed oil paint. The windshaft and stones were lifted back on November 1st, and it is hoped to complete the work by the end of the year.



The repaired windshaft being lifted back into
Drinkstone post mill on November 1st 2005



The repaired buck frame at Drinkstone



Rosy and Alex Hayward with Orlando and Halcyon outside the mill cottage at Drinkstone on 23rd July

Alex and Rosy Hayward have now sold the property, although they will continue to own the post mill for 10 years to comply with English Heritage grant conditions. From a practical point of view, however, the new owners will act as custodians of the post mill and open it to the public on specified dates from 2006 onwards. The post mill will come into their ownership once the ten year period is up.

Drinkstone Mills' new owners are Ann and Chris Rowe. They are very keen to continue the restoration work Rosy and Alex have begun, and to continue with the Mills' support group FODMAM (Friends of Drinkstone Mills and Meadow). We are delighted that they have already joined S.M.G., and look forward to meeting them in the coming months. (M.B.)

REPAIR OF THE WHEEL AT LAYHAM WATERMILL

For some time I had meant to call at Layham to see Chris Armour and his men at work on the waterwheel. Repair of the Gipping dovecote had occupied me for the early part of the year and as this was going well I took a day off to attend an auction sale in Woodbridge. To add to my 'crackpot' collection I bought an old teapot (New Hall, c.1800, handle with rivets!). I left the sale early and as the day was fine decided to visit Layham and enjoy a pic-nic lunch there. For a bit of fun I poured the not too hot tea from my flask into the old teapot and enjoyed a cup of tea complete with dead spider!

In 1992 David Pearce who owns the mill had Armour Engineering of East Bergholt replace some of the buckets and repair the

sluice. By 2005 though the 16ft diameter Whitmore wheel made in 1868 needed considerable repair, with most of the starts broken and the rest of the buckets needing replacement. The wheel was loose on its shaft and parts of the rim were broken.

Removal of the broken starts was very difficult and needed the application of a lot of heat and great care had to be taken so as not to damage the rim. 110 of the 168 starts were replaced with new ones cast at Thurton foundry near Yarmouth.

Each of the 56 buckets is 9ft long and made of the very special Corten steel. This steel is ideal for an old waterwheel as it acquires a surface layer of rust giving it a traditional brown appearance, but then it becomes passive and the rust does not increase as it would in mild steel. As we have seen the appearance of an old waterwheel can be spoiled by use of galvanised or stainless steel buckets. The buckets were rolled into shape by Kisa Engineering of Hadleigh and had to be fitted in pairs opposite each other to maintain wheel balance. This worked out well and when all were fitted no balance weights were needed.

The sluice was repaired in 1992 and needed no further attention and the wheel bearings were sound, but several breaks in the rims had to be bridged and bolted. One side of the wheel was loose on the shaft and new wedges had to be fitted. The mill is well set up now and David Pearce hopes to do a little grinding for himself and friends. The work was grant aided by DEFRA under the Environmentally Sensitive Areas support scheme. Perhaps we can arrange a visit there soon to see it. (C.H.)

S.M.G. ARCHIVE

In recent months S.M.G. has taken custody of two collections of mill material, assembled by H.O. Clark and Tom Paisley respectively. Most of it is photographic, of good quality, with a heavy bias towards the windmills of eastern England, especially Norfolk (where H.O. Clark lived). There are also scrapbooks and two interesting travelogues of journeys through France in the 1930's. We would like to thank Rosy and Alex Hayward for their thoughtful donation of this material.

S.M.G. is also in the process of receiving the extensive collection of Brian Flint, which includes all of Stanley Freese's Suffolk photographs and notes. This will combine nicely with the copies of Peter Dolman's comprehensive notes on Suffolk mills and millwrights which have been obtained from the Mills Archive Trust.

Don't forget that much Suffolk material can be viewed on the Mills Archive Trust website at www.millsarchive.com as the Trust has given priority to cataloguing and scanning Peter Dolman's Suffolk collection. (M.B.)

LISTED ROUNDHOUSES CONVERTED

By a coincidence, the two Grade II listed post mill roundhouses in the county have been house converted within the space of a few months. The work at Saxmundham is complete, with the existing building sympathetically repaired (retaining the slated roof



Work in progress on the Layham waterwheel!



The completed job with proud workforce!

built in 1999) and the addition of a single storey monopitch-roofed extension in contrasting materials. The roundhouse at Thorndon has a new conical roof in Welsh slate, beautifully executed, and is corridor-linked to a separate two-storey red brick building providing the main accommodation. In each case the roundhouse interior has been left largely open, allowing dramatic views of the trestle. (M.B.)



The converted roundhouse at Saxmundham



The Thorndon roundhouse in mid October 2005

OTHER NEWS

The Museum of East Anglian Life has been successful in obtaining a grant of £4,700 from the Pilgrim Trust to pay for repairs to the wheelshaft of Alton watermill. Volunteers will do other work, including draining and cleaning the mill pond. Once operational the museum hopes to have live demonstrations of the mill twice a day for visitors.

The old railway carriage at Pakenham windmill (see Newsletter 79) has been dismantled and taken away by a collector. The carriage was getting into a very poor state and it is good that it has found a new home.

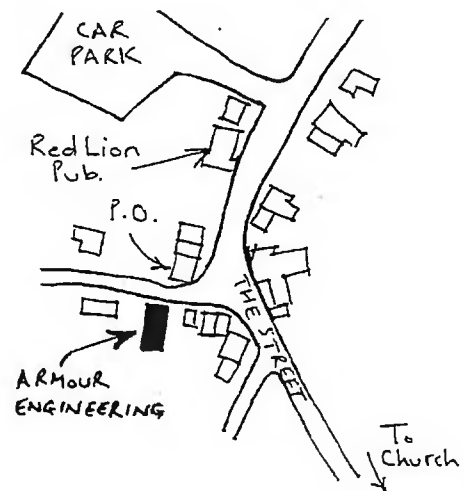
Suffolk's first wind farm was finally given planning permission in October. The proposal is for six 100m high turbines on a disused airfield at Parham near Framlingham. Saxon Windpower hope to have them up and turning by Spring 2007. The scheme had faced strong opposition locally since first revealed in 2003.

Plans have been submitted for a 140-turbine wind farm on the Inner Gabbard and Galloper sand banks, 25km off the Orford coast. If permission is forthcoming, it will generate 500MW of electricity by the end of 2008.

EVENTS

S.M.G. SOCIAL EVENING:
SATURDAY DECEMBER 3rd, from 7.30pm,
at ARMOUR ENGINEERING, EAST BERGHOLT

This year we return once again to Chris Armour's engineering workshop in the centre of East Bergholt for our annual Christmas social. There will be opportunity to see video as well as slides, so if you have anything you would like to show (provided it has sails or a waterwheel!) bring it along. Contributions of food and/or drink would also be welcomed. A torch is advised as the nearby car park is unlit.



S.M.G. PUBLIC MEETING: SATURDAY MARCH 4th 2006

We are delighted to announce that Mildred Cookson has agreed to speak at our 2006 public meeting. Mildred has been miller at Mapledurham watermill on the Thames for many years, and until recently chaired the SPAB Mills Section committee. Further details in the next newsletter.
